



## Single Use Plastic (SUP) Challenge for Lent Week 2: Straws

The last time you got a drink at a restaurant, did it come with a plastic straw? Over 500,000,000 plastic straws are used every day in the U.S., enough to circle the equator 2.5 times. Straws can't be recycled due to their light weight and will last 200 years in a landfill. Improper disposal makes them one of the top 10 contributors to marine debris pollution. They do not biodegrade, but break down into micro plastics, making their way into our food chain and the deepest trenches of the oceans.

There is a worldwide movement to make plastic straws a relic of the past. We need to educate individuals to refuse plastic straws and spread the "straw free" message, along with encouraging eateries to no longer automatically give plastic straws.

If you would like to "give up" of plastic straws, here are some ideas:

- Say "No straw, please" before you order a drink. Encourage others to join you.
- If you need a straw, carry your own paper, glass, bamboo or stainless steel straw. Good reusable straws are durable and easy to clean with a special cleaning brush.
- Reach out to local eateries and ask them to only serve straws upon request. Print out the Straws Upon Request Cards listed below and leave one with your bill. Encourage them to change to non-plastic options (like paper) if diners do request a straw.

Post pictures of your creative ideas and plastic bag alternatives on the "SWPA SUP Challenge" Facebook page and other social media outlets. May this challenge make us more attentive to God our creator and all of God's creation.

Citations and other resources

1. The Last Plastic Straw. <https://www.plasticpollutioncoalition.org/no-straw-please>. Under Level 2, print cards for eateries by selecting "leave these informative cards with your bill".
2. One Less Straw Pledge Campaign (sign a pledge not to use straws for 30 days) <https://onelessstraw.org>