



## Caring for our Common Home in Lockdown

Many people are finding that although there are hard parts to being in lockdown, there are many things that they can do that they maybe didn't have time for before.

Learning more about nature is good for everyone. It helps us relax, provides beautiful flowers and plants, gives us good things to eat and can help us grow closer to God. The best way to learn about nature is to get out into nature. And the more we learn about it the better we will be able to care for our common home.

Below you will find some fun activities to try as a way of using lockdown time to Care for our Common Home.

Jesuit Missions would love to have photos of your efforts for our website. Please send these to your teacher and they will be forwarded to us at Jesuit Missions!



*Pictured: homegrown apples  
2019 London Marathon runners with the Jesuit Missions Wombles  
Briksdal Glacier, Norway*

## Grow it! Make a seed bomb

Create the following mixture:

- a container with a 2-4 litre capacity.
- 2-3 packets of flower seeds. Try to get seeds that need the same growing conditions and will germinate at about the same rate
- 2-3 cups of general-purpose compost or soil from the garden
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup water

Mix the seeds, compost, and water together thoroughly. Add the flour. This will make a paste. Adjust amounts of compost and flour, aiming for a consistency that you can then shape into several golf ball sized balls. Set in a tray and allow to dry for at least 24 hours.

Find an area in your garden that needs some colour. Perhaps there is a forgotten corner or a bare patch. Loosen the soil a little with a hoe or garden rake to create a perfect environment for your seeds to grow in. Now, simply throw the seed bombs. It is usually best to do this soon after it has rained or throw them on a spot that you have watered. The flour and soil will gradually break down and the seeds will start growing.

You may have seeds at home. Some companies are still providing seeds online.



### Create a window box or planter

Choose the type of window box or planter that you want and what you want to grow in it flowers, herbs, veg.

To make the planter you can recycle many things that you have around the house, for

example line a basket with plastic. Make certain to cut small drainage holes in the plastic. Fill with compost. Various containers, ranging from fruit crates and teapots to old dresser drawers, old boots and shoes and large plastic bottles may be used for planting. Just make certain that if



needs be they are lined and also that holes have been cut for drainage.

### Photograph it! / Draw It!

Where are you seeing God in nature?  
What are you grateful for in nature?

In your garden or during a walk take your phone and take photographs of nature. Take the time to really look at flowers, trees, hills, blades of grass and animals or anything in nature that particularly strikes you. Photograph it from several different angles.

Make a Finding God in Nature photo collage.

Or, find something in nature that really strikes you and draw or paint it.

Send photos of your work to your teacher with your name and a note of where you saw it and why this says something to you about God and what you are grateful for.

Depending on the type of window box you want, you can plant seeds. For example, lettuce, herbs, or flowers. Or

might want to take cuttings from plants that you already have. Geranium cuttings can be placed in water and will develop roots. This will usually take 3-4 weeks. Once the roots are well established these can be planted. It is amazing how quickly they will grow. Some garden supply companies are still selling seeds and even bedding plants as are some grocery stores. Delivery times may vary.

**Health and Safety:** If you are using scissors to cut anything, make certain that there is an adult around to help. If a container needs drainage holes, ask an adult to help you with these! Wash your hands carefully after planting up containers.



## Find it!

Choose a category. How many of these common creatures you can find in your garden? Once you have decided on a category, you may need to do some research so that you are sure what you are looking for. Take photographs of your finds, if possible. Then produce a photo collage with labels. Jesuit Missions would love to see these.

## Here are some websites to help you!

<https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/joinin/garden-bird-spotting?>

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/>

### Category 1- Insects and butterflies

marmalade hoverfly, bumble bee, wasp, green shield bug, seven spot ladybird, emperor dragonfly, garden black ant, daddy longlegs (*Tipula paludosa*), the common European earwig, grasshopper, cricket, glow worm, garden spider, slugs, snails, holly blue butterfly, peacock butterfly, admiral butterfly

### Category 2 – Mammals

hedgehog, red fox, badger, vole, mouse, moles, bats, red squirrel, grey squirrel, stoat, weasel, rabbit, shrew

### Category 3 – Amphibians and reptiles

frog, toad, newt, grass snake, lizard, adder

### Category 4 – Birds

magpie, sparrow, blue tit, robin, goldfinch, blackbird, starling, collared dove, great tit, house sparrow, chaffinch, blackbird, wood pigeon, jay, wren, goldcrest, coal tit, owl, kingfisher



## Build It!

Some of you will have made eco bricks at school. They are simple to make. Just take plastic bottles and fill them as tightly as possible with plastic bags, wrappers (sweet, biscuit, crisps) and empty blister packs. They must be **clean and dry** before they go into a 2 litre plastic bottle or plastic milk bottle and must be packed tightly. Make certain that they are solid, otherwise what you build with them will not be sturdy.

They can be used to build everything from greenhouses to benches and plant containers. To make them into a structure you can check online for ideas. These will usually require wire mesh, wire, and sometimes small amounts of concrete.

**Health and Safety:** Make sure you have an adult help you with this! Never work with sharp materials on your own.



**Benches**

*Tables*

**Planters**

**Art**

## Pray It!

Pope Francis' important letter Laudato Si takes its name from a prayer written by St Francis of Assisi, called the Canticle of the Creatures. A Canticle is a song. The prayer is a song praising God for ALL of Creation.

After having done one of the activities above, try writing a prayer or poem praising God for creation.

Again, please share these with your teacher and they will be passed on to us at Jesuit Missions.

If you would like to read this important prayer of St Francis, please see:

<https://ignatiansolidarity.net/blog/2015/06/04/canticle-of-brother-sun-and-sister-moon-of-st-francis-of-assisi/>

***Thanks go to Clare McCullough of St Mary's Hall, Stonyhurst for suggesting this resource and for collaborating in its preparation.***



### **For further information contact:**

Jesuit Missions | | Edge Hill Wimbledon London SW19 4LR

Telephone: 0208 946 0466 Email: [info@jesuitmissions.org.uk](mailto:info@jesuitmissions.org.uk) Visit our website:

[www.jesuitmissions.org.uk](http://www.jesuitmissions.org.uk)

Follow us on social media: Facebook: Jesuit Missions UK Twitter: @jesuitmissions

Instagram: @jesuitmissions

Registered charity number: 230165 (England and Wales) and Scotland (040490)