

Living Lightly: An Ecological Resource

“We stand at a critical moment in Earth’s history, when humanity must choose its future...to move forward we must recognize that in the midst of a magnificent diversity of cultures and life forms we are one human family and one Earth community with a common destiny.”

The Earth Charter (2000)



*Embracing a Simple
And Sustainable
Lifestyle as
Sisters of Saint Joseph
And Associates*

*“We seek to live ever more simply,
to express moderation in all things, and to value all creation as gift.”*

Constitutions #81

*“Our commitment to promoting a sustainable future for and beyond our Congregation
impels us to embrace the lens of sustainability, with its focus on the common good,
as the guiding principle for planning.”*

Strategic Plan 2008

Ecological Resource Contents

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March 2009

Dear Sisters and Associates,

In fidelity to living out our 1994 vision statement to “treasure and care for Earth” and our Chapter 2004 commitment to sustainable living most recently highlighted our 2008 Strategic Plan, the Sustainability Committee of the Commission for Justice is offering this *Ecological Resource* so that our Congregation and our local communities, can prayerfully assess our lifestyle and take concrete action steps to live more simply and sustainably for the life of our world and for all of God’s creation.

This resource includes: quotes from our Congregational documents and other sources for your reflection; questions to assess our lifestyle as it relates to sustainability and simplicity; tips for living more sustainably; suggested books/websites for further learning; and questions for dialogue that will assist us as we more fully embrace a simple, sustainable lifestyle as Sisters of Saint Joseph and Associates. The centerpiece of this Ecological Resource is a “Sharing the State of the Heart and Order of the House” that we envision as the prayer in which our contemplative dialogue on simple lifestyle will take place.

We encourage you to be creative in the use of this resource and we offer these suggestions as a way to proceed:

♥ **Spring/Summer, 2009:**

- Use the *Ecological Resource, Section 1 – Spirituality* for personal prayer/reflection/assessment prior to gathering for the State of the Heart and Order of the House.
- Use *Sharing the State of the Heart and Order of the House* to engage in contemplative dialogue on simple lifestyle. (See page 24)

♥ **Fall, 2009:**

- Local Communities/Associate Groups use *Section 2 – General Overview* for personal reflection followed by contemplative dialogue using *Sharing the State of the Heart and Order of the House*. (See page 24)

♥ **Winter-Spring 2009 - 2010:**

- Local Communities/Associate Groups choose at least two (2) sections from the Ecological Resource using *Sharing of the Heart and Order of the House* for contemplative dialogue. (See page 24)

♥ **On-going use 2010, 2011, 2012:**

- Local Communities/Associate groups choose at least two (2) sections annually using *Sharing the State of the Heart and Order of the House*. (See page 24)

♥ **Long-term use:**

- Our gradual transformation to a simple, sustainable lifestyle is the result of our choices influenced by God’s grace and *repeated over a lifetime*. We encourage you to continue to use this resource and revisit those sections that will most enable you to live more simply as we move into the future.

You can also access this resource through the congregational website. It is our hope that this resource will act as a touchstone for dialogue that impels us to choose actions that move us beyond our comfort zone as we “discover and implement creative ways to live more simply for the sake of the common good.” (Strategic Plan, 2008)

Gratefully,

*The Commission for Justice and
The Sustainability Committee*

Section 1 - Spirituality

Reflection

“The Canticle of Brother Sun is a charter of peace, and as such it is a charter of creaturely right: human, animal, vegetable, and mineral. The most basic meaning of peace is being at home with all creatures, loving all life, reverencing all matter. The Canticle has a message of peace for all nations...” Eric Doyle

“We are completely dependent upon the community of creation and cannot draw a breath without it. We are poor, absolutely dependent upon God at the core of our beings. God is the sole source of life.” Monica Hartnett CSJ

On the line next to each statement describe your current practice using this scale:

Never	Sometimes	Always
1	5	10

Score: 20 – 69 points

Use: *Tips for Living More Lightly*

Score: 😊 70+

Use: *The Resources for Ongoing Learning*

1. I believe we have, through our “SSJ” spirituality and charism, a commitment to reconciliation and restoration of harmony to our world. _____
2. I believe I have a moral obligation to be responsible for the protection of the environment. _____
3. I believe that living simply frees up resources for those in need and frees the human spirit to cultivate relationships with neighbors, the natural world and the world of the spirit. _____
4. I realize I have a need to pray for a deeper awareness of my connectedness with all of creation. _____
5. I believe the ecological crisis has assumed such proportions as to be the responsibility of everyone. _____
6. I believe that ecological stewardship is a fundamental exercise in solidarity. _____
7. I believe in a God-centered and sacramental view of the universe, in which humans are accountable for choices that affect the future of Earth. _____
8. I believe in a worldview affirming the ethical significance of global interdependence and the common good. _____
9. I believe in an option for poor people which gives passion to our quest for an equitable and sustainable world. _____
10. I believe my actions effect the entire created order. _____

