

Parish Focus Area: Ecological Education

Laudato Si' Goals: Ecological Education and Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles

Learn about our common home and all the life it supports, including human life

- Educate yourself about Catholic teachings on care for creation.
 - Read “*Laudato Si’*” and “*Laudate Deum*”. Study guides are widely available.
 - Learn how those who are poor and most vulnerable are often those most affected by climate change and environmental problems. Find out more from [Oxfam](#), the [United Nations](#) , and the [American Public Health Association](#).
- Engage others in conversations regarding environmental concerns. Discuss issues as a family.
- Learn something new!
 - Participate in programs at local parks to learn something new about nature.
 - Go for a hike in state parks, nature preserves, and land trust properties. For some family-friendly ideas, see <https://indywithkids.com/family-kid-friendly-hiking/>.
 - Consider attending conferences and webinars on topics that interest you. Sign up for [HortusScope](#), a monthly free newsletter with nature-related items.
 - Find your passion and learn more about it
 - Native plants – [Indiana Native Plant Society](#)
 - Animals – [National Wildlife Federation](#)
 - Birds - Cornell University [All About Birds](#)

Live more sustainably

Food and Food Waste

- Food and food production is a leading cause of greenhouse gas emissions. One of the most effective ways to reduce your environmental impact is to eat less meat, especially red meat. Consider having meatless meals several times a week. For more information, see <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/science/climate-issues/food>
- Buy your food with minimal packaging. Take your own bags to the store. Save money and reduce waste by taking your own containers to purchase flours,

grains, nuts, candy and other bulk items at Good Earth, Fresh Thyme, Whole Foods, and Fresh Market.

- Reduce food waste: buy only what you need, eat what you buy, and avoid throwing away food. See [tips on preventing food waste](#).
- Compost plant-based food scraps and garden trimmings [at your home](#) or sign up for a residential compost service ([Green with Indy](#), [Earth Mama Compost](#), or [Indy Go Green](#))

Transportation

- Car travel is a significant source of greenhouse gas emissions. To [reduce your impact](#):
 - Drive less. Ride a bike or walk for short trips. Carpool, use rideshares, and combine errands to reduce how much you drive.
 - Drive wisely. Keep your car maintained and drive efficiently.
 - Don't idle. Idling pollutes the air, wastes fuel, and wears down the engine.
 - Choose a fuel-efficient vehicle when possible.

Home Landscaping

- Increase biodiversity by planting native plants that support pollinators and reduce the need for watering and fertilizing. Much information can be found at [Indiana Native Plant Society](#) and [Homegrown National Park](#).
- Decrease use of pesticides and herbicides that contaminate the water supply and are harmful to birds, butterflies and other living creatures. More information can be found at <https://xerces.org/blog/top-7-reasons-to-stop-pesticide-use-at-home>
- For an eco-friendly way to reduce mosquito populations, try the [Mosquito Bucket Challenge](#)

Waste Reduction: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

- Avoid single-use items.
- Find [alternatives to plastic](#), which is made from fossil fuels. Laundry detergent, shampoos, conditioners, and cleaning supplies can be found in concentrated forms without plastic packaging. Choose clothing made from natural fibers rather than polyester.
- Shop at thrift, vintage, and second-hand stores for clothing and other goods. Use [Freecycle](#) to gift unwanted items or find items. Rent or borrow rarely used

equipment. Donate items to St. Vincent de Paul, Re-Store, Thrifty Threads, Goodwill, and other organizations.

- Learn [how to recycle correctly and explore local options](#). Teach children to reduce, reuse, and recycle through your own example.
- [Recycle Force](#) will recycle electronics (anything with a cord or power source), metals, and Styrofoam.
- Household hazardous waste from Marion County residents can be taken to [ToxDrop](#) sites; Hamilton County residents can go [here](#)