



**SEASON OF CREATION**



**Green Churches**  
Network

**ACTION**

## **FAMILY AND COMMUNITY GUIDE**



This guide is divided into 4 sections :

- An activity to build awareness about the trees in your community.
- Six fun activities for everyone that can be adapted to meet your needs.
- Practical tips on how to make a short video.
- Annex: Inspiring Quotes About Creation Care



## 1- An activity to build awareness about the trees in your community



The objective of this activity is to learn about the trees and shrubs in your community. If you are in an urban setting, walk the streets around your neighbourhood, if you live in a rural setting, walk through a piece of land that you can lay out.

Invite the children to take pictures of the different trees and create a digital album or a presentation (on PowerPoint or Google Slides).

Take notes about the health of the trees, are they young, mature, diseased, or dead? Write down any species you can identify.

Take notes about why a tree may have been pruned or cut down.

Once back home, download the images, and with the cooperation of family members, try to identify the remaining tree species.

Take the time to make a virtual presentation or video with the photos.

Organize a screening of the presentation, at a family gathering, with friends, or with your church community.

This activity will help raise awareness about the presence, the health, and the biodiversity of the trees in your community.



## 2- Six fun activities for everyone that can be adapted to meet your needs

### Make a Bird Feeder from an Orange Peel

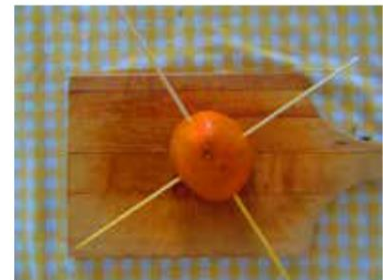
One way to introduce children to caring for creation is to allow them to make something simple, especially for those under six years old. This bird feeder will make use of orange peels. If you make yourself fresh orange juice, you end up with two empty halves. These can be used to make a bird feeder. (1)



Materials needed:

- half an orange (peel only)
- black sunflower seeds
- natural peanut butter (1 tbsp)
- two bamboo skewers
- string or wool
- scissors (safe for children)

- 1- Take an orange peel and insert the two bamboos in the shape of an X.
- 2- Mix peanut butter and sunflower seeds.
- 3- Place this mixture in the orange.
- 4- Cut 4 strings of the same length and tie them to the bamboo.
- 5- Take a picture of the family with the feeder before installing it, a nice souvenir.
- 6- Choose a location to hang the feeder where the birds can come in peace and safety. Place the feeder in a way that is safe for the birds (like far from a window) and if possible, in a tree that remains green all year long.
- 7- Don't forget to check your feeder from time to time. If you need to replace it, you can reuse the bamboo and the rope to make another one. ■



(1) <https://www.naturalbeachliving.com/orange-bird-feeder/>

## Be-a-Bee-Friendly Family/Community

We can all help the bees. There are several simple initiatives that can be taken.

Discuss and decide if you want to become a bee-friendly family, community or church. Here are some suggestions:

- 1- Watch a documentary about the importance of bees, how they transfer pollen from one plant to another and how this impacts food production (like fruits, vegetables, and nuts).
- 2- Plant flowers. Set aside a corner in your yard or on your church property or use containers or pots on your balcony. Choose a variety of flowers with different colors and with different blooming cycles. Different species of bees have different preferences of flowers, and you want to make sure there is flowers available all season long.

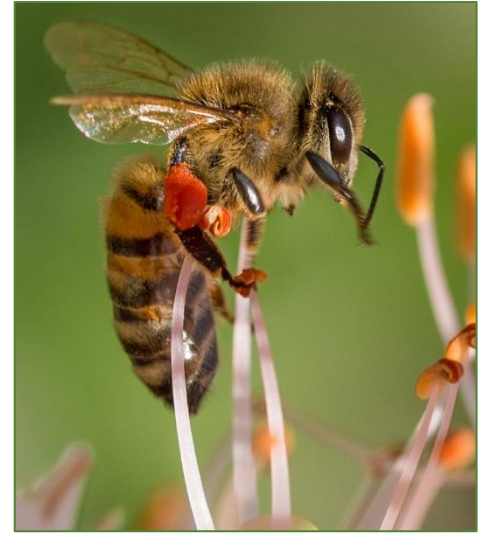
A tip: before buying at the garden center or market, find out if the flowers have been treated with pesticides or chemicals. Pesticides are one of the causes of death for bees.