Tips for Living More Lightly

1. Make conscious efforts to limit amount of clothing, furniture, food purchases, etc., making them more available to others.
2. Reflect on your personal responsibility to protect the environment.
3. Examine your use of the resources.
4. Take time each day to reflect on the free and generous gifts of nature.
5. Explore ways of getting media coverage for an issue that concerns you.
6. Use filtered water rather than bottled water in solidarity with those whose water's source is being diminished by privatization of water.
7. Learn about environmental racism, the disproportionate impact of environmental contamination on communities of color.
8. Learn about agencies in your community, city, or state that have responsibilities for environmental issues and how to contact them with your concerns.
9. Give 5% of your budget to assist a poor family in your area while becoming more aware of the plight of those who are poor.
10. Watch the sun rise and set, take a walk, learn the birds in the area, and follow the night sky. Go outside to a quiet place or listen to instrumental music with nature background. Allow yourself to be transported into the heart of creation.

Resources:

Judy Cannato, *Radical Amazement*

Sallie McFague, *Life Abundant: Rethinking Theology and Economy for a Planet in Peril*

Joanna Macy and Molly Young Brown, *Coming Back to Life: Practices to Reconnect Our Lives, Our World*

Elaine Prevallet, SL, *Making the Shift: Seeing Faith Through A New Lens*

Joyce Rupp, *The Cosmic Dance: An Invitation to Experience Our Oneness*

Websites:

www.webofcreation.org

www.projectnatureconnect.com

www.earthministry.org

www.religionandecology.org

www.brianswimme.org

www.sojo.net

www.rainforestinfo.org

Section 2 - General Overview

Reflection

A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. Chinese Proverb

"Give your full attention to the actions you perform. Remove from them the slightest imperfections and try to observe all conditions necessary to make them perfect. One action done well is worth more than a thousand done half-heartedly." (Maxims of Perfection 14:4)

On the line next to each statement describe your current practice using this scale:

Never	Sometimes	Always
1	5	10

Score: 20 – 69 points

Use: *Tips for Living More Lightly*

Score: ☺ 70+

Use: *The Resources for Ongoing Learning*

1. I choose foods that are grown locally and are chemical free. _____
2. I make an effort to use fluorescent lighting rather than incandescent. _____
3. I keep the thermostat at 65 degrees in the winter and 75 degrees in the summer. _____
4. I wait to have a full load before using the washing machine or dishwasher. _____
5. I combine trips when running errands by car. _____
6. I recycle newspaper, office paper, plastics, glass and metals. _____
7. I make an effort to find and buy products made from recycled materials. _____
8. I look for leisure activities that will bring me in contact with natural settings. _____
9. I make choices based on the impact on the natural world. _____
10. I make consistent efforts at learning ways to live simply. _____

Reflection/Action

Analyze your everyday choices and how they impact the environment.

What choices do I feel good about?

Where do I feel the need to make some changes?

How do our communal choices in this area contribute to fullness of life and unioning love in the world?

Tips for Living More Lightly

1. Buy locally produced, organic food to help reduce air pollution caused by transporting food and toxins out of the water supply.
2. Replace as many bulbs in you living/work area as possible with fluorescent bulbs, which produce more light and less heat than incandescent bulbs.
3. Lower the thermostat in winter; raise it in the summer.
4. Save water any way you can as a gift to the environment.
5. Travel fewer miles by car. The result will be less gasoline burned; less smog, soot, and carbon dioxide pollution, and better health for our world.
6. Recycle newspaper, paper, plastics, glass, Styrofoam, batteries, cans, cell phones and appliances. Find out how it is done in your area and begin.
7. Buy recycled paper products: copy paper, toilet paper, facial tissue, etc. Recycled paper products are becoming more available now that consumer demand is higher. Consider cloth napkins, instead of paper. Instead of paper plates, use disposable plates made of bagasse.
8. Take a daily walk or keep a plant.

Resources:

Michael Brower and Warren Leon, *The Consumer's Guide to Effective Environmental Choices: Practical Choices from The Union of Concerned Scientists*

John Dear, SJ, "Christianity and Vegetarianism: Pursuing the Nonviolence of Jesus"
John Robbins, *Diet for a New America: How Your Food Choices Affect Your Health, Happiness, and the Future of Life on Earth*

John Robbins, *The Food Revolution: How Your Diet Can Help Save Your Life and the World*

Al Gore, *An Inconvenient Truth*

James Lovelock, *The Revenge of Gaia: Earth's Climate Crisis and the Fate of Humanity*

Websites:

www.sustainabletable.org

www.nrdc.org

www.localharvest.org

www.goodenergy.com

www.energystar.gov

www.simpleliving.net

www.PETA.org

www.ucsusa.org

http://www.biodegradablestore.com/cip/cip_plates.html

Section 3 - Energy

Reflection

Protect and restore the integrity of Earth's ecological systems, with special concern for biological diversity and the natural processes that sustain life. Earth Charter

