

## Tips on Caring for Our Common Home

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### 1

*Laudato Si'*

#### **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

When eating at a buffet restaurant, or even at coffee and doughnuts after Mass on Sunday, you can help conserve natural resources and reduce waste by taking just one plate, one napkin and only the utensils you need. Encourage others to do the same.

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### 2

*Laudato Si'*

#### **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Encourage prayer before and after meals to express gratitude to God for His generosity in meeting our daily needs, but also as a reminder of our duty to be good stewards of His creation so that it may continue to serve the needs of all His creatures.

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### 3

*Laudato Si'*

#### **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Talk with fellow parishioners about the possibility of sharing rides to Mass and other parish events as a way of reducing your carbon footprint. You can take this a step further by organizing occasional walk-to-church weekends.

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### 4

*Laudato Si'*

#### **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

“... In some places, where the facades of buildings are derelict, people show great care for the interior of their homes, or find contentment in the kindness and friendliness of others. A wholesome social life can light up a seemingly undesirable environment.” — Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*, paragraph 148

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# 5

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

“How can we genuinely teach the importance of concern for other vulnerable beings, however troublesome or inconvenient they may be, if we fail to protect a human embryo, even when its presence is uncomfortable and creates difficulties?” (*Laudato Si'*, paragraph 120)

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# 6

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Practice observing, and appreciating, the beauty in all aspects of creation that surround you. “If someone has not learned to stop and admire something beautiful, we should not be surprised if he or she treats everything as an object to be used and abused without scruple.” (*Laudato Si'*, 215)

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# 7

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Pope Francis writes that the disappearance of an entire culture “can be just as serious, or even more serious, than the disappearance of a species of plant or animal.” We should strive to listen to indigenous peoples, protect their lands and involve them in processes and decisions that affect them.

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# 8

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

It is important to learn lessons that first present themselves in family life: how to show love and respect for life; the proper use of things; order and cleanliness; respect for the local ecosystem and care for all creatures; how to learn and mature; how to ask without demanding; saying “thank you” in genuine gratitude; controlling aggressiveness and greed. “These simple gestures of heartfelt courtesy help to create a culture of shared life and respect for our surroundings.” (*Laudato Si'*, 213)

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# 9

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Make it a priority to increase your use of public transportation. Buses and light rail are operating anyway, so making use of them instead of your car — even just two or three times a month — is a step in reducing emissions and congestion. You might find it easy enough to do even more often.

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# 10

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Even if we don't see immediate impact from our stewardship efforts, we must continue them and keep in mind that they will ultimately benefit society “for they call forth a goodness which, albeit unseen, inevitably tends to spread.” (*Laudato Si'*, 212)

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# 11

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Familiarize yourself with life-affirming legislation and with church teaching on the sanctity of life, including St. Pope John Paul's “*Evangelium Vitae*,” which is available online.

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# 12

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Get involved with, or organize, a group to clean up public spaces in your neighborhood and keep them clean and nice looking. In addition to enhancing your surroundings, you will be setting a positive example of how to be good stewards of God's creation.

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# 13

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Try to eliminate as much disposable plastic from your life as possible; it breaks down into tiny particles that enter streams, lakes and oceans, harming harm fish and other wildlife. Instead, keep a reusable water bottle; wash and reuse plastic sandwich and snack bags, or try replacing them with waxed paper or waxed-paper bags, which can be composted.

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# 14

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Buy used items whenever feasible, and if possible repair rather than replace broken items. In most cases this will save money, but it also will preserve resources and reduce overall consumption.

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# 15

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

“There is a nobility in the duty to care for creation through little daily actions, and it is wonderful how education can bring about real changes in lifestyle. Education in environmental responsibility can encourage ways of acting which directly and significantly affect the world around us...” (*Laudato Si'*, 211)

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# 16

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

If possible, use email and text-messaging to reduce paper consumption. If you must print a document, use double-sided printing if you can. These steps will help conserve natural resources and save money as well.

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# 17

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

To help keep waterways clean and safe from pollutants, take steps such as using biodegradable detergents at home and in business and eliminating the use of disposable plastic whenever possible. Also, be aware that synthetic pesticides and herbicides can harm birds and insects that benefit agriculture.

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# 18

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Save water by taking shorter showers and not letting the water run continuously while brushing teeth or shaving. In this way we can help bring a future in which impoverished populations around the world will have affordable access to a clean source of this God-given necessity of life.

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# 19

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Whether alone or with family or friends, take some time for a leisurely walk in a park or along a waterfront and appreciate the great beauty God has given us in all aspects of creation.

