



Season of Creation 2022 Prayer Journal

This Season of Creation, we offer this prayer journal to help you reflect on your carbon footprint and its impact on the planet. We hope you will use it weekly to contemplate the actions you take that are impacting our planet for the better or the worse and consider the ways we as a congregation can act together to reduce our carbon footprint and to advocate for systemic change.

As Pope Francis tells us in *Laudato Si'*, "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." (LS 211) We are called to ecological conversion where we hear the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor and respond. This prayer journal offers prayers from the Laudato Si Movement Prayer Book, educational information, thoughts to ponder, and questions to explore to deepen your ecological conversion.

We urge you to take the time to pray and reflect on the choices you make and their impact on our planet. May this help you and us go deeper, journey farther, and respond boldly and creatively to the call to ecological conversion.

The [Laudato Si'](#) [Movement](#) invites us to **ecological conversion**, the "transformation of hearts and minds toward greater love of God, each other, and creation. It is a process of acknowledging our contribution to the social and ecological crisis and acting in ways that nurture communion: healing and renewing our common home."

Climate Change

Excerpts taken from [Climate Change | United Nations](#)

Climate Change is the defining issue of our time, and we are at a defining moment. From shifting weather patterns that threaten food production to rising sea levels that increase the risk of catastrophic flooding, the impacts of climate change are global in scope and unprecedented in scale. Without drastic action today, adapting to these impacts in the future will be more difficult and costlier.



After more than a century and a half of industrialization, deforestation and large-scale agriculture, quantities of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere have risen to record levels not seen in three million years. As populations, economies and standards of living grow, so does the cumulative level of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The most abundant GHG, accounting for about two-thirds of GHGs, carbon dioxide (CO₂), is largely the product of burning fossil fuels.

[The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change \(IPCC\)](#) shows that **human actions still have the potential to determine the future course of climate**, pointing to strong and sustained reductions in emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases to limit climate change. Benefits for air quality would come quickly, while global temperatures would take 20-30 years to stabilize.

Limiting global warming to 1.5°C would require rapid, far-reaching and unprecedented changes in all aspects of society.

Prayer for ecological conversion

Fr. Tim Galvin, Laudato Si' Animator. Riwoto, South Sudan, *Laudato Si' Prayer Book* [English](#), [Spanish](#)

Creator God, we thank You for the wonder and beauty of all You have created. You have created us humans to be protectors and carers of creation. Yet we are the ones who are now spoiling the works of Your hand. Your Son Jesus Christ is still suffering and dying in the suffering earth and the suffering poor. Forgive us our sins against Your creation and against the poor of the world. We join with the whole of creation in thanking You and praising You. We thank You, Creator God, for all the good things we enjoy, help us to live more simply. Give us the courage that you gave to the Apostles on the day of Pentecost to proclaim and advocate for the care of our common home and the poor. Amen

So what are we to do about fossil fuels?

A **carbon footprint** is the total amount of greenhouse gases (including carbon dioxide and methane) that is generated by a person's actions. Calculating your carbon footprint is one way to identify personal behaviors you may be able to change. If we are going to avoid climate disaster, we must make major personal and systemic changes regarding our use of fossil fuels.

Although decreasing your carbon footprint by personal changes you make is best, for those uses of carbon that you cannot avoid, you might want to consider a **carbon offset**. A carbon offset "cancels out" carbon emissions by supporting a renewable energy source like wind or solar power or by planting trees. Some offset programs are more reputable than others, so be careful to avoid "greenwashing."



How to calculate your carbon footprint

Most carbon footprint tools challenge us to:

- Reduce our heating and cooling
- Reduce our electricity consumption
- Monitor and make environmentally sustainable transportation choices by reducing air travel, purchasing environmentally friendly vehicles, carpooling and using public transportation
- Purchase environmentally friendly products, like [our recommended sustainable products](#)
- Consider our food consumption patterns (revisit our [April 2022 Eco-Challenge](#))

Here are three simple online tools for calculating your carbon footprint:

- [Climate Hero](#): This tool is easy to use, requiring general information rather than specifics. It is friendly for those who do not live in single-family households. (available in English and Spanish)
- [UN Carbon Footprint Calculator](#) (available in English and Spanish)
- [Global Footprint Calculator](#) from the Global Footprint Network (available in Spanish and English)

Did you know?