- 3- Leave water out for the bees to drink. Provide a dish with water and add colored beads to it so that the bees can comfortably have a drink.

- 4- Make an insect hotel for the bees to enjoy. Here are some resources on how to do this and what materials are needed:

<https://www.cbc.ca/parents/play/view/nature-craft-diy-bug-ho-tel>

<https://www.natureconservancy.ca/en/blog/archive/how-to-build-abug-hotel.html>



Insect Hotel



# Make a Mural About the Climate We Want for the Future



Materials needed:

1. Roll of recycled gift wrap or easel paper (about 30 m long)
2. Canvas for painting (protection) - enough for the length of the mural
3. Pencils, paints, brushes, etc.
4. Pots and water for cleaning brushes
5. Reusable adhesive (to install the mural)
6. Padding for knees

This group activity (five to 20 participants or 3-4 families) is ideal for ages 10 and up. Toddlers can participate with the help of their parents. It can last from half a day to a full day with a break for lunch. This activity will allow the community to align itself with concrete actions towards creating the future we want to see.

Depending on the location and number of people participating, place the painting canvas on the floor first, then the recycled gift paper or easel paper on top. Provide cushions for everyone's knees.



Announce that the mural is to illustrate the future climate we want. After discussion, choose the themes that participants want to illustrate (i.e.: oceans, bees, the green city, green transportation, our green church, protecting people from climate change, glaciers and snow, sustainable food, etc.). Divide the themes and space on the mural.

Plan a place for the mural to be displayed over the long term, that way community members can be reminded about the future we need to create. Over the next few months, discuss and make a list of actions that your community can do to help achieve the goals displayed on your mural. ■

## A Christian Ecological Nature Walk

This activity can be inter-generational so that, from the youngest to the oldest of your community, the concern for the preservation of the Earth can be shared. A small team could take care of organizing the event.

1- Choose around 10 or 12 biblical quotes and passages about Christian ecology to have on hand (see the Annex of Inspiring Quotes About Creation Care). Distribute the texts to the people who will read them to the group. Since the activity is outside, provide a megaphone if necessary.

2- Choose a location that allows for an interesting walk (flowers, trees, water, etc.) taking into account those with physical limitations, strollers, and wheelchairs.

3- Determine the date, start, and end times. Plan an alternative date in case the weather does not permit the activity to be held. Clearly indicate how long the walk will last. A tip: the ideal is between 45 and 60 minutes.

4- Publicize the event, take registrations, and provide ecological transportation options (electric bus/bike routes/car pooling).

5- During the walk, invite the participants to listen (requesting silence if necessary) and to feel the presence all around them. Observing the ground, the wind, the smells, and all the surrounding sights (both big and small).

6- Every five minutes, stop so that the participants can listen to the readings. Take some reflections from the participants. Then walk another five minutes in silence.

7- At the end of the walk, collect the impressions of the participants. Write a short report for your newsletter or website. ■



## Create a 'Parachute For the Planet'



The [Parachutes For The Planet®](#) is an initiative that is actively promoted by the Mother Earth Project in over 80 countries, and is very relevant in the context of our climate emergency. It allows the youth of your community or parish to express their concern and commitment to Creation and to the most vulnerable.

This activity can be launched on the 1st Sunday of the Season of Creation. It consists of inviting young people, alone or in groups, to decorate a large round parachute shaped cloth with messages and drawings about the climate emergency we are facing. Since the size of the cloth is quite large, invite them to write their short messages in large letters.

