Weekend community event set for Monarch Butterfly Waystation dedication

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The Franciscan Renewal Center, 5802 E. Lincoln Dr., Paradise Valley, will hold the Dedication of the Monarch Butterfly Waystation.

On April 6 and 7, the event will include the sale of one-gallon milkweed plants supplied by the Desert Botanical Garden, activities for children, and tours of the garden, according to a press release.

The Monarch butterfly is necessary for the planet's health, “while feeding on nectar, the butterflies pollinate many types of wildflowers...and are an important source of food for birds, small animals and other insects,” according to the National Park Service.

Part of an ecosystem that sustains humans, the release added that Monarchs are endangered because of the loss of milkweed plants, loss of winter habitat, and climate change; and the FRC is striving to do its part to stem and reverse the Monarch butterfly's decline.

Monarch butterflies will only lay their eggs on milkweed, not any other plant, the release noted, adding that Monarch caterpillars can also only eat milkweed.

To help combat the loss of these plants necessary for monarch survival, the Desert Botanical Garden will sell one-gallon milkweed plants beginning on Saturday, April 6 before the 5 p.m. Mass and continue on Sunday after the 7:30 a.m., 9:15 am, and 11 a.m. Masses.

In addition, a combination of 35 – 40 native milkweed plants and native nectar plants will be planted on the grounds of the FRC on Sunday, the release said.
Families attending the 9:15 am Mass on April 7 will help with the planting, and tours will be conducted before the dedication, which will take place at about 12:30 p.m. at the Altar Ramada toward the back of the property. Refreshments will follow.

This new monarch habitat will be officially designated as a Monarch Waystation by Monarch Watch, the release noted.

The FRC is said to be proud to work with the Desert Botanical Garden’s Great Milkweed Grow Out Initiative for Monarch and pollinator conservation to complete the project, stated the release, inviting those in the Casa and surrounding communities to “celebrate taking one step closer to saving the Monarch Butterfly.”