



10 Ways Your Parish Can Make a Difference

Calculate your carbon footprint. Understanding which of your activities are carbon-intensive allows your parish to know where it can take action. To help, use the EPA's free [carbon footprint calculator](#).

Consider energy efficiency. Research if you'd qualify for tax rebates or other special programs to help retrofit your buildings to be more energy efficient.

Start a "Wash and Dry" team. Instead of using paper and plastic dinnerware for parish events, go to your local thrift store and buy reusable ones. Then start a volunteer team to wash and dry them after each event. Your parish will reduce its paper and plastic waste.

Turn off your office. Put your office appliances (computers, printers, etc.) on a power strip and turn it off at night.

Educate your community. Include information about how climate change affects vulnerable people at home and around the world in your weekly parish bulletin or on your social media accounts.

Identify parish advocates. Find a few volunteers from your parish who'll take action by writing letters to the editor and to your local legislators, or by attending local government meetings. Your elected officials and media outlets have the power to influence the climate conversation. As a community, encourage them to take substantive action.

Switch to low-flow faucets and toilets, and to energy efficient lightbulbs. Water processing accounts for approximately 3% of energy use in the United States, and electricity generation accounts for approximately 39%, according to the EPA. Saving water and electricity means saving energy.

Adjust the thermostat. Turning down the church's and the rectory's air conditioning or heating will further reduce your parish's energy consumption. This is probably one of your parish's most carbon-intensive activities, but a change of just 5 degrees is a great start.

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

Make climate change an agenda item for parish meetings. Get creative! Discuss and act upon your parish's unique opportunities to address climate change and care for creation in your area. Each parish, by virtue of its unique context, has something special to contribute to the solution.