

HOW TO DISCUSS A LIFESTYLE CHANGE WITH YOUR FAMILY

Improving our habits is an important way to contribute to the movement for a better world. This guide provides some suggestions and guidance for lifestyle changes in your family. You could also use this guide to speak with friends or colleagues

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FIND A TIME TO TALK

Plan ahead to find a good time to talk about how your family's values are reflected in your lifestyles. Many families find that a half-hour is a good amount of time. A good moment to discuss a lifestyle change could be over a meal, during an evening, or at the weekend.

SHARE WHY YOU WANT TO MAKE LIFESTYLE CHANGE

Share why making a lifestyle change is important to you. Some families want to make a lifestyle change to connect with religious teachings, to embrace simpler and more family-centered habits, or to ensure that future generations thrive.

It may be helpful to highlight the scale and severity of the ecological crisis and the urgent need for everyone to take action. You can find more information on these points [here](#).

The ecological crisis can be a divisive issue for some people. Our helpful [guide](#) offers some sample responses to challenging questions.

DECIDE ON A LIFESTYLE CHANGE

Rather than committing to a massive transformation of your lifestyle, identifying one concrete, impactful change is often much more effective.

A few of the most impactful changes follow:

- **Choose vegetarian meals one day per week.** *[Industrial ranching produces greenhouse gas emissions that drive climate change. Cattle ranching accounts for approximately 80% of deforestation in the Amazon.]*
- **Eat all the food you buy, and set up a composting bin or composting service.** *[Food loss and waste make up between 6% and 10% of the greenhouse gasses that drive climate change. Producing food on an industrial scale and food rotting in landfills both lead to the greenhouse gas emissions that drive climate change. This includes a highly potent gas called methane.]*
- **Eliminate one item that is packaged in disposable plastic from your home. For many people, this is beverage bottles.** *[Items that are put into recycling bins are very often not actually recycled. Approximately 85% of single-use plastic products like beverage bottles end up in landfills.]*
- **Improve your use of energy by adjusting your thermostat by just 1 degree.** *[Studies show that heating our homes generates a huge amount of carbon emissions. Recent studies have shown that households are responsible for up to 72% of global greenhouse gas emissions. 21% of this comes from heating and cooling homes.]*

As another approach, you may wish to ask your family for their suggestions about a change that can be made. Children and younger members of the family often have creative suggestions, and hearing their voices can make the family's change more fun and engaging.

CREATE A PLAN

After deciding on your lifestyle change or changes, create a plan with your family to make these changes, and to hold each other accountable.

Research shows that having a plan is key to realizing habit changes.

- Decide who will be responsible for each aspect of your lifestyle change. (As examples, who would take compost out to the bin, look for tasty vegetarian recipes, or make sure that family members fill their reusable water bottles?)
- Decide when your plan will start. Will you begin this week? Next month?
- Decide how you will stay on track. Will you check in with each other weekly?

For more guidance on how to create a plan and to receive a list of suggested actions tailored to your needs, enroll in the Laudato Si' Action Platform.

CELEBRATE!

Your commitment to protecting our common home is important. Each step you take towards protecting our common home is a step towards the better future we're building together. On behalf of creation and all who share it—thank you!