"Let them have an artless simplicity in all things and everywhere, banishing from their community any kind of duplicity. This simplicity should include great prudence and maturity which they will learn through prayer and union with God rather than from the maxims of the world which are full of fraud and deceit." (Primitive Constitutions p.33)

On the line next to each statement describe your current practice using this scale:

Never	Sometimes	Always
1	5	10

Score: 20 – 69 points

Use: *Tips for Living More Lightly*

Score: ☺ 70+

Use: *The Resources for Ongoing Learning*

1. I unplug appliances when not in use. _____
2. I air dry clothes as much as possible. _____
3. I turn off the lights when I leave the room, even if it is for a short time. _____
4. In the summer I close the blinds and drapes in the house while I am away. _____
5. Whenever possible, I cook with a lid on the pot. _____
6. I use Energy Star appliances. _____
7. I air dry dishes instead of using the dishwasher drying cycle. _____
8. I have invested in compact fluorescent bulbs (CFL). _____
9. I set the refrigerator thermostat in the middle range. _____
10. I keep the freezer as full as possible without cramming. _____

Reflection/Action

Analyze your everyday choices and how they impact the environment.

What choices do I feel good about?

Where do I feel the need to make some changes?

How do our communal choices in this area contribute to fullness of life and unioning love in the world?

Tips for Living More Lightly

1. Turn off the water while brushing your teeth and save approximately two gallons of water for each minute you brush.
2. A shower of less than 5 minutes will save up to 1,000 gallons of water each month.
3. Close blinds and drapes in summer to keep the house cooler. Air conditioners don't have to run as high to bring the house to comfort level.
4. Cook with lids on pots to conserve energy. Water will boil more quickly.
5. The "small load" saves water but uses just as much electricity as a full load. Another good strategy is to make sure you have a full load before washing – clothes or dishes.
6. Avoid drinking bottled water. Learn about your municipal water source and filter only if there is a local problem.
7. The average life of a new fluorescent (CFL) bulb is 10,000 hours. A 40 watt CFL uses only 10 watts electricity; a 60 watt CFL uses only 15 watts; a 100 watt CFL uses only 25 watts.
8. The middle setting on refrigerator thermostat will keep all food at the right temperature when the door seal is tight.
9. A full freezer will stay colder longer because there is no large amount of empty space to cool.

Websites:

www.aceee.org

www.metaefficient.com

www.eere.energy.gov

Section 4 - Environment

Reflection

To listen well is the mark of a true friend – and listening is a habit we learn through years of freeing ourselves enough to enter into another’s world. What we seldom realize is that the Earth itself is listening to us – and it speaks to us also, if we only make the effort to listen. But the earth is old and it speaks quite softly. *Al Fritsch, SJ*

Our vow of obedience – our vow of mutual collaboration – challenges us with making discernment our way of life by listening to God-within and obeying without resistance the inspirations that are so freely given. “Obey faithfully the inspirations of grace. There are few persons who give it full obedience. Often they respond reluctantly or negligently, seldom fully accomplishing the good God inspires them to do.” *(Maxims of Perfection 6:8)*

On the line next to each statement describe your current practice using this scale:

Never	Sometimes	Always
1	5	10

Score: 20 – 69 points

Use: *Tips for Living More Lightly*

Score: ☺ 70+

Use: *The Resources for Ongoing Learning*

1. I buy organic, pesticide-free food. _____
2. I keep hazardous wastes (old batteries, solvents, paints, oils, grease, etc.) out of the garbage or sewer. _____
3. I discard hazardous wastes and electronics such as computers, cell phones, and other devices using a designated recycling program. _____
4. I make an effort to know my watershed and protect it. _____
5. I use non-toxic, biodegradable soaps, detergents and cleaning products. _____
6. I use glass, metal, paper, or ceramics instead of plastics for food storage. _____
7. I use chlorine-free, recycled paper products – i.e. coffee filters, napkins paper towels, and toilet paper. _____
8. I buy clothes that don’t require dry-cleaning or use organic dry-cleaning. _____
9. I avoid using pesticides and herbicides on the lawn, garden or houseplants. _____
10. I avoid eating fish with high concentrations of mercury. _____

Reflection/Action

Analyze your everyday choices and how they impact the environment.

What choices do I feel good about?

Where do I feel the need to make some changes?

How do our communal choices in this area contribute to fullness of life and unioning love in the world?

Tips for Living More Lightly

1. Use organically farmed food to protect our soil, our water, and our health.
2. Take nickel/cadmium and other batteries to hazardous waste collection site. Batteries thrown away by consumers are the single largest source of cadmium pollution in the environment.
3. Learn about local opportunities for keeping all kinds of things out of the land fill. The average computer, for example, contains 3-5 pounds of lead. Ways to recycle computers and other electronic waste vary widely according to region. Learn more about your watershed.
4. Avoid products containing toxic ingredients – chlorine, phenols, formaldehyde, cresol, and the benzenes – commonly found in household cleaners. Many of these cancer-causing products find their way back into drinking water when dumped into the sewer system.
5. Avoid plastic packaging and bottles, choosing glass, metal, paper, or ceramics instead.
6. Use chlorine-free paper to help to keep dioxin out of your drinking water.
7. Avoid clothes that need dry cleaning. The Perchloroethylene (PERC) used in dry cleaning generates large amounts of toxic waste.
8. Find green ways to manage pests.
9. Mercury concentrates in fish, making this important food a source of mercury poison. Mercury is a potent neurotoxin that can affect the brain, spinal cord, kidneys, and liver. Learn more.

