

# YOUR GUIDE TO THE *Livesimply* award

Pope Francis, in his encyclical letter *Laudato Si'* invites us all to “work with generosity and tenderness in protecting this world which God has entrusted to us.”

(#242)

The *livesimply* award is an opportunity for Catholic communities - parishes, schools, religious orders and chaplaincies - to respond to that invitation.

The award invites groups to celebrate how they already live simply and gives them the focus and inspiration to go further.

The award can help you build community by bringing together different groups under a common vision. It can help you save money through conserving energy and water. It can help you develop relationships with other churches and groups outside the church. It can help you to live, not just more simply, but also more fully.

“We are right to repeat again and again the straightforward appeal: ‘Live simply so that others may simply live.’”

Cardinal Vincent Nichols

 *livesimply*

**CAFOD**  
*Just one world*



## What is the *livesimply* award?

The *livesimply* award is given to Catholic parishes, schools and communities that have taken significant steps to respond to the Church's call to live simply so that others may simply live.

It is awarded to communities who can show how they have been living:

- simply
- in solidarity with people in poverty
- sustainably with creation.

The logo for the livesimply award, featuring a stylized cross inside a circle followed by the word "livesimply" in a lowercase, sans-serif font.

## Start here to apply for your *livesimply* award



“An important part of our faith is to care for creation and to develop respect for other people in the world. Becoming a *livesimply* parish helps you go deeper and to take action”

Paul Kelly, St Joseph's parish,  
Lancaster diocese





**1: EXPLORE ▶▶** Read through this guide, check out [cafod.org.uk/livesimply](https://cafod.org.uk/livesimply) or get in touch with any questions.

If you're excited by the idea of working towards the award, share that excitement with others in your community. A small enthusiastic group, whether an existing CAFOD group or Justice and Peace group or a handful of people ready for a new challenge, is all you need to get started, along with the backing of your parish priest or head teacher.

This group leads the way, but they don't do everything! A *livesimply* award needs to involve as many people in the community as possible. From the youngest to the oldest, each person's different strengths and interests contribute to making it a success.

**2: SIGN UP ▶▶** Just sign up at [cafod.org.uk/livesimply](https://cafod.org.uk/livesimply) with your contact details and parish name to download a really simple action plan form and questions to consider. If no one in your group is online, just call us and we'll fill it in for you over the phone and send you the information you need.

When you sign up, we'll invite you to an email group for *livesimply* communities. This is an easy way to share ideas, resources and questions with more experienced parishes and groups and can provide you with advice and inspiration to help you make your action plan.



## **Ideas for living simply, sustainably and in solidarity with people**

▼ **who are poor** These ideas – large and small - all come from *livesimply* award communities. See if there is something here which inspires you.



### **Living simply**

- Ask community members to make their own *livesimply* pledges.
- Host a talk or study group on *Laudato Si'*.
- Make a *livesimply* banner from recycled materials.
- Include a *livesimply* tip or thought for the week in a newsletter.
- Give out CAFOD prayer cards or say the *livesimply* prayer at Mass.
- Hold a nature walk.

### **Living sustainably with creation**

- Encourage people to walk or cycle to Mass or school.
- Compost food waste.
- Plant bulbs.
- Produce an electronic newsletter instead of printing.
- Carry out an energy audit.
- Turn off lights and close doors to conserve energy.



**3: PLAN ▶▶** To apply for the award, your community needs to plan one substantial action – something which involves either a significant change or a lot of people – and at least two smaller actions under each of these three headings: living simply; living sustainably and living in solidarity with people who are poor. Nine actions in total.

Start by thinking about what your community already does. Perhaps you welcome refugees, support a local food bank, sign CAFOD campaign cards, look after a parish or school garden, collect recycling, or run a Fairtrade stall. You may find you already have a long list.

Then think about what you'd like to do. Applying for the *livesimply* award can give a focus for a new project or boost an idea that's just waiting to get off the ground. Visit [cafod.org.uk/livesimply](http://cafod.org.uk/livesimply) for more ideas.

You can include activities which are already taking place – but should include also some that are new, or that aim to reach new people.

- ▶▶ Send us a copy of your completed plan by email or post. We'll send you a certificate to display to show that your community is working towards the *livesimply* award.

### Living in solidarity with people who are poor

- Sign campaign cards and petitions.
- Collect items for the local food bank.
- Visit people who are sick or housebound.
- Commit to only using Fairtrade products.
- Support a local refugee project.
- Challenge people to live on £1 a day for a week.

