

BULLETIN POSTS (2 per month) **DRAFT**

JANUARY

1 **Make A Resolution to Care for Creation'. Words of Inspiration from Pope Francis and *Laudato Si'***

- The Pope's encyclical, *Laudato Si'*, is a text of landmark significance in Catholic Social Teaching. He challenges us to rethink our relationship with nature and invites us to become aware and reflect deeply on the unsustainable environmental degradation around us and its consequences.
- The Pope asks us to examine our lifestyles through sound ecological virtues, strive for greater simplicity and to focus less on material things.
- Through active stewardship and reducing excessive consumption/waste we demonstrate our care for Creation and gratitude for this great gift.



2 Reduce Paper Waste – Paper is recyclable. Recycle paper at home and office, and buy recycled paper products. Forty percent of the world's commercially cut timber is used for paper. This endangers natural habitats and depletes water resources. Since it's inexpensive to print, we do it without thinking. Try to go paperless: think about what you print, your bank statements, the paper towels you use, and the junk mail you haven't opted out of. There are many areas where each of us can help to lessen paper production.

Join our Care for Creation Efforts! Go to <https://stmatthewcatholic.org/care-for-creation/>

FEBRUARY

1 Live Simply The sum total of all our daily purchases has a massive impact on the environment. The associated destruction of nonrenewable resources, the global warming emissions and industrial toxins from manufacture and transportation of “**stuff**” really adds up. Examine what you really need, where it comes from, and whether it needs to be a “**new**” purchase. Pope Francis urges us to live more simply, as his namesake St. Francis of Assisi did, and to be mindful of our impact on and interdependence with nature.



2 Support green with your purchasing power - Buy products made of recyclable, reusable or biodegradable containers or packaging, and avoid Styrofoam that contains non-biodegradable and carcinogenic elements. When buying items, check product labels to determine an item's recyclability and whether it is made from recycled materials.

Join our Care for Creation Efforts! Go to <https://stmatthewcatholic.org/care-for-creation/>

MARCH

1 Conserving Water – NEED TO UPDATE THIS The average American uses 156 water bottles/year. Due to limited demand, only a small portion of the plastic in your recycling bin gets recycled. Plastic takes decades to degrade, breaks down into smaller pieces, which animals mistake for food, and die. We must use less. During Lent, let's sacrifice convenience to protect the wonderful environment God has given us.

2 Water is a precious life-giving resource requiring enormous energy for distribution/treatment. How you use water can have a significant environmental impact over time. Low flow shower heads, washers, dishwashers and toilets reduce water waste (and cost), as does avoiding letting water run unnecessarily. Fully load washers and dishwashers for more efficient use of this important resource and to be good stewards of the environment God has given us.

Join our Care for Creation Efforts! Go to <https://stmatthewcatholic.org/care-for-creation/>

APRIL

1 Earth Day and Care for Creation – To commemorate Earth Day (April 22), consider reading Pope Francis's landmark encyclical letter about our planet's environment. If you don't own a copy of "Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home," you can find it at <https://bit.ly/1Lh3szp>

From time to time, questions arise about what the connection is between the Catholic faith and the environmental sustainability recommendations presented in this column. Care for God's Creation is one of the seven themes of Catholic social teaching. Care for Creation is not just an Earth Day slogan, it is a requirement of our faith. We are called to protect people and the planet, living our faith in relationship with all of God's creation. The Bishop's tell us, "*The environmental challenge has fundamental moral and ethical dimensions that cannot be ignored.*" To learn more about the Catholic Climate Covenant Earth Day campaign, go to: <https://catholicclimatecovenant.org/program/earth-day>

2 Earth Day 2020: 50th Anniversary of Earth Day! - The diversity and the populations of the species around us and upon which we depend, are declining at alarming rates. However, we can act to protect our species, through our individual actions, our communities, nationally, and globally. Grounded in scripture, Catholic social teaching, and *Laudato Si*, this year's Earth Day program will help mobilize the Catholic community to take urgent action to protect all of God's creation. The one-hour educational program includes prayers, readings, a short video, and suggested activities.

To learn more about the Catholic Climate Covenant Earth Day campaign, go to: <https://catholicclimatecovenant.org/program/earth-day>.

