

Lenten Ecology, Prayer, and Practice

Week 2: March 1 - 7

Reducing Food Waste

Week 2 - Meal Prayer:

May the food we are eating make us aware of the interconnections between Universe and us, Earth and us, and all other living species and us, because each bite contains in itself the life of the sun and earth. May we see the meaning and value of life from these precious morsels of food and each other. (Blessing adapted from Thich Nhat Hanh)

Are you aware that 40% of all food grown is wasted? Some is left in the fields, some lost in transportation processing, some not sold in the stores, and some wasted in our own homes. If none of that were wasted the hungry of the world could be fed. Jesus fed the multitudes and then what was left was collected. Nothing was wasted.

This week we invite you to consider food waste in your own home. Begin with an inventory of the freezer, refrigerator and cupboards. Is anything outdated, freezer burned or spoiled? Note how much and compost it so at least it is returned to the soil. Ask yourself, what needs to be used now and how can it be incorporated into a soup, salad, stir fry, stew? Or, simply save it to be used the week.

Another way to help provide more food for others and produce less waste into the environment is to eat lower on the food chain. That means eating less meat and more vegetables and fruits.

During Lent we are instructed to abstain from eating meat on Fridays. Perhaps we could also abstain one or two more days. Beef consumes the most vegetation per pound and produces the most waste into the environment whereas chicken, turkey and fish are much lower on the food chain. Another suggestion might be to fast from beef during this season.

Whatever we are led to do, let us always be grateful for the food we have to eat and remember those who have none or not enough.

For more ideas, check out these additional resources:

- Reducing Food Waste at Home: <https://www.epa.gov/recycle/reducing-wasted-food-home>.
- Tips to Reduce Food Waste: <https://www.fda.gov/food/consumers/tips-reduce-food-waste>.
- Reducing Food Waste - 8 Tips for Home Cooks: <https://www.nrdc.org/stories/reducing-food-waste-eight-tips-home-cooks>.

Advocacy/Action Items:

- Read Food Fix: How to Save our Health, Our Economy, Our Communities, and Our Planet – One Bite at a Time, by Mark Hyman, MD and join our conversation entitled “*Food Fix: Getting to the Root of the Challenges in our Food System and Cultivating Collaborative Solutions. A conversation and opportunity around the Twin Cities Food Justice Landscape*” - Wednesday, March 31st 5-6:30PM
- Watch the YouTube Video: "How to Fix Our Food System and Save Humans and the Planet": <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nB-On7ZuXs4>