

“The environment is God’s gift to everyone, and in our use of it we have a responsibility towards the poor, towards future generations and towards humanity as a whole”

(Pope Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate*, n. 48).

Lenten *Caring for Creation* Calendar 2012



The Environmental Outreach Committee suggests the following spiritual reflections, sacrificial actions, and practical suggestions everyone can consider during Lent. They are a way to help you grow in your commitment to be a wise steward of God’s Creation now and for future generations. We invite you to use this Lenten calendar creatively in your preparations for Easter.

Environmental Outreach Committee
Department for Charity and Justice
Archdiocese of Washington
www.adw.org

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p><i>“When you give alms, sound no trumpet before you . . . so that your alms may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”</i> (Matthew 6:2, 4)</p> <p>Ash Wednesday reminds us to be faithful in action even when no one is looking. When we live in harmony with God’s people and Creation, our households, our churches, and our society will be transformed . . . beginning with us!</p> <p>As we begin Lent, let us keep in mind our connection with Creation and reflect on our beginning and end: <i>“Remember that you are dust and to dust you will return.”</i></p>			<p>Feb. 22</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Turn your thermostat down by at least one degree in cold weather.</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Combine trips or carpool, walk, bike or use public transportation.</p>	<p>25</p> <p>Recycle and refurbish electronics.</p>
<p>Learn more about Catholic teaching on the environment. This Lent read <i>Ten Commandments for the Environment: Pope Benedict XVI Speaks out for Creation and Justice</i>.</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Run the clothes washer on “cold/cold” setting and only when you have full loads.</p>	<p>28</p> <p>Many caring people are working to protect creation. Find out what the Catholic Bishops are doing. Google “USCCB Environmental Justice Program”.</p>	<p>29</p> <p>Check windows and doors for drafts with a ribbon or feather. If it flutters, consider caulking, weather stripping or a draft dodger.</p>	<p>March 1</p> <p>Let your dishwasher breathe, run only when full and skip the energy intensive drying cycle. Just open the door to dry.</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Fix household water drips and leaks.</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Check with your local pharmacy for the proper way to dispose of unused and expired medications. Methods may differ by jurisdiction.</p>
<p>4</p> <p>Reflect on Pope John Paul II’s message for the World Day of Peace, <i>“Peace with God the Creator, Peace with All of Creation.”</i> Google the title.</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Be aware of your hot water use today. Turn off the water when scrubbing the dishes.</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Help your kitchen fridge to function more efficiently by placing jugs of water in the unused space.</p>	<p>7</p> <p>Be aware of how much food you discard every day. Look for opportunities to eat leftovers and avoid wasting food. Consider participating in Operation Rice Bowl.</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Consider composting your plant-based food waste.</p>	<p>9</p> <p>Plan to plant extra vegetables in your garden this year to provide fresh produce for a local soup kitchen or shelter.</p>	<p>10</p> <p>Conserve water when you shower, draw water for a bath, brush teeth or shave.</p>

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>Spend some extra time in prayer today, thanking God for the beauty of Creation. Reflect on Psalm 148. Share with someone what you learned!</p> <p>11</p>	<p>Many electronics draw power even when off. Today, place computers, radios, and TVs on a power strip, and really turn it off between uses.</p> <p>12</p>	<p>End junk mail that wastes resources. Stop unwanted catalogs. Google "End Junk Mail".</p> <p>13</p>	<p>Minimize disposables at home. Use cloth napkins at a meal. Wipe up with a dishcloth instead of paper towels.</p> <p>14</p>	<p>Minimize disposables at work. Use a mug for coffee and water.</p> <p>15</p>	<p>Check the tire pressure of your car today to maximize mileage and save gas.</p> <p>16</p>	<p>Save paper: print double-sided. Wrap your next present in color comics, or a reusable gift bag.</p> <p>17</p>
<p>Praise God for the wonder of creation. Pray through Daniel 3:51-90.</p> <p>18</p>	<p>Begin spring gardening by going organic. Grow your lawn and garden without toxic chemicals.</p> <p>19</p>	<p>Protect Creation. Learn what the Franciscans are doing and consider signing up for their e-newsletter at www.franciscanaction.org.</p> <p>20</p>	<p>Are you recycling everything you can? Refresh your memory today on what items you are allowed for curbside recycling.</p> <p>21</p>	<p>"Carry in. Carry out." Leave no trace when visiting a park or the wild.</p> <p>22</p>	<p>When cooking and heating water on the stove, use a pot with a lid to conserve energy.</p> <p>23</p>	<p>It's hard to open ourselves up to the realities of the climate crisis. Learn more about Church teaching through the Catholic Coalition on Climate Change at www.catholicsandclimatechange.org</p> <p>24</p>
<p>Be filled with wonder at the marvelous works of God the Creator. Reflect on Psalm 104.</p> <p>25</p>	<p>Celebrate Spring! Plant native plants or a native tree in your yard. Google "Native Plants".</p> <p>26</p>	<p>Use earth-friendly cleaners. Seek "green" cleaning products that are biodegradable and designed with the environment in mind.</p> <p>27</p>	<p>Give the dryer a rest and save your clothes. Hang your clothes to dry on a rack or clothesline. Get free drying that doesn't wear out clothes or age elastic/stretch material by heating it.</p> <p>28</p>	<p>Help people on the "front lines" of climate change. Catholic Climate Covenant links US churches with carbon reducing projects in developing countries. See: www.catholicclimatecovenant.org</p> <p>29</p>	<p>Contact publishers of any magazine you receive asking them to use environmentally responsible practices.</p> <p>30</p>	<p>Learn about mountain-top mining to access cheap coal. Google "Appalachia's Wounds" in America magazine (10/4/10).</p> <p>31</p>
<p>Embrace the silence. Turn off everything unnecessary. Reflect on God's glory in Creation. "The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims his handiwork." (Psalm 19:1)</p> <p>April 1</p>	<p>Pick up some litter when you are out walking and dispose of it properly.</p> <p>2</p>	<p>When driving obey the speed limit. Every 10 mph in speed above the limit reduces fuel economy by 4 mpg.</p> <p>3</p>	<p>Plan to use reusable bags when shopping. Wash after use to prevent contamination.</p> <p>4</p>	<p>Holy Thursday: Reflect on Pope Benedict XVI's message for the World Day of Peace, "<i>If You Want to Cultivate Peace, Protect Creation.</i>" Google the title.</p> <p>5</p>	<p>Good Friday: Meditate on the mystery of love: "Behold the wood of the cross, on which hung the Savior of the world. Come, let us worship."</p> <p>6</p>	<p>Holy Saturday: Remember your Baptism and the power of water. Thank God for this gift and ask him to help you be a good steward of his gifts, which reveal his love.</p> <p>7</p>

8 Easter Sunday "At a time of world food shortage, of financial turmoil, of old and new forms of poverty, of disturbing climate change ... of growing fears over the future, it is urgent to rediscover grounds for hope. Let no one draw back from this peaceful battle that has been launched by Christ's Resurrection. ... Christ is looking for men and women who will help him to affirm his victory using ... justice and truth, mercy, forgiveness and love." (Pope Benedict XVI, *Urbi et Orbi*, Easter 2009)



Take some time today to reflect on all of the activities that you have performed during Lent, and how they have brought you into greater harmony with God's plan for Creation and all life. Continue your personal pledge to serve God and serve others by pursuing a more sustainable way of life.

Find Catholic teaching on the environment. Google *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* and read Chapter 10, "Safeguarding the Environment."