Join our Care for Creation Efforts! Go to <https://stmatthewcatholic.org/care-for-creation/>

3 St. Matthew Cares for Creation Action Plan: We can show our plan, initiatives, and efforts for 2020.

4 The Dangers of Electronic Waste to Earth and People

This Earth Day and in honor of God's greatest gift to us, earth, we want to help reduce one of the most dangerous waste streams on the planet created by mankind: E-waste, or electronic waste. It represents **2%** of America's trash in landfills, but it equals **70%** of overall toxic waste that contain harmful materials such as lead, cadmium, chromium, brominated flame retardants or polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and more which impact human health and create the accumulation of chemicals in soil, water and food.

Because of the dangers of electronic waste, a NC state law requires that electronics must be disposed of properly and recycling is always an option.

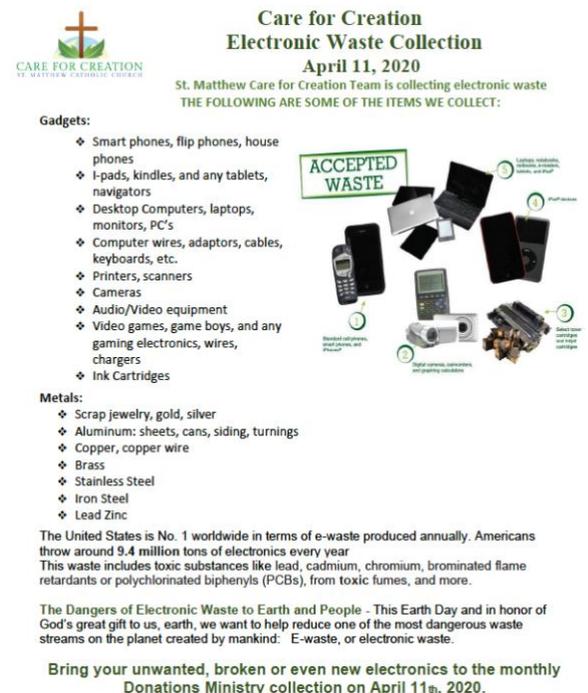
Sadly, a 2018 study reported that only 12.5% of e-waste is recycled.

This year, St. Matthew will host an E-Waste Collection Drive to properly dispose of and recycle electronic waste. These materials often have value and can be a great fundraiser. Host one in your school or community!

Bring your unwanted, broken or even new electronics to the monthly Donations Ministry Collection on April 11th, 2020.

Join our Care for Creation Efforts! Go to <https://stmatthewcatholic.org/care-for-creation/>

MAY



CARE FOR CREATION
ST. MATTHEW CATHOLIC CHURCH

**Care for Creation
Electronic Waste Collection**
April 11, 2020

St. Matthew Care for Creation Team is collecting electronic waste
THE FOLLOWING ARE SOME OF THE ITEMS WE COLLECT:

Gadgets:

- Smart phones, flip phones, house phones
- I-pads, kindles, and any tablets, navigators
- Desktop Computers, laptops, monitors, PC's
- Computer wires, adaptors, cables, keyboards, etc.
- Printers, scanners
- Cameras
- Audio/Video equipment
- Video games, game boys, and any gaming electronics, wires, chargers
- Ink Cartridges

Metals:

- Scrap jewelry, gold, silver
- Aluminum: sheets, cans, siding, turnings
- Copper, copper wire
- Brass
- Stainless Steel
- Iron Steel
- Lead Zinc

The United States is No. 1 worldwide in terms of e-waste produced annually. Americans throw around 9.4 million tons of electronics every year. This waste includes toxic substances like lead, cadmium, chromium, brominated flame retardants or polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), from toxic fumes, and more.

The Dangers of Electronic Waste to Earth and People - This Earth Day and in honor of God's great gift to us, earth, we want to help reduce one of the most dangerous waste streams on the planet created by mankind: E-waste, or electronic waste.

Bring your unwanted, broken or even new electronics to the monthly Donations Ministry collection on April 11th, 2020.



1 Plant trees – They clean our air, protect our drinking water, provide food and habitat for animals. Studies show they even improve our mental health. Trees also absorb the CO₂ that contributes to global warming and release oxygen back into the air. In one year, an acre of mature trees absorbs the amount of CO₂ produced by a car driven 26,000 miles. Planting trees also helps prevent soil erosion, increases land fertility and can add value to your property. Trees that provide shade can also significantly reduce your energy bills. When selecting trees, choose native types to support local wildlife. Spring and Fall can be good times to plant. For more information go to: <https://www.arborday.org/trees/>.