Approximately 60% of the world's electricity and heating is generated by fossil fuels such as coal or natural gas. This means that this sector is the single biggest polluter, responsible for about one third of global greenhouse gas

Counteract your carbon use with our new tool!

The Sisters of St Joseph of Carondelet in collaboration with the Fe y Alegría (Faith and Joy) School in Tacna, Peru have created a tree-planting program in this desert area: **Trees for Tacna**. The program will have three components:

- **Planting trees:** High school students and their parents will plant and care for new trees outside the school and in the neighboring community.
- **Creating green space:** Grade school students will work to improve the gardens in the school and renew the trees that are in the school garden. Students from a nearby university are working with the Fe y Alegría students to create a green space within the school in an area that is now just hard-packed dirt.
- **Environmental education:** Working with two science teachers and a math teacher, the whole school, parents and the local community will learn about the project's impact.

We are partnering with Catholic Climate Covenant's [Catholic Climate Action Projects](#) to offer you a way to calculate and counteract your transportation footprint while contributing to Trees for Tacna.

[Read more about the program](#)

[Support the program](#)

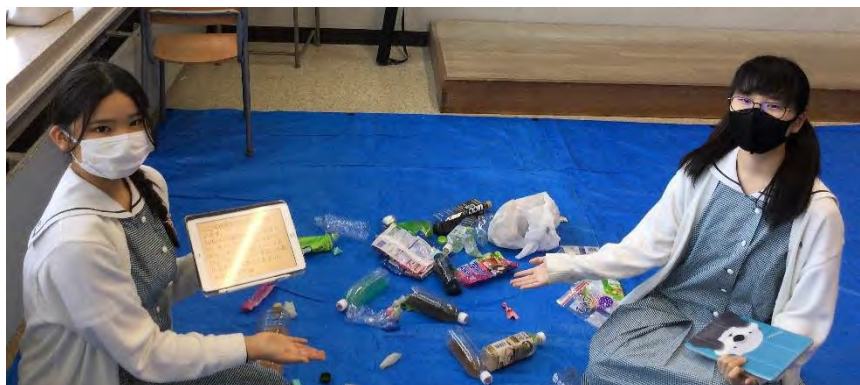


10 Everyday Tips to Cut Greenhouse Gas Emissions in Japan

Excerpts from [10 Everyday Tips To Cut Greenhouse Gas Emissions In Japan](#), Saving The Planet Is Everyone's Job, BY KIRSTY KAWANO | FEBRUARY 19, 2018 | LIFESTYLE

Here are some interesting ideas from Japan on reducing your carbon footprint. Although many of these tips won't translate globally, there are some that we can all consider.

1. **Stick to “Cool Biz, Warm Biz.”** Since 2005, Japan’s environment ministry has been running its annual Cool Biz campaign, asking people to aim for a summertime room temperature of 28° Celsius, (82.4° Fahrenheit), while its winter Warm Biz approach calls for offices and homes to target 20° (68° Fahrenheit).
2. **Turn off your toilet seat heater.**
3. **Use floor heating wisely.**
4. **Heat the bathroom naturally.** To warm the room before you bathe, leave the bath lid open when you run the water. The steam from the bath will warm the room. To dry laundry in the bathroom on a rainy day, hang the clothes and leave your bathroom doors open so that they room-dry for most of the day. If any clothes are then still damp, use a short burst of the heating function—perhaps 20 minutes—to finish them off. Better still, leave them to dry naturally overnight
5. **Keep your home cool in the summer by using a sudare sunshade to cut the amount of sunlight that enters your home.** Sudare are usually made from bamboo or reed, thereby allowing air to pass through. For big balcony windows try a yoshizu. These are about two meters tall and can simply be set on the balcony floor and rested at an angle against the wall above your window.
6. **Limit your A/C use.**
7. **Break your taxi habit.**
8. **Nix the packaging.** Choose products with little or no packaging. Shift from single-serve packed items. What changes can you make? like tea bags, to bulk supply: buy a tea strainer and use leaf tea instead, for example. Depending on the product and vendor, you can even remove the need for packaging by taking your own storage container to the shop with you and getting your tea leaves, coffee beans or tofu placed straight into it
9. **Buy less stuff.** There is no downside to buying less stuff—less clutter for you, less waste for the planet and more yen in your pocket. Take care of the things you already own. Carry out regular



