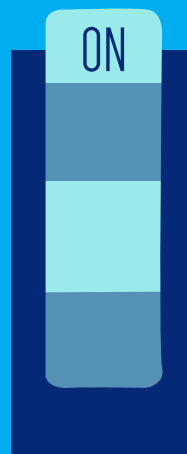


FLIPPING THE DEFAULT TOOLKIT

Renewable Energies



Fossil Fuels

INEE 4997 Capstone Seminar for the Interdisciplinary Minor in Environmental Ethics
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FAITH AND THE ENVIRONMENT

RELIGIOUS MOTIVATION FOR FLIPPING THE DEFAULT:

Sacramentality: God is present in all of creation, thus all of creation manifests God's wisdom, goodness, and grace. Human beings are distinct in that we have the ability to reason, to contemplate and to know about God's creation. Because of these abilities, we should reduce our energy consumption, participate in energy efficiency strategies and promote renewable energy sources as demonstrations of respect for God and God's creation.

Cooperation: There are overlapping relationships among humanity, God, and all of creation (both living and non-living). We rely on God and creation as much as they rely on us to cooperate for our common good--the flourishing of Earth. In order to maintain proper relationships with God and with Earth, we are motivated to flip the default to energy efficiency and renewable sources in order to care for creation based on the relationships we share with God and the home we share with other creatures.

Restraint: We must have foresight and practice restraint when using the goods of Earth so they are available to present and future generations. Committing to the reduction of fossil fuels and more environmentally conscious alternatives like renewable energy shows our intention to interact with God's creation in restrained ways.

Hope: We have hope for change through the grace God offers to us. God will give us the strength to progress and bring about change. As Pope Francis tells us, "injustice is not invincible." We can overcome and make the changes necessary to save our common home. Making the change toward more efficient energy use and renewable energy sources will give us the hope that God's creation is being respected and cherished.

Resources:

Pope Francis
Laudato si'

On Care for Our Common Home (2015)

Pope John Paul II
Peace with God the Creator
Peace with All of Creation (1990)

Pope Benedict XVI
If You Want to Cultivate Peace
Protect Creation (2010)

INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

Voting:

Residents should educate themselves on the energy policies of current and future politicians on the local, state and federal levels of government and vote accordingly.

Resources:



**Wisconsin Elections
Commission**

Milwaukee Programs:

Residents should educate themselves on different programs available in their state to better adapt to a renewable energy lifestyle.

Resources:



Sustainability plan for the city of Milwaukee focusing on improving food systems, energy, transportation, and water usage over the next 10 years.



Provides affordable financing for energy saving improvements in Milwaukeeans homes, including new insulation, furnaces, boilers, hot water heaters, air conditioners, and windows.



Milwaukee's solar energy program providing information and resources for home and business owners. Partnered with Summit Credit Union to offer solar loans of up to \$20,000 to aid in solar installment and payments.



Program reaching out to manufacturers to cut operating expenses and improving operating systems to decrease negative environmental effects.

Since switching to energy efficiency and renewable sources in the State of Wisconsin cannot be accomplished by individual and family initiatives alone, action is required by neighborhoods, religious communities, corporations, and government at local and state levels.

NEIGHBORHOOD LEVEL

Affordable, Renewable & Efficient Energy:

Neighborhood communities should come together to make efforts towards local green technology through investing in solar energy and retrofitting buildings.

Resources:



PACE stands for Property Assessed Clean Energy and provides financing for commercial property owners to upgrade building's heating and cooling systems, lighting controls, and water efficiency.



NeighborWorks makes homes more energy efficient and keep families safe and healthy, teaches about sustainable investments and provides support to organizations who practice green activities.



Offers renewable energy training, while working to expand renewable energy adoption.

Energy Companies:

Neighborhood communities should establish and expand upon movements to convert their cities and towns to more green energy in order to reduce fossil fuel emissions.

Resources:



Reach out to municipal companies such as We Energies to ask for the company to invest in renewables and offer them at a reasonable price point.

PARISH LEVEL

Renewable Energy in Services:

The Archdiocese ought to distribute information by email newsletters, posters, or in parish bulletins in order to educate parishioners on how their energy use is adversely affecting the environment.

Resources:

Homily Helps Catholic Climate Covenant

Homily Helps provides resources for homilists, bulletins, and other materials, to help integrate the insights of *Laudato Si'* and caring for creation into church.

