

#pennies4plastics

Lent
2019



Reconnect with God, with Others and with Creation

WWW.BISHOPSAPPEAL.IRELAND.ANGLICAN.ORG/GET-INVOLVED





Information:

This Lent Eco-Congregation, Church of Ireland Bishops' Appeal and the Representative Church Body are joining forces to lead an exciting initiative called **#Pennies4Plastics**

What is #Pennies4Plastics?

- 1. REDUCE:** We are encouraging individuals, parishes, small groups, children's clubs and schools to think of simple and creative ways to reduce the amount of single-use plastic they buy and use.
- 2. SPEAK OUT:** Alongside this, we are encouraging everyone to raise their voices about the amount of single-use plastics being used in products and packaging. So contacting your local supermarket, or an offending company or your local TD/MP looking for better legislation might be part of your Lenten Reflection.
- 3. DONATE:** Over the six weeks of Lent, we are encouraging people to collect coins in a recyclable jar so that we can raise vital funds for a Waste Aid project in the Gambia, which reduces the amount of plastics that are burned and that end up in the oceans. It also provides employment and improves health for people in poorer communities. Read more here: <https://wasteaid.org/>

What are single-use plastics?

Single-use plastics, often also referred to as disposable plastics, include items intended to be used only once before they are thrown away or recycled. These include, among other items, grocery bags, food packaging, bottles, straws, containers, cups and cutlery.

Why are single-use plastics so bad for the environment?

Shopping bags, coffee cups and bottles of water and juice that can be grabbed on the go are really, really handy. Their convenience means we use them... a lot. So what's the harm? Take a look at some of the reasons why we're focusing on this topic. As Christians, who believe the earth and all that is in it is God's Handiwork, we are particularly compelled to take action.

Over 90% of plastics produced are never recycled.

9 REASONS TO REFUSE SINGLE-USE PLASTIC

- 1** Made from fossil fuels
- 2** Huge carbon footprint
- 3** Will still be here in hundreds of years
- 4** Only a tiny percentage is recycled
- 5** Leaches toxins into food & drink
- 6** Causes hormone disruption & cancers
- 7** Pollutes our oceans
- 8** Kills marine animals and birds
- 9** Enters our food chain

LESS PLASTIC.

WWW.LESSPLASTIC.CO.UK



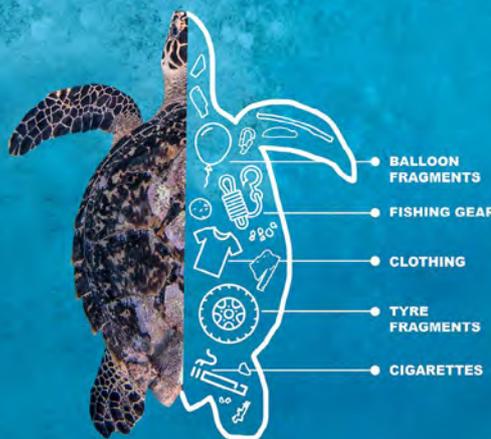
Information:

If we hone in on even one of these nine reasons to reduce our plastics, we see that the problem is global and, quite literally, choking our planet:

Scientists estimate that around 8 million tonnes of plastic is ending up in the ocean each year - that's the weight of roughly a billion elephants or 47 million blue whales.

PLASTIC FOUND IN EVERY SEA TURTLE

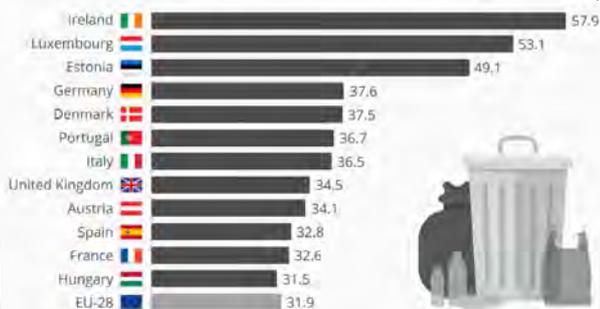
102 SEA TURTLES FROM 3 OCEANS AND SEAS CONTAINED 150 TO 500 PIECES OF PLASTIC



#EVERYPIECECOUNTS #COMPASSIONORCONVENIENCE @seashepherdmarinedebristeam

Plastic Waste: The EU's Worst Offenders

Annual plastic packaging waste per head of the population in 2016 (kg)



statista

How is Ireland doing with its plastic waste?

