

STEP 4: TAKE ACTION

WATCH [Greta Thunberg and George Monbiot make a short film on the climate crisis](#) on YouTube. **SHARE** with the group or journal something Greta said that inspired you?

DECIDE on one thing that we can do to better care for the environment. What we do counts so **CHOOSE** something that you believe is possible and **CREATE** a short video to inspire people to take action.

DIVIDE into four groups and assign each group one of the following topics: Food, Water, Energy, Waste. Each group will **CREATE** a short video to address the climate crisis for their topic. Begin by **RESEARCHING** this topic. (If you are a teacher, you can provide students with information for their topic if you want to save time).

CONSIDER the following questions in producing your video :

- What objective or goal do you want to accomplish?
 - What do you want people to do after they have seen your video?
 - Who is the audience you want to reach?
 - What specific steps do you want them to take?
 - Why should they take these steps?
 - When will the steps be completed?
 - What resources will be needed?
 - Whose support will you need to make this happen?
 - How will you present your video to the class and how will you share it with a larger audience?
 - How will you evaluate how well you have succeeded in meeting your objective(s)?
- Each group will show their video. As a class **DECIDE** on one of the videos to move forward on. **IDENTIFY** if there is a leadership person or committee that can work with the class to make this happen.

RAISE YOUR VOICE

MAKE an appointment with the leadership group that can work with the class to promote your video. . (This may be a principal, student council, school board, parish council, scout leaders, etc.) Students should **PRESENT** their video class to the leaders and **ASK** that they partner with you. **GIVE** concrete ways that leadership can partner in this project. For example if the project is to reduce waste and recycle better **PRESENT** ideas of how to get recycling containers or what can be used instead of paper projects.

BE A GLOBAL NEIGHBOR

Fr. Lawrence Radice, M.M. works as a teacher at [Thailand's Research and Training Center](#). The Center teaches indigenous communities to farm sustainably. Every year people from hill tribes come for training. They return home with skills to protect the earth and ways to live in harmony with their environment. The center's goal is to reduce the amount of waste and pesticides that infect the land and food supply. They also encourage the younger generation to remain on indigenous land rather than move away to find work. They believe giving people a reason to live in harmony with their environment helps insure a future for the land as well as native cultures at risk. You can help support Fr. Lawrence's work by donating at [Maryknollsociety.org environment project](#).

ENGAGE YOUR FAMILY

CREATE a way for families in your community to participate in your action plan. For example if your project is focused on eliminating paper product use, have families bring their own coffee cups or water bottles to the next sporting event, or community gathering. If you had a project like Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers solar panels provide families with information on how they could use solar energy or have a guest speaker on wind energy for adults and crafts for kids that use wind, i.e. research crafts like wind spinners, mobiles. Make them together as a family.

CARE FOR CREATION

IMAGINE A HEALTHIER PLANET

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A worker installing solar panels.
(Unsplash)

OBJECTIVE:

In this issue students will **IMAGINE** what a cleaner and healthier planet will look like. They will **EXPLORE** one step Maryknoll has taken to care for the planet. They will **APPLY** what Pope Francis said to our current reality. They will **CREATE** a video project to **ENGAGE** their family and community in caring for creation.

STEP 1: PRAY

PRAY with your imagination by having a leader slowly read the following meditation or by **READING** it on your own. Then **SAY** the closing prayer.

MEDITATION

Close your eyes, put your feet squarely on the floor and sit up straight. Take one or two deep breaths to relax yourself.

Now, Picture your favorite place in nature. Where are you?
(pause for a bit after each question)

What do you see? Are there animals or birds or flowers or rocks? Let your imagination go. What do you smell? What do you taste? What do you hear? What do you feel?

CLOSING PRAYER

Creator God,
Thank you for the gift of your creation, for the places in nature that bring us joy and the animals that intrigue us and give us love. As human beings we are connected to your creation. Help us to hear the cry of the earth and imagine ways to care for it. Help us to be aware of our impact on the earth and to be good caretakers of it. Inspire us with new ideas and new dreams as we go forward into the future. AMEN

STEP 2: FAITH PERSPECTIVE

READ the mission story and then **REFLECT** by answering the questions.