maintenance of machines and cleaning of shoes and seasonal equipment and try repairing your things instead of throwing them away.

- 10. Reuse and recycle.** Reusing items significantly lowers your carbon footprint because it takes far less energy to recycle them than to produce goods from scratch. Reusing them removes the need to buy new stuff to do the same job. Use plastic supermarket containers to organize the contents of your refrigerator, to hold recipe ingredients or serve snacks to kids

Systemic change that hears the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor



As persons of faith, we feel ourselves even more responsible for acting each day in accordance with the summons to conversion. Nor is that summons simply individual: “the ecological conversion needed to bring about lasting change is also a community conversion” (LS, 219). In this regard, commitment and action, in a spirit of maximum cooperation, is likewise demanded of the community of nations, especially in the meetings of the United Nations devoted to the environmental question. *Pope Francis’s message for the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation 2021*

Opportunities for action our congregation has offered this year

As a congregation, we are committed to bold action to address climate change and its intersection with ecological justice. We have urged national and international action. Do you recall participating in any of these actions?

- [Writing to our UN Ambassadors about the UN plastic treaty](#)
- [Supporting the Build Back Better Act](#)
- Supporting the Clean Future Act
- Supporting the Break Free from Plastics Act
- [Contacting the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers about pollution in St James Parish, Louisiana](#)

**ACTION
ALERT**

If you have participated, thank you. If not or not all of them, might you want to make a commitment to act on these action alerts that come from the congregation?



What individual political actions am I willing to make to encourage my governments— local, state and national—to achieve ecological sustainability and meet the goals of the Paris agreement?

Individual Changes are Not Enough: What is Japan doing about Greenhouse Gas Emissions?



Japan has actively contributed to global efforts towards sustainability. It has signed the Paris Agreement and is meeting the goals it pledged to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Japanese Government is actively engaged in international climate change mitigation, adaptation and finance cooperation. It also funds and implements international projects to

address climate change, develop greenhouse gas emission offset credits and facilitate the transfer of low carbon technology to developing countries.

The Japanese Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries, recognizing that agriculture contributed to 4% of Japan's total greenhouse gas emissions, has established and implemented policies, funds and directs research, facilitates markets and engages internationally in its efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change. Japan currently operates two carbon credit markets, one for domestically produced credits and another for credits produced bilaterally with international partners.

Preparing for the future while addressing current practices has led Japan to sponsor research into climate change adaptation research for rice and horticultural products, while forestry, rice,

livestock and greenhouse horticulture are critical areas of mitigation study. Soil carbon sequestration, energy efficient agricultural machinery and genome editing are other common areas of interest for climate related research in Japan.



What do you know about the efforts that your country is making? How do you keep yourself informed about these issues?

How to reduce your carbon emissions by examining your clothing choices

The fashion industry is responsible for approximately 10% of the world's carbon emissions. That's more than all international flights and maritime freight combined.

Globally, we create 92 million tons of textile waste each year, which is equivalent to 12 kilograms per person. [Less than 25% of clothes are reused secondhand, and less than 1% of material is recycled.](#)

The vast majority of end-of-life clothes end up in landfills or incineration plants.



Today, the average consumer buys 60% more clothing than 15 years ago.

The average garment is used only ten times before it's thrown away, which drives the demand for new clothes. As almost 80% of the carbon footprint is generated in the manufacturing of new clothing, the most effective carbon reduction you can achieve is to use existing clothes longer, instead of buying new ones.

