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To respond to the Pope's prompt on how we can make a mark on our community, we created a mural on the wall of a shed that Jamie's family didn't use very often. We decided to create our mural there because we hope that after creating the mural, it would brighten the environment around it and encourage the usage of the area more often.

Our mural illustrates the two possible paths that mankind can take; paths that will create our future. The first option is full of pollution, and the chained, dying tree in the center symbolizes the destruction of nature. The second is full of happiness and people of all races and identities. Nature is clearly alive, and animals coexist in our society. We have used paint to convey the message that the consequences of our actions today affect the generations of tomorrow.

The gray, dreary landscape found on the left side of the tree is devoid of life; the black color of the tree and the stormy clouds contribute to creating a melancholy atmosphere that reflects the results of poor choices that we make, especially regarding the environment. All the people found on the right side of the mural are barefoot, symbolizing our wish for humanity to be connected to nature and our surroundings. Roses, often given as a symbol of one's love or devotion to another, are painted on the mural to represent the love that we must have for each other and the environment around us if we wish to reach a future full of unity. The chains surrounding the tree turning into vines on the opposite side of the tree symbolize our hope for humanity's ability to release ourselves from the actions, such as racism and sexism, that restrict and prevent us from becoming like a vine and being intertwined with each other. The sun setting on the right side of the tree recalls the end of the day or the completion of a hard day's work; the right side of the tree shows the ideal result of all of humanity coming together in unity and work together on issues like the environment and equality.

Our mural illustrates how we wish to make an impact on our community. We hope that, as people of faith, we hope to act as bright candles that illuminate the lives of the people we interact with and the area around us. We wish to raise awareness on issues such as equality, human rights, and the environment. Our hope is that, by spreading the word about these matters, we can create a ripple effect that will encourage others to do the same in their communities. (Pictures of mural on next 2 pages)



