

Integrity of Creation



From the Season Of Creation 2021 Prayer

Creator of All,

We are grateful that from your communion of love you created our planet to be a home for all. By your Holy Wisdom you made the Earth to bring forth a diversity of living beings that filled the soil, water and air. Each part of creation praises you in their being, and cares for one another from our place in the web of life.

In this Season of Creation, we pray that the breath of your creative Word would move our hearts, as in the waters of our birth and baptism. Give us faith to follow Christ to our just place in the beloved community.

We are preparing for the roll out of the Vatican's *Laudato Si' Action Platform* during the Season of Creation, September 1- October 4, 2021. We have begun creating Creation Care teams.

We are inviting you to join those who have already expressed an interest and join us for the first gathering, Wednesday, August 18 at 7 pm EDT via Zoom.

Email kdrager@sndusa.org for more information and the link.

As world leaders prepare for setting new goals for governments as well as actions toward the goals of the Paris Agreement at the United Nations Climate Change Conference, we invite you to sign the **Healthy Planet, Healthy People Petition** to make the voices of Catholics heard by world leaders to listen to the Cry of the Poor and the Cry of the Earth.



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Moving Forward on Racial Justice



International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples is a day to promote and protect the rights of the world's indigenous population and to recognize the achievements and contributions that indigenous people make to improve the world and protect the environment.

Beginning with the Indian Civilization Act of 1819, the United States enacted laws and implemented policies establishing and supporting Indian boarding schools across the nation. The purpose of Indian boarding schools was to "culturally assimilate indigenous children by forcibly relocating them from their families and communities to distant residential facilities where their American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian identities, languages, and beliefs were to be forcibly suppressed."

Watch for an Advocacy Alert later this fall on HR 8420: *Truth and Healing Commissions on Indian Boarding School Policy Act*.

**Some further reading shared from sisters and associates and
a FREE higher learning opportunity!
[GSR Sankofa bird teaches us about future](#)**

[Asian and Pacific Islander Sisters Speak out against Hate](#)

[Our Nation's Invisible Population](#)

From Sr. Nicole Varnerin: A free online course at the University of Akron on the impact of law on equality in the United States. What a great way for us to learn more as we take action on our corporate stance Against Racism. For more information or to register for the 12 week course click **[Racial Equality and the Law](#)**



Spotlight On...

Notre Dame Cathedral Latin High School, Chardon, OH

In June, Blackboard Inc., a leading global EdTech software and solutions company, named Notre Dame-Cathedral Latin School as the only high school in the world to win the 2021 Blackboard Catalyst Award for Teaching and Learning. The award recognizes persons and institutions that have adopted flexible, distance, and online delivery models to positively impact the educational experience. Other award recipients this year include such prestigious institutions as the Mayo Clinic, Johns Hopkins University, and Abu Dhabi Institute of Applied Technology. Nominations for the award came from 17 different countries across the globe.

Principal Joseph A. Waler shared, "NDCL has used Blackboard Inc. technology since 2014 as a way to challenge students and faculty to get creative with technology to prepare them for the future. NDCL is forward thinking, like the Sisters of Notre Dame, and is always looking for ways to be innovative and provide 'safety nets to catch everyone who needs help' as well as being 'trampolines that propel us higher and further than our own locality'."

Sr. Joanne Keppler, Director of Professional Learning, echoes him saying that this Blackboard technology has really been all about "equity." All students are different and come with unique learning styles. Some students need more visualization, repetition or just information presented in a variety of ways. Our Blackboard platform provides wide-ranging ways and extra opportunities to accommodate a multitude of learning styles and individual student needs.

Sr. Joanne credits Mrs. Amy Myers, NDCL Media Specialist, who spent four years working with teachers and students to learn step by step how to best utilize this very robust and sophisticated platform. It worked so well because faculty shared what they were discovering, learning and creating with one another. The pandemic would really put this to the ultimate test.

During the pandemic, Sr. Joanne said she really saw how hard everyone was working. The teachers could not use many of the standard strategies and approaches. Students and teachers had to get very creative at a time when there were already so many things tugging at their energy and emotions.

Although students, faculty and staff could not gather in person, Blackboard provided a medium for them to be connected for educational achievement and social and emotional well-being during the prolonged school shutdowns and unpredictable quarantines caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Even with the many challenges, "Our daily in-person and online attendance averaged 96%, nearly 80% of our students were named to the honor roll, and 100% of our seniors in 2020 and 2021 graduated on time," Waler reported.

When asked what this really means for NDCL students and staff, Mr. Waler said it is really about validation and affirmation. As we go through daily life, we follow a routine. This award reminds us of all that what we see as ordinary is truly extraordinary. Being awarded at this level also really expands the student's recognition of being a part of a global community. Sr. Joanne says that she knew the faculty, staff and students deserved this award and recognition for the ways they persevered, supported one another and worked so hard in such creative ways.

I am not sure that the students realize what a privilege they are afforded. Not every school was able to avoid interruption during the pandemic. It takes resources to prepare for the future and plan ahead. As these students go out into society hopefully, they carry within themselves the passion, skills, and motivation to radically bring change for the common good into the world.

[Watch the video about the Award](#)