

## Parish Accreditation - Frequently Asked Questions

- 1. Our church has been an environmentally friendly church for many years and can achieve our Gold level of accreditation. Do we need to go through the bronze and silver levels – or can we just go straight to gold?**

The program is a cumulative one so 10 categories from the bronze level need to be completed before the silver. But if you have been a progressive parish for many years and have accomplished 10 items from the bronze and 10 from the silver categories there is no reason why you can not "go straight to gold". But please tick all 30 relevant boxes when you submit your form together with the necessary written document of your achievements.

- 2. We don't have 10 from the bronze level can we tick some of the silver level to claim our bronze level?**

The bronze level aimed to be an educational tool for each parish so it is important to complete just the bronze and not reach into the silver category. Don't forget that you can substitute 2 items not mentioned on the form using creative ideas that have been achieved in your parish. If you used silver items for the bronze it would be harder to complete the silver at a later time and give you less flexibility in that category.

- 3. Why is a Fair Trade section included in the accreditation process when it doesn't have anything to do with the church becoming greener?**

Fair Trade is an ethical, just, and sustainable way to purchase food not grown in Canada. By buying fair trade we are supporting sustainable farming practices in developing countries. As a result, by choosing Fair Trade in our churches, we are making a positive impact in the way agriculture is practiced and consequently minimizing our negative impact on the life of the world.

- 4. We are a rural parish and don't have blue bin and green bin recycling? How can we complete the areas that involve recycling?**

Contact your public works department and educate yourselves about what can be recycled/composted and do whatever is available. Press your local municipality for more of these services. Install a compost bin in the church grounds.

- 5. It can be hard to find time to prepare services for Earth Hour, Earth Day, and Season of Creation. Where can I go for help with these?**

Liturgies for these services are available on our Climate Justice Niagara Web site. KAIROS also has excellent resources.

- 6. Isn't it against health regulation to offer sugar bowls or milk jugs on the tables at public events? *Single-serving containers are also easier for us to use in our hospitality, why would we switch?***

Where there are health concerns you need to comply. If the food event is open to the public then single-serving containers are needed. If the event is just for the church then open sugar bowls and milk pitchers are allowed, but only put out what is needed. Single serving containers are wasteful and use plastic which is oil based.

- 7. Our parishioners are good at recycling, but other church hall users aren't. What can we do?**

Try visiting groups and explain the policies you are trying to follow in the church. Have the Best Practice sheets available for outside groups. Have a written agreement for tenants to sign asking them to comply with your new rules. Monitor how groups are doing and give them feedback on improvements seen.

**8. Our parking lot is shovelled and salted by a contractor in the winter. What suggestions do you have for improving this activity as we have to have safe access for all the church users?**

This is a difficult area as safety is a big factor for all churches. But check with your contractor and explain your concerns about salt and see if they are able to use an alternative - cost may be an issue. Is anyone at the church able to do some of the sidewalks/paths using an alternative to salt?

**9. After COVID-19 we need to clean more carefully with bleach. How can we still be environmentally friendly?**

Information is available on our Climate Justice Niagara web site – Safe Cleaning and Public Health Advice. Use only the stated amount of bleach – more is not better – in the necessary areas of the church. Check the Diocesan web site for updates in the Diocesan COVID policies.