

Focus: Simplicity

Daily invitations to care for God's Gift of
Creation *during Lent*

During the season of Lent let us
contemplate Gospel values concerning
our call to ecological conversion and our
call to be responsible stewards of creation
as outlined in “Laudato Si” on caring for
our Common Home by Pope Francis.

These Scriptures and invitations are
organized by a weekly focus, beginning
with Ash Wednesday, and changing each
Sunday. Contemplation and action go
hand in hand. Not all invitations will be
possible for everyone.

Challenge yourself, remembering that
God’s grace is with you.

ASH WEDNESDAY – FEBRUARY 14

*“Is not this the fast that I choose: to lose the bonds of injustice, to
undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free. Is it not
to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor
into your house... Then your light shall break forth like the
dawn... and the glory of God shall be your rear guard.” Is
58:6-8*

February 15 *“He has told you, O mortal, what is good, and
what the Lord requires of you but to do justice, to love kindness
and to walk humbly with God.” Micah 6:8*

Invitation: Make a” Consumption List” listing all
you consume (eat, wear, use, or buy) for one day.
Classify each entry as “Needed” or Useful” or Nice
to Have”

February 16 *“From everyone to whom much is given, much
will be required: and from one to whom much has been entrusted,
even more will be required.” Luke 12:48*

Invitation: Identify what constitutes your “trash” that goes “away” for disposal. Find out where it goes and how long it really takes to go away.

February 17 *“Strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given you as well” Matthew 6:33*

Invitation: Ask yourself, how did I spend my time? Was it a righteous use of time and money?

Weekly Focus: Simplicity
First Sunday February 18

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Loving God, your heart is open to the call of all creatures and all creation. Open our eyes to see the needs of others. Open our ears to hear their cry. Open our hearts that we might be touched to act, and open our hands to respond. Give us compassionate hearts. Amen

February 19 *“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also”. Matthew 6:21*

Invitation: Reduce exposure to advertising and social media influence. Notice how ads & social media bombard you, stirring up your desire to buy.

February 20 *“The earth is the Lord’s and all that is in it, the world and all his people, for he has founded it upon the seas and established it on the rivers.” Ps 24 :1-3*

Invitation: Get outside for a few moments and connect with the natural world.

February 21 *“Keep your lives from love of money, and be content with what you have; for he has said, “I will never leave you or forsake you”. Hebrew 13: 5*

Invitation: Create a “Gratitude List” and add three things each day for which you are grateful.

February 22 *“Jesus said, “Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none, and whoever has food must do likewise”. Luke 3:11*

Invitation: Check your closet and give to the marginalized what you do not need.

February 23 *“You set the earth on its foundations, so that it will never be shaken.” Ps 104 5*

Invitation: Take a meditative walk outdoors. Look at the sunset. Praise God

February 24 *"When you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame. You will be blessed because they cannot repay you." Luke 13 :13*

Invitation: Donate to the [Mary Queen Food Pantry](#), or help an unhoused person.

Weekly Focus: FOOD

Second Sunday February 25

Good and gracious God, you provided manna in the desert for your chosen people. May we recognize that our food comes from your bounty, the generosity of our planet and the work for many human hands. Teach us to reverence your creation which supplies our food. Help us to recognize that eating is a moral act. Amen

February 26 *"Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread together at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts." Acts 2:46*

Invitation: Do without fast food and highly processed food. Think about how much waste(trash) fast food produces and how the extra salt, sugar and fat affects your body.

February 27 *"Hear this, you that trample on the needy, and bring to ruin the poor of the land." Amos 8:4*

Invitation: Drink fair trade coffee/tea. Read the point of origin on food labels. Have gratitude for those who have labored in the fields, orchards, on farms and in processing plants.

February 28 *"Give thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." Ephesians 5:20*

Invitation: Pause in prayer before eating. Pray for the many people who have helped bring food to your table.