Ireland is certainly recycling more than ever before. We need more education on what we can put in our recycling bins as a lot of our efforts are contaminated. However, as much as we support recycling, we are still buying and consuming far more plastic waste than other countries. Often, this is because of the options we are presented with, and part of this initiative is to encourage the call for better, more sustainable options.

How can we respond?

Check out the Action Sheet for lots of Ideas about how you can get involved and make a difference... starting today.

This can be overwhelming and the lack of options, especially for people on tight budgets or time schedules can be quite deflating. Choose a couple of small changes and be consistent with them this Lent. Give of your time to raise the issue with people who have the power to create change. **And pray.** Pray for God's world. Pray for the greed and the ignorance that is destroying it. Pray for those who suffer most from the consequences of it: the communities, the eco-systems, the generations to come.



Action:

Give Up:

1. Single-use coffee cups
2. Single-use water bottles
3. Straws
4. Plastic Shopping Bags
5. Paper Towels
6. Chewing Gum <https://get-green-now.com/environmental-impact-chewing-gum-infographic/>
7. Disposable Razors

Take Up:

1. Using a Keep Cup and a Reusable Water Bottle
2. Carrying Reusable Cutlery
3. Carrying Reusable Shopping Bags
4. Opting for Loose Fruit and Veg (*bring reusable net bags*)
5. Writing to your local supermarket about unrecyclable plastic packaging. Greenpeace have a sample letter that you can easily adapt: <https://www.greenpeace.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Sample-letter-to-supermarket-1.pdf>
6. Writing to main offender companies about their responsibility towards the environment and their customers. <https://www.ecowatch.com/worst-plastic-polluting-companies-2611144880.html>
7. Writing to your TD/MP about the need for legislation to ban unsustainable, non-environmentally friendly plastic packaging and products.
8. If you are ready to get involved in more actions, Greenpeace provide lots of templates for getting started in their Toolkit here: <https://www.greenpeace.org/new-zealand/a-million-acts-of-blue/>

Look Up:

Prayers for the Environment:

- Sign up to receive Christian Aid's Lenten Newsletter, which will focus on Climate Change: <https://www.christianaid.ie/lent-easter-appeal/footprints-journey-through-lent-christian-aid>
- Check out this Green Anglican Service Resource with lots of prayers for the Environment: <https://www.anglicancommunion.org/media/18502/recycling-prayers.pdf>
- This Prayer for our Oceans is Apt and easily adaptable: <http://www.arocha.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Prayer-for-the-Oceans.pdf>



Action:



Dear Father, we acknowledge that too much human effort and ingenuity is devoted to the accumulation of money and power, in defiance of your command to seek first your Kingdom. Help us to repent of our dependence on plastics, our failure to recycle, and the thoughtless destruction of your world. We acknowledge that communities across the world are suffering because of our carelessness. May we turn back to the ancient wisdom contained in your Word, and to resolve to choose life for ourselves, our children and the whole of your wonderful Creation. Amen

Reduce & Recycle:

Get informed on what you actually can recycle. Invite champions to your church, work or school. Voice Ireland have Recycling Ambassadors and run workshops on recycling. www.voiceireland.org

Discover:

- Bamboo Toothbrushes
- Loose leaf tea
- Your local Co-op or Farmers markets
- Local ethical stores with sustainable packaging like: <https://littlegreenshop.ie/>
- Reusable jars/containers
- Refillable products - shampoos, soaps etc.
- Groups and communities who support each other to reduce waste and live in a more sustainable world. Examples: Zero Waste; local co-operatives; Eco-Congregation

Get Creative!

