

STEP 4: TAKE ACTION

REDUCE AND RECYCLE PLASTIC

Pope Francis continues to challenge us to change the “throwaway culture” we live in. What are we called to do in response to the pope’s challenge and how should we do it?

RESEARCH: the amount of plastic bags, water bottles and straws that are used and discarded each year. Design a graph or chart to help explain your findings to your class/group.

REDUCE: make a chart with three columns. Label them plastic bags, straws, water bottles. For the next week track how many of these you use each day. At the end of the week brainstorm as a class ways that you can eliminate single-use plastic. Use the family pledge card (available at discoveryourneighbor.org) to commit how the family will reduce/recycle and repurpose plastic.

RECYCLE: learn about your local recycle program in your community. Interview leaders at your school, church, as well as your family to find out how well they are recycling. Together find ways to implement effective recycling programs.

RAISE YOUR VOICE

Raise your voice in your school, church or local community by doing a letter writing campaign to restaurants, stores, etc., asking them to reduce or terminate their use of plastic. Watch the “Straws No More Video” on DYN website and decide if you want to join the campaign or create one of your own. Share what you are doing on Instagram @DiscoverYourNeighbor.

BE A GLOBAL NEIGHBOR

Did you know that Maryknoll Fathers & Brothers work with communities all over the world that are deeply impacted by the world’s consumption. One example is the project in Guatemala that works to reduce the production of plastic and to reduce waste in the water. Visit DiscoverYourNeighbor.org to learn how to support these efforts as a family, classroom, school or parish.



Father Ted Custer (top right) with local parishioners (S.Sprague/Guatemala)

ENGAGE YOUR FAMILY

Share what you have learned with your family. Invite them to keep track with you and then look for ways to reduce and recycle plastic in your house.

EXTENSION; Go on a scavenger hunt in your home. Make a list of all things that are made of disposable plastic. When finished, discuss alternatives that the family can use in place of plastic that are more environmentally friendly.

M Fathers and Brothers
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NEXT ISSUE COMING NOVEMBER 2018: MIGRATION

CARE OF CREATION

TRANSFORMING A THROWAWAY CULTURE

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DYN
DISCOVER YOUR NEIGHBOR

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Sean Sprague/Guatemala

OBJECTIVE:

Students will be able to: **OBSERVE** and **EXPLAIN** how plastic waste threatens the natural environment. **IDENTIFY** ways to reduce the use of plastic and how these relate to their faith. **UNDERSTAND** how our faith calls us to protect the earth. **APPLY** what has been learned by doing presentations and projects to encourage others to change behaviors which support a throwaway culture.

STEP 1: PRAY

Loving God,
You created all things both big and small in the universe.
You tenderly care for all that exists.

Empower us with your love
That we may protect and care for your creation.
Fill us with your peace, that we may be kind to all.

Open our hearts and lives
That we may heal the world and not harm it.
Help us to care for the earth, our common home.

Amen!

FAITH PERSPECTIVE

“As a young priest in Manila, Philippines, I was invited by my friend, a local pastor, to visit members of his church. Our visit took us to ‘Smokey Mountain,’ a garbage pile so high it really looked like a mountain. My friend and I carefully navigated the narrow path which led us up to the top of the pile where we were greeted by a family and invited into their home.

“I watched as the baby crawled on the laminated floor which had been carefully placed upon the rubbish below. I listened to stories about how each day the family worked the pile to recycle items

like plastic and metals. I remember the smell; it was so strong that when I returned home, right away I had to wash everything, including my shoes.

“What I learned from this experience and others I had with my neighbors in the Philippines is the importance of recycling and how often we throw things away that can be recycled and reused with a little bit of work and imagination.”

Fr. Clyde Phillips, M.M.

NEIGHBOR FOCUS – GUATEMALA

Alejandro Cordoba’s friends jumped into the back of his Toyota truck to meet up with Fr. Ted Custer, M.M. and his truckload of volunteers. They were headed to Lake Macanche in Guatemala for a parish clean-up operation. Their mission: to pick up plastic garbage. Once the image of a pristine paradise, the lake was now starting to suffer from the effects of human behavior from the nearby villages.

Alejandro shook his head in dismay as he watched a dump truck

being washed in the lake, with grease and oil flooding the waters. He also saw women washing clothes with the detergent seeping into the water. He shook his head again and said, “Poor fish.”

The group began to work and filled several large bags of items thrown away on the shores of the lake. The last stop for the group was the recycle center. As they headed home, they took pride in knowing at least for today they had done their part to maintain paradise.

STEP 2: MAKE PERSONAL CONNECTIONS

READ the *FAITH PERSPECTIVE* article as a class/group. **DISCUSS:** A throwaway culture is one where people use something only once or a few times and then toss it out. Think through your day or week, and how much of what you use is thrown out after only one use. Based on the Faith Perspective article, how do you think so much trash is accumulated? Why do you think people end up living in the dump? **RESEARCH:** Where does your trash and recycling go? What happens to it when it gets there? **EXTENSION:** Together, brainstorm ways that we can start reducing the amount of plastic we use. Have each person pick one idea they will start doing and write or draw their commitment on a card. Tape it on a wall and check back in a month to evaluate how things are going.

IN A GROUP: Read *NEIGHBOR FOCUS* and What Does the Church Say. **DISCUSS:** How do you think Alejandro felt when he said, “Poor fish?” How was he working to make changes in his environment and trying to ensure that this area will remain clean in the future? How do you think that we can change the “throwaway culture”? What are some of your biggest challenges to making these changes? Fr. Custer felt called to help clean up the plastic in the lake. What do you feel God is calling you to do? **EXTENSION:** Create a campaign to advocate for changing the “throwaway culture.” Consider the following: Who are the people you want to reach? What is the message you want to share with them? What is the best way to reach them? How will you encourage others to join your campaign?

STEP 3: EXPLORE SCRIPTURE AND TRADITION

READ ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

OLD TESTAMENT: Genesis 2: 4-15

LIFE OF JESUS: Matthew 6:25-34

CHRISTIAN LIVING: Romans 8:18-22

REFLECT: What does this reading say to you about the relationship and responsibilities between humans, creation and God? How do we not only serve each other but also creation?

READ the Scripture, **CIRCLE** the words that catch your attention. What is it about those words that strikes you? **CREATE** a prayer using some of the words you selected that shows your commitment to caring for creation.

WHAT DOES THE CHURCH SAY?

In *Laudato Si'* Pope Francis appeals to all of us to “recognize the need for changes of lifestyle, production and consumption. These are closely linked to a throwaway culture which affects the excluded just as it quickly reduces things to rubbish.” *Laudato Si'* 22-23

“The earth, our home, is beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth. The climate is a common good, belonging to all and meant for all.” *Laudato Si'* 21 & 23

“Young people demand change. They wonder how anyone can claim to be building a better future without thinking of the environmental crisis and the sufferings of the excluded.

We know that things can change. Humanity still has the ability to work together in building our common home.” *Laudato Si'* 13