February 29 *"I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever". John 6:51*

Invitation: Do I waste food? How can I share the bread of life?

March 1 *Jesus saw the crowd and they were hungry ... Give them something to eat yourselves. Mt. 14:16*

Invitation: Plan ahead for the meals of the week. Include leftovers and pantry items that need to be used.

March 2 *"Whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all" Galatians 6:10*

Invitation: Buy food grown and processed close to home. Consider as a family supporting the Mary Queen [Social Concerns Ministries](#)

Week three Focus: CONSUMPTION

Third Sunday March 3

O Giver of Life, you are the source of all creation. Through the healing power of Jesus, you brought sight to the blind. Open our eyes to see the pervasive consumerism in our country.

Free us from its grip so we may grow in spiritual freedom. Teach us to use creation with moderation and compassion for those who do not have enough. You are our hope. Amen

March 4 *"How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses to help?" 1 John 3:17*

Invitation: Clean out your closet, cabinet, attic or garage. Give to a charity what is in good shape and recycle what is not. Be mindful of what you throw away. Many household items leach toxins into soil and groundwater. Consult Mary Queen Creation Care for recycling options.

March 5 *"Jesus said to them, "Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions." Luke 12:15*

Invitation: Use paper responsibly. Recycle newspapers, cardboard and magazines.

March 6 *"Since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us give thanks by which we offer to God an acceptable worship, reverence and awe; for indeed our God is a consuming fire." Hebrews 12:28-29*

Invitation: Buy products from environmentally and socially responsible companies. Reduce or bundle on-line purchases. Shipping creates a lot of waste and adds to carbon emissions.

March 7 *"Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and keep oneself unstained by the world." James 1:27*

Invitation: Pay attention to the manipulation of values by social media. Move away from unnecessary and wasteful consumption. Consumption of 'things' and your TIME.

March 8 *"I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. ... I regard all things as rubbish in order to gain Christ and be found in him." Philippians 3:8*

Invitation: Reduce, reuse, recycle. Pray today about what it means to reduce what we buy and reuse what we have and how it affects all that God has given to us.

March 9 *"Do not worry over what you are to eat and what you are to drink, instead strive for the kingdom of God and all these things will be given to you as well." Luke 12:29*

Invitation: Craving drives much of our consumption, depleting God's creation. Replace recreational shopping with Sabbath time. Be the hands and feet of Christ. Check out Elementary Faith Formation's [2 Hands of Christ](#)

Week four Focus: WATER

Fourth Sunday March 10

**Creator God,
Your waters refresh
our bodies and give life to the Earth.
From the hardness of our hearts, bring forth
the waters of compassion and care.
Open our hearts to the water crisis in our
world. Guide us in ways to reduce waste and
overconsumption of this precious resource.
Teach us to use this sacred water wisely. Amen**

March 11 *"Let everyone who is thirsty come. Let anyone who wishes take the water of life as a gift." Rev. 22:17*

Invitation: Learn how you can use water more wisely. Only run the dishwasher and washing machine if you have a full load. Reduce your use of plastic water bottles. Use a refillable water bottle instead. Challenge yourself to carry it with you at all times.

March 12 *"Let us approach God with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water." Hebrews 10:22*

Invitation: Calculate your water footprint. See www.waterfootprint.org

March 13 *"Let us seek to know the Lord; his appearance is as sure as the dawn; he will come like the dawn, like the spring rains watering the earth. Hosea 6:3*

Invitation: Turn off water while brushing your teeth, saving two gallons per minute. Reduce your shower time. Turn off the water when lathering your body.

March 14 *"Jesus said to the woman, 'If you knew the gift God is offering you and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink' you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.'" John 4:10*

Invitation: Watch "The Story of Bottled Water" at www.storyofstuff.org Avoid using bottled water or any plastic bottles.

