

Update on Women in Conversation, Fall 2021 – Spring 2022

For our Fall 2021 – Spring 2022 series, Women in Conversation set out to inform ourselves on *The Earth Crisis*, through a well-designed sequence of topics, beginning with the “big picture,” that is, the dialogue of emerging theology and science, leading eight months later to practical and local projects in the East Bay. Aware that the gravity of today’s cultural and economic crisis must be translated into new habits, we asked what kind of conversion we need to take up in terms of our lifestyles, our spirituality and ways we relate with the Earth. What is ours to do? How can we care for creation?

In **September** we viewed the video-recording : “[Can the Earth be Healed? Insights from Teilhard de Chardin, SJ](#)” by **Sister Ilia Delio**, OSF, a theologian and scientist, author of 20 books. Recognizing ways creation cares for us, Delio challenged us to rediscover the place of the human in the cosmos and to take up an ecological conversion as guided by *Laudato Si*. The video was from Creighton University’s recent, July 13th - 15th, conference: *Laudato Si’* and the U.S Catholic Church.

In **November Molly Burhans** spoke to us in a video-chat from Rome. A young woman of 33 years may well be on the verge of making history for women in the Vatican. An American cartographer, data scientist, and environmental activist, founder of GoodLands, Burhans shared how Goodlands is mobilizing the [Catholic Church](#) to use its land for environmental and social justice purposes.

Our **January** speaker, **Katie Hirschboeck**, a climate scientist emerita at the University of Arizona, presented, *Probing the Roots: Pope Francis’ Radical Call to Care for the Earth*. Now as a “Catholic Climate Ambassador” for the U.S. *Catholic Climate Covenant*, and a “Laudato Si’ animator” for the global *Laudato Si’ Movement*, she shared scientific and faith-based understandings of climate change and the urgent need to “care for our common home” with fellow Catholics and other faith communities.

From the conversation after Katie's talk, parishioner Jeannie Battigan elicited activities, readings, practices individual women in WIC are taking up to develop her relation with the earth, then she compiled and circulated the list. Two study groups for *Laudato Si* were initiated.

In **March**, we turned to inter-faith dialogue, *Nurturing the Earth: Spirituality and Practices from South India, An Interfaith Exploration*, with **Swamini Ambikamrita Prana and Karen Matten**. From these women of the Amma ashram in San Ramon, we learned of their care the earth and for the poor globally, of their ritual and meditative practices, enriching our understanding how women of other faiths care for our common home, which we share together.

In **May** we look forward to **Anne Symens-Bucher**, co-founder of the [Canticle Farm](#) in the Fruitvale District of Oakland. Inspired by the life of Francis of Assisi, the Catholic Worker Movement and [The Great Turning](#). Anne's vision for Canticle Farm, focusing primarily on the poor and marginalized, implements the planetary shift called for in *Laudato Si* – through spiritual practice, integral nonviolence, gift economy, restorative justice practices, and urban permaculture – all necessary for regenerating community in our times.

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