



Suggested Practical Actions for Parishioners for the Season of Creation 2020 – Adapted for the Diocese of Huron, Ontario, Canada

Inside the home:

- When cleaning use eco- friendly options:
 - An easy-to-make-at-home all purpose cleaner used at St. James' Stratford and by parishioners is done with 2 ounces dish detergent, 4 ounces lemon juice, 8 ounces vinegar (preferably 10% acetic acid), and 10 ounces water
 - Bulk cleaning products are now available at some eco-friendly stores. Bring a reusable jar and stock up
 - A variety of eco-friendly, zero waste products are available online including laundry detergent like Tru Earth
https://www.tru.earth/?gclid=CjwKCAjw34n5BRA9EiwA2u9k3zpaVyoNQdB_LvJES0goRkBM78UnW7Nd8H8Fsv_ElvpXUCWW7BK71FRoCc8UQAvD_BwE
 - Dryer balls are an alternative to disposable dryer sheets
- When it is no longer practical to repair, look for Energy Star appliances. See <https://www.nrcan.gc.ca/energy-efficiency/energy-star-canada/18953>
- Reduce water usage:
 - Install low flow shower heads and keep showers short;
 - Turn off water while brushing teeth or washing hands;
 - Install low flush or dual flush toilets
 - Only run (ideally Energy Star) dishwashers and washing machines with full loads
- Personal products:
 - Explore alternatives to personal products including bamboo toothbrushes, silk floss, toothpaste powder or tablets, natural deodorant, shampoo bars or cubes and more
 - Check out your local eco-store for make-up and grooming options
 - Some local stores carry bulk products (soap, shampoos, lotions) allowing you to refill reusable jars
- Check out your local Habitat Restore for renovation materials.
- Make donations of items that you are no longer using. Send appliances to Habitat Restore, furniture to a refugee resettlement program, and clothing to your local clothing cupboard. Check out which local programs will take which items.

Food:

- Avoid waste! Don't get too hung up on best before dates, some are arbitrary. Use your senses to determine whether something has gone bad. Better yet, make sure you use up what you have long before it goes bad.
- Compost – food waste cannot break down efficiently in landfill causing methane gas releases.

- Buy a composter for your yard and use it
- Bury compost in the garden – you never know what might pop up next year!
- Make use of municipal composting programs and advocate for these where they do not exist
- If all else fails contract someone to collect compost like Greener Bins in the Windsor-Essex region <https://www.greenerbinscompost.com/>
- Grow your own – it is easy to grow some vegetables in planters or get ambitious and build a garden. Food can be grow indoors and outdoors!
- Buy local – South Western Ontario has a rich agricultural heritage. Stop by farmers stands and farmers markets and see what is in season
- Take a page from Grandma’s book – make jam, sauces, pickles and more that capture the freshness of the season and preserve it for enjoyment in the months to come

Energy:

- Learn how to read your energy bills and make your home more energy efficient.
- Explore the use of renewable energy in your home, business and school, parish buildings.
- There have been a number of government programs at the provincial and federal level to offer rebates and other incentives to move towards efficiency. Keep your eyes on these and use them when available.
- Good insulation, draft proofing and smart thermostats help reduce energy usage which helps wallets and the environment.
- Switch to LED lighting

Outside your doors:

- Spend some time outside each day, reconnect with nature. Remind yourself of how wonderful Creation is.
- Avoid or reduce the use of chemicals in your home and garden.
 - Transform your lawn, traditional turf grass lawns are monocultures that have very little environmental benefits and are resource hungry. Consider moving towards native plants which God designed for the region so they require less maintenance, are valuable to native wildlife and can have medicinal value for people. Check out <https://inthezonegardens.ca/>
- Plant pollinator friendly plants in your window box or garden at home and in your parish grounds. For more information check out:
 - <https://www.stratford.ca/en/live-here/fs-nativeplants.aspx>
 - <https://www.stratford.ca/en/live-here/fs-gardeningforwildlife.aspx>
 - <https://www.stratford.ca/en/live-here/fs-wildflowers.aspx>
 - <https://www.anglicanjournal.com/for-the-love-of-bees/>
 - <https://diohuron.org/churches-dig-into-pollination-gardens/>
- Use rain barrels to collect and water your gardens as much as possible
- Shop wisely. Buy Fairtrade and locally made products when possible.

PLASTIC

- Refuse single use plastics such as straws, cutlery and bags. Bring your own reusable ones as much as possible.
- Switch to a reusable water bottle /travel cup and bring this with you!

- Bring your own containers for shopping. Find out where this is possible and take advantage of these opportunities
- Check for and avoid microbeads in products
- Refuse packaging – Avoid - Reduce - Re-use – Recycle - Upcycle
- Use the “Recycle Coach” app on your phone when it is available for local recycling information <https://recyclecoach.com/residents/find-my-municipality/>
- Show a film or documentary on the topic in your parish/community
- Participate in a beach, stream, river, park, street, area, road clean-up.

Want to learn more? Download the Random Acts of Green app, log your actions and earn points towards benefits.

