

SUSTAINABILITY IN CATHOLICISM

Sustainable Traditions In **SCRIPTURE AND TRADITION**

Care for creation in Catholicism is rooted in Scripture, theology, and examples of Saints:

- Genesis 1:31 "God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good."
- Genesis 2:15 "The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it."
- Numbers 35:33 "You shall not pollute the land in which you live."
- Colossians 1:19-20 "For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on Earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross."
- The ancient Israelites let their fields lie fallow every seventh year to regain fertility, gave livestock rest, forbid cutting down trees during sieges, and prohibited killing both a mother bird and her fledglings. Then, the early Christians were inspired by Jesus' teachings about love, mercy, justice, and peaceful relationships with others.
- St. Melangell, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Kateri Tekawitha, and St. Hildegard advocated for care of plants, animals, and natural resources.

- Reduce car use. Carpool, bicycle, or use public transportation!
- Keep your old phone and other electronics. Technology uses lots of mining-intensive minerals, so update your tech as rarely as possible.
- Use reusable versions of straws, water bottles, diapers, and napkins.
- Volunteer and donate.

Sustainability **TODAY**

- Emphasis on creation care and stewardship
- Environmental nonprofits: Catholic Climate Covenant, A Rocha, and the National Religious Partnership For The Environment
- Environmental advocates: Father Thomas Berry, Dr. Rosemary Radford Reuther, Pope Benedict XVI, Pope Francis, and Sister Miriam MacGillis
- Books: *Laudato Si': On Care For Our Common Home*, *Super Natural Christians: How We Should Love Nature*, *All Creation Is Connected: Voices In Response To Pope Francis's Encyclical On Ecology*, *Green Discipleship: Theology And Ecology*, and *A New Climate For Christology: Kenosis, Climate Change, And Befriending Nature*
- Congregations are going solar with Interfaith Power & Light

DO YOUR PART!

- Buy what you need and learn to repair what you have.
- Eat less meat and consider reviving meatless Fridays. Try beans, peas, hummus, lentils, peanut butter, tofu, and meat alternatives instead!
- Lessen AI use.
- Sign petitions encouraging environmentally-friendly policies!
- Reduce backyard pesticide use.
- Encourage your workplace to implement resource-saving initiatives.
- When growing your family, consider adoption as an option.
- When appliances break, replace with energy-efficient versions.

This congregational resource was created as part of the Sustainability In Religion program by Conserve It Forward, a nonprofit organization focused on empowering everyday people through environmental education, and made by religious studies PhD student Avalon Jade Theisen in consultation with Catholic moral theologian Dr. Tobias Winright.

