



STEWARDS OF OUR EARTH *All of God's Creation*

Social Justice Committee, Holy Cross Parish, Mt. Airy, May 7, 2023

Let's Not Forget Our Plastic Crisis

“Every single day, Americans throw away enough plastic to fill the Dallas Cowboys stadium -- the country's largest football stadium -- to the brim” (*Trash in America*, PIRG - Public Interest Research Group, 9/28/22).

“**Most plastic takes hundreds of years to fully degrade.** That means almost every bit of that plastic will still be out there piling up in landfills, littering our streets, and polluting our environment for generations to come -- unless we take action to slow the plastic tide.” (PIRG, 4/19/23)

Many of you are keenly aware of this problem and have taken steps to reduce, reuse, or recycle plastic items. Thank you for being a good steward of our earth! You may want to extend appreciation to those stores you frequent that have switched out plastic bags for paper.

Now there is a **new "widely recyclable" label** being promoted that is being used on plastic that is recycled less than 3% of the time. The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) is investigating the problem.

“More and more people are paying attention to our plastic waste crisis -- and seeking greener alternatives. That's good for our planet, but it's a threat to the fossil fuel and chemical companies whose products get turned into plastic packaging.

A group of companies, including ExxonMobil and Nestle, announced last summer that they would consider products made from polypropylene to be eligible for their ‘widely recyclable’ label.” (*Environmental Action*, 2/16/23) Polypropylene is a widely used plastic for containers and packaging that's **labeled with the number 5**.

But only 2.7% of polypropylene plastic is ever actually recycled, and most Americans don't even live in a place where recycling that kind of plastic is an option. (Saabira Chaudhuri, *Wall Street Journal*, 8/17/22) [Call on the FTC to crack down on misleading claims about recyclability.](#)

“Plastic waste is also destroying our **national parks’ beauty**. “While Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland plans to phase out single-use plastics from these lands by 2032, it shouldn't take a decade to get plastic out of our parks” (Faran Savitz and Mark Morgenstein, *Environment America*, 6/8/22).

“The National Park Service deals with an annual average of nearly 70 million pounds of waste” (National Park Service, 4/11/22). “And 81% of that waste is plastic” (Rob Hotakainen, *E&E News*, 11/1/22). **Items we use for mere seconds shouldn't ruin nature for centuries.** [Tell Secretary Haaland to swiftly act to make America's precious parks plastic-free.](#)

“You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make.”
Jane Goodall