

# Care for Creation

Brought to you by the Social Justice & Ministry Committee of St. John the Baptist Parish

Do you have a desire to help make the world a better place? To help it thrive for generations to come...but just not sure how to start? The Social Justice & Ministry Committee would like to help our parish(es) become better stewards of God's creation. The committee invites you to join us in a **Care for Creation** challenge of sorts.

Catholic social teaching calls us all to work for the common good. The world that God created has been entrusted to all of us. Our stewardship of the earth is a form of participation in God's act of creating and sustaining the world. In our use of creation we must be guided by a concern for generations to come. We show our respect for the creator by our care for creation. (Source: Minnesota Catholic Conference adapted from "Catholic Teaching and Principles" by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.)

Pope Francis states:

*"Creation is not a property, which we can rule over at will; or, even less, is the property of only a few: creation is a gift, it is a wonderful gift that God has given us, so that we care for it and we use it for the benefit of all, always with great respect and gratitude."*

St. John the Baptist  
Catholic Church



Creation Care

**With this principle in mind, the Social Justice and Ministry Committee of Saint John the Baptist Parish invites parishioners to join us in an effort to raise awareness; promote ideas of sustainability and the interdependence of all creation; to engage our parish in prayer and reflection; and to inspire action that will benefit our environment.**

To do this, the SJM Committee has asked that a Prayer for Creation be included each week in the formal petition prayers at Mass; will present **Creation Care** topics for the Lenten soup and speaker series; and will use the weekly bulletin to promote practical steps to reduce human impact on creation and promote and inspire a more sustainable lifestyle.

## Here's how you can get involved in a **Care for Creation Challenge**:

- On the reverse of this sheet you will find some ideas of the "Five Rs" (yes, five, not the usual three!).
- Choose one or two (or more) ideas that you can implement as an individual or family.
- For each sustainable practice you adopt, you are invited to fill out a form sharing how you've implemented it and what benefit you've seen from doing so. With each form you will be entered into a Creation Care drawing for fun (and sustainable) prizes!
- After Easter, there will be a concluding event in celebration of Earth Day/Arbor Day at which time names will be drawn from the pool for prizes that will promote care for creation.



# Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle & Rot

Many of the following ideas are taken from the book “Zero Waste Home” by Bea Johnson. The author’s family tried to live without producing any waste. She realized that the goal was impossible, but when attempting to live this way she came up with two additional R’s: **Refuse** (to let products into the house, i.e. single use plastic, junk mail), and **Rot/Compost**. We invite you to try some new R’s. Watch the bulletin for a new idea each week. Any small changes that we make will positively affect our planet!

## Refuse

- Ask for paper bags instead of single-use plastic bags (or bring your own reusable cloth bags).
- Avoid using a straw with your fountain drink.
- Buy products in bulk with less packaging; avoid goods that are over-packaged.
- Use a reusable water bottle instead of drinking bottled water.



## Reduce

- Use smart buying habits: look for items that are durable, reusable, refillable, rechargeable, repairable and versatile.
- Look for products made with recycled materials.
- Subscribe to online versions of papers and magazines.
- Put a brick in toilet tanks to reduce the water used to flush.
- Wash clothes in cold water. Hot or warm water does not help get clothes cleaner.
- Use a rake instead of a leaf blower.
- Replace light bulbs with LED bulbs.
- Check out library books or download e-books from the library or a bookseller.
- Use reusable filters in your coffee maker.



Reduce



Reuse



Recycle

## Reuse

- Use cloth napkins instead of paper.
- Use reusable plates and cutlery at work and home instead of disposable.
- Use cloth bags for all shopping. If you do bring home plastic or paper bags, bring them back to the store or reuse at home.
- Donate toys, furniture, household goods, art supplies, etc. Learn which organizations take what things.
- Shop at thrift stores for good deals and to feel good about reusing items.

## Recycle

Recycle everything that you cannot refuse or reuse. Know your recycler’s requirements: whether to sort, how clean items need to be, what to include (and not!), etc.

## Rot/Composting

Collect food scraps (excluding meat). Drop at a collection site or start a composting bin in your yard. Put the composted materials in your garden or find a farmer or a community garden that can use the materials.