

this great  
... and beautiful world



A guide to our commitment to the Integrity of Creation

We know that all Creation  
is groaning in labour pains even  
until now; and not only Creation,  
but we ourselves, who have the  
the first fruits of the Spirit.

Letter to the Romans VIII, XXII-XXIII



# this great ... and beautiful world

A Guide to our commitment to the Integrity of Creation

Because You love us so much  
You gave us this great and beautiful world.  
Loving Father, we are glad to give you thanks!

Eucharistic Prayer  
for celebrations with children

**Editor and producer**

Committee for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation  
Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate (French Canadian Province)

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the International Year of Planet Earth.

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This guide is a tool. It is up to you to adapt it to your situation by sharing your experiences.

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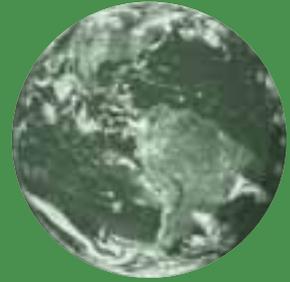
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## We hear the call of the Earth

We believe that caring for life on Earth is a spiritual commitment.

People and other species have the right to life unthreatened by human greed and destructiveness.

Pollution, particularly from the energy-intensive wealthy industrialized countries, is warming the atmosphere. A warmer atmosphere is leading to major climate changes. The poor and vulnerable in the world and future generations will suffer the most.

We commit ourselves to help reduce the threat of climate change through actions in our own lives, pressure on governments and industries and standing in solidarity with those most affected by climate change.

We pray for spiritual support in responding to the call of the Earth.

Spiritual Declaration on Climate Change  
United Nations Conference on Climate Change  
Montreal, December 4, 2005

## Why this Commitment Guide?



To realize the urgent need for a radical transformation of our behaviour, since our planet is sending us signals of great distress.



To recognize the link between these environmental issues and our commitment to the poor, in a world where misery is the fruit of inequality and of the exploitation of the great majority of human beings by a well-to-do minority.



To base our actions on verified facts and firmly held convictions.



To suggest reference points, information sources and concrete areas of commitment.



To coordinate efforts to bring about change made by separate individuals and communities and to create collective commitment.



To enter into a worldwide movement of solidarity with groups that run counter to the dominant culture.



And, above all, to go beyond beautiful declarations of intentions and to leave visible marks on our day-to-day life by lessening our negative impact on the environment.



The suggestions offered in this Commitment Guide were drawn from various publications and websites.



Mention is made of them in the list of complementary resources on several pages.



- 8 We dare to make our stance and our convictions known, without, however, aggravating people around us by our excessive zeal. Our actions in this area must be carried out with respect for others, with good humour and moderation, and not as though they were expressions of a fanatical sect.
- 9 We who speak of poverty and even vow it, let us not lose contact with people's real living conditions, looking only to our own "security." A minimum of coherence is required of us, especially if we ask others to commit themselves to a simpler lifestyle. In our congregations, previous generations often lived very frugally and were in close contact with the needy.
- 10 "We do not inherit the Earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children," says a Massai proverb that was taken up by Antoine de St-Exupéry. What real concern do we have for future generations?
- 11 We recognize what has already been achieved in the area of the environment, for there are results. For example: acid rains have been under control for 15 years now; the use of recycling bins is becoming part of our culture; religious communities have exercised leadership in the opposition to nuclear projects.
- 12 We never give up when we confront the complexity of ecological issues. Rather, we fight the defeatism and sarcasm which lead us to believe that we ordinary citizens can do nothing.

- These two pages are the most important in the whole Guide. They help us discover the significance of our actions. They can provide nourishment for several meditations or for community meetings. Which of the above attitudes offers me the greatest challenge?
-

## Formation: Beginning our “personal training”

- • Getting information – deepening our understanding – participating
- 1 We take a few minutes every day to enter into communion with Nature: a plant, a green area, a sunset; listen to a bird singing; take deep breaths of fresh air; walk just for the sake of walking; and if possible, take part in outdoor sports.
  - 2 We have in our room some objects that recall Creation: a stone, a feather (perhaps in a Dream-Catcher), wild flowers, and illustrations of faces of persons from various parts of the planet.
  - 3 We express concern for Creation in our liturgies and celebrations: texts from the Bible or from other religious traditions (especially from aboriginal traditions), hymns and songs, invocations, rituals, symbols, plays, sacred art, texts from Francis of Assisi or from other contemplatives and prophets of yesterday and today, prayers of thanksgiving, celebrations outside in Nature (the Creator’s great cathedral), etc.
  - 4 We rent a video (DVD or VHS) on these issues and watch it as a community, as a family, as a group of friends or young people. It is good to explore websites and the many slide shows on the Internet; to read published articles.
  - 5 We can learn from young people: they are often more aware and better informed than their elders in this area. We invite them to give their testimony at one of our meetings. We also collaborate with their projects and put into practice some of their concrete suggestions.
  - 6 We develop our creative talents instead of buying everything ready-made in the store. For example: when exchanging gifts at Christmas.
  - 7 We check where our food and other supplies come from. Why are they cheaper? Did exploitation of resources and of people take place in Third World countries? We also check the contents of the product: does it contain ingredients dangerous for human health or for the environment?

- 8 We participate in information sessions or debates about these concerns in our neighbourhood, our professional or community group, or form a group ourselves in our neighbourhood. We gather information about reflection or action groups that exist in our region or can be contacted through the Internet. (A good occasion for on-going formation, perhaps with the help of the local school board.)
  - 9 We also participate in activities in our neighbourhood, such as the clean-up of a street, a river bank or a park; a mini-market of local products; public sales of second-hand goods; a petition or a march to protest against municipal/provincial/federal policies regarding environmental issues; meetings of residents or of community organizations; clubs holding nature walks, bird-watching or defending endangered species.
  - 10 We become active members of a local or international environmental group defending ecological and humanitarian causes, such as *Friends of the Earth*, *The Ecumenical Water Network*, *Greenpeace*, ...
  - 11 We consult organizations for social responsibility and equity such as the *Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility* (ICCR). Check out the ecological choices made by the organizations we support financially.
  - 12 We give our support to political parties or candidates who are firmly committed to promoting solutions to environmental problems.
- ⊕ Other means: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

The Eucharist sends us out to labour in  
a responsible manner to safeguard Creation.

Benedict XVI, God is Love



## Some wide-ranging tools for going deeper into these issues

### A. Printed Materials

- ⊙ Thomas Berry, OP, *The Dream of the Earth, Evening Thoughts* - Reflections on Earth as Sacred Community, <http://www.thomasberry.org/Books/>
- ⊙ André Beauchamp, *Reconciliation and the Environment in the Context of Globalisation*, 2006 CRC General Assembly, CRC website at Justice-Peace-Creation, Theological Reflections.
- ⊙ Sally MacFague, *Life Abundant*, Rethinking Theology and Economy for a Planet in Peril, Fortress Press, Minneapolis, MN, 2001.
- ⊙ Thomas Berry, OP, *Befriending the Earth: A Theology of Reconciliation Between Humans and the Earth*, Twenty-Third Publications, 1991.
- ⊙ Jim Conlon, *From the Stars to the Street* - Engaged Wisdom for a Broken-hearted World, <http://www.jimconlon.net/>
- ⊙ *EarthLight*, the magazine of spiritual ecology, Oakland, CA, [www.earthlight.org](http://www.earthlight.org)
- ⊙ *Spiritearth*, Contemplation, Reflection, and Justice for the Ecozoic Era, 1515 W. Ogden Ave., LaGrange Pk., IL 60526-1721.