Choose climate friendly materials

When buying a new garment, remember the climate impact of your choice of material. [Cotton and polyester are the most common materials](#) in the fashion industry. Cotton is unfortunately extremely resource-intensive to grow and process. Polyester is not much better, as it's made from petroleum and causes major problems in the form of microplastics.

A more climate-friendly alternative is [bamboo](#), which is the world's fastest growing plant. A bamboo plantation annually produces ten times more textile per hectare than cotton does. Bamboo is not harvested at the root but pruned, which helps keep the soil stable and sequesters carbon dioxide. Bamboo does not require fertilizers, pesticides or irrigation, which further boosts its environmental benefits. There are also other climate-friendly materials on the rise, such as locally grown [hemp](#) and [lyocell](#) (made from trees). For performance clothes, traditionally made using virgin polyester and nylon, there are now [garments made from recycled ocean plastics](#) available.

Finally, it's important to choose quality over quantity. It's not how much money you spend, but the amount of clothes you buy and how quickly they wear out that creates the carbon footprint.

Prayer before shopping

Originally written in Polish by Malgorzata Rzym, Laudato Si' Animator. Warsaw, Poland. [English](#), [Spanish](#)

Thank You, Lord, for all Your gifts. For bestowing upon us the necessary food and things of daily use.

Do not let material possessions separate us from You, the Supreme Good. Open our hearts to Your love, which You show to us through the closeness of our brothers and sisters and the beauty of Your creation. Free us from attachment to the things we possess and enable us to share sacrificially with those who have less than us.

Teach us to be content with what is necessary. Protect us from greed, avarice and waste. May our daily choices serve to achieve justice in the world, not exploitation of the planet and its poor. We ask for the needed wisdom, sensitive hearts, and the virtue of moderation, so that when we purchase goods we are guided not only by our own benefit, but by concern for the common good, the rights of workers, the proper treatment of animals, and the consequences for the environment.

Help us always to remember that You are our highest Good, and all that we have we owe to You. Amen

A prayer for when we want to give up

By Gold, Chair, Laudato Si' Movement Board of Directors, Ireland, Laudato Si' Prayer Book, [English](#), [Spanish](#)

God of hope, You have placed us on this earth in a moment of ecological crisis. We face a crisis of such proportions and urgency, at times it feels like it could crush us.

At times we rebel. We did not ask to be born into this moment, yet being alive now, we face the fate of humanity and the planet. It places a weight on our shoulders and we feel called forth to heal Your world.

At times we struggle. Sometimes, we wish it were not like this, that we could just go about our business. We are tempted to turn our heads away. Sometimes we feel that the fight is futile – the science can seem to say that hope is lost. We feel we do not have the strength to go on.

We feel burnt out.

When we feel like this, may we take time out and turn our gaze to You. May we draw close to You, dear Lord, and realize that You have been here too. You know what it means to feel defeated, hopeless, and crushed. You share our tears and weep with us for the future of our children and all Your creatures.

On the cross You too cried out in abandonment: “my God, my God, why have You forsaken me?” In Your cry, the whole of creation cried out. You held all our tears until they overflowed, transforming them into infinite dew drops.

When all seems lost, may we experience Your divine mercy. May we be gentle on ourselves and merciful to others. May we find strength for the road ahead. Amen



“Striving to be beacons of hope, we commit to respond to the crisis of Earth and global warming.”

2019 Congregational Chapter

In our world today, we are facing the ravages of climate change, and some even wonder if we have reached a tipping point past which some changes are irreversible. It is easy to feel overwhelmed and that we as individuals have nothing to offer. We are not individuals; we are a congregation of women with many advocates and allies. Now is the time for us to truly be those beacons of hope, making personal changes and sharing them within and beyond our circles of influence. We continue to act communally to reduce our carbon footprint, and we act together to advocate for the needed legislative change at the local, national, and international level.

A beacon is a source of light or inspiration. It may be hard to see our impact now, but we are beacons of hope joining with other beacons of hope. Fidelity to our commitment for the life of the world is essential to who we are.
