

Litter-less Lunch Challenge

Why a Litter-less Lunch?

Laudato Si

In his Laudato Si encyclical, Pope Francis writes, “*There is a nobility in the duty to care for creation through little daily actions.*” How we prepare and consume something as simple as lunch can be part of those daily actions for the OLL community.

Lunch Waste at School

A recent waste audit revealed that lunch waste is the #1 contributor to the school’s trash – 50% of our trash!

What happens to food when we throw it away?

Food decomposes into methane when put in the landfill. Methane is 30x more potent as a heat-trapping gas in the earth’s atmosphere than carbon dioxide.

Meaningful Change

Led by the Green Team, OLL is focusing on reducing waste and recycling more to become better stewards of the natural world, save money for the Parish and follow Pope Francis’ teaching.

How You Can Help

The Green Team is studying ways to reduce lunch waste. Here are some ideas from the students. Keep it simple – pick one new idea and try it out.

Tip #1 Don’t Waste Food

Bring your uneaten food home so your parents can see what you are eating and how much to pack.

- Paulina Dhanens,
1st grade

Tip #2 Morning Snack

Bring your snacks in reusable containers instead of plastic bags.

- Jack Curtis
2nd grade.

Tip #3 Buy in Bulk

Buy a large container of yogurt (or canned fruit or snacks) and put smaller serving sizes in reusable containers for lunch.

- Maria Nehnevaj,
6th grade

Tip #4 Silverware

Bring a spoon and fork from home. Use metal silverware because you can’t recycle plastic spoons and forks.

- Piper Johnson,
3rd grade

Tip #5 Bye-bye Juice Box

Instead of juice or sports drinks, fill up your reusable water bottle with refreshing water from OLL’s new fountains. For class parties, bring a large jug of juice and pour it into our water bottles.

- Entire OLL Green Team

Tip #6 Clean & Recycle

Wipe out single-serve yogurt or fruit cups with a paper towel and recycle. Remember: Containers smaller than your fist cannot be recycled.

- Entire OLL Green Team

Litter-less Lunch Resources

Did You Know?

Clark County Waste Connections provided new recycling tips and reminders at OLL's school-wide trash audit. Here are some we found useful for Litter-less Lunches:

Pizza Boxes are OK to Recycle (!)

As long as there is no food, such as meat or cheese left over, you can recycle entire pizza boxes. A little grease is okay. Many classrooms now recycle pizza boxes on pizza lunch day.

Plastic in Lunches

- Items smaller than your fist cannot be recycled because they jam up the recycling machinery. Unfortunately, this eliminates many single-serve containers from being recycled.
- Plastic utensils cannot be recycled. A few OLL classrooms have eliminated plastic utensils from their class supplies - kudos!

The entire OLL Green Team contributed to this resource guide. The idea for the guide comes from 7th grader Uriel Meza-Gonzales. Second-grader Steven Nehnevaj came up with the idea for the Litter-less Lunch presentations your student will see in class during lunch.

Resources for Waste-free Lunch Kits

It doesn't have to be hard or expensive to pack a litter-less lunch. The Green Team is exploring school affiliate programs with lunch kit companies. In the meantime, here are some tried, true and affordable resources.

Canning & Jelly Jars

Small canning and old jelly jars make excellent, durable, reusable containers for yogurt, snacks and canned fruit.

Thrift Store Silverware

Collect 2-3 forks and spoons for each child from thrift stores or garage sales. Keep them in a place where your child can be responsible for putting them in their lunch. Old baby spoons work well, too.

Re-usable Snack Bags

One of our favorite re-usable snack bag brand is Lunchskins (www.3greenmoms.com). One bag costs the same as a bulk box of plastic snack bags and lasts for 5+ years. And, they can be washed in the dishwasher.

Cloth Napkins

Try adding a cloth napkin to your lunch box. Worn dinner napkins can be re-used for lunch boxes. Launder as needed.

Bento Boxes

Bento boxes are an excellent investment that last many years. Check out Laptop Lunches or Lunchbots for sustainably-made options.

Do the Math

An average disposable lunch costs \$4.02/day. An average waste-free lunch costs \$2.65/day.

One child's disposable lunch generates an average of 67 pounds of waste each school year.

Please recycle this flyer