### B. Films and Documentaries

- ⊙ The Refugees of the Blue Planet is a hard-hitting documentary that brings us to the heart of major issues confronting humanity. 2007, 57 min 22 s. France-Québec Production. Distributed by NFB (514) 283-9000, 1-800-267-7710.
- ⊙ An Inconvenient Truth. A documentary on Al Gore's campaign to make the issue of global warming a recognized problem worldwide.

### C. Climate Change Action and Educational Groups

- ⊙ Christian Environmental Network <http://www.christianenvironmentalnetwork.com/>  
The purpose of the Christian Environmental Network is to educate pastors, teachers, and the laity about the ecological crisis and to help them reflect theologically and ethically on ecological problems and proposed solutions.
- ⊙ Climate Change and Presbyterian Church Action  
[http://www.climate.org/topics/climate/presbyterian\\_climate\\_neutral.shtml](http://www.climate.org/topics/climate/presbyterian_climate_neutral.shtml)  
In a stunning development the Presbyterian Church USA, (PCUSA) one of the more conservative of the mainstream US Protestant denominations, has asked its 2.3 million members each to “make a bold witness by aspiring to carbon neutral lives.”
- ⊙ Canadian Centre for Environmental Education (Royal Roads University) <http://www.ccee.ca>  
Joint project of ECO Canada and Royal Roads University – offers a distance-learning based post-secondary Certificate in Environmental Practice.

## D. Internet Sites

- ⊙ <http://www.sistersofstjosephbrentwoodny.org/ecology.htm> Resource for Ecology and Spirituality.
- ⊙ [www.ec.gc.ca/ecoaction/index\\_e.htm](http://www.ec.gc.ca/ecoaction/index_e.htm) Environment Canada's website.
- ⊙ <http://www.equiterre.org/en/> An organization that develops projects that empower citizens to make environmentally and socially responsible choices.
- ⊙ <http://www.foe.co.uk/> Friends of the Earth.
- ⊙ [www.kairosCanada.org](http://www.kairosCanada.org) Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives.
- ⊙ <http://www.iccr.org/> Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR).
- ⊙ [www.faiith-commongood.net](http://www.faiith-commongood.net) is currently focusing on the theme Renewing the Sacred Balance integrating faith, spirituality, and ecology.
- ⊙ <http://204.50.157.83/ecology/> The United Church of Canada has a long history of working to protect the integrity of creation.
- ⊙ [www.davidsuzuki.org](http://www.davidsuzuki.org) Foundation uses science and education to promote solutions that conserve nature and help achieve sustainability within a generation. See Nature Challenge programs.
- ⊙ <http://www.greenparty.ca/> Green Parties around the world share common values as expressed in the Charter of the Global Greens.
- ⊙ <http://www.earthcharter.org> this site is available in 30 languages.

## E. Resource Persons

- ⊙ At the Canadian Religious Conference:  
The CRC is deeply engaged in ecology with Jean Bellefeuille as JPIC national portfolio director, [jbellefeuille@crc-canada.org](mailto:jbellefeuille@crc-canada.org) and two field workers: David Bouchard, [dbouchard@crc-canada.org](mailto:dbouchard@crc-canada.org) for Ontario and provinces west of Ontario, and Francine Cabana, [fcabana@crc-canada.org](mailto:fcabana@crc-canada.org) for Québec and Atlantic provinces.

- ⊙ Our Congregation or Organization: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- ⊙ In our surroundings: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## This Earth is sacred



We know that the white man has no understanding of our way of life. For him, one portion of the Earth resembles every other one, for he is a stranger who arrives during the night and takes from the Earth whatever he needs. The Earth is not his sister but his enemy, an enemy he must conquer. He treats his mother, the Earth, and his brother, the Sky, as objects to be seized, bought or sold like sheep or shiny pearls. His greed will devour the Earth and leave after him only a desert.

The air is precious for the red man, because all things share the same breath of air; animals, trees, men, all breathe the same air. The white man does not seem to be aware of the air he breathes. The wind that gave our grandfather his first breath also received his last sigh.

This Earth is Sacred. This shimmering water which flows in the streams and rivers is not just water, but the blood of our ancestors. If we sell you our Land, you must remember from now on, and

teach it to your children, that the rivers are our sisters and yours, and from now on, you must have the same love for the rivers that you would show to a sister.

So that your children will respect the Earth, teach them what we have taught ours: that the Earth is our mother. All that happens to the Earth happens to the sons of the Earth. If men spit on the ground, they are spitting on themselves.

There is one thing we know, and that the white man may discover one day, that our God is the same as yours. Perhaps you think now that you own our Land, but you cannot. God is the God of all humanity and God shows equal mercy to the red man and the white man. This Earth is precious to God. To harm the Earth is to heap scorn upon one's Creator.

...

Excerpts from a speech made in 1854 by the Indian chief, Seattle, of the Squeamish tribe in reply to an American governor, who proposed that he surrender his land to white men, promising him a reserve for the aboriginal people.

A photograph of a dense forest with tall, thin trees. Sunlight is streaming through the canopy, creating a dappled light effect on the forest floor. The overall tone is green and somewhat ethereal.

The only possible attitude is  
to want to create meaning. That is, in practical terms,  
to save the biosphere while there is still time.

Hubert Reeves, *Intimes convictions*



## Sharing the Resources of Planet Earth

“ God wants to give all persons their daily bread. But God has no hands. God has ours. It is actually our duty to provide bread for all human beings, by redistributing the riches God has confided to us in confiding the Earth to us. For the Earth belongs to everyone. But in reality, what is taking place? ”

### The quarters of the pie: A Parable for Today

**Settings:**

- a table; four partners seated around the table
- a big pie cut into four

**Actors:**

- a White man representing Western Europe and North America
- a Yellow man, representing one half of humanity
- a Black man representing Africa
- a Latino representing Central and South America

**Action:**

- The White man takes the first slice of the pie. The others feel he is rushing things and is not very polite.
- The White man takes a second slice of the pie. The others find him pretty greedy and begin to get nervous.
- The White man takes a third slice of the pie as his partners look on, stunned and scandalized. Then, leaving them to decide how to share the fourth slice, he wishes them an enjoyable meal and takes off...

**In figures:**

- 25% of all humans consume 75% of this world's goods: **us**.
- 75% of all humans consume 25% of this world's goods: **all the others**.
- Thus a White person uses up 9 times the amount available for a non-White. That's a high price for the human race and for the planet!
- What is more serious: we know it  
they know it  
and now they know that we know it...

