



# Prairie Fire News

Franciscans of the Prairie Regional Fraternity, O.F.S.

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Justice



Peace



Integrity of Creation



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## Single Use Plastic



We have all seen the pictures and read the stories about the free plastic floating in the ocean and killing some sea animals. As you know, plastic doesn't decompose, so it remains in the environment forever. Did you know that there are more than 6.3 billion tons (that's right **BILLION**) of plastic waste in our oceans? Of course this quantity endangers wildlife, the waterways, and, eventually, our own health. Some suggest that recycling will solve the problem. Were you aware that only about 14 percent of plastic is currently recycled? So, the most appropriate solution is to **USE LESS PLASTIC.**

Here are some practical ways that you can use to replace the plastic items in your daily lives:

1. Cloth grocery bags, instead of the plastic ones. Many grocery stores have their own line of cloth bags that are reusable for a very long time. If you can't find them in the store, a quick trip to Google will net a long list.
2. Reusable food wrap & storage bags, instead of plastic wrap. I wonder how much plastic wrap is discarded after a single use? Getting reusable wraps and bags eliminate this problem. Once again, if you can't find it in the store, your friendly Google search will find many choices.
3. Reusable sponges instead of synthetic sponges. These will last for several months, can be easily rewashed, and are not a breeding ground for germs.
4. Glass and metal bottles, instead of plastic. Instead of buying bottled water, get a reusable glass or metal bottle and bring your own drink along. Look for soda in re-usable containers.
5. Bamboo tooth brush, instead of plastic. Bamboo is "super stainable" and,

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### COMING REGIONAL EVENTS

**July 20, 2019**

Regional Formation Gathering

**September 27—29, 2019**

Regional Retreat and Silver Jubilee

### NATIONAL EVENTS

**August 29—September 1, 2019**

National JPIC Convocation, St.

Louis, MO

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- often is grown organically. They are comparable in price to your plastic toothbrush.
- 6. Re-usable lunch bags, e.g., waxed canvas , instead of plastic of paper.
- 7. Wooden tableware, instead of plastic. Even the really sturdy plastic tableware gets pitched. The wooden is bio-degradable and re-usable. Yes, you’ll have to wash it if you re-use it. Of course, you could wash & re-use the plastic ware, too. The idea is to reuse and get plastic out of the trash stream.
- 8. Silicon, glass, paper or stainless steel straws.

These are just a few of the alternatives to plastic. By using our creativity we can find other was to re-use containers and utensils and greatly reduce the use a plastics in our every days lives.

We have all heard the slogan “Reduce, Reuse, Recycle”. Well, there is a fourth “R”—**REFUSE**. By bringing our own re-usable containers & utensils, or insisting on using these alternatives to plastic, we can reduce our own plastic footprint and set a positive example for others.

18. Moreover they should respect all creatures, animate and inanimate, which “bear the imprint of the Most High,” and they should strive to move from the temptation of exploiting creation to the Franciscan concept of universal kinship.



The information for this article is based upon “Humans Have a Plastic Problem” by Megan O’Neill om the 21 APR 2019 issue of PARADE Magazine.

## **State Catholic Conference websites**

The State Catholic Conferences are the public policy organizations of the Bishops’ Conference in each state. Here are their websites. You can sign up for weekly updates or other actions on the site.

- CATHOLIC CONFERENCE OF ILLINOIS: [CCI](#)
- MISSOURI CATHOLIC CONFERENCE: [MCC](#)
- IOWA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE: [ICC](#)

## **Personhood Alliance Education:**



**Equipping Christians on issues of life for the 21st century**

**WHO IS PERSONHOOD ALLIANCE EDUCATION?**

*The ultimate test of your greatness is the way you treat every human being...  
~ St. John Paul II*

Personhood Alliance Education is the 501(c)(3) subsidiary of Personhood Alliance. They are building a movement of principled, compassionate, grassroots pro-lifers who stand on the Word of God to defend human life and human dignity in the 21st century. They partner with multiple right-to-life organizations throughout the United States to provide educational tools and support, not only to their staff and volunteers, but also to their constituents, church networks, and the community at-large.

Here’s their website for further information: [Personhood Alliance](#) (click on Issues)

## *You can recycle anything*

A recent *Readers' Digest* (09-2018) carried an article in the *Art of Living* section that reveals an interesting twist on recycling.