Web Sites:

www.worldwatch.org

www.greenpeace.org

www.epa.gov

Section 5 - Nature

Reflection

“Our very contact with nature has a deep restorative power; contemplation of its magnificence imparts peace and serenity.” Pope John Paul II

“Are we learning how to live on “enough”? Do we choose a balanced lifestyle that calls us to mindfulness of “enough” – enough work, enough food, clothes, leisure, enough study, prayer, activities?” Monica Hartnet CSJ

On the line next to each statement describe your current practice using this scale:

Never	Sometimes	Always
1	5	10

Score: 20 – 69 points

Use: *Tips for Living More Lightly*

Score: ☺ 70+

Use: *The Resources for Ongoing Learning*

1. I spend time outdoors every day. _____
2. I keep a plant(s) or garden. _____
3. I enjoy watching birds, butterflies, and other animals. _____
4. I take time to watch the sunrise and sunset. _____
5. I enjoy observing the stars and phases of the moon. _____
6. I spend time reflecting on the gift of nature. _____
7. On vacation I find ways to experience nature. _____
8. I take time to appreciate the gift of water. _____
9. I belong to one or more groups dedicated to protecting wildlife. _____
10. I read books and or listen to tapes that add to my appreciation of nature. _____

Reflection/Action

Analyze your everyday choices and how they impact the environment.

What choices do I feel good about?

Where do I feel the need to make some changes?

How do our communal choices in this area contribute to fullness of life and unioning love in the world?

Tips for Living More Lightly

1. Spend at least ten minutes a day appreciating the natural world – even if you can't go outside.
2. Tend at least one small plant as a way to appreciate the oxygen-gift of the plant world
3. See birds and other animals as a reminder of life's basics needs – food, water, shelter and friends. Be a friend and provide what you can.
4. Observe Planet Earth. At sunrise and sunset, we are especially reminded of beauty.
5. Participate in the natural rhythms of the Earth as it rotates and shifts on its axis. The moon and the stars remind us of our earthly roots in a vast universe.
6. Take time each day to reflect on the free and generous gifts of nature. Practice gratitude.
7. Take a walk, learn the birds in the area and follow the night sky. These free activities reconnect us with nature and ourselves.
8. Take time to imagine your life without water, without clean water. Take time to appreciate and care for water.
9. Join the Sierra Club, Audubon Society, World Wildlife Federation, or local organization that fosters our appreciation of the natural world.
10. Begin with the resources listed below and follow your heart.

Resources:

Michael J. Cohen, *Reconnecting With Nature: Finding Wellness through Restoring Your Bond with the Earth*

Joseph Cornell, *Listening to Nature: How to Deepen Your Awareness of Nature,*

Websites:

www.worldwildlife.org

www.nwf.org

www.sierraclub.org

www.audubon.org

Section 6 - Food

Reflection

When we go to the supermarket, we rarely think about where our food comes from, who produces it, who harvests it, or what it takes to process, package and distribute it. When many of us think about agriculture at all, we worry about the economic cost of groceries and not the environmental cost to our land around the world.

"We shall always be perfectly content whether we have much or have little, or have nothing at all. Our little design requires of us an entire detachment from all things." (Eucharistic Letter)

On the line next to each statement describe your current practice using this scale:

Never	Sometimes	Always
1	5	10

Score: 20 – 69 points

Use: *Tips for Living More Lightly*

Score: ☺ 70+

Use: *The Resources for Ongoing Learning*

1. Whenever possible, I buy fresh organic vegetables and fruit. _____
2. I limit eating beef to once a week or less. _____
3. I avoid eating at fast food chains. _____
4. I grow some of my own food. _____
5. I compost organic food waste. _____
6. I avoid genetically engineered food. _____
7. I avoid snacks and other foodstuffs with lots of packaging _____
8. I make use of leftovers. _____
9. I belong to a food co-op in my community. _____
10. I look for Fair Trade labels on coffee, tea, bananas and cocoa. _____
11. I choose a vegetarian diet. _____
12. I eat low on the food chain. _____

Reflection/Action

Analyze your everyday choices and how they impact the environment.

What choices do I feel good about?

Where do I feel the need to make some changes?

How do our communal choices in this area contribute to fullness of life and unioning love in the world?