**4: ACT ▶▶** Now's the time to put your plan into action. It's up to you how long you take, but most communities take about a year to work towards the award. This gives time to get different groups on board, but not so long that people lose momentum.

As you go along, collect evidence to illustrate what you have done. This could be photos, service sheets, media cuttings or electricity bills. You can share these when your parish is assessed and with your community to show what you have achieved together.

If you have questions or challenges along the way, just call or email us or use the email group to get in touch with other *livesimply* communities.





**5: ASSESSMENT** ▶▶ When you've completed your plan, get in touch with us by phone or email to request an assessment. You don't need to send in anything.

At a time that suits you, two *livesimply* assessors will visit your group and your community. This is an opportunity to share and celebrate what you've been doing – it's not a test! The assessors will tell you straight away if you have achieved the award and give you advice on what to do next.



Brenda Underwood,  
Brentwood  
Cathedral Parish

**6: CELEBRATE!** This is a chance to say 'thank you' to all those who contributed to achieving your award. Many communities organise or dedicate a special Mass or other event. St John Bosco in Reading held a Creation Mass, followed by a shared meal; St Peter the Apostle in Leamington Spa invited their Bishop to present the award; and St Augustine's in Tunbridge Wells even baked a *livesimply* cake.

We'll send you a beautiful wooden plaque to display and offer advice on how to get media coverage.

"The whole process has been hugely inspirational. From not really knowing where to start, I feel we have come so far and done so much. I'd encourage other groups just to look and see - you'll be surprised at how much you can achieve."



## THE JOURNEY CONTINUES...

Once you've received the award the *livesimply* principles can be embedded in your community life and the relationships you've developed will continue to grow. You can now take on new activities with confidence because you are a *livesimply* community, and can encourage others to take up the challenge too. ▶▶▶▶

**The *Livesimply* principles are deeply rooted in Catholic tradition from ancient times to the present day.**

Today, Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si'* re-inspires us to respond to the 'cry of the earth and the cry of the poor' and to act to address poverty and care for creation.

"*Livesimply* parishes are doing what Pope Francis is asking us all to do: to care especially for the disadvantaged and those living in poverty."

Archbishop Peter Smith,  
Archdiocese of Southwark

### ***Livesimply* prayer**

Compassionate and loving God,  
you created the world for us all to share,  
a world of beauty and plenty.  
Create in us a desire to live simply,  
so that our lives may reflect your generosity.

Creator God,  
you gave us responsibility for the earth,  
a world of riches and delight.  
Create in us a desire to live sustainably,  
so that those who follow after us  
may enjoy the fruits of your creation.

God of peace and justice,  
you give us the capacity to change,  
to bring about a world that mirrors your wisdom.  
Create in us a desire to act in solidarity,  
so that the pillars of injustice crumble  
and those now crushed are set free.

**Amen.**

LINDA JONES / CAFOD





“It is a return to that simplicity which allows us to stop and appreciate the small things, to be grateful for the opportunities which life affords us, to be spiritually detached from what we possess, and not to succumb to sadness for what we lack.”

“We need to take up an ancient lesson, found in different religious traditions and also in the Bible. It is the conviction that “less is more”.

Pope Francis,  
Laudato Si', #222 and #223

“When lived freely and consciously, it is liberating. It is not a lesser life or one lived with less intensity. On the contrary, it is a way of living life to the full.”





## Livesimply award checklist ▶▶▶▶

- ☐ 1 Explore
- ☐ 2 Sign up
- ☐ 3 Plan
- ☐ 4 Act
- ☐ 5 Assess
- ☐ 6 Celebrate



### Contact us

Get in touch with any questions, to submit your action plan or to request an assessment:

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Visit [cafod.org.uk/livesimply](https://cafod.org.uk/livesimply) to sign up, download resources and read inspiring stories from communities who have achieved the award.

Order more of these guides, and find free prayer and campaign resources to help your community live simply, from [shop.cafod.org.uk](https://shop.cafod.org.uk) or call 0300 011 5680.

“We are very grateful for the efforts you are making to add your grain of sand to the defense of the natural world. Together, your solidarity and ours, inspires the work we are doing ... to protect our shared common home.”

Jesy Romero,  
CAFOD partner, Peru

**CAFOD**  
Just one world

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 **livesimply**

The *livesimply* award for Catholic parishes and communities is the sister award to the Eco Church award.