- Do you buy cleaning products in handy plastic spray bottles? This Lent consider reusing those bottles and using simple ingredients to make effective cleaning products. The Green Parent gives some starter ideas: <https://thegreenparent.co.uk/articles/read/make-your-own-cleaning-products>
- **Eco-Bricks:** These are no substitute for reducing your plastic but they are a creative way of upcycling unrecyclable soft plastic waste. Seal Rescue Ireland gives more details here: <http://www.sealrescueireland.org/blog/ecobricks>
- Do you regularly buy a fresh herb such as parsley or coriander in plastic packaging? This Lent, maybe grow your own and explore new recipes for using them.



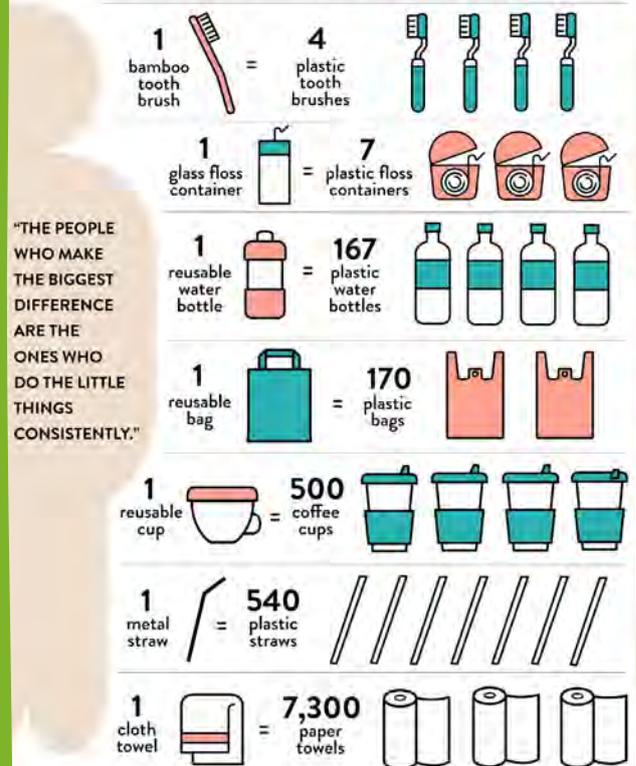
Action:

Don't Lose Heart:

Whilst buying reusable coffee cup and water bottles and bringing your own bags to the supermarket can save money in the long run, we are very conscious that pre-packaged fruit and vegetables from large supermarkets are often significantly cheaper than loose, locally sourced fruit and vegetables. This can also be true of many other plastic packaged items, be they meats or shampoos or house cleaning products right down to a plastic jar of peanut butter that provides lunches for a whole family over the course of a week.

For many of us, there is little choice because we live on a budget. For others, working long hours to provide for your family makes ideas like growing food and making your own cleaning products far from your reality. So do not feel ashamed of however small the changes are that you can make. Your contribution is valuable, wherever you are at, whatever you can do. Celebrate the little things. And if it is the case that many of your choices are restricted by finances, then lend your voice to a growing movement of people who demand that consumers do not have to choose between being able to feed themselves - to the detriment of both the environment and the producers of their food - and buying ethically sourced foods.

7 SINGLE-USE SWAPS AND THE TRASH YOU CAN SAVE IN ONE YEAR





Giving: ↘

Summary:

Collect coins in recyclable jars to support Waste Aid's work in the Gambia. They are currently training people in Gunjur to transform plastic waste into valuable items. **After Easter send your contribution to the Church of Ireland Bishops' Appeal, where it will be match funded and sent on to Waste Aid.**

Waste Aid wish to replicate this training in other more impoverished parts of the country. This will enable the spread of recycling knowledge and skills via their long term partner, Women's Initiative the Gambia (WIG). Funds raised will go directly to helping WIG reach remote communities, where they will train more women, youths and people with disabilities in simple recycling skills.

