

MAD (Make a Difference) Lent Plastic Challenge 2022



For us Lent is the time when we remember the 40 days that Jesus spent in the wilderness, facing challenge and temptation. It is a time when we reflect on God's purpose for our life. This year we challenge you to give up single-use plastics – to reduce the actions which damage God's Creation.

Over **8.3 billion tonnes** of plastic have been produced since the 1950s. That's enough plastic to cover every inch of Ireland ankle-deep more than ten times over. Just **9%** was recycled.

				<p>2nd March Ash Wednesday Isaiah 24:4-5 'The earth dries up and withers, the world languishes and withers; the heavens languish together with the earth. The earth lies polluted under its inhabitants ...'</p>	<p>3rd Give up disposable cups & drinks in plastic bottles Carry a travel mug or water bottle. Get a reusable bottle, fill it up with tap water before leaving the house, and refill it wherever you happen to be.</p>	<p>4th Bring your own reusable bags Plastic bags and produce bags in particular are often used for minutes before being discarded. Most plastic bags are not recycled, ending up in landfills.</p>	<p>5th Carry your own non-plastic cutlery Plastic disposable cutlery and straws are among the worst plastic pollution culprits. Get in the habit of carrying your own cutlery with you and leaving a set in the car.</p>
Food & drink	<p>Sunday 6th March Psalms 104: 25-30 'There is the sea, vast and spacious, teeming with creatures beyond number—living things both large and small.' By 2050 we could have more plastic than fish (by weight) in the sea.</p>	<p>7th March Buy in bulk to minimize or eliminate packaging This goes for food and drink as well as cleaning supplies, toiletries, hardware items – anything that may come in plastic packaging.</p>	<p>8th March Avoid overpackaged, processed, canned and frozen convenience foods Stay clear of the three tomatoes sitting on a Styrofoam tray and covered in plastic cellophane.</p>	<p>9th Buy fresh bread that comes in either paper bags or no bags This eliminates plastic wrapping waste from shop bought bread and you help support local businesses.</p>	<p>10th Choose milk in returnable glass bottles Many areas have local dairies that provides milk in returnable glass bottles rather than plastic or plastic-coated cardboard.</p>	<p>11th Use non-plastic containers for food lunches, leftovers, freezing, storage, take-out, travelling... Request takeaways use your container instead of their disposable one. Take a container when you buy meat, fish or cheese.</p>	<p>12th Shop at markets Fresh food markets are not only often cheaper and fresher than supermarkets but they sell fruit and vegetables loose. Don't forget to take your reusable bags.</p>
	<p>Sunday 13th March Everyday millions of microplastics enter the sea from toiletry products. Start a conversation or ask to talk about how you are taking action on plastics at church.</p>	<p>14th Look around your bathroom and see what plastics you can replace Do you have plastic bottles sitting in the shower? Find a brand you like and try and get it in bulk. If it's not available in bulk – ask the manufacturer to offer it.</p>	<p>15th Use a razor with removable blades Disposable razors and razor blades are two of the biggest contributors to plastic waste.</p>	<p>16th Check labels of toiletries Did you know some facial scrubs & toiletries products contain tiny plastic beads? Avoid anything with "polyethylene" listed as an ingredient.</p>	<p>17th Use a bamboo toothbrush or a toothbrush with recyclable heads and try to find dental floss that doesn't come in plastic packaging.</p>	<p>18th Use bar soap instead of liquid hand soap This is an easy change to make, if you are feeling keen you can even make your own soap bars.</p>	<p>19th Choose lotions and lip balms in plastic-free containers Some shops will now refill glass toiletry containers or give you a discount if you return old packaging.</p>
Bathroom	<p>Sunday 20th March Colossians 1:16-17 'For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible.' Consider organising a community litter pick.</p>	<p>21st Look around your kitchen and see what plastics you can replace Use a dish brush with a wooden handle and compostable bristles.</p>	<p>22nd Use natural cleaning cloths instead of plastic & synthetic sponges Compressed natural cellulose sponges are often sold without any plastic packaging.</p>	<p>23rd Use a blender made of glass If you find yourself needing to purchase a new blender in the future, try and go for a glass alternative if possible.</p>	<p>24th Buy glass and/or stainless steel containers for food storage Glass works well for freezer storage as well, just ensure you leave room at the top of the jar.</p>	<p>25th Avoid foil wrapped crisps and chocolates Some sweet wrappers are now recyclable but don't forget to check.</p>	<p>26th Share your leftovers or unwanted food Reduce waste by joining a food sharing network like Olio.</p>
	<p>Sunday 27th March Job 28:12-13 'But where can wisdom be found? Where does understanding dwell?' Do you use disposable cups at church? Can you encourage people to bring their own mug?</p>	<p>28th Choose natural fibres Synthetic fabrics create microfibre pollution when washed. When buying new clothes look for organic cotton, wool, and other natural fibres.</p>	<p>29th Alter and Modify Old Shoes and Clothing into New Do you have old clothes and shoes that you never wear because they don't fit or are out of style? Take them to a tailor or cobbler for alteration.</p>	<p>30th Buy clothing second-hand Buying clothes second hand not only saves you money but ensures that the second hand clothes you purchase have an extra long lease of life.</p>	<p>31st Do a clothes swap Look online for local events or get advice on how to set up your own. Take a look at sites like Get Swishing.</p>	<p>1st April Invest in quality By doing this you are minimising the demand for cheap items that end up in landfill. In the long run it will save you money.</p>	<p>2nd Request zero plastic packaging If you're buying clothes online ask the retailer if they can reduce or remove plastic packaging.</p>
Kitchen	<p>Sunday 3rd April Psalm 24:1-2 'The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it'.</p>	<p>4th Put a "No Junk Mail" sticker on your letterbox This will reduce the number of letters with plastic windows. It will also reduce your paper waste.</p>	<p>5th Make it from scratch Try and cook as much as possible from scratch and take your own sandwiches and snacks when you go out.</p>	<p>6th Avoid wet wipes These contain plastic fibres so don't break down like toilet roll, despite often being described as flushable.</p>	<p>7th April Acquire necessary plastic items used instead of new Check second-hand shops, Freecycle or Freegle. Look for sharing groups locally.</p>	<p>8th Buy second-hand plastic-free furniture There's lots of advice about repairing, upcycling and finding good wooden or metal furniture online.</p>	<p>9th Don't buy new CDs and DVDs Stream or download music, shows, and films online, buy second hand or borrow them from the library or friends.</p>
	<p>Sunday 10th April Micah 6:8 'He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.'</p>	<p>11th Avoid plastic pens and giveaways Try using a refillable fountain pen or pencils.</p>	<p>12th Bring your own toiletries Skip the free travel size shampoos, soaps, and lotions offered by hotels. Instead, fill up your own reusable travel- size containers at home.</p>	<p>13th Avoid the Mini bar snacks and drinks Not only incredibly expensive but they all come in plastic packages or bottles. Even if you can't avoid plastic entirely, you can resist single-serving sizes.</p>	<p>14th What lasting changes are you going to make? Do you find yourself looking at plastics in a different way? List three things you are going to commit to changing.</p>	<p>Make your voice heard: Share what you are doing with friends, family and community. Ask your TD what they are doing to tackle single use plastics. Join the UN's Clean Seas campaign and Greenpeace's Plastic Pledge. Find out your own plastic footprint. We hope this challenge has made you more aware of your plastic use and helped you create some lasting changes.</p>	
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