Tips for Living More Lightly

1. Using organic food reduces the amount of pesticides in the soil and water.
2. Eating less meat each week protects the environment. Meat production requires vast amounts of grain, land, and water, and causes air and water pollution.
3. Eating foods we prepare ourselves is better for our health and for the environment. Processing food wastes valuable resources.
4. Growing a small garden, even in a large container, creates a reconnection with Earth, water and soil.
5. Composting contributes to the quality of the soil and reduces the amount of waste in our landfills.
6. Learning about genetically engineered foods teaches us that they rarely have any added food value. This new technology raises many ethical questions. We need to be aware of what we are eating and its effect on ecological systems.
7. Buying in bulk helps to reduce packaging.
8. Making use of leftovers is a form of “reuse” that reduces the waste on our planet.
9. Belonging to a CSA or to a food co-op, lets us eat organic, fresh fruits and vegetables produced and purchased close to home and saves transportation and packaging.
10. Purchasing “Fair Trade” assures farmers producing the crops just wage for their labor.

Resources:

USCCB, *For I Was Hungry & You Gave Me Food: Catholic Reflections on Food, Farmers, and Farmworkers*

Wangari Maathai, *The Green Belt Movement: Sharing the Approach and Experience*

Websites:

www.globalstewards.org/garden-ecotips.htm

www.gaiafoundation.org

www.greenlivingideas.com

www.gogreencooking.com

www.localharvest.org

www.sustainabletable.org

Section 7 - Reduce-Reuse-Recycle

Reflection

"The protection of earth's vitality, diversity, and beauty is a sacred trust." Earth Charter

"In our vow of poverty – our vow of mutual sustainability – we share a consciousness that the universe belongs to us all. No one owns it. We are each responsible for cooperating with the global effort to be contributive and accountable for our share of giving and receiving what is needed for the good of the kingdom." Monica Hartnett, CSJ

On the line next to each statement describe your current practice using this scale:

Never	Sometimes	Always
1	5	10

Score: 20 – 69 points

Use: **Tips for Living More Lightly**

Score: 😊 70+

Use: **The Resources for Ongoing Learning**

1. I use cloth bags for shopping. _____
2. I avoid use of disposable cups, plates, and cutlery. _____
3. I purchase pre-owned clothing, furniture, and household items. _____
4. I find ways, both at work and at home, to recycle computers, cell phones, and other electronic and toxic waste. _____
5. I choose aluminum or glass over plastic whenever there is a choice. _____
6. I use chlorine-free paper with at least 50% "post-consumer waste" content. _____
7. I use the internet to read most news; I avoid printing out emails to save paper. _____
8. When I move or do a major household cleanup, I make every effort to recycle items to prevent them from going into the dumpster. _____
9. I make every effort to avoid buying over-packaged products and let companies know that I will not buy over-packaged products. _____
10. I use cloth napkins. _____

Reflection/Action

Analyze your everyday choices and how they impact the environment.

What choices do I feel good about?

Where do I feel the need to make some changes?

How do our communal choices in this area contribute to fullness of life and unioning love in the world?

Tips for Living More Lightly

1. Which is best, paper or plastic? Producing plastic uses less energy and water and generates less air pollution and solid waste than paper. Plastic bags may take up less space in the landfill but are not biodegradable. Most plastic bags end up in trees, gutters, sewers, and waterways. The best alternative is to carry and re-use your own durable cloth bag.
2. Consider the fact that the average useful span of plastic dinnerware is about three minutes and that they have a geological life of over a century.
3. Do all you can to keep containers from the landfill. The three R's of waste reduction are reduce, reuse (refurbish and repair) and recycle.
4. First ask, "Do I really need this?" Then ask, "Where can I purchase this second hand? Buy quality goods that last.
5. The website www.earth911.com will help you find local sites to recycle paper, plastics, metals, glass, and hazardous materials. Learn local opportunities for keeping all kinds of things out of the landfill.
6. Choose aluminum or glass over plastic. Most of the plastic you recycle does not actually get recycled, whereas recycling aluminum saves 90% of the energy cost of production and reduces 95% of the air pollution and 97% of the water pollution. Recycling glass saves 50% of the raw materials, 50% of the water, and 33% of the energy and reduces air pollution by 20%. Using refillable bottles saves four times the energy of using new bottles and 100% of the materials.
7. Post-consumer paper recycling not only saves trees but reduces the energy used in paper making by 50% and air pollution by 74% and water pollution by 35%.
8. Reduce your junk mail. Paper has three major environmental impacts: destruction of forests, dioxin production in chlorine bleaching, and disposal in landfills. For every 150 pounds of paper you reduce, reuse, or recycle you save a tree,
9. Plan ahead for major projects that generate huge amounts of waste. Think what you can sell, donate, and recycle rather than take to the landfill.
10. Paper packaging makes up 60% of the paper and about 25% of the total landfill space. Americans produce more than twice as much landfill waste as other first world countries such as Germany and Japan.

Resources:

Donald W. Lotter, *EarthScore: Your Personal Environmental Audit & Guide*

The Union of Concerned Scientists, *The Consumers Guide to Effective Environmental Choices*,

William McDonough and Michael Braungart, *Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things*

Websites:

www.freecycle.org

www.smartplanet.com

www.globalstewards.org/lunch.htm

Section 8 - Sustainability

Reflection

Sustainability encompasses the simple principle of taking from earth only what it can provide indefinitely, thus leaving future generations no less than we have access to ourselves.

