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GREEN ASSESSMENT TOOL

Holy Spirit Social Concern Commission

WHAT'S HAPPENING TO OUR EARTH

The Greenhouse Effect

Human activities are altering the climate of our entire planet.
Carbon dioxide has increased by 25 % in the last two centuries
from burning fossil fuels and deforestation

Air Pollution

Ozone is increasing at the ground level, especially from vehicles.
Ozone-polluted air is a risk factor for people, animals, forests, plants, crops.

Ozone Depletion

Ozone, which shields the earth from solar ultraviolet radiation is thinning.
This promotes skin cancers, cataracts, depresses the immune system,
reduces crop yields and fish population.

Hazardous Waste

Chemicals from manufacturing pollutes water, air and ecosystems.
Plastics, aerosols and detergents seep into groundwater.

Acid Rain

Pollutants are released from coal-burning electric-power plants and vehicles
and return to earth as acid rain destroying plant and animal life.

Vanishing Wildlife

Forests, wetlands, oceans, ice caps and prairies are invaded by people.
Our planet loses up to three species per day.

Ground Water Pollution

Pollution comes from gasoline, landfills, septic systems, fertilized fields,
chemicals, pesticides, herbicides.

Garbage Build Up

Landfills are filling up.
Plastic is fouling the oceans.

WHAT IS OURS TO DO

The Catholic Coalition on Climate Change

inspired by Pope Benedict XVI and the bishops of the world,
is calling us to examine our lifestyle
and commit ourselves to care for the earth
and help the poor who are most affected.

Catholic institutions, organizations, parishes and individuals
are asked to take the Saint Francis Pledge
which is a commitment to honor God's creation
and serve the poor.

Approach of the Saint Francis Pledge

Ecological

Francis recognized God's work in creation
and the interdependence of people with creation.

Theological

Francis saw creation as a reflection of God's overflowing love.

Action

Francis gave us an example of putting words into practice
to reverence and protect the earth.

Taking the Saint Francis Pledge

- + Pray and reflect on the responsibility to care for God's creation.
- + Learn about climate change: www.catholicclimatecovenant.org
- + Evaluate contribution to carbon emissions
by taking the Green Assessment Tool.
- + Make choices that reverence and protect the earth.
- + Advocate for those who are poor and vulnerable.

GREEN TOOL ASSESSMENT TOOL

Rate yourself with 1 poor and 5 being good.

CHEMICALS

- Use low chlorine and phosphate free detergents _____
- Use unbleached chemical free coffee filters _____
- Use pump sprayers rather than aerosol cans _____
- Use washable rather than permanent markers _____
- Avoid animal flea collars with pesticides _____
- Use rechargeable batteries _____
- Avoid pouring oil, paint, or chemicals into the ground _____
- Use cedar and balsam for air fresheners _____
- Keep house plants to clean the air _____
- Use water based strippers and latex based paint _____
- Use natural insect repellents rather than those with DEET _____

CLEANING

- Use baking soda to scour, deodorize, remove stains, soften fabrics _____
- Use white vinegar and water to clean windows _____
- Use white vinegar full strength to remove mildew _____

CLOTHING

- Use natural fibers: cotton, wool, silk, bamboo, hemp _____
- Buy second hand clothes or make clothes _____
- Share clothes and donate to local thrift stores _____
- Buy fewer but more durable clothes _____
- Repair and mend clothes _____

GASOLINE

- Keep vehicles serviced _____
- Use recommended tire pressure _____
- Save gas by lowering speed and using cruise control _____
- Keep track of gas mileage; watch for sudden loss of mileage _____
- Accelerate and brake slowly _____
- Avoid idling vehicles _____
- Use air conditioning less _____
- Car pool, organize trips, walk, bike _____
- Purchase fuel efficient vehicles when it's time to buy _____

ELECTRICITY

- Have an energy audit _____
- Shade sunny windows and open them at night _____
- Avoid using air conditioning _____
- Use energy efficient light bulbs _____
- Use LED Christmas lights _____
- Keep fridge between 37 – 41 _____
- Keep the freezer on the full side _____
- Use a clothesline instead of a dryer _____
- Use hand tools rather than gas or electric powered _____
- Use energy efficient household appliances _____
- Do not leave appliances on standby _____
- Unplug electronics when not in use _____
- Turn off lights and appliances when not in use _____
- Switch screensavers to “none” or “blank” _____
- Use gadgets that run on solar power _____
- Exercise without electrical machines _____
- Use mattresses rather than heated waterbeds _____
- Use stairs rather than elevators _____
- Use less hot water with a low flow showerhead _____

FOOD

- Plant a garden using lawn space, pots, window boxes _____
- Buy locally and support farmers’ markets _____
- Buy fresh food rather than frozen _____
- Wash and peel produce _____
- Buy in bulk to save cost and packaging _____
- Buy organic food _____
- Pack lunch rather than eating out _____
- Make meals from scratch with low cost menus _____
- Prepare whole meals in one pot: stir fries, stews _____
- Eat less meat and more fruits and vegetables _____
- Incorporate leftovers into other meals _____
- Eat foods that are in season _____
- Become label conscious _____
- Avoid microwaving in plastic containers _____
- Donate food to area food programs _____