“ It is you who have devoured the vineyard; the loot wrested from the poor is in your houses. Why do you crush my people and grind down the poor when they look up to you? says the Lord, the God of hosts. Isaiah 3:14-15 ”



## Areas of application in daily life

The concrete actions proposed in the following pages are written using the pronoun “I” to stimulate the responsibility and the initiative of each person, even if sometimes these actions refer to decisions to be taken by several persons. They may be more appropriate for one particular category of persons or age group. However, there is something for everyone, so that none of us feels excluded or exempt from making a contribution to the colossal effort required by the present state of the planet and of humanity. This includes our frequent conversations with the Creator, in the secret of our heart or during community prayer.

Certain activities may appear fanciful or idealistic. However, the facts stated and the principles set forth in each field of application should make us think twice before setting them aside. If one of them does not suit me, I will see if there is not another that does.

With regard to each of the concrete actions, circle the symbol that corresponds to what you really do:

**I am already doing it** ✓

**I am going to start doing it** ✱

**I want to do this with others** ○

**I cannot do this** ✕

**I need to know more about this** ?



1

## Consumer Habits

### Some Facts

- a. The habit of unrestrained consumption of goods is in the process of destroying the planet: it would take five Earths to raise and maintain world population at the level of consuming North Americans have reached.
- b. A large number of the products in growing demand are luxury goods, often products of countries where the masses live in widespread misery.
- c. We can no longer ignore the conditions of slavery in which farm hands and industrial workers in several countries in the South are working, nor can we ignore the exploitation of women and children.
- d. On the other hand, sales of “fair trade” products are clearly increasing: in Canada, they have become 30 times more frequent over the last seven years. Even the major chain stores offer eco products, although they are often far from being “fair trade” with respect to payment of the small producers.

### Motivating Factors and Principles of Action

- a. We are willing to pay a just price, out of concern for the social costs (effects on our health and on the conditions in which producers/workers live) and for the *environmental costs* (effects on soil, air, water).
- b. Buying is voting. Through our daily habits, we decide together what kind of world and socio-economic system we want to have. So we choose the kind of products that develop our responsibility as citizens.
- c. We wish to reduce our consumption of everything: food, medicines, stimulants, gasoline, the super-abundance of visuals, chit-chat, TV, advertising – whose end result is lack of objectivity and of inner freedom. A simpler way of life gives us a better appreciation of what we do have and frees our hands and spirit for commitments close to our hearts.
- d. What we do not buy or what we re-use provides us with an occasion to share the money we save with needy groups or regions.



### Concrete Action

01. I only buy things that I really need (not those I simply want), but I still keep some leeway for an occasional treat. I make sure that I am not in the process of yielding to the **urge to go shopping**, becoming unable to resist “special sales” and the latest gadgets.
02. I choose businesses that have a **social conscience** (like cooperatives) for certain purchases: clothing, food and furniture. Sometimes I buy second-hand.
03. I avoid big chain **stores that exploit their workers** here or abroad, who are opposed to the formation of workers’ unions and who eliminate small shopkeepers and community organizations that are involved in recycling.
04. I participate in a **shopping pool** (e.g. for farm products).
05. At the end of my life, I choose to be buried in a simpler and more ecological casket and to be cremated.
- ⊕ Others: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

✓ \* ○ X ?

Circle the symbol that best represents your actions. See instructions on page 15



### Supplementary sources of information

- a. BC Sustainable Energy Association (BCSEA) <http://www.bcsea.org>  
A non-profit association of citizens, professionals and practitioners committed to promoting the understanding, development and adoption of sustainable energy, energy efficiency and conservation in British Columbia.
- b. Guy Dauncey – EcoNews (Victoria-based) <http://www.earthfuture.com/econews/>
- c. Local climate solutions.
- + Others: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



2

## Air

### Some Facts

- a. In several large cities all over the world, the air has become unbreatheable. For instance, there are days in Bangkok when traffic policemen wear masks and tourists are invited to remain in their hotels. The situation is getting worse in China, in India, in Japan, in Mexico, and already there are several days of smog alerts each summer in Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver.
- b. On average, every Canadian produces 5 tons of greenhouse gas each year. More than 5000 Canadians die prematurely every year because of air pollution.
- c. Airplane flights are the fastest growing source of greenhouse gas emissions. One round trip flight Toronto-Vancouver can generate emissions of 1 to 2 tons *per person*. If my trip covers 2,500 miles, I have reached my yearly greenhouse gas quota.
- d. *Per capita*, Canada is second among the world's major polluters, and if Quebec is removed from these calculations, it becomes the greatest source of greenhouse gases. The Canadian Government even refuses to respect the Kyoto Agreement it signed!
- e. Global warming will cause a temperature increase of at least 4 degrees Celsius within coming decades.
- f. Respiratory illnesses (like asthma) are increasing at an incredible rate (79%).
- g. It has been shown that breathing second hand smoke is as harmful as smoking itself.
- h. Old-style lawn-mowers and blowers that work on gasoline are major producers of greenhouse gases; snowmobiles and motorboats are even greater ones, yet more and more of them are being sold.

### Motivating Factors and Action Principles

- a. Protection of people's health, especially that of the most vulnerable: children, the elderly, the sick.
- b. Protection also of the forests and lakes, by eliminating acid rain.
- c. Rich and poor breathe the same air. Poor people suffer worse consequences from air pollution, since they have no chance of escaping it.
- d. "The wind that gave our grandfather his first breath also received his last sigh," the aboriginal chief Seattle used to say.

### Concrete Action

- |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 01. I opt for <b>public transport</b> or for <b>car-pooling</b> , rather than use my own car, whenever it is possible.  | ✓ | * | ○ | X | ? |
| 02. I take <b>the plane</b> only if my schedule absolutely demands it.  | ✓ | * | ○ | X | ? |
| 03. I see that the <b>air is changed</b> in the rooms in my home by opening the windows, even for a few minutes in the wintertime, and that <b>the air is purified</b> by having green plants around to absorb the carbon and replace it with oxygen. | ✓ | * | ○ | X | ? |
| 04. I use <i>pots-pourris</i> or a fan instead of <b>air-fresheners</b> . If I use a spray, I make sure it does not contain any CFC (chlorofluorocarbons).  | ✓ | * | ○ | X | ? |
| 05. I use a manual <b>lawn-mower</b> if the surface I have to mow is not too big.   | ✓ | * | ○ | X | ? |
| 06. In a fireplace or a woodstove, I try to use <b>high energy-efficient wood</b> (oak, maple, beech) or ecologically sound logs or pellets. If possible, I use a stove with a triple combustion chamber.   | ✓ | * | ○ | X | ? |
| 07. <b>I rarely use the B.B.Q.</b> because of its harmful effect on the air and on health.  | ✓ | * | ○ | X | ? |
| 08. In the autumn, I put <b>dead leaves in the compost bin</b> instead of burning them (source of carbon dioxide emissions); I suggest this to the municipality as well.  | ✓ | * | ○ | X | ? |
| 09. I join with others to celebrate <b>Clean Air Day</b> on June 6 every year.  | ✓ | * | ○ | X | ? |
| ⊕ Others: _____   |   |   |   |   |   |
| _____   |   |   |   |   |   |



