



## RESURRECTION UNIVERSITY PARISH

### Land Stewardship Committee

#### WHAT THE MIND OF MAN CAN CONCEIVE

*"What the mind of man can conceive, it can achieve."* Oliver Napoleon Hill famous self help author coined the phrase. How true.

In a land far away and a time long ago there was a Catholic parish in Parkland Florida that was assigned to a priest that had never been a pastor before. He created a Land Stewardship Committee (LSC) and asked the parishioners to be actively involved in helping the new pastor pick the location and help with creative financing. Eventually 24 acres of undeveloped land was located and the parish of MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS BEGAN. The land featured a large cypress tree hammock. The National Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Archdiocese of Miami approved and granted funds for a base line study on an ecological view in the planning and construction of the church-social hall and land infrastructure.

The first engineer and architect for the new church proposed cutting down the entire cypress hammock — all 55 cypress trees—and installing royal palm trees. The oldest cypress tree was 550 years old which dated, at the time, meant it came out of the ground when Columbus discovered Hispaniola. The LSC argued removing the trees would be cost prohibitive while saving the trees and making them part of the spiritual, sacramental, and social life of the parish would be a treasure beyond measure. The Archbishop dismissed the original architect and engineer and replaced them with environmentally sensitive ones. The result was nothing short of astounding.

Sixteen publicity stories were featured in the Miami Herald, the Ft. Lauderdale News, the Florida Catholic, the Parkland forum, *Salt of the Earth* by Claretian Publishers, and the Parklander. Representatives from the parish were featured speakers at an environmental symposium in Orlando as well as at a Diocese of Naples conference on ecological ideas for parishes. Over \$250,000 was raised based on the design ideas from the LSC. The parish grew rapidly from 250 people to over 2,900 and eventually earned the Broward County Beautifications Award in 1999. The Florida State Department of Transportation granted \$2,000 financial assistance to assist in landscaping the land that adjoined the Sawgrass Expressway—a never before cooperative agreement between church and state.

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"KEEP YOUR EYE FIXED ON WHAT YOU WANT  
FROM LIFE, NOT WHAT YOU DON'T"

Napoleon Hill

GREEN LEAF

(cont'ued from page one)

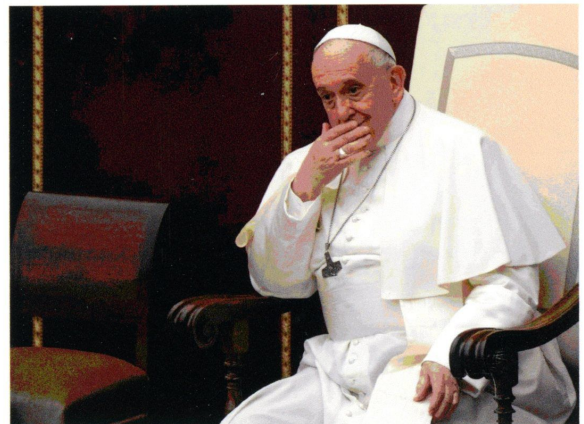
Eventually, Audubon Society, Wild Birds Unlimited, Sierra Club, Native Plant Society, Girl Scout, Boy Scout projects and work days became common as many groups discovered the natural beauty of the parish grounds. Their rambles, visits, and studies brought in new parishioners. A boy scout jamboree was another key note event as were wild animal rehabilitation exhibitions that featured hawks, ospreys, and numerous other birds restored to new life and released from the property. The lack of destruction of church trees and bushes during Hurricane Wilma, the center of which passed directly over the parish prompted the City of Parkland to invite members of the parish to make a presentation titled *RIGHT TREE RIGHT PLACE*. Over 150 memorials landscaped the property and the parish grew into a virtual spiritual garden place. The most creative is a sun dial embedded in a large boulder of Miami oolite coral that bears the legend of the exact latitude and longitude of the church. The sundial is accurate to within one minute and serves as a splendid teaching platform for the science classes at the school. The most rewarding spiritual memorial is the fresh water well that draws water from the South Florida aquifer some 135 feet down. Families hand pump up the baptismal water for the infants sacramental entrance to the faith.

Truly spirituality from the ground up

## Church properties represent substantial assets

As the largest non-governmental landowner in the world, the Catholic Church has amassed a diverse and global portfolio of parishes, schools, monasteries, cemeteries, hospitals, and more—combining to an estimated 177 million acres. Estimated? Yes, until recently they had no idea.

Recent investigation and report coming out of Boston College showed that the Vatican had no idea of the land holdings of the church in Italy, or the world for that matter. The researcher approached the chancery in Massachusetts and found the story the same—and likewise for across the nation. Under Canon Law the Pope is holder of the assets of the church and control is delegated to the multitude of bishops and from there down to the pastor. In the end though, the buck stops , so to speak, with the Pope.



