

Diocese of Plymouth Environmental Policy Framework for Action

February 2021

This document offers some suggestions for how the Diocese of Plymouth's Environmental Policy can be implemented in our schools, parishes and personal lives. This document will be regularly updated to reflect new guidance and emerging best practice.

Actions We Can All Take

- Pray to encourage a reflective attentiveness to cries of the poor and the earth and develop worship materials that praise God for His creation.
- Raise awareness and educate people on situations and issues that result in injustice, violence and damage to the environment.
- Be open to and engage with victims of injustice and damage to the environment, building relationships of mutuality and respect.
- Commit to campaign against unjust policies and structures that are detrimental to people and the environment.
- Collaborate with those who have similar concerns within and beyond the Christian family.
- Encourage acts of service, care and hospitality to those in need especially to the hungry, homeless and destitute.
- Collect and share money and resources for those in need, especially those who are impoverished by the damage done to the environment.

Schools

- Have a little wildlife area in the garden or school grounds; buy a Bob Bat Box from CAFOD and use it to create a safe habitat for British bats and birds.
- Avoid the use of pesticides that have a detrimental effect on bees and other pollinators.



- Sign up to the Live Simply Award that will enable your school to live and work together for a fairer world that looks after the environment: <https://cafod.org.uk/Campaign/Livesimply-award>
- Incorporate some of the ways to make your school green www.cbcew.org.uk/home/our-work/environment/making-your-school-green/
- Measure your school's carbon footprint and then measure it again in six months, 12 months and so on, to see the effect of your actions.
- Conduct an annual review of environmental impact using tools provided by the Diocese of Plymouth.

Parishes

- Use our graveyards and gardens to encourage an environment that can support more varieties plant and animal life.
- Sign up to the Live Simply award - a very practical and meaningful way to show your commitment to tackling climate change and poverty: <https://cafod.org.uk/Campaign/Livesimply-award>
- Consider purchasing goods which comply with fair trade standards. Have a deposit point for food banks.
- Organise a short course on Catholic Social Teaching and draw up an action plan for your school, local parish and community.
- Celebrate a special Sunday related to Caring for God's Earth e.g. Laudato Si' Week or the Season of Creation.
- Set targets for reducing the carbon footprint of our church premises and achieving year on-year improvements in energy efficiency. Insulate where possible and use energy efficient light bulbs.
- Conduct an annual review of environmental impact using tools provided by the Diocese of Plymouth.

Personal

- Offer thanks for the food on our table by saying grace before and after a meal.
- Pray for justice and peace; thank God for the beautiful world we live in. Encourage your parish and school to pray for justice, peace and the integrity of creation.
- Buy what we genuinely need and don't get caught up in what Pope Francis calls '*a whirlwind of needless buying and spending*'. When we buy goods, we validate the practices of the producer. We should look to support those that produce sustainably.
- Consider a meat-free day or even two days. Think about how to reduce consumption of plastics, travel etc.



- Buy local produce that has a low carbon footprint because it has not had to be transported long distances. If you can, buy more organic produce that is kinder to the environment and does not require large quantities of artificial fertilisers; this helps smaller scale farmers who are the majority of the world's producers.
- Consider buying electricity from green providers who are committed to renewable energy sources.

Diocesan

- Work with national partners (including Church Investors Group) to ensure our investment policies adhere to ethical guidelines and promote investment for social benefit. Ask Fund Managers to report on the key questions raised by the Church Investors Group.
- Work with Church Marketplace to promote purchasing which complies with environmental and fair trade best practice.
- Annually review and report to Trustees on our way of working at Diocesan, school and parish level to verify our effectiveness in achieving environmental objectives.
- Receive best practice from national bodies and cascade guidance and toolkits to schools and parishes.
- Include an environmental impact assessment in all major investment and property disposal issues, as well as other new projects and events.
- Encourage everyone to cut down on unnecessary journeys and use public transport or cycle and walk instead of using a car and organise meetings online where possible.

Laudato Si' in Schools: Additional Resources

The school playground and classroom play an important role in nurturing core ecological values. Environmental education is particularly vital, as it shapes how our younger generation care for our common home. In *Laudato si'*, Pope Francis highlights the important role that education plays:

'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. Education in environmental responsibility can encourage ways of acting which directly and significantly affect the world around us, such as avoiding the use of plastic and paper, reducing water consumption, separating refuse, cooking only what can reasonably be consumed, showing care for other living beings, using public transport or car-pooling, planting trees, turning off unnecessary lights, or any number of other practices.' (211)

<https://cafod.org.uk/Education/Laudato-Si-for-schools>

www.catholiceducation.org.uk/schools/laudato-si-resources

<https://se-ed.co.uk/edu/>



<https://naee.org.uk/curriculum-resources/>

www.netregs.org.uk/environmental-topics/useful-links/resources-for-schools/

www.eco-schools.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Early-Years-Eco-Schools-Leadership-Pack.pdf

www.cbcew.org.uk/home/our-work/environment/

www.catholic-social-teaching.org.uk/themes/care-creation/

<https://www.wwf.org.uk/get-involved/schools/resources/climate-change-resources>

www.campaigncc.org/schoolresources

www.schoolscience.co.uk/climatechangeschoolsprojectresources

<https://globaldimension.org.uk/resources/cafod-climate-change-resources-secondary/>

<https://catholicclimatecovenant.org/audience/educators-primary-school>

Catholic Earthcare Australia have also developed many educational resources to enable schools to care for creation; they also suggest actions schools can take at a local and a global level:

<https://catholicearthcare.org.au/earthcare-steps-to-ecological-dialogue/>

<https://catholicearthcare.org.au/laudato-si-week-2020/>

<https://catholicearthcare.org.au/elementor-887/>



01364 645421

caritas@prcdtr.org.uk

www.plymouth-diocese.org.uk/caritas

Caritas Plymouth • St Boniface House
Ashburton • Devon • TQ13 7JL