### Supplementary sources of information

- a. [http://www.ec.gc.ca/cleanair-airpur/Home-VS8C3F7D55-1\\_En.htm](http://www.ec.gc.ca/cleanair-airpur/Home-VS8C3F7D55-1_En.htm)  
Environment Canada
- b. <http://www.lbl.gov/Education/ELSI/pollution-main.html>  
How can we prevent the damaging effects of air pollution?
- + Others: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Circle the symbol that best represents your actions. See instructions on page 15



3

## Food

### Some Facts

- a. In certain regions of the Southern Hemisphere, it is no longer unusual to have only one meal in three days. Millions of persons who are forced to flee live in misery in camps with poor food supplies or on plots of land that have become infertile.
- b. The production of every kilo of meat generates about four kilos of carbon dioxide (a greenhouse gas).
- c. The food on our plates has often travelled thousands of kilometres (on an average, 2,500) by plane, by boat, by truck, leading to an enormous production of greenhouse gases.
- d. Genetic engineering of plants benefits businesses rather than the health of citizens; control over *Terminator* seeds by agro-chemical companies makes the farmers dependent on new seeds rendered sterile by these genetic modifications and thus impoverishes biodiversity.

### Motivating Factors and Action Principles

- a. Our Christian and Religious Community ideals motivate us to exercise concern for the disadvantaged and those who have been crushed under the unjust conditions imposed by our systems of exploitation of natural and human resources.
- b. Our purchases directly influence production and distribution of goods. They will benefit either farmers and family agriculture or multinational industries.
- c. Paying a little more for “fair trade” products is one way of being just towards the little guy (instead of the agro-food giants) rather than just doing “charity” to them through almsgiving.



If you share your bread with the hungry,  
and satisfy the afflicted,  
then the Lord will guide you always,  
and give you plenty even on parched land.

Isaiah 58:10-11

### Concrete Action

01. I make **local products** my priority (those coming from within an area of a hundred km.)
  02. I buy fruit and vegetables when they are **in season**, and I make the future provisions I may need by means of preserves or frozen foods. I am especially fond of berries picked in the wild.
  03. I buy products marked "**Fair Trade**" such as coffee, tea, chocolate, sugar, rice, handicrafts and gifts.
  04. I also buy those certified "**organic**," that is, produced without chemical fertilizers, without pesticides or growth hormone, to better respect the health of human persons, of animals and of the soil.
  05. I sometimes eat **vegetarian** meals to avoid eating meat (often produced to the detriment of local agriculture, on lands seized from farmers, carved out of forests).
  06. Except for special celebrations, I appreciate **modest meals**, simple foods.
  07. I prefer **home cooking** or food prepared in a **collective kitchen** or from a **grocery store**, rather than **packaged meals** and **fast food**.
- ⊕ Others: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

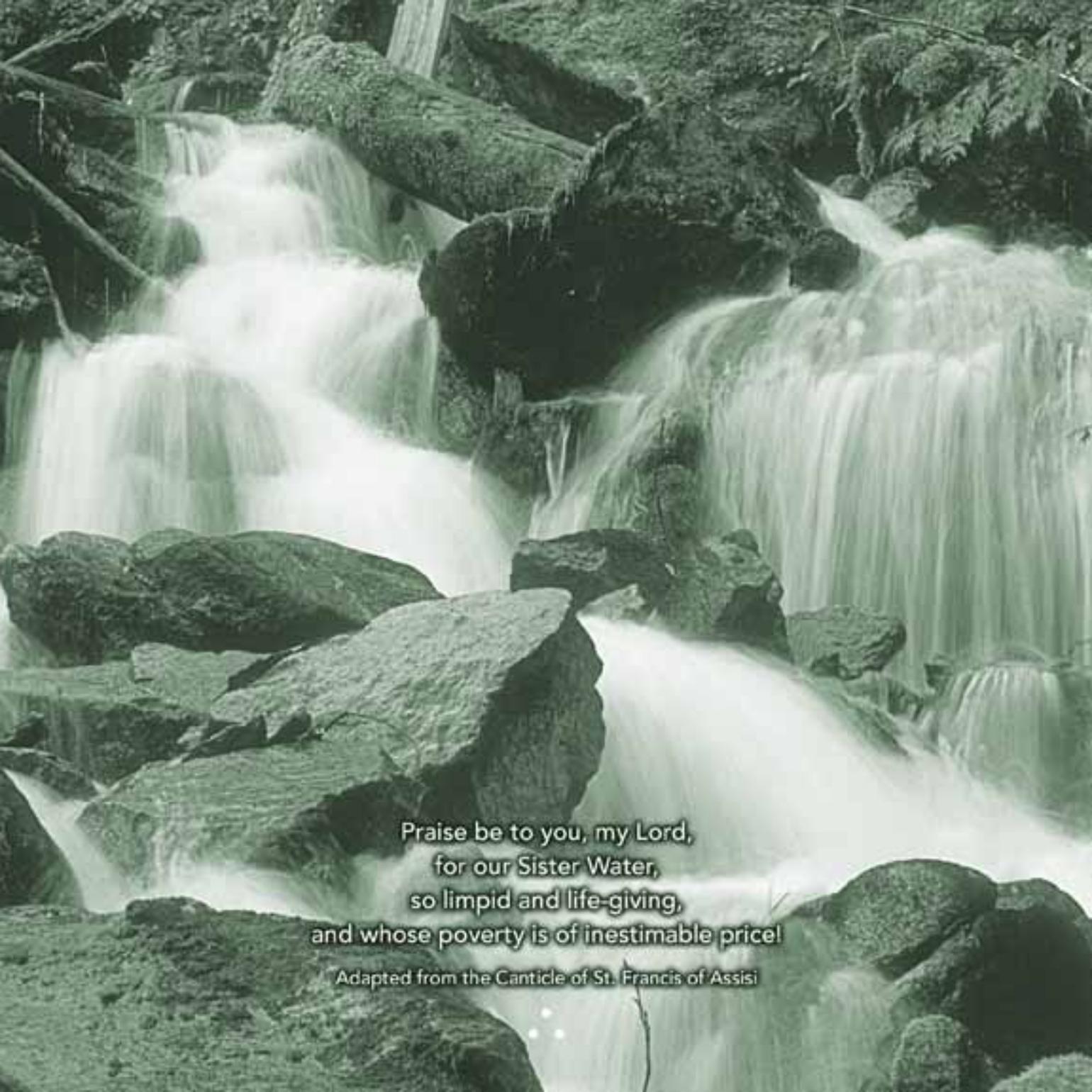
✓ \* ○ X ?