In the bible story of Jacob (Genesis 32:18-19) we see him, coming to his senses and returning to the land of his heritage. He pauses at the river Jabbok. He is informed that Esau, his brother whom he has defrauded, is coming out with a large band of men. All armed! Jacob does what any wise man would do in the circumstance and assembles a large number of sheep, cattle, camels and other gifts to send to his brother. He selects a servant and admonishes him, "When my brother Esau meets you, he may ask you, whose men are you, where are you going, to whom do these gifts belong?" In short, know your history, community, and what you own. No apology, just appeasement.

Looking past that character flaw for the moment we can draw a lesson from Esau-Jacob. Know what you got. That is one of the hallmarks of ecology. Know you land and ecology and be a good steward.

Following the report by Boston College the University of Notre Dame started a new study-degree program. In 2021, the Fitzgerald Institute for Real Estate's Church Properties Initiative (CPI) is helping the Church to think through these real estate concerns. Students and top researchers from every college at Notre Dame aid CPI in engaging with Church leadership and tapping into innovative solutions from industry practitioners to create actionable change that turns the Church's land into a powerful force for good.

Through a variety of research and educational programs, CPI is working to help scholars, policymakers, and religious leaders to understand the impact of their property decisions on local dioceses and surrounding communities. An innovative seminar is being held in November on the Notre Dame Campus, School of Business. Registration is now live for the Fall 2022 conference, "The Future of Church Property," at the University of Notre Dame, Nov. 7-9th, 2022. Notre Dame school of Business takes note that "As the world's largest social services provider, the Church is not organized to answer complex real estate questions. Its decentralized structure has left many Church property decision-makers to navigate the legal, financial, architectural, and canonical challenges alone."

In order to live out its charitable missions, **the Church is also the largest non-state landowner in the world**, operating parishes, schools, universities, hospitals, orphanages, clinics, convents, monasteries, and more on every continent.

With the sheer numerical size and diversity of the Church's portfolio in every corner of the world, there is a vast horizon of emerging multidisciplinary scholarly research of the role of these assets in climate change, history, urban planning, engineering, architecture, economics, sociology, finance, and more.

The Fitzgerald Institute for Real Estate is working to marshal the power of academic research, the leading industry best practices, and the creativity of on-the-ground innovators to help the Catholic Church and many other faith traditions as they face challenges in some regions of declining religiosity, increasing costs of aging buildings, and emerging pastoral concerns.

**GREEN LEAF AND LAND STEWARDSHIP** are planning for the "*New Look*" of Resurrection University Parish. Land Stewardship ministry is forming up its part in this plan with a list of speakers and programs, including book reviews, zoom sharing sessions and the like for the parishioners and M.S.U. student body all centered on ecology, environmentalism, and the spiritual dimension of the Good Earth. Native American aspects will be a significant part of the written and spoken presentations. And the "old timers" of the parish are not to be forgotten and will be a major focus also.

—**Employment Opportunity**—

**Writers, photographers, as well as parishioners with newspaper or publication interest and skill are invited to contact the Green Editorial Board at Paul Gore 406-587-2001**

**See [hocchoka.com](http://hocchoka.com) and the tab *Green Leaf* for background.**

## AND FINALLY

FROM REUTERS

The Vatican on Saturday made public for the first time information about its real estate holdings, revealing that it owns more than 5,100 properties, mainly in Italy.

The publication marks one of the most detailed disclosures of Vatican assets ever. It lists 4,051 properties in Italy and 1,120 abroad, not including the Vatican's embassies.

The information was published in two documents, totaling more than 50 pages of financial records: a 2020 consolidated financial statement and the first-ever public records of the Administration of the Patrimony of the Apostolic See (APSA), which manages the Church's payroll, real estate and investments.

Records show APSA owns investment properties in upscale neighborhoods in Paris, Geneva and Lausanne, as well as in London, where the purchase of one property in the South Kensington district led to enormous losses in 2014.

The information was released ahead of a trial looking into the purchase of the London property by the Vatican's Secretariat of State. Ten people, including prominent Cardinal Angelo Becciu, are on trial in connection with its purchase. Some face charges including embezzlement, money laundering, fraud, extortion and abuse of office.

A majority of the Vatican's properties in Italy are rented at reduced rates to Church staff. About 40 percent are institutional buildings such as convents, but also schools and hospitals, according to [Reuters](#).

A PRELIMINARY MEETING OF PARISHIONERS AND M.S.U. STUDENTS IS BEING CALLED FOR THE PURPOSE OF EXPLORING THE FOLDING OF LAND STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE INTO THE CREATION CARE COMMITTEE.

THE PROPOSED MEETING WILL BE HELD AT THE HOME OF PAUL GORE, #26 STARLING DRIVE, BOZEMAN MT. PLEASE CALL 406-587-2001 IF YOU ARE INTERSTED IN ATTENDING SO APPROPRIATE ARRANGEMENTS AS TO DATE AND TIME CAN BE MADE.