The spread of this knowledge will help eliminate wasted dumping and burning, create jobs and protect the environment and people's health.

The Country:

The Gambia is the country with the smallest population in Africa. It is blessed with beautiful people, beaches, wildlife, markets and of course the River Gambia itself. It is a poor country, (*over half of the population live on less than one dollar a day*) but goods and services can be expensive because there is no economy of scale.

The Problem:

With no waste management provision in the town of Gunjur, people have no option currently other than to burn or dump their waste. It is commonplace, for example, for mothers to burn plastic waste as a cooking fuel. It sets alight easily, but produces black smoke that can harm the eyes, skin and respiratory system and lead to serious health problems, especially for children.

Meanwhile, dumped waste ends up on informal dumpsites where livestock can ingest it, leading to starvation and a premature and painful death.

If plastic is thrown into riverbeds or drainage channels, it can lead to flooding which contributes to the seasonal spike in water-borne and mosquito-borne diseases. Waste Aid hope that by teaching people the dangers of mismanaging waste, and providing positive alternatives, the town of Gunjur can become an exemplar in sustainable waste management.





Giving: ↘

The Solution:

Waste Aid are facilitating a plastics recycling programme in the Gambia. The project will capture plastic waste from the coastal town of Gunjur and turn it into useful products to stop it reaching the ocean.

A training centre for plastic waste reprocessing and sustainable waste management, is currently being built, and will be run by a local partner organisation.

Detailed training in plastics recycling has already begun. Pierre Kamsouloum is overseeing the process of converting plastic waste into paving tiles, a process he developed in his home country of Cameroon. Over the two-year programme Waste Aid hopes to create lasting national demand for these tiles that do not require any cement or water in their manufacture. The tiles are more durable than concrete and can be sold at a lower price.



Church of Ireland Support for the Project:

Waste Aid does not wish to stop at Gunjur. Another element of the project will be to train local trainers in other areas. Longstanding Waste Aid partner Women's Initiative the Gambia will be learning how to teach plastic recycling skills to impoverished communities in other parts of the country. Women, Youths and People with Disabilities will be targeted for this training. Before the partnership with Waste Aid, the work of the WIG was limited, however they have achieved so much with so few resources. With our help, think of what else they can achieve!

Isatou Ceesay: The Recycling Queen of the Gambia:



The founder of the Women's Initiative the Gambia, Isatou Ceesay, has been dubbed the Recycling Queen of the Gambia. When she was a child she used a woven bag. When it broke she started using plastic bags along with all her peers, and plastic waste grew and grew. Although she was forced to drop out of school at a young age, she became passionate about the need to reduce that growing waste. She began the One Bag Movement and trained women to recycle plastic waste in order to generate income and reduce waste. Over 17 years her projects have reduced village waste and employed hundreds of West African women. When she was told about the Church of Ireland support she was so uplifted. Knowing that people care can really transform the work.



Giving: ↻

How to Donate:

Funds donated for **#Pennies4Plastics** will be **MATCHED** by Bishops' Appeal and the RCB before being sent to Waste Aid.