Circle the symbol that best represents your actions. See instructions on page 15



### Supplementary sources of information

- a. To make wise choices, take time to read the labels on all products.
  - b. Fair trade [www.equimarche.ca/](http://www.equimarche.ca/), or [www.transfair.ca](http://www.transfair.ca)
  - c. Ecology of Food and Nutrition  
<http://www.informaworld.com/snpp/title~content=t713641148-db=all>
  - d. If you choose to eat organic, you make a conscious and ethical choice  
<http://www.mangerbio-eatingorganic.net/z/eating%20organic.html>
  - e. *What To Eat* is available at Amazon.com <http://whattoeatbook.com/about/bio>
- + Others: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

A vibrant green-tinted photograph of a waterfall cascading over large, dark rocks in a dense forest. The water is in motion, creating a soft, blurred effect as it falls. The surrounding foliage is lush and green, with various types of leaves and ferns visible. The overall scene is peaceful and natural.

Praise be to you, my Lord,  
for our Sister Water,  
so limpid and life-giving,  
and whose poverty is of inestimable price!

Adapted from the Canticle of St. Francis of Assisi

4



## Water

### Some Facts

- a. One quarter of the present world population does not have access to drinking water. The forecast is that by 2025, this proportion will have risen to one third out of 9 billion people. Yet we know how lack of water places people within the vicious circle of poverty and misery
- b. Canada is the country which enjoys the highest reserves of soft water *per capita*: in both Ontario and Quebec, there are nearly a million lakes. Our water purification systems are among the best in the world. In Canada, 60 percent of Canadians drink bottled water every day.
- c. A few cities (like San Francisco) now have laws forbidding the sale of bottled water in government buildings.
- d. Our lakes have been invaded by cyanobacteria and phosphates and more and more frequently are covered over by blue algae.
- e. Watering the lawn (or the entrance to the garage) for 30 minutes takes 700 litres of water, which is more than the average daily consumption of water in a household.
- f. A tap leak of one drop per second adds up to 10,000 litres per year.
- g. 70% of the water used inside buildings is for toilets and bathing.
- h. A few 2 litre bottles, containing rain or tap water, placed upside down in one's garden close to plants, will directly water the roots for several days.

### Motivating Factors and Action Principles

- a. Water is a gift from the Creator, a common good of humanity. The very fact one is a human being and a citizen bestows the right to water. We have to resist the tendency to make it a consumer good we can buy at will, provided we have money to pay for it. The UN recently declared that access to water is a fundamental human right. *Development and Peace* made it the theme of a three year campaign.
- b. The more people opt for drinking bottled water, the less our politicians will work at improving the public systems of providing and purifying water. And the more disadvantaged persons will be deprived of water!

- c. Real change will occur when a critical mass of ordinary people come to realize that they can save money and save the planet by drinking water from the tap. Preserving this basic resource concerns each and every one, both as individuals and collectively.
- d. Selling water is in fact the take-over of this natural resource by the major soft drink manufacturers who make huge profits from this.
- e. Already a real war has been declared for control over water. This will escalate in the 21<sup>st</sup> century to levels beyond those of the wars over oil in the 20<sup>th</sup>.
- f. Bottling and transport of water leads to great energy and environmental costs: the manufacturing of plastic, an accumulation of refuse and pollution caused by transport vehicles.

### Concrete Action

- |   |                        |
|---|------------------------|
| 01. I install a <b>flow check</b> in the shower (going from 20 to 14 litres a minute), with a stop button if possible so water can be cut off during soaping. I also reduce the length of my showers: a 5 minute shower takes 50% less hot water than a bath. | ✓ * ○ X ?              |
| 02. I check for <b>leaking taps or pipes</b> ; I replace defective washers as soon as possible.   | ✓ * ○ X ?              |
| 03. I <b>wash dishes by hand</b> when there are only a few. I choose the short cycle and the minimum water level on the dishwasher or washing machine whenever that is indicated.   | ✓ * ○ X ?              |
| 04. <b>When washing</b> , brushing my teeth or shaving, I do not let the water run.   | ✓ * ○ X ?<br>✓ * ○ X ? |
| 05. Unless there are serious reasons not to do so, I <b>drink water from the tap</b> , filtering it if needs be. I keep cold water in the fridge, rather than let the water run until it becomes cold.  | ✓ * ○ X ?              |
| 06. I <b>avoid flushing unnecessarily</b> and I prefer installing water-saving toilets (cutting the flow by half) when I renovate or build. Or again, I place a full, closed bottle on the bottom of the tank.  | ✓ * ○ X ?              |
| 07. I <b>clean the entry to the garage</b> with a broom, and I use a pail and a   | ✓ * ○ X ?              |

sponge to wash my car, rather than a continuous, powerful stream of water.

08. I **collect rainwater** in a tank covered with mosquito netting for watering the lawn and plants. An ordinary 200 litre barrel will do, and this water is better for the soil than the water in the pipes.
09. I **replace chemical products and sprays** for cleaning windows, walls, furniture, toilets, with a mixture of water and lemon juice or vinegar, or with baking soda.
10. I avoid all products marked “poison, danger or corrosive.” I prefer those labelled “without phosphates; no solvents; with vegetable base, not petroleum.” I **choose products with the ecological seal “environmental choice”**. I avoid throwing paint leftovers into tap water or lakes, since they contaminate the surface of the water.
11. I **support campaigns for the protection of water** that aim at making polluters pay for the expense of decontamination and at bringing such pollution to an end.

⊕ Others: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

✓ \* ○ X ?

Circle the symbol  
 that best represents  
 your actions. See  
 instructions on page 15



### Supplementary sources of information

- a. [www.ec.gc.ca/water](http://www.ec.gc.ca/water) A Government of Canada program.
- b. <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/news/news-management/eng/a/article/1722/water-for-all-young-chr.html> Water for all: young Christians study defence of this precious resource.
- c. [http://www.ec.gc.ca/water/e\\_main.html](http://www.ec.gc.ca/water/e_main.html) Environment Canada's website.
- d. <http://www.oikoumene.org/?id=2958> An initiative of Christian churches, organizations, and movements who have joined hands
- + Others: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_



## Energy > Source of current/light/heat for buildings or equipment

### Some Facts

- a. In the last 20 years, the consumption of electricity has doubled in Canada.
- b. Heating of the house by electricity accounts for 54 % of the bill; the hot water tank 20 %; household electrical appliances, 18 %.
- c. By lowering the thermostat by 1 degree Celsius, you reduce your heating charges by 2 %. By reducing it by 3 degrees at night and when you are absent for a long period during the day, you realize the greatest savings and reduce greenhouse gases by half a ton.
- d. Chinks allowing air to escape account for as much as 40 % of heat loss in older buildings. Draught-proof filler and weather stripping reduce these losses by 20 %.
- e. An air conditioner will cost a lot in electricity charges per month, while a good fan will use less than \$1 worth of current (and perhaps you won't catch a cold!)
- f. Leaving a computer running all the time uses about \$ 100 worth of electricity a year.
- g. Compact fluorescent bulbs use 4 times less energy than traditional bulbs; they last ten times longer and give better light. Their higher cost is reimbursed within a few years.
- h. The search for alternative sources of energy has begun: wind turbines, solar energy, geothermal sources, hybrid formulas and plant based fuels, on condition that they are *made from organic wastes and not from agricultural products*.