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# 20

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Instead of buying bottled water, buy reusable water bottles and fill them from the tap at home, work or school. You can also carry empty water bottles (even metal ones) through airport security and fill them once you have passed security. This will help remove non-biodegradable plastic from the waste stream and help keep it out of our waterways.

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# 21

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Designate certain rooms in your home, or certain hours of the day (or both!), as tech-free zones. This allows more time for contemplation, reading books or newspapers, or praying. It also allows more time for meaningful interaction with family members and friends, all of which leads to a greater appreciation of our world.

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# 22

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Contact your mayor and/or City Council members to ask that city resources be used to help our homeless neighbors by cleaning up trash and other waste around homeless encampments. If you are willing and able you can volunteer to take part in the effort. This will help in some measure to improve the quality of life for the homeless population and can help reduce related health problems throughout the city.

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# 23

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

When shopping, look for items made as close to home as possible as a way to help reduce the carbon footprint of global shipping. Also look for items that have a reputation for durability — you will save money as well as help to preserve natural resources.

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# 24

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Heed the old saying “less is more” by avoiding needless consumption. Reduce, reuse, recycle — preserve resources whenever possible, use them more efficiently and limit the use of non-renewable resources.

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# 25

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

As much as 95 percent of clothes, shoes and linens thrown in the garbage could be reused or recycled. A number of local organizations will accept all clothes (except those that are wet, mildewed or contaminated with hazardous materials) — even damaged or mismatched items. To learn where you can take these items, see [www.earth911.com](http://www.earth911.com)

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# 26

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Look for way to recycle protective materials from packages you receive. Some local package-shipping offices will accept materials such as plastic peanuts and bubble wrap. Bubble wrap also can be packaged in a plastic grocery bag and placed in your recycle cart. Find out where to recycle in your area at [www.earth911.com](http://www.earth911.com)

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# 27

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Engage in forthright and honest discussions about environmental problems and policies, understanding that issues cannot be dealt with once and for all. Ongoing discussion will allow issues to be continually reframed and enriched with a variety of valid viewpoints and possible solutions.

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# 28

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

“Disinterested concern for others, and the rejection of every form of self-centeredness and self-absorption, are essential if we truly wish to care for our brothers and sisters and for the natural environment. These attitudes also attune us to the moral imperative of assessing the impact of our every action and personal decision on the world around us.” (*Laudato Si'*, 208)

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# 29

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Whenever possible, buy products that originate as close to home as you can. In addition to supporting local businesses and workers, you also will be helping to reduce the environmental impact of product transportation.

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# 30

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Try to limit the use of disposable wet wipes, which are sold for a variety of purposes. Many are made with plastics or synthetic fibers that can disintegrate into micro-plastics that become harmful to wildlife in aquatic environments. Some wipes also have been shown to damage sewer systems. Search the internet for instructions on making reusable wet wipes for various purposes around your home.

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# 31

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Set aside one day a month — or better yet, a day each week — to leave the car parked and instead walk, ride a bike or use transit to get where you are going. It's a small step that can benefit the health of the Earth, and yours as well.

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# 32

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Pray with and for creation in your daily prayers: Include a prayer of thankfulness for creation, a prayer for protection of our common home, or perhaps a prayer for people suffering impacts of climate or ecological issues. Take time periodically to pray outdoors.



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# 33

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Buy reusable mesh bags to use for fresh produce items when you are grocery shopping. That will eliminate the need to use the grocer's plastic produce bags, which are difficult to recycle. Mesh bags, available from a number of retailers, can be laundered and kept with your reusable grocery bags for convenience.

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# 34

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Keep a set of reusable dining utensils in your briefcase, purse, car or some other handy spot so that they are available whenever you buy take-out food. That way you won't have to take plastic utensils (even the compostable kind) from the restaurant.

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# 35

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Take steps to ensure that your home is properly insulated. This will help you to use less energy to stay warm in the winter and cooler in the summer, which also will reduce heating and cooling costs.

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# 36

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

When preparing your recycling, make sure materials are not soiled or contaminated with food, and make sure only items acceptable for recycling are included (for example, not all plastic is acceptable). Quality problems have some large buyers considering no longer accepting our recycling and it could end up in landfills. Learn more about the recycling rules in your area at [www.earth911.com](http://www.earth911.com)

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# 37

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

As much as possible, buy locally sourced and organic food. It is estimated that production and transportation of food accounts for 13 percent of all greenhouse gas emissions in the United States, primarily in the form of fuel and fertilizer.