1. Donate Online: <https://store.ireland.anglican.org/donations/the-bishops-appeal>.
(Choose **#Pennies4Plastics** in the donation field)

2. Give Through Your Bank:

Lodge directly into the Bishops' Appeal account. *Please note, that in order to acknowledge receipt of your donation, it is important that you state the parish or individual name in the lodgement narrative. Please use reference **#pennies4plastics**. To double check, you can email bishopsappeal@ireland.anglican.org with the specifications.*

Euro €

Account Name: Representative Church Body - Bishops' Appeal
Bank: Bank of Ireland, College Green
Account Number: 49839499
Sort Code: 90-00-17
IBAN: IE31 BOFI 9000 1749 8394 99
SWIFT Code: BOFIE2D

Sterling £

Account Name: The Representative Church Body of the Church of Ireland, Current Account
Account Number: 13098975
Sort Code: 90-21-27
Bank Name: Bank of Ireland
Address: Belfast City Branch, BT1 2BA

3. Give By Cheque:

Send a euro or sterling cheque, payable to Church of Ireland Bishops' Appeal to:

Church of Ireland Bishops' Appeal,
Church of Ireland House,
Church Avenue, Rathmines,
Dublin 6, Ireland



School Assembly & All Age Service Resources:



One leader could read the whole assembly/service or pupils/children could read parts as suggested.

Song Suggestions:

- God in his love for us lent us this planet (48 Church Hymnal)
- All things bright and beautiful (25 Church Hymnal)
- Think of a world without any flowers (50 Church Hymnal)

Reader 1/Leader:

In Assembly/Church today we are going to think about a country which is 6,550 km away from Ireland, located on the west coast of Africa. It would take you 78 hours to drive there. The Gambia is the country with the smallest population in Africa with only 2 million people and is a very poor country.

Reader 2:

We are also going to think about rubbish. We are lucky in Ireland that our rubbish gets collected from our homes and schools and is recycled or managed in special facilities.

Reader 3:

In the town of Gunjur in Gambia there is no waste management. People burn or dump their waste. People even burn plastic which lets off toxic smoke and fumes which can harm eyes, skin and damage people's breathing systems. Plastic dumped in rivers leads to flooding and diseases. If animals eat toxic rubbish they get ill and can die.

Reader 4:

What do you know about the damage caused by single-use plastics to our world?

Reader 5:

8 million tonnes of plastic ends up in the ocean each year - that's the weight of about a billion elephants or 47 million blue whales. This plastic kills marine animals and birds and pollutes our oceans. You may add other facts/display posters or artwork.

Leader:

Close your eyes for a minute and think of your favourite natural place in the world - a beach, a mountain, a river, a lake, the sea, your garden or farmland. Imagine that being destroyed. How sad would you feel?



School Assembly & All Age Service Resources:

Reader 1:

The very first book of the Bible tells a story of how God made the world. It describes the beauty of the world that God created. Sometimes we sing a song in church/ assembly which talks about this beautiful world - *All things bright and beautiful*. The last verse says 'He gave us eyes to see them and lips that we might tell, how great is God almighty who has made all things well'.

Reader 2:

Psalms 8 is an ancient song from the Bible which talks about God's greatness and reminds people that he gave them responsibility to take care of the creation.

Psalm 8 1,3-9

**O LORD, our Lord,
your greatness is seen in all the world!
Your praise reaches up to the heavens;**

When I look at the sky, which you have made, at the moon and the stars, which you set in their places - what are human beings, that you think of them; mere mortals, that you care for them? Yet you made them inferior only to yourself; you crowned them with glory and honour.

You appointed them rulers over everything you made; you placed them over all creation: sheep and cattle, and the wild animals too; the birds and the fish and the creatures in the seas. O LORD, our Lord, your greatness is seen in all the world! (Good News Bible)

Reader 3:

All of us have responsibility to protect the world, the plants, the seas, the animals and birds so we can all see the beauty, and not just us now but our children and future generations. This is a responsibility which Christians believe God has given them.

Reader 4:

What do we do in our school/church?

If your school has or is working for Green flags it would be useful to give an update on the work in progress. What do we do in school/church to recycle plastics? Do we have straws/ plastic bottles/cups?

Reader 5:

Let's think about the Gambia again. What can be done there about rubbish?



