

## What does a Care for Creation Ministry Do?

Here are a few examples of what the diocesan Care for Creation ministries do at their parishes. The common theme in each of the activities is bringing the message of *Laudato Si': On Care for our Common Home* to life in the parish. Each parish ministry is unique and draws on the talents and interests of its members. Many parishes start by studying *Laudato Si'* together. We can provide resources to help. Then, we recommend starting with one small but impactful project that the new group is excited to implement.



*Sharing ideas for reducing waste at showcase after Mass*

**Spirituality:** *Incorporating environmentally themed prayers from Catholic organizations is an effective way to deepen the desire to care for creation.* Some examples include intentions for the Prayer of the Faithful, Advent and Lent Prayer Services, Prayer Walks, Holy Hours, Stations of the Cross and Rosaries.

**Education:** *If we are not aware of the impact of our way of life on the delicate balance of life, we won't be inclined to protect God's great gift of creation.* Parishes have made presentations by print, by speaker series and through virtual webinars. Some topics include: Food waste, Zero waste, Fast Fashion, Green Burials, gardening and landscaping in our yards, home energy audits, impact of food choices, sustainability showcases, and wildlife presentations at parish festivals.



*Parishioners at an outdoor prayer service and nature walk*



*Teens clear grass away in preparation for adding Kateri Gardens spaces in the church parking lot*

**Landscaping:** *A great way to honor creation is by planting gardens.* Many parishes have Mary Gardens, St. Kateri Habitats, pollinator gardens, community vegetable gardens and nature paths. Some parishes are working with their landscaping service providers to use eco-friendly products that won't harm the local waterways.



**Energy Projects:** *Figuring out how to save energy at the parish facility is a common early step.* Some projects include: conducting energy audits to see where electric use could be reduced, realizing significant energy savings after switching to LED lightbulbs, installing smart thermostats and sensors for light switches in classrooms. Some parishes had solar panels installed.

*Cool Congregation Award for Reducing Electric Use by nearly 30% (and saving over \$15,000/year in energy costs)*



*Volunteers at Hypothermia Prevention Shelter, washing dishes*

**Resource Reduction:** *Here are some projects that were established to reduce the waste of resources from parish activities.* Recycling, composting, dishwashing instead of using single use products, and providing reusable shopping bags.

See a more comprehensive list from diocesan parishes here: <https://tinyurl.com/bdcfda85>



*And of course, ministry members keep an eye on their campuses and keep them free from litter.*