“God’s desire, Medaille’s desire, the Earth Charter’s desire, and our desire is a yearning for all humanity to rise to its highest conscious capacity and work to create a sustainable way of life for all.”
Monica Hartnett CSJ

On the line next to each statement describe your current practice using this scale:

Never	Sometimes	Always
1	5	10

Score: 20 – 69 points

Use: *Tips for Living More Lightly*

Score: ☺ 70+

Use: *The Resources for Ongoing Learning*

1. I am familiar with the concepts of carrying capacity in terms of ecological and sustainable use. _____
2. I am familiar with indicators and how sustainability indicators differ from traditional indicators. _____
3. I am familiar with the concepts of clean production. _____
4. I am familiar with the term “blue gold of the 21st century.” _____
5. I believe water is a fundamental human right; to the extent one has the right to live, one has the right to water. _____
6. I refuse to purchase bottled water. _____
7. This audit has raised my awareness of the world’s water supply problems, efforts to privatize water for profit and I would like to learn more regarding this topic. _____
8. I believe the aesthetic qualities of nature are important and with water and air, they are part of our common global inheritance and should be viewed as a common resource rather than the private property of corporations or individuals. _____
9. I believe the polluter should bear the cost of environmental restoration. _____
10. I believe farmers have the right to save seeds for the next year’s crop. _____

Reflection/Action

Analyze your everyday choices and how they impact the environment.

What choices do I feel good about?

Where do I feel the need to make some changes?

How do our communal choices in this area contribute to fullness of life and unioning love in the world?

Tips for Living More Lightly

1. Analyze your consumption quantitatively.
2. Look for opportunities to be a leader.
3. Buy more of those things that help the environment.
4. Think about non-environmental reasons for reducing consumption.
5. Invest in the environment.
6. Make land use an environmental issue.
7. Eat less meat.
8. Ask the government to provide tax incentives for manufacturers to invest in new technologies that are more efficient and are less polluting.
9. Make renewable energy a standard.
10. Educate yourself and others about environmental issues.

Resources:

The Earth Charter

Michael Brower and Warren Leon, *The Consumer's Guide to Effective Environmental Choices: Practical Choices from The Union of Concerned Scientists*

Gail Bernice Holland, "Beyond Sustainability: Designing a World That Works for All,"
IONS

Northwest Earth Institute: www.nwei.org

Choices for Sustainable Living

Voluntary Simplicity

Exploring Deep Ecology

Menu for the Future (Food)

Discovering a Sense of Place (Land)

Hazel Henderson, *Ethical Markets: Growing the Green Economy*

Kosmos Journal: An Integral Approach to Global Awakening www.kosmosjournal.org

Sarah McFarland Taylor, *Green Sisters: A Spiritual Ecology*

Patrick U. Petit (ed) *Earth Rising: The Dawning of a New Civilization in the 21st Century*

Websites:

www.idealbite.com

www.sierraclub.org

www.foe.org

www.ncrlc.com

www.coopamerica.org

www.iccr.org

Web of Creation: www.webofcreation.org

www.simpleliving.org

www.simpleliving.net

www.webofcreation.org

Section 9 - Transportation

Reflection

"Cars are multiplying faster than people. They're out-breathing us too. They're using up our land area. They're using up our economic strength." Ernest Callenbach

"Desire little in this world, and be not over-eager for what you may desire." (Maxims of Perfection 10:1)

The American Lung Association estimates that air pollution from motor vehicles, power plants, and industrial consumption costs the United States \$40 billion annually in healthcare and lost productivity.

On the line next to each statement describe your current practice using this scale:

Never	Sometimes	Always
1	5	10

Score: 20 – 69 points

Use: *Tips for Living More Lightly*

Score: 😊 70+

Use: *The Resources for Ongoing Learning*

1. I keep my car tuned up and keep track of gas mileage. _____
2. I check the inflation of my tires every two weeks. _____
3. I try not to let the car idle unnecessarily. _____
4. I try to replace my tires with steel belted or radial tires. _____
5. I make an attempt to have the car serviced where the motor oil and antifreeze are recycled. _____
6. I reduce auto weight when possible by not using the trunk for storage. _____
7. I try using alternate means of transportation just one day a week. _____
8. I let politicians know I want more and better quality mass transit. _____
9. I plan errands so the fewest miles possible are driven. _____
10. I car pool as much as possible. _____

Reflection/Action

Analyze your everyday choices and how they impact the environment.

What choices do I feel good about?

Where do I feel the need to make some changes?

How do our communal choices in this area contribute to fullness of life and unioning love in the world?

