


LENT PROGRAM FOR CARE OF CREATION

This calendar of facts and actions is a family program to engage everyone in thoughtful discussion about our relationship with God's creation and our obligations to each other. We hope this leads to changes in our lifestyles and creates an awareness of our impact on others, particularly the poor.

Also available on St Luke's Facebook page 

Note: Following tradition, Sundays are excluded from this Lenten penance - <http://www.uscatholic.org/node/425>

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			Fast Ash Wednesday Abs	2-Mar	3-Mar Abs	4-Mar
Did you know:			Pope Francis has written an encyclical (papal letter) establishing Catholic teaching about Care for our Common Home.	About 90% of the cost of a bottle of water is in the plastic packaging and labels.	Producing a pound of beef generates 13 times the amount of carbon as producing a pound of vegetables.	The average American produces 4.3lbs/day of waste, up from 2.7 in 1960. Solid waste is a major contributor to methane emissions.
To do:			Watch the following video and discuss as a family what you have learned. https://youtu.be/Fi4WSTken3w	Estimate the number of throw-away bottles your family used in the last month. Set a goal for reducing this. Save money and the planet use a refillable bottle.	Start a meatless Friday habit by having at least one veggie dinner each week by abstaining from meat on Fridays in Lent.	Discuss as a family what you can do to reduce your family's trash such as lowering consumption, recycling, share with charities, etc.
	6-Mar	7-Mar	8-Mar	9-Mar	10-Mar Abs	11-Mar
Did you know:	Vampire Electronics account for 5-10% of home energy use worth \$3B. Ex: TV/amps, computers, clocks on appliances.	Recycling paper saves 64% energy and 50% of the water compared to producing paper from trees.	Every degree a thermostat is lowered can result in a 1 to 3 percent savings on your heating bill.	2,700 liters of water are required to produce a single T shirt!	The environment is shared by all. The poor have full right to this common good but are most impacted when it is destroyed.	Many volunteer organizations are working to help the environment locally - Scouts, Ecology Clubs, Church Youth Groups, etc.
To do:	Unplug after use. Limit idle power using sleep mode. Turn off multiple devices with power strips. Switch to low standby products.	Work with your family to recycle 100% of paper that comes into your house. Develop a plan!	Lower the thermostat by 1 degree and put on another layer of clothing. Use programmable thermostats. Turn off heat in unused rooms.	Consider the environment before buying T shirts. Try Ebay or a consignment shop if you are in search of a specific one. Donate lightly used shirts to charity.	Read about loss of food security due to the environmental degradation - https://www.wfp.org/climate-change/climate-impacts	Join and support these groups in their efforts with your time, and if possible money.
	13-Mar	14-Mar	15-Mar	16-Mar	17-Mar Abs	18-Mar
Did you know:	The average American shower takes 8.2 minutes and uses over 17 gallons of water. A bath uses even more, about 40 gallons.	We believe that God created the world and all living things. Creation reflects God's glory.	The average person uses 30-50 batteries per year. Most of these batteries end up in landfills.	Consumerism drives a multi-step process: Produce>Buy>Use>Discard. The environment is impacted at every step.	"The...common good also extends to future generations...The environment...is on loan to each generation, which must then hand it on to the next."(Laudato Si 159)	Unused food can be composted which puts it good use if your family does any type of gardening.
To do:	Time how long you are in the shower. Try to keep yourself to less than 4 minutes average.	Discuss the modern meaning of this phrase: "God ... put [man] into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it." (Genesis 2:15) What is expected of us to "keep it"?	Use rechargeable batteries and eliminate the waste.	Reduces this impact by 1/2 when you keep your phone for 4 years instead of 2 . The most important action is to consume less. Check http://storyofstuff.org/	Discuss with the oldest members of your family their perspectives on protecting the environment Express your hopes for the future.	Use a compost bin to improve your garden soil. Learn how: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/04/22/how-to-compost_n_7120352.html
	20-Mar	21-Mar	22-Mar	23-Mar	24-Mar Abs	25-Mar
Did you know:	Phones take only 2 hours to charge, but many people leave them plugged in overnight which continuously wastes about 2.4W after the phone is charged.	Estimates indicate that over 665,000 people from Pacific islands could be displaced by 2050 because of rising sea levels due to climate change.	Paper makes up 1/3 of the solid waste in the U.S.	"Before the Lord, for He is coming, For He is coming to judge the earth." (Psalm 96:13)	Food purchased but not eaten, generally ends up in landfills. Many schools have a problem with food waste. About 1/3 food is wasted.	1,500,000 million barrels of oil are used each year in America just to produce plastic water bottles! More fuel is burned to ship them.
To do:	Unplug your phone charger after the phone is charged. Don't leave the phone charging overnight.	Watch and discuss this video. https://youtu.be/9P7jXveokDY	Use a phone or laptop the next time you need to make a "To Do" list. Paperless is even better than recycling paper.	Discuss as a family what you have learned about our care for God's creation. We are half way through Lent, have you made important changes?	Find a solution for your school. Ideas available here - https://www.usda.gov/oce/foodwaste/resources/K12_schools.html Donate unopened food.	Drink tap water from a refillable water bottle. It's often safer because it has to meet stricter regulations than the bottling industry.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	27-Mar	28-Mar	29-Mar	30-Mar	31-Mar Abs	1-Apr
