

# Season of Creation

## Hello!

In his encyclical *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home*, Pope Francis calls us to join him in embarking on a new path to shape the future of our planet. During this 5 week Season of Creation we invite you to join us to pray, learn, share with others, and challenge yourself to take new actions every week with the theme of the day!

If you haven't explored *Laudato Si'* yet, check out more resources at <https://ourcommonhome.org/tag/laudato-si/>

Read the full encyclical at [https://www.vatican.va/content/dam/francesco/pdf/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco\\_20150524\\_enciclica-laudato-si\\_en.pdf](https://www.vatican.va/content/dam/francesco/pdf/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si_en.pdf)



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## Meatless Mondays

Skipping meat just one day a week helps our planet; for example, to produce a “finished” steak we spend energy, water and other natural resources. To maintain the current meat diet of humans worldwide, we use farmland to sustain the animals and their feed, leading to deforestation in many areas. In addition, almost 15% of all greenhouse gas emissions are created by the meat industry.

Producing fruits and vegetables requires less energy and water than most meat. For example, it takes approximately 1,850 gallons of water to produce a single pound of beef, as opposed to just 39 gallons of water to produce a pound of vegetables.

*Lord - all we have is what You have given us. Life is a gift. Food is a gift. This earth is a gift. Help us live lives that express our gratitude for all Your gifts - life, food, and the beauty of this earth.*

## Take Action!

- Try not to eat, or decrease the amount of meat you eat on Mondays
- Search new recipes without meat
- Teach other people to be aware of the unsustainable side of meat
- Make a meatless meal for your family or friends or go meat-free when you eat at restaurants

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## Meatless Mondays

### Resources

#### Meatless recipes

- [Meatless 30 Minutes Meals](#)
- [24 meatless recipes that carnivores love](#)

#### Impacts of different food on the environment

- [ewg.org/meateatersguide/eat-smart](http://ewg.org/meateatersguide/eat-smart)

#### Videos that summarize the environmental impact of animal agriculture

- [What if the World Went Vegetarian?](#) (video)
- [Eat Less Meat and Help Reduce Climate Change](#) (video)

#### Articles

- [Tackling the world's most urgent problem: meat](#) (UN Environment)
- [Laudato Si' and Veganism?](#) (Markkula Center for Applied Ethics)
- [A year of Living Laudato Si'](#) (Catholic Register)
- [Beef is off the table](#) (US Catholic)

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## Energy Aware Tuesdays

In times like these where almost any activity needs electricity, we have to look for ways to save energy. Electricity production from fossil fuels is the biggest source of greenhouse gases and, in Indiana, we get 89% of our electricity from coal and natural gas.

Saving energy is not only good for the environment, but good for your wallet too! Small actions such as turning down the thermostat on your water heater, or bigger investments like purchasing ENERGY STAR appliances, start paying off right from the start!

*Lord - every breath we take is evidence of Your loving mercy. Help our gratitude and love for You to be evident not just in the words we speak, but also in our care for the environment, and with lifestyles that can be easily sustained by an earth we share with others.*

## Take Action!

- Read a book or pray instead of watching TV or using the computer
- Open the curtains facing the sun during the day and close the curtains at night
- Challenge yourself to go a whole day without turning on any lights
- Insulate the first 3 feet of pipe that enter/exit your water heater
- Wash clothes with cold water - today's laundry detergents work just as well in cold temperatures

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## Energy Aware Tuesdays

## Resources

### More ways to save

- [31 Ways to Save Energy in Your Home \(with coloring page\)](#)
- [10 Simple Ways to Save Money on Your Energy Bill](#)

### Impacts of energy waste on the environment

- [darksky.org/light-pollution/energy-waste/](http://darksky.org/light-pollution/energy-waste/)

### Media and tools

- [Renewable energy, explained](#) (video)
- [EPA's Carbon Footprint Calculator](#)
- [Caring for God's Creation One Solar Panel at a Time](#) (Catholic Energies)
- [Encyclical Climate Action Kit](#) (Interfaith Power & Light/Catholic Climate Covenant)

### Articles

- [Top 11 Things You Didn't Know About Saving Energy at Home](#) (Energy.gov)
- [7 Easy Ways to Make Buildings Energy Efficient](#) (EcoWatch)
- [Getting off Fossil Fuels, One Conversation at a Time](#) (Catholic Climate Movement)

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## Water Conservation Wednesdays

Wherever you live, water is a necessity of life. Although around 70% of the world is covered by water, only 2.5% is freshwater and only 1% of all freshwater is easily accessible. That means only 0.007% of the world's water is available for human consumption!