2 Free your home from Toxins - You might be surprised at how many toxic materials we have in our home. Many wonder of the accumulative impact on our family's health. Chemicals in commercial products are not rigidly regulated in the United States, which is why consumers need to be smart about what they bring into their homes. Opt for food grade cleaning supplies or make your own, choose plant based or plastic free products and supplies, buy organic food and even clothes that are produced organically, choose low VOC paints, solvents and other building materials, A wide variety of non-toxic and even fairly traded products can be found at stores now or even offer "Zero Waste" or Carbon Neutral' made products. Cut down on pesticides and fertilizers in your garden and limit what you wash into rivers, bays and oceans.

Go to this site to learn more: <https://www.treehugger.com/cleaning-organizing/how-keep-toxic-chemicals-out-your-home.html>

3 Buy Fresh, Local, Organic – Food travels an average of 1,200 miles before it reaches your plate, so buying locally grown can save energy and prevent air pollution. Also, fresh foods require significantly less energy than frozen foods (but watch out for spoilage which contributes to food waste!). Organics benefit the environment by not relying on synthetic pesticides or fertilizers which can contaminate soil and water. Other benefits of fresh, local and organic can be healthier foods with better taste. Farmers markets and Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs) are both great ways to support a local food system.

Join our Care for Creation Efforts! Go to <https://stmatthewcatholic.org/care-for-creation/>

JUNE

1 Honor the Anniversary of Laudato Si' – (June 16) This week is the anniversary of Pope Francis' encyclical **Laudato Si'**: a text of landmark significance and an appeal for all people on the planet to rethink our relationship with nature.

- The Holy Father invites us to become aware and reflect deeply on the unsustainable environmental degradation around us and its consequences.
- Pope Francis extends an "urgent challenge to protect our common home... to bring the whole human family together to seek a sustainable and integral development, for we know that things can change."
- The Pope asks us to examine our lifestyles through sound ecological virtues, greater simplicity and less focus on material things. By reducing excessive consumption and waste in our lives, we can significantly improve care for Creation.

2 Eliminate Single Use Waste and Consider Zero-waste Options

Because of the negative impact of single use plastic on our earth, in 2020, St. Matthew Parish will rid of all plastic and Styrofoam single use supplies and offer plant based ones instead. St. Matthew's Care for Creation Team asks our parish community to take part in banning all single serve products. We will ask parishioners to bring your own mug, container and even reuse our available mugs when possible.

Here are more tips to eliminate single use waste at home or church events: Opt for reusable items and cloth napkins. At parties, go heavy on finger foods: cut vegetables, nuts, fruits and small sandwiches. If you must go disposable, use organic based or naturally biodegradable paper products instead of plastic. Ditch the straws. Bring beverages in metal or glass containers and recycle. Skipping bottled water saves money and the environment.

Join our Care for Creation Efforts! Go to <https://stmatthewcatholic.org/care-for-creation/>



JULY

1 Calculate your Carbon Footprint – Popes Francis, Benedict XVI and John Paul II have all spoken of the need to address climate change. It's influenced by the amount of heat trapping CO₂ and other greenhouse gases (GHGs) in the atmosphere. Small atmospheric GHG % increases can have a significant impact on Earth's temperature rise. Every day, across everything you do and buy, you contribute to GHG emissions. Calculators can help you better understand how much carbon is produced by different activities. Then, if you decide to reduce your emissions, you'll know where you can generate the biggest impact. Start with this easy to use calculator: <https://www3.epa.gov/carbon-footprint-calculator/>.

2 Composting to Care for Creation. Food scraps and yard waste together currently make up about 30 percent of what we throw away, so consider composting instead. Making compost keeps these materials out of landfills where they take up space and release methane, a potent greenhouse gas. Your compost can then be used to enrich soil and reduce the need for fertilizer. For convenience, try using an airtight receptacle in your kitchen for interim storage of scraps to reduce trips to your outdoor composter. More info can be found at <https://www.epa.gov/recycle/composting-home>.

