

This Lent consider fasting for creation care, sacrificing some comfort, giving up a wasteful practice, or modifying your actions to reduce harm to the environment.



## DURING LENT THIS WEEK, REDUCE FOOD WASTE

See what fellow Parishioners are doing to keep food out of the trash stream



Tom B at his backyard compost pile

Nationally, about 40% of food that is grown ends up in the trash, and here in Fairfax County that means it gets burned in the incinerator. That's a lot of nutrients and associated energy lost along the way. Be conscientious about buying only what you'll use and using the food that you buy. Collect food scraps, egg shells and coffee grinds and compost them so the nutrients will be returned to the soil.

Did you know you can bring any food waste to the (free!) residential compost collection bins at the I-66 Fairfax Transfer Station? This is a great service for anyone who doesn't have room to compost. See [here](#) for details.



Stephanie, Ed and Karen collect and drop off their food scraps in Fairfax.

What new habit have **you** established to live more sustainably? We are collecting stories and will share them with the parish. Please email us at [saintjn.cch@gmail.com](mailto:saintjn.cch@gmail.com)

*Join fellow parishioners in doing one thing this week to renew our faith and renew the earth. Tap into the gift of hope and be a part of the solution to bring about a more just, equitable and healthy world.*



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### **THIS LENT PRACTICE LAWN CARE FOR EARTH RENEWAL**

**See what fellow Parishioners are doing to reduce the size of the lawn in their yards.**



Carol with grandchildren in her garden that was once grassy lawn.

While lawns offer a pastoral space for playing outdoors, they also require a lot of maintenance. Many homeowners look for alternative solutions to the regimen of “plant, feed, water and mow” or paying for these services. Reducing the size of your lawn saves time and energy and water. And it’s a great way to introduce beautiful native flowers and shrubs, making a more interesting landscape that adds value to your property. The more natural areas then offer shelter and feeding opportunities for bees, birds, and butterflies! This spring, consider reducing a portion of grassed area and increasing the variety of plants in your lawn to support the natural ecosystem.

The [Plant NOVA Natives website](#) provides several ideas for reducing lawn size. And the [Saint Kateri Conservation Center](#) is a great resource for managing your lawn in ways that praise God and foster a deeper connection between God, people, and nature.

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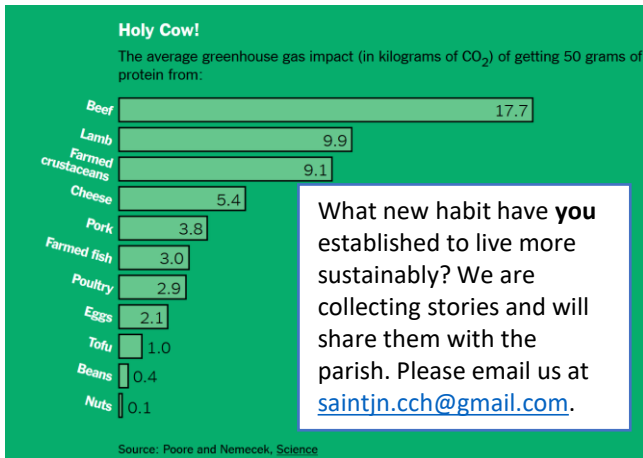


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### THIS LENT, FAST FROM: MEAT

**See what fellow parishioners are doing to reduce meat in their diets**

Reducing or eliminating consumption of meat and other animal products is one of the most effective things you can do to cut your carbon footprint. You can start where you are and take modest steps at first. We're already abstaining from meat on Fridays in Lent; why not add meatless Mondays as an easy next step? On the remaining days, substitute chicken or sustainable fish for beef, pork, and lamb. Ready to make a bigger impact? Go vegetarian or, better yet, vegan.



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Moving to a plant-based diet goes a long way toward helping the environment and can also improve your health. For tips and information, go to <https://www.forksoverknives.com>.



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**THIS LENT CONSIDER SCHEDULING A HOME ENERGY AUDIT**  
**See what fellow Parishioners are doing to reduce air leakage in their homes.**

An effective way to save energy and money is by fixing the leaks in your home where the air that you've paid to be cooled or warmed is escaping. A home energy audit helps pinpoint just where your house is losing energy. Whether you own or rent a home or apartment, an audit will also suggest ways to reduce the loss and save money on your heating and cooling bill. Many fixes are low-cost, low-tech solutions that will immediately reduce your monthly energy bill.

[See here for facts about Energy Audits.](#) Consider scheduling an energy audit this Lent. It is an interesting way to learn how your home functions through the eyes of an expert and how to make it function more efficiently. Save energy and money!

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Tom fixing leaks around his window.

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### THIS LENT, FAST FROM: BUYING NEW STUFF

**See what fellow parishioners are doing to reduce purchasing new products**

*Recycling* helps the environment by keeping used products out of landfills. But even better is avoiding unnecessary purchases in the first place, saving the energy and materials required to make the products. Practice all 6 Rs, starting with *rethink* and *refuse*. Do I really need this thing? Can I do without it or get it without wasteful packaging? Can I do with less of it (*reduce*)? *Reusing* can take different forms: substituting reusable shopping bags, mugs, and napkins for single-use items; shopping at thrift stores for used clothing and household items; and donating things you no longer need to organizations that can repurpose them. *Repair* broken or torn items before discarding them for something new. Visit <https://bit.ly/6-Rs>.



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Ann M visits a local thrift shop.

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### **THIS LENT FIND WAYS TO REDUCE YOUR ENERGY USE**

**See what fellow Parishioners are doing to reduce the energy they use:**

The best way to conserve energy is **by not using it in the first place**. Consider turning down the thermostat a degree or two and putting on an additional sweater. Or turning the water heater down to 120. Or washing clothes in cold water and skipping the electric dryer.

Another way to save energy and money is by taking advantage of **clean energy tax credits** under the Inflation Reduction Act. Many energy-efficiency improvements including heating and cooling equipment, windows, doors, heat pumps, insulation and air sealing materials, and home energy audits are covered.

And if you are thinking big, the Residential Clean Energy Installation Credit provides a 30% tax credit towards the purchase of solar panels, wind, and geothermal power generation, solar water heaters, fuel cells, and battery storage.

See IRS Form 5695 ( <https://www.irs.gov/instructions/i5695>) for details. Here's a quick way to calculate your savings and learn more: <https://www.rewiringamerica.org/app/ira-calculator>.



Janet line drying clothes

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