Utilize Programs:

The Archdiocese of Milwaukee should utilize Milwaukee renewable energy programs and begin to encourage parishes and parishioners to participate.

Resources:



Catholic Covenant Energies is a program that works with dioceses and parishes to reduce energy use in their buildings. Offers free and low-cost incentives and a retrofit program.

INTERFAITH MOVEMENTS

We are stimulated by other religious communities that are committing to renewable energy and protecting Mother Earth. We look to them for examples that we can put into action.

Resources:



Resource for people of all faiths to take actions to protect Earth--done so through renewable energy, energy conservation and energy efficiency.



Resource for all faiths to respond to global warming by acting as stewards of Creation through energy conservation, energy efficiency and renewable energy.



Wisconsin Green Muslims educates the Muslim community and the public about Islamic environmental justice teachings, applies them to daily life, forms coalitions, and works toward a just, peaceful and sustainable future.



Interfaith organization dedicated to addressing environmental issues holistically; emphasizes environmental leadership.



A prophetic voice in Jewish, multireligious, and American life.

The Shalom Center shapes a transformed and transformative Judaism that helps create a world of peace, justice, healing for the earth, and respect for the interconnectedness of all life.

WISCONSIN LEVEL

Corporations Investing in Renewables:

Large manufacturing corporations within Wisconsin should help push the market into the right direction by investing their own renewable solutions.

Resources:



RENEW Wisconsin focuses on Wisconsin's renewable energy future through advocacy, education, and collaboration.



Midwest Environmental Advocates works for healthy water, air, land and government in the Midwest.

Renewable Portfolio Standard:

Wisconsin's lawmakers should develop (and should be encouraged by others to develop) a new Renewable Portfolio Standard for the future.

Resources:



Offers information on the Renewable Portfolio Standard of Wisconsin, in addition to other energy related topics in the state of Wisconsin.

10 SIMPLE WAYS TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE TODAY



Catholic Climate Covenantsm Care for Creation. Care for the Poor.

CatholicClimateCovenant.org • (202) 756-5545 • 415 Michigan Avenue NE, Suite 260 • Washington, DC 20017

10 Ways You Can Make a Difference

Be energy efficient. During the summer months, close your curtains to block heat from the sun. During the winter, open your curtains during the day to allow the sun to warm your home. These simple steps can significantly reduce the need for air conditioning and heating, which are likely the most energy-intensive aspects of your home.

Calculate your carbon footprint. Understanding which activities are carbon-intensive allows you to know where you can take action. The EPA has a free [carbon footprint calculator](#) you can use.

Adjust the thermostat. Turning down your air conditioning or heating when you leave the house will further shrink your carbon footprint. A change of just 5 degrees is a good start.

Adjust your driving routine. By combining multiple errands into one trip, you reduce the amount of fossil fuel you use.

Go meatless on Fridays. Livestock production accounts for 4% of Americans' greenhouse gas, according to the EPA. By going meatless one day per week, you'll both honor Catholic teaching and better care for Creation.

Recycle More. Recycling reduces your carbon footprint both because landfills emit greenhouse gases through decomposition, and because manufacturing from scratch is carbon-intensive. Find where and how to recycle almost anything in your area at [search.earth911.com](#).

Use less water. Water processing accounts for approximately 3% of energy use in the United States, according to the EPA. Saving water means saving energy. Post a "please conserve water" sign at sinks and showers, install low-flow spigots, or select the "eco" setting on laundry machines and dishwashers.

Petition policy makers. Your elected officials have the power to take action on climate change. [Write policy makers](#) to tell them that you stand for the stewardship of creation.

Write to your local newspaper. Writing a letter to the editor has effects beyond your local community. Legislators assign their staffs to read letters to the editor as an important barometer of constituents' interests. For tip sheets and templates, write to [programs@catholicclimatecovenant.org](#)

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

Members United States Conference of Catholic Bishops: Department of Justice, Peace, and Human Development & Migration and Refugee Services • Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities • Carmelite NGO • Catholic Charities USA • Catholic Health Association of the United States • Catholic Relief Services • Catholic Rural Life • Columban Center for Outreach and Advocacy • Conference of Major Superiors of Men • Franciscan Action Network • Leadership Conference of Women Religious • National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry • National Council of Catholic Women • Sisters of Mercy of the Americas

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