Over the years Dave Merry of St. Paul, Minnesota built up a very large collection of power & hand tools that he used in his workshop. "The table saw, the jointer plane, the drill press, and the dozens of other power and hand tools had pride of place in his meticulously organized workshop." When his wife developed seizures and was limited to the use of a walker, Dave and Annette moved into an assisted living home. His family couldn't give up Dave's tool collection. His pastor had heard of some folks setting up a tool lending library that would work just like the book library. Of course, Dave consented, so his entire tool collection was donated to the library. The founders of the library thought it would take a year to collect enough tools; but, with Dave's contribution, it took only one day. So, today the Minnesota Tool Library has two locations with over 2400 tools, plus workshop space for things like table saws that members can use. Here's their [website](#) to look at what they are doing.

The article includes an addendum, *10 More Surprising Things You can Recycle*. It lists some interesting recyclables.

1. Aluminum Foil—wash, crumple, throw in bin or use for leftovers.
2. Athletic shoes—donate to a homeless shelter, a school program, [oneworldrunning.com](http://oneworldrunning.com), or Nike's Reuse-a-Shoe program—they're turned in running tracks, turf field, gym floors, & playground surfaces.
3. Batteries—call 800-RECYCLING or [recyclenation.com](http://recyclenation.com) to find where to take them or double check with your town's recycling program.
4. Compact florescent bulbs—check with your Home Depot, IKEA, or Lowe's stores or your local hardware.
5. Crayons—send to National Crayon Recycle Program; check out [crazycrayons.com](http://crazycrayons.com).
6. Ink & toner cartridges—try Best Buy, Office Depot, or Staples; HP operates its own recycle program; for other options check our [tonerrecycle.net](http://tonerrecycle.net).
7. Paint—local community theatre or school drama programs; check [earth911.com](http://earth911.com) or your local hardware or paint store.
8. Toys—here are some options: [projectsmile.org](http://projectsmile.org); [stuffedanimalsforemergencies.org](http://stuffedanimalsforemergencies.org); [projectnight-night.org](http://projectnight-night.org); [secondchancetoys.org](http://secondchancetoys.org).
9. TVs—drop small sets at Office Depot stores, if Best Buy delivers a new tv they will take your old one away for \$14.99
10. Wine Corks—if they are really cork, not plastic—compost them; or send a minimum of 15 pounds (about 1500) to [Yemm & Hart](http://Yemm & Hart). They repurpose them in eco-materials. Check out the website.

Of course, before recycling anything you ought to double check to see if the organization is still taking the item. Or to double check other possibilities look at [recyclenation.com](http://recyclenation.com); [earth911.com](http://earth911.com); or [epa.gov/recycle](http://epa.gov/recycle)

*"Every seed is an orphan until a patch of soil agrees to house it. So I believe the first holy communion is when earth and root make one. That is when the slow and right ascent to spread-wide giving begins. Trees, if you believe me, are the first gods."*

*-Jennifer Rahim, from "A Creed for Mornings in Redemption Rain"*

### **RE-USABLE CONTAINERS**

Do you remember the old milk bottle delivery man? Each morning your milk bottles were delivered with what you needed and the old bottles were collected for cleaning and refilling. Well, look out here comes (by 2030) a new version of that old model. At the 2019 World Economic Forum a new re-usable container program called "Loop" was introduced. This will work like the old milk bottle delivery program—product delivered to you door and picked up for cleaning and re-use. Clearly the idea of this program is to completely eliminate the one-use plastic containers that are fouling our landfills and oceans.

Companies that are already partnering with the "Loop" program include Nestle, Procter & Gamble, Pepsi-Co, Unilever, Mars Petcare, The Clorox company, The Body Shop, Coca-Cola, Mondelez International, Danone, Jacobs Douwe Egberts, BIC, Nature's Path, Thousand Fell, Greenhouse, Grilliance, Preserve, Carrefour, UPS and Suez. You may not recognize some of these brands because this is a world-wide movement.

The current plan is to launch the program in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Paris this spring. "Loop" "intends to expand to the U.S. West Coast, Toronto and the United Kingdom by the end of this year or early 2020, followed by Japan (hopefully in time for the Olympics.)"

It may be a while before we in the Midwest see this program. In any event, we should be aware of the amount of plastic that we use and do whatever we can now to eliminate its use or recycle as much as we possibly can. (*see Page 1 article.*)

### **The Marrow of the Gospel**

*By Richard Rohr, OFM (St. Anthony Messenger; OCT 2018)*

*We can only offer to others what God has done in us. Francis walked the journey himself and thus he could lead others along the path. The cosmos is mirrored in the microcosm of a healed and healing life.*