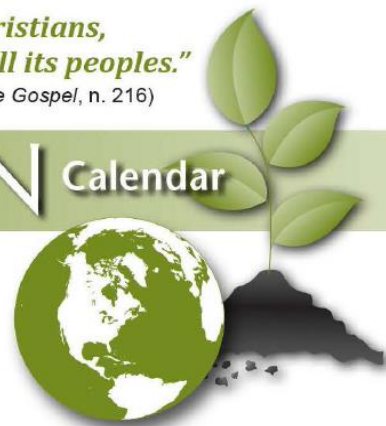


"Small yet strong in the love of God, like Saint Francis of Assisi, all of us, as Christians, are called to watch over and protect the fragile world in which we live, and all its peoples."

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

Lenten CARING FOR CREATION Calendar

2019



Here are spiritual reflections and sacrificial actions that 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.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>"Living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience."</p> <p>Pope Francis, Letter for the Establishment of the World Day of Prayer for the Care for Creation, 2015.</p>			<p>March 6 Ash Wednesday <i>"You are dust and to dust you will return."</i></p> <p>Reflect with gratitude on your connection with Creation – we are all made of the stuff of the Earth!</p>	<p>7</p> <p>Share your journey this Lent with members of the human family throughout the Earth through CRS Rice Bowl.</p> <p>Find out more at: www.csricebowl.org/</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Looking for meatless meals to prepare this Lent? Find delicious recipes from around the world at: www.csricebowl.org/recipe</p>	<p>9</p> <p>All recent Popes have spoken on our eco-responsibilities. Reflect and pray on St. John Paul II's "Peace with God the Creator, Peace with All of Creation." bit.ly/JP2-on-ecology</p>
<p>10</p> <p>In today's first reading, the Israelites show their deep gratitude to God by offering the "first fruits of the products of the soil." Thank God today in prayer for the gifts nature gives you.</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Save energy this week: find 5 incandescent light bulbs in your house and replace them with efficient LED bulbs. They pay back in energy savings in 6 months!</p>	<p>12</p> <p>"From panoramic vistas to the tiniest living form, nature is a constant source of wonder and awe. It is also a continuing revelation of the divine." Pope Francis</p>	<p>Mark 1:10 13 <i>"As he was coming up out of the water..."</i></p> <p>Use water mindfully today. Calculate your "water footprint" and look for water savings: watercalculator.org/wfc2</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Shift to cleaner energy at home by buying 100% renewable power on your electricity bill. Find out more at: bit.ly/mcfacs-clean-electricity</p>	<p>Isaiah 58:1-9 15 <i>"This, rather, is the fast that I desire..."</i></p> <p>Reflect on how eating more plant-based meals may be a way to fast as the Lord desires.</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Combine trips today or walk, bike, or use public transportation. Check store sites on the web or call ahead to make sure the trip is worth it.</p>
<p>17</p> <p>Celebrate St. Patrick's Day by planting something green! Plant a native tree, shrub, flower, or grasses, or support tree-planting in other places.</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Save energy this week: run the clothes washer on "cold/cold" setting and only when you have full loads.</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Minimize disposables at home. Use a cloth napkin for several meals. Wipe up with a dish cloth instead of paper towels.</p>	<p>Spring Begins 20</p> <p>Decide to go organic in your garden this spring. Grow your lawn & garden without toxic chemicals. Leave grass clippings on the lawn and cut the grass higher.</p>	<p>21</p> <p>Minimize disposables at work. Use a mug for coffee and water. Carry lunch in reusable food containers.</p>	<p>22</p> <p>Check out Oxfam's "Eat for Good" website to explore how to shop for food and eat sustainably: bit.ly/eat4good</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Take a walk in nature and observe the interdependence of all God's Creation. Spend time thanking God for what you see, smell, and feel around you, and for what God has made.</p>