Join our Care for Creation Efforts! Go to <https://stmatthewcatholic.org/care-for-creation/>



AUGUST

1 Be a mindful consumer to reduce waste – Before purchasing, ask yourself how it will impact the environment. Avoid products with excess packaging. Don't buy what you don't need. Borrow or rent items you need only for occasional use. For items you do buy, look for durability. Consider buying secondhand clothes and household items from thrift stores, consignment shops, and private sellers when it makes sense. Before disposing, donate useful old household items so someone else can reuse them.

REMEMBER THE 5 R'S OF SUSTAINABILITY:
Refuse – Reduce – Repair – Reuse – Recycle

2 What you eat matters! – Meat production accounts for about 15% of climate warming greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Most meat comes from factory farms that are heavily polluting. Cutting back or changing the mix of meats you eat can have a big environmental impact, and can improve your health. Here is EWG's comparison of CO₂ emissions/unit of meat to your plate:

- Chicken rated as the best meat
- Pork, turkey, farmed salmon and cheese are almost 2x worse than chicken
- Beef is 4x worse than chicken
- Lamb is 5x worse than chicken
- Lentils, dry beans, yogurt, peanut butter, rice, nuts, tofu, milk & potatoes are +2x better than chicken.

Join our Care for Creation Efforts! Go to <https://stmatthewcatholic.org/care-for-creation/>

SEPTEMBER

1 Celebrate the Season of Creation – From Sept. 1 to Oct. 4 each year, the Christian community celebrates the Season of Creation by praying and acting together to protect our common home. We Catholics are uniting with others in the Christian family to protect every creature in God's beautifully complex web of creation.

Caring for Creation protects the inheritance the Creator has given us, ... an inheritance essential to our well-being. Pope Benedict XIV told us protecting this inheritance is a way of fulfilling our role as stewards of Creation. Pope Francis urges us to recognize our connectedness with the natural world saying, *“Nature cannot be regarded as something separate from ourselves or as a mere setting in which we live. We are part of nature, included in it and thus in constant interaction with it.”* (LS 139)

2 Encourage Elected Officials to Take Action -

Legislators want to hear from their constituents on issues:

- Contact your legislator about a particular Creation care issue by phone, letter, email, fax, or social media.
- Be brief, concise, specific. Let them know you are a constituent. Tell your legislator what effect you think a particular issue or bill, if it becomes law, will have on you, your children, or community.
- Cover only one issue per call or letter. Also suggest a course of action. It's important to be polite.

If legislators don't hear from you on an issue, they assume it's not important to you. 70 million Catholics can be a powerful force for change. Let's get active!

For current Church-sponsored actions see:

www.catholicclimatecovenant.org/program/advocacy

Join our Care for Creation Efforts! Go to <https://stmatthewcatholic.org/care-for-creation/>

OCTOBER

1 Keep it simple! Live like St. Francis of Assisi who lived in simplicity and in harmony with God.

Pope Francis cautions us to avoid the “culture of consumerism” when he says, “A constant flood of new consumer goods can baffle the heart and prevent us from cherishing each thing and each moment.” A simpler “outer” life, free of clutter and distraction, makes it easier to be more spiritual. In turn, spirituality leads to a less attached and simpler outer life. A virtuous circle! Material simplicity is an intentional pathway to more joy, happiness and the flourishing of God's Creation. Filter acquisition decisions through a lens of needs v. wants. “Less is more”.

Live Simply...

Live like St. Francis of Assisi who lived in simplicity and in harmony with God.

*Replace consumption with sacrifice
Replace greed with generosity,
Wastefulness with sharing
Not just living up things, but living.*

*...as a way of loving earth and
the creatures in it.*



This message provided by  St. Matthew Care for Creation Team

(Source: Laudato Si' Chapter 8)

2 Buy Ethically! Look for Fair Trade practices behind your products.

Think about the hands that created your clothes or harvested your food. Were they children? Did they suffer? How much pollution and waste was produced in the manufacturing process? In order to produce goods cheaply and quickly, companies may be giving up ethical and environmental measures to meet the demand for cheaper products.