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# 38

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

To conserve water, wash your car less frequently and use a commercial car wash. Estimates are that an average homeowner uses more than 100 gallons of water to wash a car, while most car washes use far less and properly dispose of the dirty water. Runoff from car washing in a driveway, street or parking lot can pollute the environment.

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# 39

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

When making major purchases, be mindful of the environmental impact, particularly production and transportation, and seek ways to minimize it. The poor and destitute in all parts of the world contribute the least to environmental degradation and suffer the most from it.

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# 40

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Consider sharing electronic devices rather than having a device for each person in your home. Consider buying refurbished devices rather than factory new, helping to reduce exploitive practices used to get the minerals needed to make the devices.

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# 41

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Be sure to follow the routine maintenance schedule for your motor vehicle and keep tires at their recommended inflation. This will reduce undue vehicle wear, maintain top efficiency and increase mileage, helping to limit carbon emissions.

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# 42

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

An average U.S. home receives as much as 40 pounds of junk mail a year. You can cut down on the clutter and help the environment by registering (for a small fee) with the Data & Marketing Association to reduce the amount of junk mail you receive. Go to <https://dmachoice.thedma.org/register.php>.

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# 43

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Use matches instead of disposable lighters to light the grill or fireplace or for other uses. Estimates are that 1.5 billion lighters end up in landfills each year, and they are made of plastic and contain butane, neither of which is environmentally friendly. Paper matches are preferred because they are made from recycled paper.

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# 44

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Showering typically uses half the water of taking a bath, possibly even less. To save even more water, spend less time in the shower and make sure it is equipped with a low-flow shower head.

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# 45

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

If possible, opt to pay your bills online. It's quick and convenient and reduces paper use. Choosing to receive bills, bank statements and the like electronically can save a huge number of trees, and in that way help to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions.

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# 46

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Make energy efficiency a primary consideration when buying items such as a furnace, dishwasher or refrigerator. Products labeled "Energy Star" are recognized for superior efficiency, which benefits the environment.

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# 47

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Unplug chargers for cell phones, laptops and other devices when they are fully charged or you leave your home or office. That will minimize "vampire energy," since many electronics and appliances continue drawing power even when they are off.

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# 48

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Consider planting trees and/or shrubs next to your house. They will help keep you cool naturally in warmer weather, lessening the desire for air conditioning, and they help to pull carbon from the atmosphere.

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# 49

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Consider replacing all incandescent light bulbs in your home with more efficient CFL or LED bulbs. Replacing just one incandescent bulb can eliminate hundreds of pounds of climate pollution each year.

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# 50

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Recycling becomes more effective if you buy products that use recycled content. For example, when buying paper towels or printer paper, look for brands that are made from recycled content.

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# 51

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Consider reducing your coffee or tea consumption to help conserve increasingly scarce water resources. It takes nearly 600 cups of water to grow and process the beans for one cup of coffee, while producing a single cup of tea requires about 130 cups of water.

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# 52

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

When driving long distances or not in stop-and-go traffic, use your vehicle's cruise control. You could increase your fuel mileage as much as 15 percent, which will reduce carbon emissions.

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# 53

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Recycle as much as possible. EPA figures show recycling aluminum cans saves 95 percent of the energy used to make new ones from raw materials. The energy saving is as much as 70 percent when recycling steel and tin cans, 60 percent for paper and about 33 percent for glass and plastic.

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# 54

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

When shopping, often you can choose to have a receipt emailed to you instead of receiving a printed copy. Digital receipts are easier to organize, save and search, and they reduce paper waste.

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# 55

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Whenever possible, save up your errands and combine as many as you can into a single trip. This will mean much less vehicle exhaust than if you made separate trips, and it will save wear and tear on your vehicle.

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# 56

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

When visiting your favorite coffee shop, bring along your own travel mug to cut down on paper waste. Use a reusable spoon to stir your coffee and not the stirrers the shop provides — each year an estimated 138 billion straws and stirrers are thrown away in the U.S.

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# 57

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Know and closely follow local recycling/compost/trash rules. This can help to keep buyers of materials to be recycled (many in China) from rejecting material arriving from specific areas of the U.S. and sending it to the landfill.

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# 58

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

When working in the garden, try to use a watering can instead of a hose to focus on areas that need watering. Try to water early in the day to reduce evaporation. These steps can help to conserve dwindling water resources.