It is estimated that by 2025, two-thirds of the world's population will live in water-stressed regions as a result of use, growth, and climate change. While we now may live in a region with abundant water, let's make changes for our future and unite with those who lack clean water as we work to conserve water in our daily life.

*Lord - open our eyes to see You in all that You have created. Through the contemplation of your goodness, move us to act wisely and stand in solidarity with our brothers and sisters and with the earth that we share.*

## Take Action!

- Use a broom instead of a hose to clean patios, sidewalks, and driveways
- Save a washing machine full of water per week by turning off the faucet when brushing your teeth
- Install a low-flow showerhead and set a timer for a 5 minute shower
- Put your cup of water in the fridge for your next meal instead of down the drain
- Check faucets and pipes for leaks

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## Water Conservation Wednesdays

### Resources

#### More ways to save

- [5 areas to work focus on cutting back water use](#)
- [How to save water in schools](#)

#### How water quality and supply affect ecosystems and livelihoods

- [National Climate Assessment Report - Water Supply](#)

#### Media and tools

- [What's your water footprint?](#) (english and español)
- [Quality Unknown: The Invisible Water Crisis](#) (video)
- [Waterless Car Wash](#)

#### Articles

- [Nutrient Pollution](#) (english and español)
- [11 cities most likely to run out of drinking water](#) (BBC)
- [Laudato Si' and Water](#) (Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns)
- [Access to clean water is a life issue the church must defend](#) (National Catholic Reporter)

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## Reduce, Reuse, Recycle Thursdays

We live in a culture of having and buying, where it is often easier to get something new rather than take care of all that we have.

Let's try to **reduce** by simplifying the consumption of certain products that may be unnecessary (whether water, energy, food, or household products), **reuse** by looking for another purpose for our things or sharing them with others, and **recycle** in the appropriate manner once a product has fulfilled its functions in every way. When we do this in our homes, workplaces, churches, and schools, we not only help our earth but initiate a culture of giving in our communities.

*Lord - in Your mercy, You have designed an earth that can provide enough for all. And in Your wisdom, You have created an earth that also requires our care to preserve it. Give us strength to joyfully fulfill our responsibility.*

## Take Action!

- Carry your own reusable straw and tableware for restaurants that use disposables
- Think about why you don't recycle (or do enough) and find creative ways to overcome those barriers
- Go paperless with bills, insurance claims, financial statements, store receipts, meeting handouts, etc.
- Reuse glass bottles and jars as vases, to store bulk pantry items, or as bathroom/office organizers

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## Reduce, Reuse, Recycle Thursdays

### Resources

#### More ways to reduce, recycle, reuse

- [Reduce, recycle, reuse \(packaging\)](#)
- [50 ways to reuse your garbage](#)

#### Impact of waste on the environment

- [How plastic aquatic debris impacts different ecosystems](#)

#### Media and tools

- [Pack a Waste-Free Lunch](#)
- [Explore Recycle City](#) (geared for kids)
- [Eco-Cycle Guide: Zero Waste](#)
- [Waterless Car Wash](#)

#### Articles

- [Kids Environment Kids Health - Reduce, Reuse, Recycle](#) (NIEHS)
- [‘The Economy of Francis:’ Pope Sumons Young People and Economists....](#) (Zenit)
- [Pope Francis’ guide to avoiding a ‘throwaway’ culture](#) (Our Sunday Visitor)

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## Walk, Bike, Share-a-Ride to Work Fridays

Do you know how much fuel you use per day? Per week? Per year? In 2018 in the US, about 391.40 million gallons of finished motor gasoline were used per day! The emissions from fuel used for transportation account for about 29 percent of total US greenhouse gas emissions, making it the largest contributor to the total US greenhouse gas emissions.

Even if you can't walk or bike there are other ways to reduce fuel consumption. Share a ride with other people or use public transportation to go to work, the supermarket, mass, parish meetings, etc.

