

Creation Care Tips 2026 (Year A)

Place these environmental challenges in your bulletin or on your website to encourage parishioners to care for creation.

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November 30, 2025 • 1st Week of Advent

“They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks” —Isaiah 2:4

In Isaiah’s day, technology advancements often focused on military weapons and defense (sound familiar?). Yet his vision for the future was of a society that focused on growing food and tending the earth rather than destroying it and its people. What technology do you use that doesn’t contribute to your flourishing or that of your family, community, or the earth? How might you use technology for the restoration of the environment or the betterment of others this week?

December 7, 2025 • 2nd Week of Advent

“But a shoot shall sprout from the stump of Jesse, and from his roots a bud shall blossom.” —Isaiah 11:1

As Pope Francis urged in *Laudato Si’*, one thing we can do as we work to care for creation is to see the beauty already present around us. How often do we see stumps instead of sprouts or seemingly lifeless roots instead of buds? Yes, there are many sobering signs of how our earth is hurting, many “stumps” we can focus our attention on, but this week pray to keep your eyes open for where sprouts and buds are present in the world. As we go into the winter season in the northern hemisphere, chances are we won’t see actual plant sprouts or buds coming up, but pay attention to the news for signs of life and regeneration in the fight against climate change.

December 14, 2025 • 3rd Week of Advent

“The wilderness and the parched land will exult; the Arabah will rejoice and bloom; like the crocus, it shall bloom abundantly, and rejoice with joyful song.” —Isaiah 35:1-2

While parts of the world are parched by more frequent and prolonged droughts and others are flooded by hurricanes and superstorms, we are called to be ever-more conscious of our water usage. Fresh water shortages are predicted to become even more extreme in the coming years. While we are fortunate to have access to clean running tap water, let’s not take it for granted. This week, be mindful of times when you run the water longer than necessary in the shower, bathroom, or kitchen sink. Strive to shorten those intervals and make using less water your norm.

December 21, 2025 • 4th Week of Advent

As you wrap Christmas presents this week, see if you can wrap everything (or at least more than last year) with alternatives to wrapping paper. You can use newspaper (the comic page for kids' presents), old posters, cloth napkins, handkerchiefs, bandanas, or even re-use gift bags or grocery store bags. In this way, you won't contribute to a market that requires cutting down tens of thousands of trees to make wrapping paper, some of which can't be recycled and gets thrown out soon afterward. Another benefit is that you'll raise other people's awareness of this environmental issue.

December 25, 2025 • Christmas Day

"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it." —John 1:5

Some of us have so much excess on Christmas Day: presents, food, family, a big house, electricity, heat, and running water, while billions of others worldwide don't have the basics. On a day when we celebrate Jesus coming as a light into the darkness, find some time to tone down the excess. Turn the lights down (or out), and spend a few minutes of quiet with only the light from some candles or the Christmas lights. Be more conscious about your use of electricity and your heating source, and celebrate that there is still light and warmth in the darkness.

December 28, 2025 • Holy Family

As the time for making New Year's resolutions approaches, resolve to grow something yourself that will feed you and your loved ones this year (or to grow at least a little more than you have in the past). It might be as basic as growing herbs on your windowsill or experimenting with your first tomato plant. It might be something more ambitious like setting aside an area for creating a garden bed or planting some fruit trees or bushes. If you don't have land of your own, you can grow plants in pots on a patio or look into joining a community garden where you can tend to your own plot. Eating food you've grown yourself eliminates the carbon impact of transporting food grown hundreds or even thousands of miles away.

January 4, 2026 • Epiphany

"Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh." —Matthew 2:11

Having just come through another Christmas season of gift-giving, consider which gifts you gave or received were the most significant to you. Likely you most treasure those that won't end up in a landfill sooner rather than later. As we move into a new year, consider vowing to give gifts this year that aren't disposable in any way. How might you give gifts of time, talent, and "treasure" that won't end up in the garbage?

January 11, 2026 • Baptism of the Lord

"Just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him." —Matthew 3:16