

“Small yet strong in the love of God, like Saint Francis of Assisi, all of us, as Christians, are called to watch over and protect the fragile world in which we live, and all its peoples.”

(Pope Francis, *The Joy of the Gospel*, n. 216)

Lenten CARING FOR CREATION Calendar

2014

The Care for Creation Committee suggests the following spiritual reflections and sacrificial actions 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.



Care For Creation Committee
Department for Charity and Justice
Archdiocese of Washington

Download copies:
www.adw.org/caringforcreation

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, especially when no one is looking, 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, man, you are dust and to dust you will return.”</i></p>			<p>March 5</p>	<p>Help change lives this Lent. 6</p> <p>Consider participating in CRS Rice Bowl.</p> <p>Visit www.crsricebowl.org.</p>	<p>Combine trips or carpool, walk, bike or use public transportation. 7</p> <p>Call ahead to make sure the trip is worthwhile.</p>	<p>“Cultivating and caring for creation . . . means nurturing the world with responsibility and transforming it into a garden, a habitable place for everyone.” (Pope Francis, Homily on 2013 World Environment Day) 8</p>
<p>9</p> <p>“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 <i>Caritas in Veritate</i>, n. 48)</p>	<p>10</p> <p>Run the clothes washer on “cold/cold” setting and only when you have full loads.</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Consider the cost of buying water in disposable plastic bottles to both your pocketbook and the environment.</p>	<p>12</p> <p>If you’re going to be away from your electronics for over an hour, turn them off.</p>	<p>13</p> <p>Give your dishwasher a rest, run only when full and skip the energy intensive drying cycle. Just open the door to dry.</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Think about the benefits of abstaining another day from meat for yourself and the environment. Try it this Lent.</p>	<p>15</p> <p>Turn off lights that you are not using. Shut off the lights as you leave a room.</p>
<p>16</p> <p>Reflect and pray on Pope John Paul II’s teaching on Creation in “Peace with God the Creator, Peace with All of Creation.” Google the title to find it.</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Plan ahead to bring reusable bags with you when shopping.</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Investigate renewable energy technologies to become less dependent on the power grid. This is good for our economy, environment and energy security.</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Be aware of how much food you discard. Eat leftovers and avoid wasting food. “Throwing away food is like stealing from the table of those who are poor and hungry.” (Pope Francis, 6/5/13)</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Don’t know where to recycle old electronic gadgets? Visit www.EPA.gov to find out more.</p>	<p>21</p> <p>Learn what Catholic Relief Services is doing to help people around the world live better by taking better care of the environment at www.crs.org and search for “Environment”.</p>	<p>22</p> <p>Use the power of the new media to stay informed on the latest carbon emission tips. Subscribe to GovEnergy, EDCmagazine and EnergyStarBids on Twitter.</p>

Adapted from Tearfund and other sources with help from Greater Washington Interfaith Power & Light. www.gwipl.org

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Reflect on 23 Psalm 104, a hymn to God the Creator. Share with someone what you have learned.	24 Many electronics draw power even when off. Place computers, radios, and TVs on a power strip , and turn it off between uses.	25 Install a water filter at home and use reusable bottles instead of buying plastic bottles of water.	26 Making travel plans? Consider getting there without flying if the trip is 500 miles or less.	27 Check the tire pressure of your car today to maximize mileage and save gas.	28 Save paper: print double-sided. Put your next present in a reusable gift bag.	29 Minimize disposables at home. Use a cloth napkin for several meals. Wipe up with a dishcloth instead of paper towels.
“Embrace the silence” 30 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)	31 Begin spring gardening by going organic. Grow your lawn and garden without toxic chemicals. Leave grass clippings on the lawn and cut grass higher.	April 1 Many people are working to protect Creation. Take the St. Francis Pledge. Learn what the Franciscans are doing at www.franciscanaction.org .	2 Are you recycling everything you can? Refresh your memory today on what items you are allowed for curbside recycling.	3 “Carry in. Carry out.” when visiting a park or the wilds. Get your family outside more often, visit parks and gardens to view God’s creation.	4 When heating water on the stove, use a pot with a lid to conserve energy.	5 Pick up some litter when you are walking and dispose of it properly. Always pick up pet waste and put in trash.
6 In prayer today thank God for the beauty of Creation. Reflect on Psalm 148 and share with someone what you learned.	7 “The works of charity and justice as well as the promotion of solidarity, justice, peace . . . and stewardship of creation build up the Kingdom of God.” (<i>Disciples Called to Witness</i> , USCCB)	8 Purchase more thoughtfully, question your need before buying. Use alternative gift giving that benefits creation and the poor. Google CRS Gift Catalog.	9 Celebrate Spring! Plant a native tree, shrub, flower or grasses or support tree-planting in other places.	10 Support people on the “front lines” of climate change. Catholic Climate Covenant links US churches with carbon reducing projects in developing countries. Visit www.catholicclimatecovenant.org .	11 Dispose of unneeded medications in the trash or at the pharmacy. Do not flush them, which overwhelms the filtering system and contaminates drinking water.	12 Join Saint Francis of Assisi in prayer: “We praise you, Lord, for Sister Earth, who sustains us with her fruits, colored flowers, and herbs.” (“Canticle of the Sun”)
13 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 .	14 When driving obey the speed limit. Every 10 mph in speed reduces fuel economy by 4 mpg.	15 Place an insulating cover over your electric water heater. If you have an oil or gas water heater, you may need a plumber to install it.	16 Minimize disposables at work. Use a mug for coffee and water. Carry lunch in reusable food containers.	17 Holy Thursday: Reflect on Pope Benedict XVI’s message for the World Day of Peace, “If You Want to Cultivate Peace, Protect Creation.” Google the title.	18 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.”	19 Holy Saturday: Remember your Baptism and the wonder of water. Thank God for this gift and ask him to help you be a good steward of his gifts, which reveal his love.

20 Easter Sunday “This is the invitation which I address to everyone: Let us accept the grace of Christ’s Resurrection! . . . Peace to the whole world, torn apart by violence linked to drug trafficking and by the iniquitous exploitation of natural resources! Peace to this our Earth! May the risen Jesus bring comfort to the victims of natural disasters and make us responsible guardians of creation.” (Pope Francis, *Urbi et Orbi*, Easter 2013)



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. Share what you learned with others.

Dig deeper. Read Ten Commandments for the Environment. Pope Benedict XVI Speaks out for Creation and Justice. Google the title.