School Assembly & All Age Service Resources:



Reader 1:

An organisation called Waste Aid has started a plastics recycling programme in the Gambia. Plastic waste from Gunjur is being turned into useful products such as paving tiles which are cheaper and better than concrete tiles. This is good news for the people of Gunjur.

Reader 2:

Waste Aid is also training people to recycle in the Gambia. One woman Isatou Ceesay began the One Bag Movement to get people to reduce plastic bag waste and to recycle village waste. Over the past 17 years her projects have reduced waste and employed hundreds of women.

Reader 3:

Did you know that people in Ireland are collecting money to help train people in Gunjur and in other parts of the Gambia to recycle their plastic waste. We can help too by collecting coins in recyclable jars and giving them to **#Pennies4Plastics**. This also reminds us to play our part in recycling and not using single-use plastics in our schools and homes too.

Prayers:

Lord Jesus you taught your disciples that everyone is their neighbour. We pray for the people of the Gambia who need help to solve the problems of their waste. Help those leaders like Isatou who are giving their time to train people to recycle and clean up their beautiful country. Amen

Dear God, when we look at the polluted seas and think of the poisoned and injured birds and animals because of plastic waste we are sad. Help us to each play our part in being responsible for our use of plastics, because together we can make things much better. Amen

O God our Father, thank you for the world that we live in. Thank you for all the beautiful things we see each day, the mountains and the rivers, the sea and wildlife. Help us always to remember to keep the world beautiful and not to make it ugly or dirty. Help us to preserve our beautiful world for generations to come. Amen



School Assembly & All Age Service Resources:

Note: Links to RE lessons in Follow Me books:

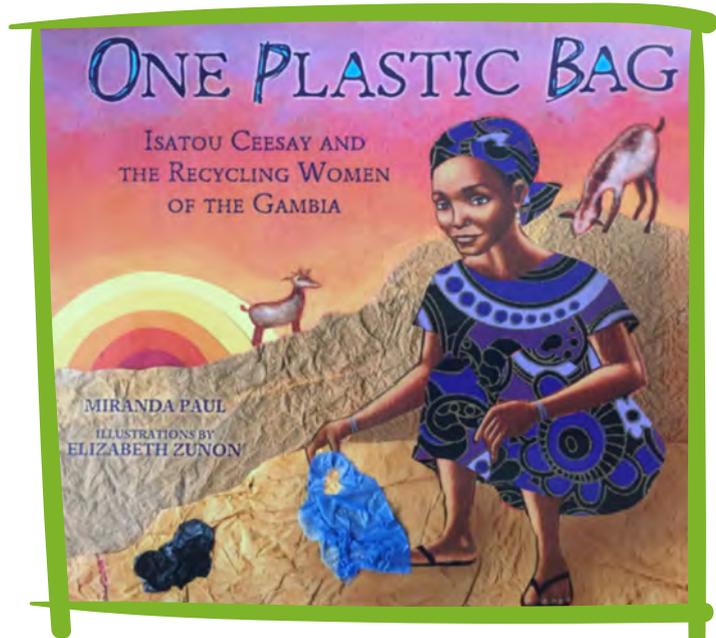
When fundraising or thinking about topics such as the **#Pennies4Plastics** project it is worth schools linking the information into RE lessons. The Follow Me series frequently links to mission organisations in the second term and also to topics of creation and stewardship in the first term. Loving God and loving our neighbours is a theme which encompasses much of the work of organisations such as the Bishops' Appeal and can be illustrated by many Bible stories of helping others.

Follow Me Lessons which could link in well with the resource material are Fit for life Lessons 5 and 6; On Line lesson 2.

The material also links into SESE strands and any work being undertaken for Green Flags in school.

Extra Resource:

A spoken aloud version of the book 'One Plastic Bag' about Women Initiative the Gambia founder Isatou Cheesay is available on Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gHskUChyKgs> (Story begins at 1:06)



With thanks to Jacqui Wilkinson, Church of Ireland Centre, DCU