HEAT

- Run the furnace efficiently and change filters _____
- Insulate the water heater or use a tankless heater _____
- Turn the water heater to 120 _____
- Use energy saving glass _____
- Heat only rooms that are used _____
- Keep heaters free of drapery and couches _____
- Clean the washer lint trap after each use _____
- Turn down the heat, especially at night and when gone _____
- Insulate and weatherize doors, windows, outlets _____
- Use ceiling fans in winter to push warm air down _____
- Leave oven door open when done cooking _____
- Use cookware with lids to conserve energy _____
- Allow hair to dry naturally _____

INFANT CARE

- Use glass or polypropylene, not plastic polycarbonate _____
- Do not warm bottles in the microwave _____
- Make your own baby food _____
- Use cribs made from wood and if painted, test for lead _____
- Use 100% cotton sleep-wear _____

PAPER

- Use less paper, go online _____
- Cancel junk mail cataloguechoice.org _____
- Recycle all paper products _____
- Print double sided _____
- Use scrap paper for notes _____
- Buy recycled paper products _____
- Use cloth instead of paper products for cleaning _____
- Reuse wrapping paper; use colored comics or gift bags _____
- Use cloth napkins and tablecloths _____
- Choose products that come with little packaging _____

PEST CONTROL

- Keep food in containers with tight fitting lids _____
- Keep foods areas and dishes clean _____
- Sweep crumbs from floors, mop and vacuum _____
- Put garbage in cans with lids _____
- Keep mops clean and dry _____
- Weather-strip around doors and windows _____
- Repair holes in screens _____
- Keep bedding off the floor, avoid clutter _____

PLASTICS

- Use reusable containers to store food _____
- Use biodegradable wax paper _____
- Use reusable cloth or canvas shopping bags _____
- Use biodegradable flatware and paper products, not styrofoam _____
- Use tap water rather than bottled water _____
- Use wood cutting boards rather than plastic _____
- Choose plastic wrap made from polyethylene _____

RECYCLE

- Buy for quality, not quantity _____
- Recycle paper, glass, aluminum _____
- Recycle batteries, cell phones, electronics _____
- Buy beverages in recyclable containers _____
- Use refillable pens and mechanical pencils _____
- Have tone cartridges reconditioned _____

WATER

- Run water from faucets and shower heads slowly or use aerators _____
- Use the dishwasher and washers with full loads _____
- Turn water off during a shower and brushing teeth _____
- Put a displacement bag or bottle into the toilet tank _____
- Use rainwater to water plants _____
- Use recycled water for toilets _____
- Water plants early or late to save evaporation _____
- Water with a sprinkling can rather than a sprinkling system _____
- Wash the car with a bucket of water and sponge _____

YARD CARE

- Keep lawn mower tuned up and blades sharpened _____
- Cut grass longer for roots and shade _____
- Avoid chemical pesticides and herbicides _____
- Plant trees and shrubs, especially shade trees _____
- Make a compost pile of food waste _____
- For flies, use citronella, cloves, eucalyptus, mint _____
- For ants, use cayenne pepper _____
- Use a mulching mower _____
- Put coffee grounds and ashes on the lawn _____
- Buy durable tools _____
- Pick up litter _____

ACTION PLAN

Choose a goal from several or all of the above areas and write it down.
Allow a goal a month to take root in your habits before starting a new one.

Chemicals _____

Cleaning _____

Clothing _____

Gasoline _____

Electricity _____

Food _____

Heat _____

Infant Care _____

Paper _____

Pest Control _____

Plastics _____

Recycle _____

Water _____

Yard Care _____

REDUCE

REUSE

RECYCLE

IT'S EASY TO DO!

CANTICLE OF CREATION Saint Francis of Assisi

Most High, all powerful, all good, Lord!
All praise is yours, all glory, all honor and all blessing!
To you, alone, Most High, do these belong.
No mortal lips are worthy to pronounce your name.

All praise be yours, my Lord, through all that you have made.
And first, my Lord, for Brother Sun, who brings the day,
the light you give to us through him.
How beautiful he is, how radiant in all his splendor!
Of you, Most High, he bears the likeness.

All praise be yours, my Lord, through Sister Moon and Stars.
In the heavens you made them, bright and precious and beautiful.

All praise be yours, my Lord, through Brother Wind and Air.
And fair and stormy, all the weather's moods,
by which you cherish all that you have made.

All praise be yours, my Lord, through Sister Water,
she is so useful, lowly, precious and pure.

All praise be yours, my Lord, through Brother Fire,
through whom you brighten the night.
How beautiful he is, how joyful, full of power and strength!

All praise be yours, my Lord, through Sister Earth, our Mother,
who feeds us in her sovereignty
and produces various fruits, colored flowers and herbs.

All praise be yours, my Lord, through those who grant pardon for love of you,
through those who endure sickness and trial.
Happy those who endure in peace.
By you, Most High, they will be crowned.

All praise be yours, my Lord, through Sister Death
from whose embrace no mortal can escape.
Happy those she finds doing your will!
The second death they need not fear.

Praise and bless the Lord,
And give him thanks!
And serve him with great humility!