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>March 24</p> <p>Reflect and pray on Pope Benedict XVI's message for the World Day of Peace, "If You Want to Cultivate Peace, Protect Creation." bit.ly/pope-benedict-protect-creation</p>	<p>25</p> <p>Save energy this week: place an insulating cover on your electric water heater. If you have an oil- or gas-fired water heater, consult with a plumber before installing it.</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Learn what the U.S. Catholic Bishops are saying to national leaders about the environment: bit.ly/US-Bishops-Environment</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Are you recycling everything that you can? Refresh your memory today on what items you are allowed to put in curbside recycling.</p>	<p>28</p> <p>Need help recycling something that can't be put in curbside recycling? Go to search.earth911.com</p>	<p>29</p> <p>Look to purchase locally-grown food. Go to a farmer's market or consider joining a community-supported agriculture (CSA) group for fresh produce: LocalHarvest.org</p>	<p>30</p> <p>At 8:30 pm, join hundreds of millions around the world who will be switching off all lights for one hour to commit to global climate action: EarthHour.org</p>
<p>Psalm 23:2-3a 31</p> <p>"Beside restful waters he leads me; he refreshes my soul." Have an "embrace the silence" Sunday: turn off everything unnecessary and unplug from the internet. Get outside!</p>	<p>April 1</p> <p>Save energy this week: check the tire pressure on your vehicles and adjust it to the recommended levels to increase mileage and save gas.</p>	<p>2</p> <p>When driving, obey the speed limit. Every 10 mph of excess speed reduces fuel economy by 4 mpg. Look ahead in traffic to avoid sudden stops and starts.</p>	<p>Luke 9:23-25 3</p> <p>"What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit their very self?" Reflect and pray for those who seek to gain profit at the expense of Creation.</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Travel plans? Consider getting there without flying. Can't avoid flying? Fund a project that prevents 1 ton of pollution for each ton caused by your trip: bit.ly/traveloffsets</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Could you carpool to work with a co-worker, or to evening meetings or events with friends? Look at your calendar for next week and think of at least one way you could share a ride.</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Buy a water-filter pitcher or install a water filter at home and use reusable containers instead of buying plastic bottles of water.</p>
<p>7</p> <p>In prayer today, thank God for the beauty of Creation. Reflect on Psalm 148 and share with someone what you learned.</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Save energy this week: replace your old power strips and connect related appliances with smart power strips. Learn more at: bit.ly/smartstrips</p>	<p>9</p> <p>Save paper! Print double-sided. Put your next present in a reusable gift bag.</p>	<p>Jer. 31:33 10</p> <p>"I will write my law upon their hearts." God, who calls us to be fruitful servants within Creation, fill our hearts with compassion for the suffering of your Creation.</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Planning on making Easter baskets? Purchase chocolate that is Fair Trade, free from child labor, and supports communities: bit.ly/fair-trade-chocolate</p>	<p>12</p> <p>As you abstain from meat today, consider plant-based dishes for Easter Sunday: bit.ly/sfa-recipes</p>	<p>13</p> <p>Why not compost your vegetable food scraps, grass clippings, and plant cuttings? Find out how you can cut down this significant fraction of solid waste: bit.ly/compost-it</p>
<p>14</p> <p>Palm Sunday</p> <p>Reflect and pray on "The Gaze of Jesus" (nos. 96-100) in Pope Francis' encyclical <i>Laudato Si'</i>. bit.ly/gaze-of-jesus</p>	<p>15</p> <p>Save energy this week: turn down your home thermostat by at least one degree. Aim for 68° during the day and 60° at night. If you have a programmable thermostat, program it. If not, buy one.</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Learn about the justice issues in Maryland relating to the environment and Care for Creation: bit.ly/IPC-EJ</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Want to continue to walk the path of Care for Creation after Easter? Join the 10,000 people who have taken the St. Francis Pledge and committed to do more: bit.ly/stf-pledge</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Holy Thursday</p> <p>After the Last Supper, Jesus prayed in the garden of Gethsemane. Following Jesus' example, take time today to pray outdoors, remembering all who suffer.</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Good Friday</p> <p>Meditate on how God used the created world in the plan of redemption: "Behold the wood of the cross, on which hung the Savior of the world. Come let us worship."</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Holy Saturday</p> <p>Remember your Baptism and the wonder of water. Thank God for this gift and ask for help to be a good steward of it.</p>

**April
21**

Easter Sunday "If the simple fact of being human moves people to care for the environment of which they are a part, Christians in their turn "realize that their responsibility within creation, and their duty towards nature and the Creator, are an essential part of their faith". Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*



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.