Maryknoll began as the dream of three visionaries, Fr. James A. Walsh, Fr. Thomas Price and Mary Josephine “Mollie” Rogers (known as Mother Mary Joseph). They imagined creating a missionary order to send men and women from the U.S. to bring the good news of Jesus to those most in need around the world. They began by buying a farm on a knoll or hill in New York and dedicated it to Mary. This is where the name Maryknoll began.

Care for the planet is an important part of Maryknoll’s work in mission to share God’s love and the Gospel in combating poverty, providing healthcare, building communities, promoting human rights and protecting the earth’s resources. Maryknoll missionaries have been privileged to serve God’s people in many corners of the earth, most often on the margins with the people who are excluded from tables of power and whose lives are considered expendable or “throwaway” in our current economic system. This lived experience of our missionaries informs our beliefs and guides us to imagine new ways to live as missionary disciples.

Today there is a new dream emerging on Mary’s knoll. For years the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers wondered how they might use cleaner energy to help power their home campus and contribute it to those around them. Solar energy seemed to be the way to go. So they recently put their dream into action by installing 2,184 solar panels (874-kilowatt) in two locations on the Maryknoll property. Solar energy reduces our carbon footprint. Solar panels have been installed on carports in two of Maryknoll’s parking lots. The energy collected by the panels will be transferred and sold to the local utility company by Ecogy Energy, giving residents a chance to purchase green energy. The project will have a total of 110,000 square feet of solar panels. It will generate enough electricity to power between 100 and 200 households.

Maryknoll Superior General, Father Raymond Finch, said “This initiative aligns with Maryknoll’s goal to combat environmental destruction and to care for God’s creation. It’s part of how we see ourselves fulfilling our responsibility to care for the earth. Pope Francis is very clear that we have to be concerned about protecting our common home and at the same time helping people to move beyond poverty and that they are connected and one cannot be without the other.”

1. How is Maryknoll living their dream to care for God’s people and the earth?
2. How is helping people move beyond poverty connected to caring for creation?
3. Maryknoll imagined a way to turn their parking lot into an energy source, look around your home and your community, where do you see possibilities to dream of new ways to care for the earth?

STEP 3: EXPLORE SCRIPTURE AND TRADITION

READ THE FOLLOWING SCRIPTURES:

Old Testament: [Joel 3:1-2](#)

Life of Jesus: [John 1:1-5](#)

Christian Living: [Colossians 1:16-17](#)

REFLECT:

In the Old Testament we hear about how the Spirit will be given to the people and how it will inspire them to dream dreams and envision possibilities. In John and Colossians we are reminded that all of creation came to be through God, who imagined every living thing into being.

1. What dreams and visions is God giving you for a cleaner planet or creation?
2. Imagine a better future for all of creation, what does it look like?

WHAT DOES THE CHURCH SAY?

READ below Pope Francis’ message from “Let Us Dream” and then **ANSWER** the questions in a small group or in a journal.

We have neglected and mistreated our ties with our Creator, with creation, and with our fellow creatures. As we come out of the COVID-19 crisis we need to integrate and dialogue with the poor, the excluded, and the vulnerable, we need a system that gives people a say in the decisions that impact their lives. This is a moment to dream big, to rethink our priorities-what we value, what we want, what we seek- and commit to act in our daily life on what we have dreamed of. Come, let us dare to dream.

1. What did we learn from the COVID-19 crisis in terms of how it affected creation and vulnerable people?
2. What is the first thing that comes to mind when you hear Pope Francis encourage us to dream big and rethink our priorities?
3. What is it you value and why? Imagine more people with the same values. What does that world look like? How would it be different? What would we be able to do in that world that we are not doing now or not doing enough of?
4. What do you imagine that you could do to better care for creation?