

LEGACY FOR OUR MISSION:
For Our Children and the Future

SACRED HEART STUDENTS 'CARE FOR GOD'S CREATION'

When Santa Claus visited the Sacred Heart of Jesus School in Terre Haute this Christmas, students predictably asked for the year's most popular toys. One young girl, however, wanted a bird feeder. Her love of the animals grew out of hands-on learning in the classroom.

"It's making an impression," said Providence Sister Theresa Bowland, principal at Sacred Heart. The school's place-based education program uses *Care for God's Creation* at its core, and develops "experience lessons" for its students.



Kindergarten and second grade students created butterfly habitats. Pre-schoolers regularly observe outside birdhouses and bird feeders. The fifth-graders have their own weather station, and all 55 students recycle cardboard and plastic items in the Sacred Heart cafeteria.

"We needed to have a different niche, and it is part of our Catholic identity to take care of God's creation," Sister Theresa said. "It increases academic achievement, creates stronger ties to the community, enhances appreciation of nature and heightens commitment to service as active citizens."

"We want to be a good choice for parents and have a bigger influence on the neighborhood and community."

Sacred Heart is also in the process of involving the Terre Haute community and environment as a starting point to teach concepts in language arts, mathematics, social studies, science and other subjects across the curriculum.

The *Legacy for Our Mission Campaign* will assist Sacred Heart of Jesus School and Catholic schools throughout the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. Sacred Heart hopes to further develop its hands-on education, including conserving energy in its building, beautifying the outside and forming an environmental committee.

Sacred Heart is also concentrating on building its enrollment in preschool and kindergarten. "We don't have to be a huge school, but we would like to work with 100 students," Sister Theresa said. "We want to be a good choice for parents and have a bigger influence on the neighborhood and community."

The school's unique educational approach is making a difference in its students, like the girl who asked for a bird feeder for Christmas.

"We're just at the beginning; that's the key thing. We want to create a future for our children and for future generations."

As Sacred Heart looks toward the future, both the teachers and students are excited about what is to come with its programming. "We are called to protect people and the planet, living our faith in relationship with all of God's creation," Sister Theresa said.

Legacy for Our Mission, the archdiocese's upcoming capital campaign, is guided by the principles of Christian stewardship and addresses the needs of archdiocesan ministries such as Home Missions. By contributing to Legacy for Our Mission through your local parish, a portion of your gift will be allocated to Catholic education programs and distributed to organizations such as Sacred Heart of Jesus School in Terre Haute.