On the last Sunday of the Season of Creation, ask the youth to bring their parachutes for an outdoor display if the weather permits, or indoors if it is more appropriate. Indoors allows you to have a longer display, you can keep them up for weeks! If you have more than five very colorful parachutes, invite a media outlet (newspaper, website, community television) to cover your story, invite all the creators of the parachutes to be interviewed. You can also invite other faith communities in your area to join in the creation and display, making for a larger more impactful exhibition. Take photos of your outdoor or indoor display.

Take pictures of the artists and their 'Parachutes For The Planet' (with their written permission because of image rights) for your community or diocesan website. (2)



(2) [https://cippic.ca/en/FAQ/Photography\\_Law#:~:text=A%20photograph%20recorded%20onto%20either,%E2%80%9Cphoto-graph%E2%80%9D%20within%20the%20Act](https://cippic.ca/en/FAQ/Photography_Law#:~:text=A%20photograph%20recorded%20onto%20either,%E2%80%9Cphoto-graph%E2%80%9D%20within%20the%20Act)

Materials needed:

- A piece of light-colored round cloth about 152 cm (take a round tablecloth for a template or use the back of an unused round tablecloth).
- Pencils, paints, brushes, etc.

Small tip: with the group, suggest tracing the letters of the text and the drawings with pencil before applying the colors (this avoids mistakes). Also, start coloring in the center of the parachute and work outward. Children can write their first name and the date of their achievement if they wish.

For more information, visit the [Mother Earth Project](#) website. ■

## Scarves for the North



Invite youth (and others in your community) to learn about the importance of the Arctic climate, learn about the northern way of life and how it has been affected by climate change. The Arctic climate is warming faster than the rest of the planet, and the repercussions of melting sea ice and rising sea levels have a global impact. Write and draw messages on winter scarves to draw attention to the importance of the Arctic. Tie up a clothesline style rope outside of your church or community and hang the scarves up for display. This will help raise awareness not only for your faith community, but the community at large. The more scarves you have, the greater the impact. Take pictures of each scarf as well as a picture of the entire display. This can be used in your church newsletter and on social media.

Materials needed:

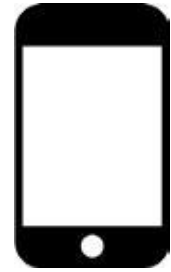
- Light colored scarves (ideal size: 120 cm and 40 cm wide)
- Felt pens, markers, paints, etc. ■



### 3- Practical tips on how to make a short video.

## Make a Low-Cost Video

A short video is a great way to raise awareness, especially on social media. Making a video with your family or your community can be a lot of fun, remember to respect the image rights of the people who agree to be recorded. Decide what digital platform you will post your video on and learn about the specific details that need to be respected (file type, file size etc.). Get some tips and advice on-line that will help you make a great video, from recording to editing.



Materials needed:

A cell phone (check that you have enough storage for recording)

A tripod or a boom to hold your cell phone

A microphone (for better sound quality, especially if outdoors or during an activity)

A computer to save the recording

Free editing software (i.e.: Shotcut, Filmora, or others depending on the digital platform)

Royalty-free music (i.e.: Pixabay)

A digital platform to broadcast the video



For the recording, determine these 3 factors:

- Explain everything to the participants who will be interviewed. People need to understand in advance what you are trying to obtain. You must get the consent of anyone you record (image only or image and voice).
- During the recording, use the rule of thirds to ensure that your main subject is in the right place. (3)
- If you don't have an external microphone, stand closer than one meter away from the subject to ensure a proper sound recording.



Then, take a picture of the location, the exposure, the environment, etc., with or without sound, depending on the context.

Immediately after recording, upload it to a computer and watch the material. It is good to have a copy of the recording right away on your computer, then you can see if you need to retake any interviews or images while everyone is still there.

Next comes editing, a 5-8 minute video is ideal. Add text and music if you desire. Show it to the people who participated and to members of your community for their feedback. Upload the final version to a platform.

Finally, showcase your video to your faith community!



(3) <https://www.photographymad.com/pages/view/rule-of-thirds>

## 4- Annex: Inspiring Quotes About Creation Care



Can love of Earth's beauty and gratitude for the gift of life wake us up? Only such an awakening can lead us to true praise by word and deed. Then Earth might be home to more generations of grateful living creatures as we have listened to God.

