Saint Bernard Green Team

**To Fast is to Care**

*SIX Fasts for Lent*

In his message for the 54th World Day of Peace *(Jan 1, 2021),* Pope Francis wrote of a *“culture of care as a way to combat the culture of indifference, waste and confrontation so prevalent in our time.”*  The Saint Bernard Green Team invites all parishioners to help build a “culture of care” by participating in ***SIX Fasts for Lent*** *(adapted from Climate Caretakers’ “Carbon Fast for Lent”)*. Each week, we’ll ask you to fast from habits that harm the earth and the human family, habits that do not promote a “culture of care.” We begin with a *Fast from Electricity.*

***Fast from Electricity - (March 6th – 13th)***

For week one, take action to reduce your electric usage and your overall carbon footprint. According to *The Nature Conservancy*, the average American’s carbon footprint ranks among the highest in the world, at 16 annual tons per year. By fasting from electricity, you can join the “culture of care” by working to contain your footprint to help slow global warming and ensure the future of the planet. Some recommended actions for this week’s fast are:

**Hand dry or air dry your dishes.** Using your dishwasher’s dry cycle increases its energy use by at least 15 percent (*energized.edison.com*).

**Bundle up and turn off electric space heaters.** Electric space heaters are much less efficient than your home’s heating system (*energy.gov).* Set your heat at a reasonable temp and layer up!

**Wait for full loads in your clothes washer or dishwasher.** You can eliminate at least a load per week by not running your appliances when partially empty.

**Unplug unused electronics.** Phantom power use by electronics on stand-by can account for up to 20 percent of your home’s annual electric use (*duke-energy.com*).

**Lower the lights.** Use your dimmers to set lighting to meet your basic needs, use natural light when possible, and turn off accent lighting.