

## Eco Congregation Notes July

### Plastic-Free July

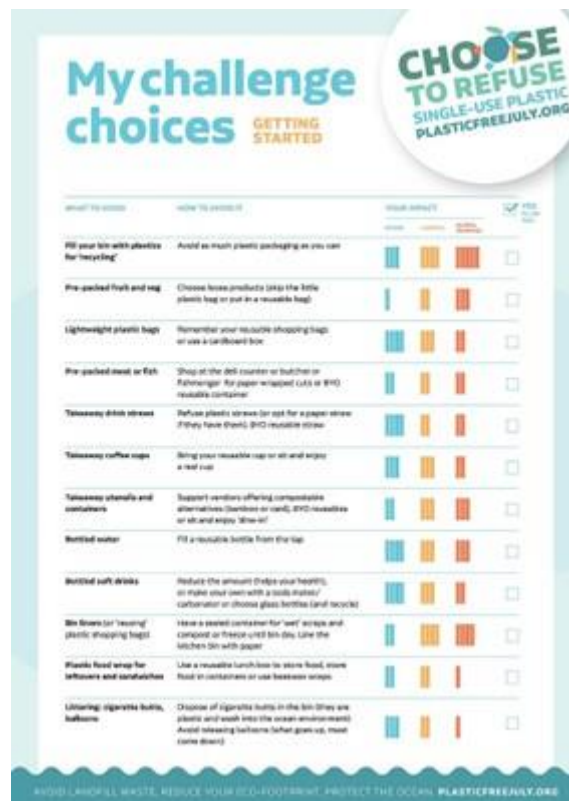
Plastic Free July is a key initiative of the Plastic Free Foundation, an organisation started by Rebecca Prince-Ruiz and a small team in local government in Western Australia in 2011. It is now one of the most influential environmental campaigns in the world. Millions of people across the globe take part every year, with many committing to reducing plastic pollution far beyond the month of July.

Humans produce 300 million tonnes of plastic annually, with at least half of disposable plastics designed to be used just once. These plastics do not decompose over hundreds of years. Plastic straws for instance, could easily float around in our oceans for as many as 500 years. Plastic waste in our oceans and seas has been devastating marine life at alarming rates.

According to UN estimates, one million plastic drinking bottles are purchased every minute around the world. Every year globally, 5 trillion single-use plastic bags are used.

More than 8.3 billion tonnes of plastic have been produced in the last seven decades according to researchers. Of this, about 60% has ended up in either a landfill or the natural environment. The invasion of plastic in our lives has been so complete and widespread that scientists have suggested it could serve as a geological indicator for the Anthropocene era. (The Anthropocene era is a term used to denote a new geologic age which is dominated by human impact on earth's ecosystems and geology. It highlights the role of human activity in climate change and mass extinctions of plant and animal species.)

At the heart of the message from Plastic Free July is the fact that plastic is choking our natural environment, and that simple choices such as these could reverse the damage drastically.



## Plastic Free July Prayer

Dear God,

Our earth is precious and is in need of gentleness  
and kindness upon facing climate change.

We pray for the environment and all of creation, the  
sky, land, sea and all living creatures.

May you protect all ecosystems and  
natural habitats, freeing them from harm  
and inhumane actions.

Protect the earth from plastic, land and ocean  
pollution keeping the earth in your loving care, in our  
common home, communities and everywhere.

Help us to love, respect and restore creation.

St Francis of Assisi, Pray for us.

Amen.

(Francesca, Year 11)