### Motivating Factors and Action Principles

- a. The less energy we use, the less negative impact we have on the environment.
- b. Fossil energy sources have long been thought to be inexhaustible. We now know that this is not the case. Hence the importance of working towards lasting solutions that are respectful of the planet.
- c. "Man does not believe in the apocalypse that he is creating. And yet we are already heading towards disaster." René Dumont.

### Concrete Action

01. I **turn off lights** and electric/electronic appliances when I am finished. I install a timer to control exterior lighting. ✓ \* ○ X ?
02. I use **compact fluorescent bulbs** and light dimmers. I dispose of these through proper recycling. ✓ \* ○ X ?
03. I **lower the temperature of the house** at night and when I am away for a long time. I set the thermostat for the water heater at 49° C and the air conditioner at 24° C. ✓ \* ○ X ?
04. I **install a ceiling fan**, making sure that it turns in the right direction, sending the warm air downwards in the wintertime; a few fans or an air changer also facilitate good circulation of both warm and cool air. ✓ \* ○ X ?
05. I **check the insulation** of the outer walls, of the attic, of the basement (weather stripping R20-R40); I eliminate entry of air through doors, windows, window air-conditioners and plugs facing outer walls; I add thick, closed curtains at night in winter and during the day in summer. ✓ \* ○ X ?
06. I **insulate the hot water pipes** for a metre from the tank, unless they are made of plastic. ✓ \* ○ X ?
07. I check **whether I really need a 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> refrigerator or freezer**. I recycle old fridges; models made after 2004 consume 50 % less electricity. ✓ \* ○ X ?
08. I install reflectors (aluminium plates) **behind hot water radiators**. ✓ \* ○ X ?
09. I **plant a row of trees** near our house as protection against cold in winter and as shade in the summer. ✓ \* ○ X ?
10. I **avoid drying clothing too long in the dryer**. I wash my clothes in **warm water** and rinse them in cold. ✓ \* ○ X ?

11. If I have to buy a new household electrical appliance, I look for the “Energy Star” seal.
  12. I check whether **it is possible to install a solar panel** as an additional energy source.
  13. I make sure **small night lamps have a sensor** and that they are placed in an area where they will turn off in daylight. 1 watt fluorescent bulbs are now available.
  14. **During rush hour**, I reduce my use of electricity.
- ⊕ Others: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

- ✓ \* ○ X ?



### Supplementary sources of information

- a. [www.energystar.gc.ca](http://www.energystar.gc.ca) The international ENERGY STAR symbol is a simple way for consumers to identify products that are among the most energy-efficient on the market.
  - b. [www.schl.ca](http://www.schl.ca) Household Guide to Water Efficiency.
  - c. <http://www.oeenrcan.gc.ca/energiguide/home.cfm?Text=N&PrintView=N> Energy guide for appliances, Houses, heating and cooling, vehicles.
  - d. [http://www.ontariotenants.ca/apartment\\_living/electricity-savings.phtml](http://www.ontariotenants.ca/apartment_living/electricity-savings.phtml) Reduce your electricity consumption with these energy conservation tips.
  - e. [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jeff-mcintirestrasburg/convenient-truths-reduce\\_b\\_35116.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jeff-mcintirestrasburg/convenient-truths-reduce_b_35116.html) Reduce your home electricity consumption.
  - f. <http://www.positivenergy.com/reduceneeds.html> Are Your Electric and Gas Bills Too High?
  - g. [www.energyalternatives.ca](http://www.energyalternatives.ca) Alternative power systems.
- + Others: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

  
 Circle the symbol that best represents your actions. See instructions on page 15



You visit the earth and water it  
You greatly enrich it  
You provide the people with grain  
You bless earth's growth  
The pastures of the wilderness overflow,  
All shout and sing for joy. Alleluia!

Psalm 65



## Forest › Soil › Fauna › Flora

### Some Facts

- a. Trees absorb carbon dioxide like an anti-pollution filter. Yet we are cutting down thousands of hectares of forest every year for immediate profits, with no concern for future generations or for the animals that are losing their natural habitat.
- b. One ton of recycled newsprint and magazines saves 20 trees.
- c. Using recycled fibres in the manufacture of paper diminishes the use of water by 58 %, marine pollution by 35 %, air pollution by 74 % and energy use by 23 %.
- d. Distribution of free trees to citizens has become more frequent: 50,000 in 2007 in 87 municipalities in the St. Maurice Valley (QC) alone.
- e. More than 7000 kinds of pesticides are still being used in Canada, even though they harm the soil and many of them are cancer-producing for humans.
- f. Many Canadian mining companies exploit the subterranean resources in Africa and South America, with respect neither for the environment nor for the rights of local populations, both human and animal. (See *Development and Peace* campaign.)

### Motivating Factors and Action Principles

- a. The crucial importance of trees for the protection of eco-systems: the great forests (such as the Amazonian and the Northern Canadian) are the lungs of the world. They are essential to the cycle of Nature. Clear-cutting leads to the loss of arable land and is the cause of floods and landslides, as has been the case in Haiti.
- b. Youngsters learn best through involvement, through hands-on experience. To confide a plant or a corner of the garden to a child is to cultivate in her/him a sense of wonder, of responsibility, of solidarity. (And at what age do we stop being children, in this respect?) Children often develop the same attachment for small plants as they would for a household pet.
- c. Besides reducing household garbage by 30 %, composting enriches the soil with organic matter and stimulates organic activity in our garden.

### Concrete Action

01. I participate in **campaigns to save forests** here and in other countries. ✓ \* ○ X ?
02. I never miss an opportunity to **plant a tree**, to care for a bit of garden, to join others in replanting trees on a riverbank or in the woods. If I do not have much space, I **grow some vegetables (organic)** in tin cans or in window boxes. ✓ \* ○ X ?
03. When I buy wood for building or for fences, or perhaps paper in large quantities, I **look for the FSC seal**, (*Forest Stewardship Council*) which certifies that these materials have come from companies that respect social and environmental concerns. ✓ \* ○ X ?
04. I **reduce the area of my lawn** by using ground cover plants or clover, and I leave the grass on the lawn after mowing as a natural fertilizer. ✓ \* ○ X ?
05. I set up **feeders and birdhouses** which, among other benefits, eliminate insects more effectively than insecticides; I also protect bats which eat twice their weight in insects every night. I employ **alternatives to chemical pesticides**: citronella, grape seed oil, eucalyptus and others. ✓ \* ○ X ?
06. I use **natural fertilizers** rather than chemically based ones, and **sand rather than salt** to melt winter ice on pathways. ✓ \* ○ X ?
07. I never leave **litter** behind (not even a cigarette butt) when I go for a walk. There are bins waiting for me open-mouthed! ✓ \* ○ X ?
08. I express my condemnation of promoters who **so easily destroy age-old trees** to make way for concrete and buildings. ✓ \* ○ X ?
09. I spend some quality time **in contact with nature**. ✓ \* ○ X ?
10. I keep informed about celebrations to be held on **Earth Day, April 22**, every year. ✓ \* ○ X ?
- ⊕ Others: \_\_\_\_\_