Ethical or fair trade represents an employment based on the better treatment of workers, artisans and farmers, providing fair wages, safer working conditions and consideration to the community and environment. This impacts all of us. Commit to thoughtful purchasing with all your gifts this season and even in

our day to day choices of products and services for the new year. Look for labels that indicate ethical policies

are in place:



For more information on Ethical trade: <https://ethicaltrade.crs.org/partnerships/our-promise/>

Join our Care for Creation Efforts! Go to <https://stmatthewcatholic.org/care-for-creation/>

NOVEMBER

1 Tips to Save Energy and Money this Winter

- 1 **Seal and weatherstrip:** can improve the heating system efficiency by as much as 20 %.
- 2 **Use a programmable thermostat:** program to lower the heat by 8 degrees Fahrenheit or more when you are away from home or asleep, and you can save about \$180 per year.
- 3 **Keep your furnace air filters clean:** At minimum, change the filter every three months. This lowers energy bills and improves air quality.
- 4 **Tune up your HVAC equipment yearly.**
- 5 **Close your fireplace damper when not in use.**
Visit the EPA's website for more energy saving tips.

2 **Know How to Recycle and closely follow local recycling/compost/trash rules.** Recycling options are quickly changing. Reducing contamination is key in proper recycling. This can help to keep buyers of materials to be recycled from rejecting material sending it to the landfill. Follow this basic tips:

- Only recycle what your hauler or city picks up.
- Flatten boxes and throwaway any soiled ones.
- Keep SOFT PLASTIC and Styrofoam out of the curbside bin.
- Do not use plastic bags to contain your recyclables. These gum up the machines.
- Make sure your items are clean and dry and free from contaminants (food, glue, tape).

Join our Care for Creation Efforts! Go to <https://stmatthewcatholic.org/care-for-creation/>

December

1 Caring for Our Common Home at Christmas

Consider buying at least one less Christmas gift this year and instead spend time with a special person or donate to a cause serving the most vulnerable. Large scale consumer goods production requires enormous energy and resources. Buying even one less gift moves toward a more sustainable lifestyle.

2 Buying Sustainably Sourced Gifts at Christmas

Pope Francis asks us to become more aware of the "throwaway" culture we are accustomed to. Think about how much pollution and waste was produced in the harvesting and production, transporting and even packaging of your purchases, some, like single serve products, only lasting minutes.

Commit to thoughtful purchasing with all gifts this season and even in day to day choices of products and services for the new year.

What small changes can you make that help preserve the environment and its diminishing resources when you shop?

- ❖ **Ask yourself** - "Is this item really necessary?"
- ❖ **Buy second hand or borrow** – Most likely that item you intend to purchase is available used (even on Amazon), in second hand shops, nextdoor.com for sale, Facebook marketplaces, or even a neighbor.

- ❖ **Buy fair or ethically Traded Goods** - Ethical or Fair Trade represents, safer working conditions and consideration to the community and environment.
- ❖ **Buy organic** – Organic labeling certifies that the item is produced or involving production without the use of chemical fertilizers, pesticides, or other artificial agents.
- ❖ **Shop local** - The average food product travels about 1500 miles before it ends up on your plate. Support your local community businesses and farmers. There is usually less packaging and fewer preservatives.
- ❖ **Purchase products with botanical ingredients** or ingredients that are safe for the environment. These are now found more frequently in cleaning agents, pesticides and even oil.
- ❖ **Support green with your purchasing power** - Buy products made of recyclable, reusable or biodegradable containers or packaging, and avoid Styrofoam that contains non-biodegradable and carcinogenic elements.
- ❖ **Buy supplies that compost naturally** - Many party facilities, picnic and park areas don't have recycle bins nearby so use plant-based or FSC paper products that are compostable.
- ❖ **Shop with sustainable businesses** - Support companies that commit to 'Zero Waste' or Carbon Neutral practices, minimize their footprint by using non-toxic ingredients and materials, energy efficient practices, and water conservation in the manufacturing of their goods. Read your favorite company's 'Sustainability or Social Responsibility Report' to learn more
- ❖ **Avoid green washing** – Many products boast “natural” ingredients, however the term ‘natural’ is not regulated and even harmful ingredients can be labeled natural or green. Be aware of misleading information and always read the ingredient list for the actual contents.