- Phyllis Creighton



All things share the same breath - the beast, the tree, the man. The air shares its spirit with all the life it supports.

- Chief Seattle



The Creation is our neighbour, just like every human person is our neighbour.

- Rev. Susan Johnson, National Bishop,  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada



All plants are our brothers and sisters. They talk to us and if we listen, we can hear them.

- Arapahoe proverb



Listen to creation: Jesus is the face of God, the source of all creation. Therefore, we also able to hear the voice of the Lord in creation. Latest report indicates that up to 1 million plants and animals could go extinct in the near future. We know the effects of climate change that we face. Are we listening to the cry of our earth. The voice of the Lord is heard in creation as well.

- Fr. Mark Gatto, Hamilton



The Church has a critical role to play in advancing this ecological conversion within the Church itself and in all the social, economic, political and institutional realities. (...) To concretely change, it will be important to work together. Unity is strength

- Manifesto written by young catholic people at World Youth Day 2019

### Sources:

[https://www.kairosCanada.org.translate.google/spirited-reflection-beauty-earth? x\\_tr sl=auto& x\\_tr tl=fr& x\\_tr hl=fr](https://www.kairosCanada.org.translate.google/spirited-reflection-beauty-earth? x_tr sl=auto& x_tr tl=fr& x_tr hl=fr)

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<https://nomadictribe.com/discover/items/18>

<https://www.catherineofsienachurch.ca/how-to-listen-to-gods-voice/>

<https://laudatosimovement.org/news/young-catholics-around-the-world-are-calling-for-action-to-protect-the-earth-our-common-home-a-manifesto/>



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.

- Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*, 13



God's Creation is a sacred gift that we are invited to share in, and to care for. Indigenous communities around the world are at the forefront of efforts to protect the lands they hold sacred. As followers of Jesus, we are called to do our part in sustaining the life of the Earth we all share, to be active in caring for our shared home.

- A message from Anglican, Lutheran leaders for Earth Day 2022



Climate change is not just an environmental problem. It's not just about the earth. It's also about people. The way we're treating the earth and the effects of that are already impacting the world's poorest people. We don't get to choose between caring about climate change or caring about poverty, they're interconnected – just like the relationship between God, people and the world.

- Care for Creation: A Resource Pack for Christian Youth



First, it must be stated that a true "right of the environment" does exist, for two reasons. First, because we human beings are part of the environment. We live in communion with it, since the environment itself entails ethical limits which human activity must acknowledge and respect. Man, for all his remarkable gifts, which "are signs of a uniqueness which transcends the spheres of physics and biology" (*Laudato Si'*, 81), is at the same time a part of these spheres. He possesses a body shaped by physical, chemical and biological elements, and can only survive and develop if the ecological environment is favourable. Any harm done to the environment, therefore, is harm done to humanity.

- Pope Francis, meeting at the United Nations, 2015



Right of the environment: Second, because every creature, particularly a living creature, has an intrinsic value, in its existence, its life, its beauty and its interdependence with other creatures. We Christians, together with the other monotheistic religions, believe that the universe is the fruit of a loving decision by the Creator, who permits man respectfully to use creation for the good of his fellow men and for the glory of the Creator; he is not authorized to abuse it, much less to destroy it. In all religions, the environment is a fundamental good.

- Pope Francis, meeting at the United Nations, 2015

#### Sources:

[https://www.vatican.va/content/dam/francesco/pdf/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco\\_20150524\\_enciclica-laudato-si\\_en.pdf](https://www.vatican.va/content/dam/francesco/pdf/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si_en.pdf) <https://anglicanlutheran.ca/statements/a-message-from-anglican-lutheran-leaders-for-earth-day-2022/> [https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2015/september/documents/papa-francesco\\_20150925\\_onu-visita.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2015/september/documents/papa-francesco_20150925_onu-visita.html) <https://www.tearfund.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Climate-Packs.pdf>