

# CREATION CARE TIPS

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF COLUMBUS

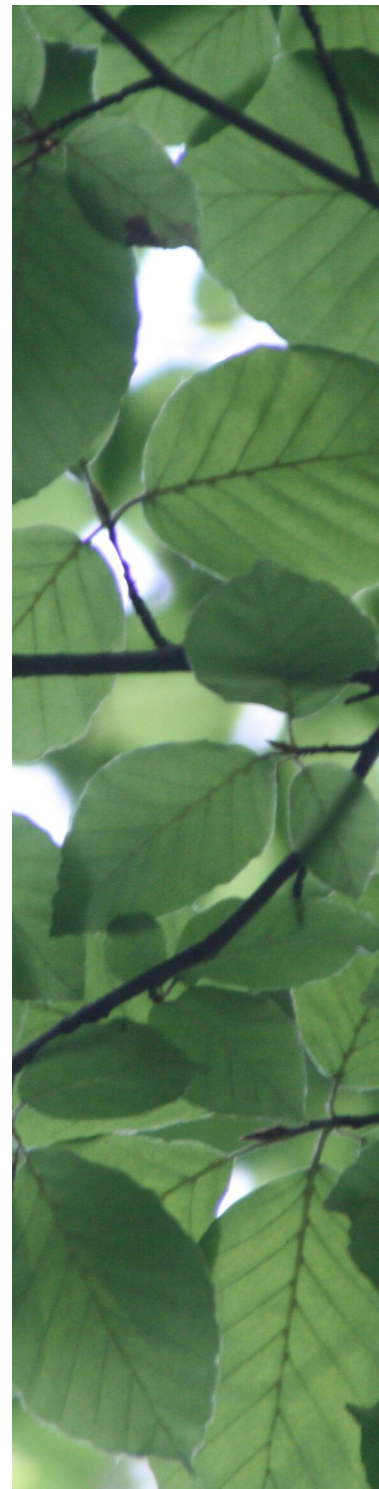
The entire material universe speaks of God's love, his boundless affection for us. Soil, water, mountains – everything is, as it were, a caress of God. All of us are linked by unseen bonds and together form a kind of universal family, a sublime communion which fills us with a sacred, affectionate and humble respect. Everything is related, and we human beings are united as brothers and sisters on a wonderful pilgrimage, woven together by the love God has for each of his creatures and which also unites us in fond affection with brother sun, sister moon, brother river and mother earth. Encountering God does not mean fleeing from this world or turning our back on nature.

There is a nobility in the duty to care for creation through little daily actions. Along with the importance of little everyday gestures, social love moves us to devise larger strategies to halt environmental degradation and to encourage a "culture of care" which permeates all of society.

- Excerpts from Pope Francis' encyclical, *Laudato Si'*

## CREATION CARE IN THE COLUMBUS DIOCESE: ST. ROSE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

St. Rose Elementary School in New Lexington recently underwent a lighting conversion to energy-efficient LEDs. Like many elementary schools, St. Rose had never undergone a major lighting upgrade. The school's annual electricity consumption dropped by 37% following the conversion. Those annual savings will be used to pay back the no-interest loan on the project, which will be adjusted by an AEP rebate of \$4,700 and a grant from the Catholic Foundation of \$15,000. The annual energy savings on the project will be 48,285,600 watts.



Learn more at <https://columbuscatholic.org/care-for-creation>

## **FIRST STEP: CHANGE YOUR BEHAVIORS**

When you leave home for the day, adjust the thermostat to avoid heating or cooling an empty house, and when you leave a room, turn off unnecessary lights. While there is no cost in dollars to reducing your energy use this way, you might need to adjust routines or enlist the help of family members. Since heating and air conditioning make up around half of your home energy use, try living in the "68-78 degree" range. In other words, keep the thermostat at 68 degrees in winter and 78 degrees in summer. To avoid family thermostat battles, install programmable ones that turn the heating and cooling off when not needed. Timers and motion sensors can serve the same purpose for lighting. If you have children, have them join the search for "energy wasters" unnecessarily costing you money.



## **SECOND STEP: CHANGE YOUR BULBS & APPLIANCES**

Swap out incandescent light bulbs with LEDs. Old-fashioned light bulbs waste a lot of energy, giving off more heat than light. LEDs start paying for themselves immediately through energy savings and last much longer, saving both landfill space and your need to get out a ladder. Almost every type of light bulb now has an LED equivalent. When it is time to purchase appliances, look for the Energy Star ([www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov)) symbol that independently certifies units that run most efficiently. Appliances such as dishwashers, clothes washers and dryers, water heaters, furnaces, and air conditioning units use very large amounts of energy.



## **TAKE A STEP TOGETHER: COMPLETE A PARISH ENERGY AUDIT AND DEVELOP A PLAN**

A professional energy audit will determine how a parish uses energy and provide specific ways to save. This step should be followed by enacting a plan that spells out specific energy conservation measures, who is responsible, and what support is available. Remember, you can accomplish your energy reduction goal through one large action or many small actions. Parishes, schools, and other facilities are encouraged to contact Bruce Boylan at the Diocesan Facilities Office ([bboylan@columbuscatholic.org](mailto:bboylan@columbuscatholic.org); 614-228-2457) for more information on energy audits, monitoring, and reducing usage. Bruce also knows about available grants. For the energy you still need, consider selecting an electricity provider that gets most of its energy from renewable sources. Provider options may be viewed online at the Apples to Apples Energy Choice Ohio tool ([www.energychoice.ohio.gov/ApplesToApples.aspx](http://www.energychoice.ohio.gov/ApplesToApples.aspx)).

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