**Developing a Comprehensive Recycling Program**

by the St. Pius Church Green Team

**Our Goal:** We wanted to make recycling easy in every part of our building and at every event, so that recycling became the norm for how things were done.

**Project Approval:** Our facility manager was behind us 100% and we had Green Team funds to cover the costs, so we didn’t have to seek approval or money elsewhere. We were confident this project would receive widespread support. We just made sure the custodial staff would be okay emptying the bins.

**Assessing the Needs:** We went to every room in the facility and counted the number of receptacles we would need--essentially one for every room—which would be placed beside every trash can. We also looked at room use and what size we thought was needed.

**Getting the Recycling Bins:** We got these from a variety of sources. For some rooms we purchased inexpensive trash cans or brought extras from home. For some less visible places like in our kitchen we used a free blue recycling bin from the city. We used cardboard recycling containers with lids that were fairly nice looking for the area by the office that received heavy traffic. We got a couple of big black trash bins (the kind you use for leaves) for our big hall where events are held.

**Labeling:** We made attractive, big laminated signs that we taped to the bins so it was clear what they were for and what kinds of materials could be recycled. Generally they said: “Please recycle plastic, cans, and paper here.”

**Deffenbaugh Recycling Container**: We got a big recycling bin from Deffenbaugh that sits behind the church, close to where the trash is kept and accessible so people use it. We pay $25 a month for a monthly pick-up, which is sufficient for our needs. It is a mixed-use bin so nothing has to be sorted. If volume is high enough, Deffenbaugh gives a rebate, which can cover the monthly cost. Call Deffenbaugh at 1-800-631-3301.

**Educating the Congregation**: We have put notices in the church bulletin about using the recycling bins. Our Green Team also put an insert into the bulletin with a list of green guidelines for parish events and made sure it included instructions in recycling. The team plans to send an email to the chairs of groups reminding them about recycling and how it is done. The biggest challenge is getting church groups who have social events, such as wedding receptions, to use the bins. But our facility manager reports that many groups do use them. It just takes making it easy for people to recycle, and patience and perseverance to get people to adopt a new habit.

*For more information, contact Carol Meyer at 913-677-8672*