*Lord - guide our prayer and action to be a source of renewable energy for the earth. May we slow down amidst the hustle and bustle of the world to start building peace and instilling a love of creation in the hearts of those around us.*

## Take Action!

- Create a group on WhatsApp or Facebook with people of your work, parishioners, friends or relatives to talk about carpooling
- Provide cold pitchers of beverages for committee members who walk or ride to meetings (and bring their own water bottle!)
- Make taking the bus an opportunity to teach kids about maps, schedules, & the community

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**Walk, Bike, Share-a-Ride to Work Fridays**

## Resources

### More ways to take action

- [Combine car trips or borrow something you need from a neighbor](#)
- [Biggest ways Americans can change their transportation habits](#)

### Impact of fossil fuels on the environment

- [Fossil Fuels: The Dirty Facts](#) (NRDC)

### Media and tools

- [Air pollution in cities](#) (video)
- [EPA's Carbon Footprint Calculator](#)
- Google "Carpool tool" - there are many out there!

### Articles

- [Getting Around Without Fossil Fuels](#) (Building Green)
- [Everything You Need to Know About Biking to Work](#) (Bicycling)
- [Pope Francis Takes the Bus, and Other Unexpected Stories](#) (book by Rosario Carello)

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## Take-a-Hike Saturdays

Start the weekend by enjoying nature alone or with family or friends. Take a hike, camp with your kids, plant a garden, have a picnic, or go to the zoo or your favorite park.

Offer the physical toll of your day for your prayer intentions. And, as you appreciate the beauty of God's creation, you may be inspired to carry out your daily challenges for the next week, pick up trash along your route, meet a new friend in the community, report a safety hazard, discover new plant and animals species you haven't noticed before, and grow closer to God!

*Lord - Help me to be straightforward like the sky-seeking redwood tree. May my soul be clear like the spring water at its origin. May You be always in my life as a constant companion. May the cross which rises at the crossroads be for me like the meeting of a good friend.*

## Take Action!

- If it is raining: plant an inside flower, study something about the environment, or plan your next hike
- Try a new trail in your area
- Visit an outdoor sacred space in your diocese
- Go creek stomping (kids and adults!)
- Ask an elderly neighbor if they need help with yardwork

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## Take-a-Hike Saturdays

## Resources

### More ways to enjoy nature

- [Visit a park on National Public Lands Day \(late Sept\)](#)
- [Start your own family nature club](#)
- [Take on the outdoors in Indy](#)

### Community Forestry

- [How to plant and care for trees in your neighborhood](#)

### Media and tools

- [MyEnvironment](#) (EPA tool for viewing various environmental data by zipcode)
- [Creating Sacred Grounds](#) (webinars)
- [Prayers for Outdoor Life Celebrations](#)

### Articles

- [Effects of Deforestation](#) (Pachamama Alliance)
- [Walking with God](#) (Franciscan Media)
- [God can always be found in the natural world](#) (National Catholic Reporter)

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## Laudato Si' Sundays

End the week by reflecting a little on the day's gospel, the meaning of your new daily changes, and perhaps reading some pages of Pope Francis' encyclical, *Laudato Si'*, with an eye towards understanding why it is necessary to make a change and take care of the gifts we have been given.

Then, seek a moment of community with friends, family, or fellow parishioners to comment on *Laudato Si'*, share experiences you had during the week, or difficulties encountered and in doing so maybe find solutions that can help others too!

*Lord - we pray for all the projects in the universal church and our parishes, so that You help us in the realization of being good stewards of all You have given us. We thank You for this beautiful gift of the creation and ask for strength to protect the earth so it can be enjoyed by our children and all future generations too.*

## Take Action!

- Read a section of *Laudato Si'* on each of the 5 Sundays during the Season of Creation
- Add a new form of prayer to your Sunday routine
- Start a [Laudato Si' Circle](#) (small groups that meet to deepen their relationship with God as Creator) or Creation Care Committee (to plan events, prayer services, encourage members and implement best practices) in your parish/school

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## Laudato Si' Sundays

### Resources

#### More ways to read Laudato Si'

- [Readers' Guide to Laudato Si'](#)
- [Laudato Si' Summary](#)

#### Media and tools

- [Top 10 Things to Know about Laudato Si](#) (video)
- [Catholic Social Teaching 101: Care for God's Creation](#) (video)
- [10 New Ways to Pray](#)

#### Articles

- [Abuse of environment threatens human life, dignity](#) (Archbishop Charles C. Thompson)
- [Laudato Si': Reactions from Catholic Analysts and Bloggers Around the World](#)
- [Integral ecology and the horizon of hope....](#) (Cardinal Peter Kodwo Turkson)
- [Renewing the Earth](#) (Pastrol Statement of the USCCB)
- [Pope Francis Preaches the Gospel to Non-Christians with Laudato Si'](#) (Aleteia)

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