### Supplementary sources of information

- a. [www.treecanada.ca](http://www.treecanada.ca) improve our quality of life by planting and caring for trees.
- b. <http://www.cwf-fcf.org/en/> Ensuring an appreciation of our natural world and a lasting legacy of healthy wildlife and habitat by informing and educating.
- c. <http://www.wildeducation.org/index.asp> Giving youth unprecedented access to knowledge vital to the well-being of our lands and waters.
- d. [www.FSCCanada.org](http://www.FSCCanada.org) FSC is an international certification and labeling system that guarantees that the forest products you purchase come from responsibly managed forests and verified recycled sources.
- + Others: \_\_\_\_\_

Circle the symbol that best represents your actions. See instructions on page 15

7



Includes &gt;

## Recycling

**Reduce** > consumerism and the garbage it creates

**Reuse** > put things to a new use

**Repair** > rather than buy new things

**Recycle** > materials used in articles  
we buy and transform them

### Some Facts

- a. In 2006, Canadians threw 25 million tons of garbage into landfills; that is the equivalent of 23 football fields covered over with garbage one kilometre thick.
- b. 70 % of our domestic trash could be recycled or composted, but at present, only 25% is. Some municipalities have already reached 60 % (and Victoriaville even more!)
- c. Eco-centres exist now in most municipalities; others are visited by mobile eco-centres.
- d. A cartridge for a printer can take up to 1000 years to decompose. It can be recharged from 2 to 10 times and at a lower cost for the user. Several companies have a service centre for this purpose (for instance *Printwell*)
- e. In 2004, Canadians bought 450 million dry batteries, about 15,000 tons of them. Less than 235 tons have been recycled. Their sale is increasing since so many modern devices work on batteries. These batteries contain lead and mercury which are definitely poisonous for humans, animals, the soil and the water. By recycling them we can recover iron, manganese, zinc and mercury for other uses.
- f. Every ton of recycled paper means 20 trees saved. 20 recycled aluminium drinking cans can be made with the same amount of energy it takes to make 1 new one. It takes 20 % less energy to make new plastic bottles out of old recycled ones.
- g. It takes 1.5 million barrels of oil to make the water bottles that people in the U.S.A alone use every year. Only 23 % of these bottles are recycled. Add to that the gasoline necessary for the transportation of these bottles when filled with water (just imagine the weight!). The effect on the environment is far from refreshing!
- h. Some telecommunication companies have programs for recycling cell phones and other telephone equipment. Items that are returned to the distributors can be recycled safely. Other companies do the same with computers and electronic devices.

- i. The sale of recyclable articles collected by the city of Ottawa alone in one year raised 8 million dollars, which helped pay a good part of the cost of collecting and recycling.
- j. Used tires are recycled free of cost by retail dealers: the cost of tire disposal is included in the price of new tires.
- k. We can refill the anti-freeze containers for our windshield wipers at several gas stations.

### **Motivating Factors and Action Principles**

- a. Recycling is useful, economical (even profitable sometimes), ecological and it gets results!
- b. We do not throw away our car's gas tank when it is empty. The same goes for printer cartridges, batteries, etc.
- c. The person who buys a product also has the responsibility of using it in a manner respectful of the environment and to dispose of it properly.
- d. Throw-away products or cheap ones do not always save us time and money; they oblige us to shop more often and fill up our garbage bins, too.
- e. Often one person's trash is another one's treasure. A "garage sale" can be an opportunity to get rid of things of no use to us but very useful to our neighbours. Even before recycling articles, check whether they can be reused or mended.



“It is better to light one candle  
than to curse the darkness.”  
says an old proverb.

## Concrete Action

01. I recycle paper, plastic, metal, etc. I place **bins in convenient places**: kitchen, corridors and garage.
02. I bring **dangerous residues** (used oil, paint, batteries, solvents, acidic or caustic cleaners, glue) to an eco-centre, to a mobile collection of Dangerous Household Residues or to certain chain stores that accept them.
03. I bring back my **out-of-date medicines** to the pharmacy or to a clinic.
04. I use **re-usable grocery bags** that are now available in many stores. I keep close at hand a few cloth bags.
05. I buy **recycled paint** (quality guaranteed).
06. I prefer to buy **durable products that can be used more than once**; I avoid single use articles such as razors, plastic cutlery and cups, coffee filters, wipes and paper handkerchiefs. I buy re-chargeable batteries and a charger.
07. If possible, I use **real dishes**, not Styrofoam or paper. I suggest that those attending meetings bring their own cups or write their name on a Styrofoam cup and use it several times during the day.
08. I have completely converted to **biodegradable household products**: soap, cleaning products, detergents.
09. I print and photocopy using **both sides of each page**; preferably, I send my texts by e-mail.
10. I give away **books and magazines that I no longer read** to a neighbourhood or parish library, to a senior's residence or a day care (to cut

✓ \* ○ X ?

and paste), etc.

11. I buy certain non-perishable foods **in bulk or in a big bag**, rather than in pre-packaged containers; I also buy 1 or 2 litres of yogurt rather than in the more expensive individual plastic containers.
  12. I **repair or have repaired whatever is defective** when it can be done fairly easily.
  13. I post in a public place **information about local recycling resources**.
  14. I go with others to **visit a recycling plant** in my region.
- ⊕ Others: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

✓ \* ○ X ?

⋮

Circle the symbol that best represents your actions. See instructions on page 15



### Supplementary sources of information

- a. [http://www.ecopeinture.ca/index\\_en.aspx](http://www.ecopeinture.ca/index_en.aspx) to promote and facilitate the recovery of paint residues and paint containers, to support and encourage the reclamation of recovered paint, and contribute to waste recycling.
  - b. *Blue Planet Smart*, The BluePlanetSMART can cut the volume of a household garbage bag by more than a third, while also producing a high-quality fertilizer for vegetable and flower gardens, lawns and houseplants.
  - c. <http://www.compost.org/englishoverview.html> Advocate and advance composting and compost usage.
  - d. [http://www.recycle.nrcan.gc.ca/default\\_e.htm](http://www.recycle.nrcan.gc.ca/default_e.htm)  
Promote and enhance recycling in Canada.
  - e. <http://www.grinningplanet.com/2004/12-21/battery-recycling-article.htm>  
Battery Recycling – Why, Which, How, and Where?
- + Others: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



## Transportation

### Some Facts

- a. Transportation accounts for 25 % of all greenhouse gases in Canada. A vehicle that travels 20,000 km. a year produces 6 tons of CO<sup>2</sup> if it is a SUV, 4 tons if it is medium sized and 2 tons if it is a hybrid (gas and electricity).
- b. In the 1970s cars became smaller in size and less in weight during the first oil crisis. Manufacturers started producing energy-guzzling cars again in response to consumer demand.
- c. Speeds over 100 km/h. increase the cost of oil and gas by 25 to 33%; air-conditioning by 10 to 20 %.
- d. Leaving a car running (when parked) for ten minutes a day wastes 100 litres of gas per year. It also increases smog and its consequences for health in terms of serious cardio-respiratory illnesses.
- e. Gas made from ethanol produces less greenhouse gas. On the other hand, the production of ethanol has ecological and food costs. We should make it from organic wastes rather than from grains. Most importantly, we need to bring to an end the craze for cars and see that agriculture serves to feed humanity and not to run cars.
- f. Thousand of persons who are committed to voluntary simplicity in lifestyle manage to live without a car in the city or by using services such as *Communauto*.
- g. There are parking areas where you can leave your car and then take public transportation or use **car-pooling**. Some big cities also have car-free zones.