Did you know:	On average, Americans receive 16 pieces of junk mail a week, compared to 1.5 personal letters. 44% goes to landfills unopened.	"The heavens are telling of the glory of God; And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands." (Psalm 19:1)	Cloths dryers use about 3000W. They consume 5 times more energy than washers.	Aluminum cans are 100% recyclable. Aluminum can be recycled perpetually which saves 95% of the energy needed to produce from ore.	A washing machine uses up to 40-45 gallons of water per load; about 12,000 gallons per year for a family.	Americans produce 235,000,000 tons of garbage each year! Decomposing trash contributes to global warming.
To do:	Use CatalogChoice.org to manually ask specific sender to stop mailings or use a service such as DMAconsumer.org to stop almost all unsolicited direct mail.	Plants improve the air we breathe by taking in carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen. Plant something- inside or out!	Skip using the dryer whenever possible. Use clotheslines in the summer. Use indoor racks in the winter which also helps raise the humidity in your home.	Recycle your aluminum can every time you finish the drink. Lightweight cans from recycled aluminum have lower carbon impact than plastic or glass.	Ensure that you only run full loads of wash. New high efficiency washers can reduce this by 1/2 or more.	Try this experiment: collect all your trash in one bag for a day, then see how much of it could actually be recycled or composted!
	3-Apr	4-Apr	5-Apr	6-Apr	7-Apr Abs	8-Apr
Did you know:	The carbon emissions from a F150 pickup are more than 3 times the emissions from a Prius hybrid.	"Let the field exult, and all that is in it. Then all the trees of the forest will sing for joy." (Psalm 96:12) Recycling on ton of paper saves 17 trees.	Trees are the lungs of planet Earth. One tree can filter 60 pound of pollutants from our air each year.	We all need to reduce water use during recurring droughts. Brushing your teeth with water running wastes up to 5 gallons.	Pope Francis says "The issue of environmental degradation challenges us to examine our lifestyle."	Cars and trucks account for 25% of carbon dioxide emissions, which scientists say cause climate change.
To do:	Drive in the most efficient car available. Carpooling lowers emissions particularly for longer trips. Use mass transit when available.	Get creative about wrapping gifts: newspaper comics, old maps, reused wrapping paper, etc. Then recycle this wrapping!	Plant a tree with your family. Plant a tree every year and make a forest!	Turn water off while brushing and only keep the water on while rinsing a toothbrush.	Examine your lifestyle and discuss as a family. Identify one significant change you can make for the common good.	Walk or ride your bike when running errands close by- you'll enjoy the time outside!
	10-Apr	11-Apr	12-Apr	Holy Thursday	Fast Good Friday Abs	15-Apr
Did you know:	"God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness." (Genesis 1:4)	Paper bags from renewable trees; plastic bags from petroleum. But plastic take less energy, pollution and water to produce. Paper or plastic?	Computers use between 50-200W when fully powered. Putting them in sleep mode reduces this by 2/3.	Scientists say we are on the verge of the sixth mass extinction, but the first caused by humans.	Locally grown produce is fresher and requires less packaging and energy for shipping and storage.	The United States makes up 5% of the world's population, but we use 30% of the world's resources.
To do:	Enjoy lights when you need them but switch off the light when you leave a room empty to save energy. Turn down the heat when on vacation.	Use reusable canvas bags always. These bags reduce these impacts by 93-97% compared to plastic or paper.	Put your computer in sleep mode while taking a break. With laptops, this will extend the time before recharging.	Revitalize your connection to nature. Support organizations that work to preserve natural habitats in land and seas.	Buy local fruits and vegetables in season at the local Farmers' Market from May through October. Or better yet, grow your own vegetables.	Make a To-Do list for putting your family on an energy diet. Pick 5 significant changes. Make the plan sustainable.
	<p style="text-align: center;">4/16/2017</p> 		<p>Easter is a celebration of the Hope of the Resurrection after the despair of the crucifixion. The challenges of environmental damage and climate change can seem insurmountable. However there is reason for great hope. Mankind has shown an ability to respond collectively for the common good when needed. In the last 40 years, clean air laws have dramatically reduced airborne pollution including acid rain. Clean water laws have allowed 1000's of rivers and streams became fit for swimming and fishing. Hazardous substances like fluorocarbons, asbestos and lead have been removed from our products.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Our Hope and Prayer is that we will respond to the current threats to our Common Home</p>		<p>Thank you for using the Lent season to reflect on your impact on God's creation and to evaluate how you can make changes to your lifestyle. We all need to consider the impact we are having on others who share our Common Home.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Please use these suggested actions to make lifelong changes.</p>	

Day of Fasting
Fast

Day of Abstinence
Abs

Reflection and background on Fasting and Abstinence - <http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/liturgical-year/lent/catholic-information-on-lenten-fast-and-abstinence.cfm>

Developed for St Luke the Evangelist Parish, Westborough, MA by the Environmental Stewardship Ministry. Feedback welcome., email to environmentalstewardship@stlukes-parish.org