Tips for Living More Lightly

1. A well-tuned car uses up to 9% less gasoline and if there is a sudden drop in gas mileage, you can catch it and get the problem fixed quickly.
2. Under inflated tires can waste up to 5% of the car's fuel.
3. It takes less gas to start a car than to let it idle.
4. Installing the most efficient tires can boost fuel economy of most cars 1-3 miles per gallon.
5. The motor oil can be re-refined and the antifreeze can be re-distilled.
6. An extra 100 pounds in weight decreases fuel economy about 1% for the average car.
7. Coolants from auto AC units release CFC's into the atmosphere, contributing to 16% of the earth's ozone destruction.
8. If 1% of Americans left their cars at home for one day a week, it would decrease carbon dioxide emissions by 840 million pounds per year.
9. A Greenspace study concluded that it takes \$10 million to build one mile of highway and \$15 million to build one mile of light rail transit.
10. Fewer miles traveled by car result in less gasoline burned; less smog, soot, and carbon dioxide pollution; and better health for our world.

Resources:

The Union of Concerned Scientists, *The Consumers Guide to Effective Environmental Choices*

Websites:

www.greencars.org

www.fueleconomy.gov

Section 10 - Water

Reflection

*"Praised be You, my God, through Sister Water, so useful, lowly, precious and pure."
Canticle of the Creatures, St Francis of Assisi*

"Holding lightly and as 'blessed' all the good things that come to us is the fruit of an interior life that flows from gratitude and the awareness that all is gift! We own nothing. Everything has been given us by a Provident Creator God." Monica Hartnett CSJ

On the line next to each statement describe your current practice using this scale:

Never	Sometimes	Always
1	5	10

Score: 20 – 69 points	Use: <i>Tips for Living More Lightly</i>
Score: ☺ 70+	Use: <i>The Resources for Ongoing Learning</i>

- 1. I run the washing machine and dishwasher only when full. _____
- 2. I spend less than five minutes taking my shower. _____
- 3. I plug the bathtub before turning the water on, then adjust the temperature before I take a bath . _____
- 4. I direct down spouts and other runoff towards shrubs and trees. _____
- 5. I use one glass for drinking water each day. _____
- 6. I turn off the water while brushing my teeth. _____
- 7. I drink filtered water from the tap instead of buying bottled water. _____
- 8. I turn the water off while shampooing and conditioning my hair. _____
- 9. I am careful to turn off faucets, keeping them from dripping. _____
- 10. I keep a bucket in the shower to catch water as it warms up and use the water to flush the toilet or water plants. _____
- 11. I don't purchase or drink bottled water. _____

Reflection/Action

Analyze your everyday choices and how they impact the environment.

***What choices do I feel good about?
Where do I feel the need to make some changes?***

How do our communal choices in this area contribute to fullness of life and unioning love in the world?

Tips for Living More Lightly

1. By turning off the water while brushing, you save approximately two gallons of water for each minute you brush.
2. Taking a shower less than 5 minutes will save up to 1,000 gallons of water each month.
3. If your shower can fill a one-gallon bucket in less than 20 seconds, then replace it with a water-efficient showerhead.
4. Use the garbage disposal sparingly. Compost instead and save gallons every time.
5. If you accidentally drop ice cubes when filling your glass from the freezer, don't throw them in the sink. Drop them in the house plant instead.
6. While staying in a hotel or even at home, consider reusing your towels.
7. Avoid running water to thaw food.
8. Support projects that use reclaimed wastewater for irrigation and other uses.
9. Avoid pouring toxic substances or unknown chemicals down the drain.
10. Use phosphate free detergents.

Resources:

Maude Barlow and Tony Clarke, *Blue Gold*

Rachel Carson, *The Edge of the Sea*

Rachel Carson, *The Sea Around Us*

ROW, *Water, Gift of Life*

Websites:

www.thinkoutsidethebottle.org

www.wateruseitwisely.com

www.ifpri.org

www.waterforlife.net

www.epa.gov/watershed

www.epa.gov/safewater



Sharing the State of the Heart and Order of the House **Simple, Sustainable Lifestyle**

Preparation:

“**State of the Heart and Order of the House** is a tool to listen to the movement of the Spirit within the community. It can help us discern in an ongoing manner if we are being faithful to the mission. Any decision arrived at by the community as a result of having reflected on the **Order of the House** can be tested against this question: *Does it contribute to fullness of life and unioning love in the world?*” (*State of the Heart and Order of the House*, Christy Cogil CSJ, Theresa Kvale CSJ, Janet Lander CSJ, Dottie Moss CSJ)

Prior to Sharing the State of the Heart and Order of the House:

- ♥ Pray with the Poverty section of our Constitutions (Constitutions #71 - #81)
- ♥ 1st Gathering: Reflect on *Section 1 – Spirituality* in the Ecological Resource
- ♥ 2nd Gathering: Reflect on *Section 2 – General Overview* in the Ecological Resource
- ♥ Future Gatherings: Reflect on the section from the Ecological Resource chosen by your group.

Note: It is suggested that you schedule approximately one hour for *Sharing the State of the Heart and Order of the House*.

Gathering:

Call to Prayer

Leader: As Sisters of Saint Joseph, we hold all things in common...