Want to learn more? Join our Care for Creation Efforts! Go to <https://stmatthewcatholic.org/care-for-creation/>

SOURCES AND MORE IDEAS

Weekly Tips:

<https://catholicclimatecovenant.org/resource/bulletin>

<https://www.mercyworld.org/global-action/>

<https://catholicclimatecovenant.org/program/earth-day>

<https://catholicclimatecovenant.org/resource/10-ways-you-can-make-difference>

<https://catholicclimatecovenant.org/program/advocacy>

EARTH DAY TOOLKIT from Catholic Climate Covenant: Free downloadable Posts, Images, and articles, etc. <https://catholicclimatecovenant.org/program/earth-day>

IMAGES

Far top right corner: <http://www.heartofthehighlands.org/laudatosi> contact David Doll, at: ddoll@stjameslou.org

Season of Creation Image: <https://www.mercyworld.org/newsroom/preparing-for-the-season-of-creation-2016-1september-4-october-1561/>

10 Ways You Can Make a Difference in 2020

Source: <https://catholicclimatecovenant.org/resource/10-ways-you-can-make-difference>

PDF version:

<https://catholicclimatecovenant.org/files/resource/attachment/102bWays2bYou2bCan2bMake2ba2bDifference1.pdf>

10 Ways You Can Make a Difference

Be energy efficient. During the summer months, close your curtains to block heat from the sun. During the winter, open your curtains during the day to allow the sun to warm your home. These simple steps can significantly reduce the need for air conditioning and heating, which are likely the most energy-intensive aspects of your home.

Calculate your carbon footprint. Understanding which activities are carbon-intensive allows you to know where you can take action. The EPA has a free [carbon footprint calculator](#) you can use.

Adjust the thermostat. Turning down your air conditioning or heating when you leave the house will further shrink your carbon footprint. A change of just 3 degrees is a good start.

Adjust your driving routine. By combining multiple errands into one trip, you reduce the amount of fossil fuel you use.

Go meatless on Fridays. Livestock production accounts for 4% of Americans' greenhouse gas, according to the EPA. By going meatless one day per week, you'll both honor Catholic teaching and better care for Creation.

Recycle More. Recycling reduces your carbon footprint both because landfills emit greenhouse gases through decomposition, and because manufacturing from scratch is carbon-intensive. Find where and how to recycle almost anything in your area at [search.epr11.com](#).

Use less water. Water processing accounts for approximately 2% of energy use in the United States, according to the EPA. Saving water means saving energy. Post a "please conserve water" sign at sinks and showers, install low-flow toilets, or select the "eco" setting on laundry machines and dishwashers.

Petition policy makers. Your elected officials have the power to take action on climate change. [Write policy letters](#) to tell them that you stand for the stewardship of creation.

Write to your local newspaper. Writing a letter to the editor has effects beyond your local community. Legislators assign their staffs to read letters to the editor as an important barometer of constituents' interests. For tip sheets and templates, write to programs@catholicclimatecovenant.org.

Form a study or action group at church. We are all strengthened when we act together as a community. Consider forming a [Creation Care Team](#), and visit [CatholicClimateCovenant.org](#) for more information.

Members: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops • Department of Justice, Peace, and Human Development & Migration and Refugee Services • Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities • Catholic BIDD • Catholic Charities USA • Catholic Health Association of the United States • Catholic Relief Services • Catholic Rural Life • Columbian Center for Outreach and Advocacy • Conference of Major Superiors of Nuns • Franciscan Sisters General • Leadership Conference of Women Religious • National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry • National Council of Catholic Women • Sisters of Mercy of the Americas

More posts:

-To help keep waterways clean and safe from pollutants, take steps such as using biodegradable detergents at home and in businesses and eliminating the use of disposable plastic whenever possible. Also, be aware that synthetic pesticides and herbicides can harm birds and insects that benefit agriculture.

-Try to eliminate as much disposable plastic from your life as possible; it breaks down into tiny particles that enter streams, lakes and oceans, harming harm fish and other wildlife. Instead, keep a reusable water bottle; wash and reuse plastic sandwich and snack bags, or try replacing them with waxed paper or waxed paper bags, which can be composted.

-Try to limit the use of disposable wet wipes, which are sold for a variety of purposes. Many are made with plastics or synthetic fibers that can disintegrate into micro-plastics that become harmful to wildlife in aquatic environments. Some wipes also have been shown to damage sewer systems. Search the internet for instructions on making reusable wet wipes for various purposes around your home.

-When visiting your favorite coffee shop, bring along your own travel mug to cut down on paper waste. Use a reusable spoon to stir your coffee and not the stirrers the shop provides. Each year an estimated 138 billion straws and stirrers are thrown away in the U.S