March 15 *"You shall not pollute the land in which you live; for blood pollutes the land, and no expiation can be made for the land." Numbers 35:33*

Invitation: Consider ways to keep water clean and safe. Dispose of household waste e.g., paint, used oil; insecticide containers and prescription

medicines responsibly. Contact MQ Creation Care for locations nearby.

March 16 *"Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream." Amos 4:24*

Invitation: Don't let water run thoughtlessly during food preparation, or when car washing.

Week five Focus:
ENERGY & OUR BODIES
Fifth Sunday March 17

**Good and gracious God,
you are the light of the world.
Forgive us for acting as if creation belongs to us,
rather than to you.**

**Help us to conserve and use wisely the
treasures of this Earth.**

**Teach us lifestyles which are a blessing to
creation. May your spirit light the way. Amen**

March 18 *"The sun shall no longer be your light by day, nor the brightness of the moon by night; but the Lord will give you everlasting light, and God will be your glory. Is 60:19*

Invitation: Turn lights out when you leave a room. Challenge your family to use fewer lights. Use light bulbs that require less energy.

March 19 *"Whoever is faithful in little things is faithful also in much." Luke 16:10*

Invitation: Unplug appliances when not in use to stop "energy leaks". Fuel your body with healthy foods.

March 20 *"The night is far gone; the day is near. Let us lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light". Romans 13:12*

Invitation: Tonight turn off every light in your home and sit quietly for a moment in the dark. Notice that even in the darkness there is light. As you turn the lights back on, appreciate the gift of light and energy.

March 21 *"Light dawns for the righteous and joy for the upright of heart." Psalm 97:11*

Invitation: Wake before first light. Go outside and marvel at the beauty and power of the sunrise. Reflect on how God has given us the sun which powers everything. Use energy saving settings on the Big Four: refrigerator; dishwasher, clothes washer and dryer.

March 22 *"You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden." Mt. 5:14*

Invitation: You are created by God. Be mindful and thankful for this gift. How can you better care for your body? Consider planning to join other parishioners on April 1st (8am) for a healthy walk or run right here at Mary Queen. Register online.

March 23 *"Your eye is the lamp of the body. If your eye is healthy, your whole body is full of light". Luke 11:34*

Invitation: Give your eyes a rest from screens especially at night as you prepare for sleep. Be mindful of what you choose to view. Does it build you and others up or does it make you depressed or tear down others?

Palm Sunday Focus: TRANSPORTATION

March 24 Sunday

O Giver of Life, You called your chosen people to journey with you and blessed their movement. Guide us as we search for alternative means to fuel our journeys. Give us the creativity and

courage to protect your creation and share its resources fairly. Amen

March 25 *"As Saul was going along to Damascus and approached, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him."*

Acts 9:3

Invitation: Take opportunities to walk or ride a bike to any location within six blocks to your home, school or office. Think about how difficult it is to get places without using a car. Try to carpool, take a bus or plan other ways you can cut back on car use.

March 26 *"You have no trust in the Lord, who goes before you on the way to seek out a place for your camp; in a cloud by day and fire by night to show you the route you should take." Deut. 1:32-33*

Invitation: Before getting into your car ask yourself. "Is this trip really necessary, right now?"

March 27 *"Jesus went through towns and villages proclaiming and bring good news of the Kingdom of God" Luke 8:1*

Invitation: Reflect on the many ways people got around at the time of Jesus and on into the 21st century. Our current fossil fuel dependency hurts our atmosphere and is a source of conflict around the world. Imagine transportation of the future.

A prayer for our earth

From Laudato Si by Pope Francis.

All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of your creatures. You embrace with tenderness all that exists. Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty. Fill us with peace, that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one. O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth, so precious in your eyes. Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect our world and not prey on it, that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction. Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain at the expense of the poor of the earth. Teach us to discover the worth of each thing, to be filled with awe and contemplation, to recognize that we are profoundly united with every creature as we journey towards your infinite light. We thank you for being with us each day. Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love and peace. Amen