Each of us commits herself to voluntary poverty in the spirit of the Beatitudes. (# 78, 81)

All: May we seek to live ever more simply, to express moderation in all things, and to value all creation as gift. (#81)

For Contemplation:

Reading 1: “We will deepen our understanding of the spirituality of the Sisters of Saint Joseph in relation to both Global Spirituality and consciousness of the Universe. Through the lens of this understanding, we will focus on specific sustainability issues. We will make individual and corporate choices that witness to the belief that all is ONE.” (Chapter 2004) Our commitment to promoting a sustainable future for and beyond our Congregation, compels us to embrace the lens of sustainability, with its focus on the common good, as the guiding principle for planning.” (Strategic Plan 2008)

Contemplative Silence

Song: *Because We Love God* by Kathy Sherman, CSJ All is One; or another suitable song

For Contemplation . . .

Reading 2: Let us reflect on God’s immanent presence and goodness to us in our material as well as our spiritual resources. These material resources enable us to live our mission, in service to God and our dear neighbors. In these uncertain economic times, we are reminded of theologian Sandra Schneiders’ words that our vow of poverty is meant to be lived with an attitude that views all from the perspective of a gift economy rather than a commodity economy. The values in a gift economy include sharing, generosity, compassion and simplicity. In the commodity economy, competition and consumption are the primary values. These are some of the false values that have contributed to the economic crisis of our current times. (*Change our Hearts*, October 2008).

Contemplative Silence

Sharing the State of the Heart

After a period of contemplative silence, each sister shares on the questions below as far as she is able. This is a time to practice our contemplative listening skills. It is not a time to respond or discuss. Pause for a minute or two after each sister speaks to honor her sharing.

- ♥ As I pray with these excerpts from our Congregational documents and this section from the Ecological Resource, what feelings surface in me? Where am I drawn? Where can I identify resistance?
- ♥ In what areas of my life do I need to make some difficult decisions in order to live a simpler lifestyle?

Order of the House

Order of the House is an opportunity for communal contemplation. After hearing each sister's State of the Heart, the community reflects together on how the Holy Spirit is moving among them, within their communal heart. (State of the Heart and Order of the House, Christy Cogil CSJ, Theresa Kvale CSJ, Janet Lander CSJ, Dottie Moss CSJ)

Reflection: *Allow a period of time to reflect on these questions*

- ♥ How are we being moved, challenged, inspired, drawn?
- ♥ How did our sharing reflect our responses to God's love?

Sharing:

- ♥ What do we look like as a group in the practice of a simple lifestyle as described in this section?
- ♥ What do we need to do at this moment in time to Change our Hearts?
- ♥ How can we as a local community live a simple life style that promotes the common good?
- ♥ What action(s) will we choose?

Intercessions: Our strategic plan calls to "discover and implement creative ways to live more simply for the sake of the common good" and so we pray for the gift of love that is empty of self.

Response: O Jesus, we ask you to change our hearts:

- ♥ So that we may be more at home with those persons who are poor and simple, being willing to be with them in their struggle, to share with them in so many ways.
- ♥ So that we may use our gifts for the good of others, sharing in the joy and pain of our sisters and brothers
- ♥ So that we may acknowledge that all comes from you, that the power of your spirit is for your honor and glory.
- ♥ So that we may embrace simplicity, concern for others, respect for all.
- ♥ So that we may freed from anything that inhibits us from doing your will and sharing your mission.
- ♥ So that we may live that "all may be one."

Closing Prayer of Commitment;

Good and gracious God, help us choose a simpler life-style that promotes solidarity with the world's poor, helps us appreciate nature more, affords greater opportunity to work together with our neighbors, reduces our use of limited resources, creates greater inner harmony, saves money, allows time for meditation and prayer, incites us to take political and social action. May all our decisions about our style of life celebrate the joy of life that comes from loving you. Amen. (Visions of a World Hungry, Thomas G. Pettepiece)

Sharing the State of the Heart and Order of the House

“The Earth Charter As Seen Through the Lens of Medaillan Spirituality.”

Monica Hartnett, CSJ

Medaille simply places before us a communication style that is as ancient as the Gospel. Live the message yourself and be responsible for passing on the “Good News” to just three other persons.

“As to the activities of our sisters they will be with God’s help very interior, both for their sake, and for the manner of life they will try to inspire in others so that the whole world will strive more than ever to live for God and to serve God in “spirit and in truth.”

(Eucharistic Letter)

Suggested questions for *Sharing the State of the Heart and Order of the House* as you engage each section of this resource:

Sharing the State of the Heart:

- ♥ As I pray with this section of the *Ecological Resource*, what feelings surface in me? Where am I drawn? Where can I identify resistance?
- ♥ In what areas of my life do I need to make some difficult decisions in order to live a simpler lifestyle?

Order of the House

- ♥ What do we look like as a group in the practice of a simple lifestyle as described in this section of the *Ecological Resource*?
- ♥ What do we need to do at this moment in time to Change our Hearts?
- ♥ How can we as a local community live a simple life style that promotes the common good?
- ♥ What action(s) will we choose?