### Motivating Factors and Action Principles

- a. The means of transportation we choose affects air quality (for good or bad).
- b. They can contribute also to reducing our expenses. It costs an average of \$7000 per year to drive a car compared to thousands less if we travel by public transportation.

### Concrete Action

- |  |           |
|--|-----------|
| 01. I <b>walk</b> or ride my <b>bicycle</b> when I have a short way to go.   | ✓ * ○ X ? |
| 02. I use <b>public transportation</b> whenever possible (subway, bus, train, taxi or car pooling). It is easier on my nerves and saves gas as well.   | ✓ * ○ X ? |
| 03. I join a <b>car sharing club</b> for occasional trips. In community, I share with others the cars we have for common use.  | ✓ * ○ X ? |
| 04. If I have to have a car for my own use, I choose one <b>adapted to my real needs</b> (small cylindered if possible) and I am trying to reduce my present use of the car by at least 10 %.                  | ✓ * ○ X ? |
| 05. I make use of <b>teleconferencing</b> instead of having each committee member make a trip.   | ✓ * ○ X ? |
| 06. I give up <b>driving</b> entirely when my state of health makes that activity risky. If I am in good health, I offer to drive other community members, relatives or friends for shopping or for an outing. | ✓ * ○ X ? |
| 07. I check regularly that there is <b>enough air in my tires</b> , so that I use less gas on the road and the tires last longer.  | ✓ * ○ X ? |
| 08. I respect <b>speed limits</b> ; I start and I accelerate gently; I avoid leaving a parked car running for several minutes.   | ✓ * ○ X ? |
| 09. I get <b>rid of my remote starter</b> , which tends to set the engine in action too quickly, since it only takes a few minutes for the engine to warm up enough.   | ✓ * ○ X ? |
| 10. If I have to use a <b>block heater</b> in the wintertime, I only connect the car a couple of hours before I start out (using a timer if necessary).  | ✓ * ○ X ? |
| 11. I put pressure on the municipality to improve <b>public transportation</b> and I <b>encourage its programs</b> such as bicycle lanes, etc.   | ✓ * ○ X ? |
| ⊕ Others: _____  |           |



### Supplementary sources of information

- [www.carpooltool.com](http://www.carpooltool.com) Find matching commuters in about two minutes.
  - [www.ec.gc.ca/](http://www.ec.gc.ca/) Environment Canada's mandate is to preserve and enhance the quality of the natural environment.
  - <http://www.betiresmart.ca/> "Be Tire Smart - Play Your PART" is a national public education campaign designed to encourage Canadian motorists to adopt good tire maintenance practices.
  - <http://www.caa.ca/home-e.cfm> Your CAA Club offers complete Automotive and Travel services.
- + Others: \_\_\_\_\_

Circle the symbol that best represents your actions. See instructions on page 15

## Implementing this Plan

### Suggestions

#### The Provincial Council

- ▶ Studies the Green Plan and sends a letter to all community members, partners and Associates.
- ▶ Suggests ways communities or groups can implement the Plan.
- ▶ Names one of the Councillors in charge of environmental matters.
- ▶ Invites members to attend regional meetings on this topic.
- ▶ Encourages members to share their experiences in community and at Local Superiors' meetings.
- ▶ Makes sure environmental efforts are accounted for in Province Newsletter.

#### At the Local Community Level

- ▶ To show that this praxis is part of a Provincial project, the Provincial Council's letter is read at a community meeting and each member is given a copy of the Green Plan Guide.
- ▶ The community is invited to set a few clear objectives taken (from sections **1** - **8**) and adapt them to its own community concerns.
- ▶ Two persons are named by the community: the first to set up the necessary equipment (e.g. for recycling) and the second to inform on environmental issues by posting articles on a bulletin board.
- ▶ Members encourage those who work with them in various ministries to get involved in some concrete environmental projects.



## Suggestions

### At the Individual Level

- ▶ I read the whole document and examine my personal attitudes and motives (see pp.6-7) in each of the sections.
- ▶ In the concrete actions sections, I circle the symbol that corresponds to what I actually do.
- ▶ I share my concerns with my local community or other people in my neighbourhood.
- ▶ When reading the Word of God, I pay attention to environmental issues and take my concerns to my prayer.

### At the Inter-Institutional Level

- ▶ We aim at greater collaboration with other religious communities and community organizations to strengthen the impact of our action. Collaboration in different regions has already borne fruit. We can group together when buying fair trade products to diminish costs or to buy bio-degradable dishes in bulk.
- ▶ Even more importantly, we put pressure on political authorities responsible for major environmental decisions whenever we can. Our collective voice gives greater weight to the stands we take when addressed to government officials, and they also contribute to form public opinion.

## Key Words To sustain our “Greening Mission”

### Simple Living

A lifestyle that leads us to be less dependent on money and on speed, and less greedy with respect to the resources of the planet.

The use of collective means (of transportation, of services) develops greater solidarity, while still responding to personal needs.

### An enterprise within a “social economy”

Like every other business, it aims at a return on investments, but not simply for the profit of the owners.

It promotes participation of workers, support by citizens, services to the community and the increase of collective wealth.

### Fair trade

A kind of trade based on equity, justice and a lasting partnership between North and South. By eliminating middlemen from the distribution chain, the consumers in the North pay a more just price to producers in the South for their work, often done in cooperatives.

### Organic agriculture

Where no chemical fertilizers or pesticides are used nor genetically modified organisms (GMO) in the handling of soil, plants or animals. Domestic animals are treated, preferably, with natural medicines.

### Sustainable development

To work towards sustainable development implies that, in the name of greater social and economic justice, production and consumption of today does not compromise the resources of tomorrow.



Creation is the greatest marvel of the Living God.  
Today it is experiencing excruciating labour pains.

To save humanity by saving the planet  
is an on-going humanitarian and missionary commitment.

You who have read this Guide, be missionaries!  
In the name of all persons displaced because of ecological disasters,  
in the name of victims of exploitation and starvation,  
in the name of species and of lands that are becoming extinct!

Go, speak out, and form small groups for sharing and for action.  
Let your anger arise in the face of all that is destructive of life.  
But most of all, let your sense of wonder arise at the sight of

**this great**

**... and beautiful world**

# Going GREEN is part of our mission

An action and reflection plan  
for religious communities,  
their partners and associates,  
and for anyone who  
is concerned with eco-spirituality  
lived in the very midst of daily life.

