

## Season of Creation: Week 3

### Contamination of our Seas & Rivers – Use of Chemicals

#### Some Facts

- There is a clear link between plastics and chemicals – many of which are used in the production of plastics. Chemicals are also used in millions of processes for making food, building materials, electricals as well as plastic toys and gadgets
- There is an estimated 100,000 synthetic chemicals on the EU market today and more being produced all the time. The potential negative impact of this cocktail of synthetic substances on our aquatic wildlife and ecosystems is one of the big unknowns of our time.
- Many chemicals, particularly persistent organic pollutants (POPs) take a long time to break down and can accumulate to polluting soil, water and air.
- There has been a tenfold increase in global fertiliser use since the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. Pesticides and herbicides sprayed on to food crops to control weeds and pests are, by design, toxic.
- Some human and pet medicines contain chemicals which are tolerable to us in small doses, but they work their way through our sewage systems into the sea, and can build up to cause fertility problems in fish.
- The many chemicals we use on a daily basis to clean our homes or ourselves often end up down the drain and can be harmful to wildlife and marine environments.

#### It's not all bad news

- POPs have been phased out in the last decades although their legacy from the 20<sup>th</sup> century can still be seen
- Regenerative farming – aiming to improve soil health, and reducing the amount of pesticides used to grow crops – is growing in the UK
- In UK the Environmental Permitting Regime (EPR) regulates the entry of effluent into freshwater or coastal waters, and impose penalties.
- Many household and beauty products are now more eco-friendly by using natural ingredients

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## What Can I do?

Please join us after Mass today at OLSE. We will be praying a “VIA CREATIONIS” outdoors (weather permitting). This is a devotion inspired by the stations of the cross, and is a new prayer to celebrate and contemplate creation.

### A prayer for our earth

All powerful God, you are present in the universe  
and in the smallest of your creatures.

You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.

Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty.

Fill us with your peace, that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one.

O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth,  
so precious in your eyes.

Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it,  
that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.

Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain at the expense of the poor and the earth.

Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,  
to be filled with awe and contemplation,  
to recognize that we are profoundly united  
with every creature

as we journey towards your infinite light.

We thank you for being with us each day.

Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle,  
for justice, love and peace.

### And if you would also like to do something more practically:

- Buy Eco cleaning products – most supermarkets stock a brand or two
- Look at labels before buying – aim for items which say % Sulphates
- If possible, buy organic foodstuff which have not been exposed to pesticides
- When buying toiletries/cleaning stuff, buy items which are made from natural (plant based) sources, or those which say that they are biodegradable
- Reducing the use of plastic will reduce the amount of chemicals going into our environment
- Don't use pesticides in your garden

For information on sources, please speak to Pat Fuchter

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