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# 59

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Calculate the carbon footprint for your household at [www3.epa.gov/carbon-footprint-calculator](http://www3.epa.gov/carbon-footprint-calculator), then consider some of the steps suggested by the calculator to lower your carbon footprint. You might be surprised at the potential savings in carbon emissions, and cash.

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# 60

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Consider switching to, or at least trying, a shampoo bar rather than bottled shampoo for your hair. A bar typically comes with minimal packaging, and when it is gone there is no container to recycle or toss in the trash.

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# 61

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

If you smoke cigarettes or know someone who does, consider that quitting can help the environment. By sheer numbers, cigarette butts top the list of plastics littering the world's beaches (2.4 million were collected in one brief beach-cleanup period last year). The cotton-like fibers in cigarette filters are made of plastic, and once on beaches or in the ocean they can be ingested by marine life, damaging the food chain.

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# 62

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Lower the amount of energy used to pump, treat, and heat water by washing your car less often. When you do wash your vehicle, take it to a commercial car wash. That will use less water and the water will be treated afterward.

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# 63

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Consider installing LED lights at home. While LEDs cost more up front, they last far longer — up to 23 years. During that time, total operational cost for an LED is about \$38, compared with \$48 for CFLs and \$200 for incandescent bulbs. A big part of the savings is reduced electrical usage for the same brightness.

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# 64

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

For summer picnics, try to use reusable cups, plates and cutlery. If you must use disposables, use a different color of marking pen for each person to prevent mix ups that cause more than one setting to be used per person. If possible, opt for compostable plates, cups and cutlery.

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# 65

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Washing dishes by hand rather than using a dishwasher saves energy and water. If you opt for the dishwasher, try to at least skip pre-rinsing — a good detergent will get your dishes just as clean and you can save as much as 20 gallons of water per load.



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# 66

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Switch to a low-flow showerhead. Newer efficient showerheads use 2 gallons of water per minute or less, compared with 3 or more gallons a minute for older models. A family of four using low-flow showerheads can save about 20,000 gallons of water a year.

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# 67

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Visit [how2recycle.info](http://how2recycle.info) for ideas on how to recycle items that you can't put in your curbside recycle bin. For example, you will find that Safeway accepts all plastic bags, and Target accepts plastic bags as well as plastic overwrap from products such as bathroom tissue and even plastic envelopes from online shopping deliveries.

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# 68

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

If you regularly take baths, consider switching to a shower at least occasionally. A full bathtub uses about 70 gallons of water, compared with 10 to 25 gallons for a 5-minute shower. A low-flow showerhead saves the most water.

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# 69

*Laudato Si'*

## **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Put computers, as well as printers and other peripherals, on a power strip and turn it off at night to save electricity. Do the same with TVs, radios, microwaves and other appliances that remain "powered up" even when off, then turn off the power strip whenever you're gone for an extended period.

# Seasonal

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## Spring

70

*Laudato Si'*

### **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

To commemorate Earth Day (April 22), consider rereading, or reading for the first time, Pope Francis's landmark encyclical letter about our planet's environment. If you don't own a copy of "*Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home*," you can find it at <https://bit.ly/1Lh3szp>.

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## Summer

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*Laudato Si'*

### **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

During the warmer days of spring and summer, try to use air-conditioning sparingly on particularly warm days. AC uses more energy and contributes to the accumulation of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, and it also has been demonstrated to have negative health effects, particularly for respiratory and some chronic conditions.

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## Winter

72

*Laudato Si'*

### **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

During chilly winter months wear an extra layer (or two!) around the house and lower the setting on your thermostat. This can preserve resources, reduce waste emissions and save money. Installing a programmable thermostat will allow you to automatically reduce heating at night or at times when no one is home

# Holidays

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## *Christmas*

73

*Laudato Si'*

### **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Consider buying at least one less Christmas gift this year and instead spend time with a special person or donate to a cause serving the most vulnerable. Large-scale consumer goods production requires enormous energy and resources. Buying even one less gift moves toward a more sustainable lifestyle.

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74

*Laudato Si'*

### **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

This Christmas, save wrapping paper for later use; reuse old wrapping paper for this year's gifts or use a fun alternative such as color newspaper comics. Instead of a material gift, consider donating on someone's behalf to a food bank, homeless shelter or other charity.

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## *Lent*

75

*Laudato Si'*

### **A weekly tip on Caring for Our Common Home**

Consider instituting “meatless Fridays” during Lent and year-round. Livestock production accounts for 4 percent of greenhouse gas emissions in the United States, according to the Environmental Protection Administration. By giving up meat one day a week, you will help take better care of creation as well as honor Catholic teaching.