

Resources

Carbon Footprint 101 Video

www.csjp.org/justice/c4/video1.html

CAFOD Climate Change Site

www.cafod.org.uk/climatechange

Catholic Coalition on Climate Change

www.catholicsandclimatechange.org

Catholic Health Association

www.chausa.org/climatechange

Intercommunity Peace & Justice Center

www.ipjc.org/links/globalwarming.htm

Tearfund Climate Change Campaign

www.tearfund.org/climate

US Carbon Footprint Calculator

tiny.cc/csjpgcarbonus

UK Carbon Footprint Calculator

tiny.cc/csjpgcarbonuk

Care of Creation Prayer

God of all creation, we give you thanks for the gift of Earth, our home. Bless our efforts to cherish and protect your creation. We ask this in the name of Jesus our brother, and the Spirit who gives us life. Amen



Reflection Booklet



Care of Creation & Climate Change

Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace
Autumn 2010

Introduction

In our 2008 *Seeds of Peace Care of Creation and Climate Change Chapter Act*, we committed ourselves personally and communally to:

- ∞ deepen our spirituality of peace regarding care of creation
- ∞ identify and reduce our carbon footprint in our communities, ministries and institutions
- ∞ pray, study and act to promote a sustainable lifestyle
- ∞ participate in legislative efforts to support the integrity of creation
- ∞ stand in solidarity and act in justice with marginalized people whose lives are already affected by the devastation of Earth
- ∞ collaborate with others, including interfaith and civic groups who are addressing climate change.

An Invitation

We invite each Sister and Associate to use this reflection booklet to help deepen our engagement with this Chapter Act.

Earlier this year, we gathered in Congregation Small Groups to begin the work of identifying and reducing our carbon footprints. The wealth of creative ideas was so inspiring, the C4 Core Group decided to share them here with the entire Congregation for further reflection. This reflection booklet will also be used in a CSG process later this year.

Blessings of Peace,
Care of Creation and Climate Change Core Group

Journal Pages

*We commit ourselves personally
and communally to pray, study
and act to promote a sustainable lifestyle.
(Seeds of Peace Chapter Act 2008)*

Mother Evangelista

"Read the first chapter of Genesis: the numbers and varieties of creatures God has made in the mineral, the vegetable and animal creation. And these were made to help me to praise, reverence and serve God. My duty is to use them only for that end. "

(Retreat Notes, 1901)

- ∞ Think of Mother Evangelista as she wrote her retreat notes. What do her words evoke in me?
- ∞ What stirs in my heart when I read the first chapter of Genesis?

19th General Chapter

"We hear this call in a complex and chaotic world: a call to be people of prayer, to live deeply out of a contemplative stance; a call to realize our interconnectedness, wholeness, kinship, and integration; a call to recognize the gift of diversity among us as we journey toward right relationships; a call to stand with all people, especially with women everywhere, in our search for justice; a call to integrity as we endeavor to match the words we speak with our actions for justice and peace; We hear this call as key to bringing about the reign of God."

(CSJP Chapter Act, 1996)

- ∞ How am I living into this Chapter Act?
- ∞ What more do I feel called to today?

God's Grandeur by Gerard Manley Hopkins

The world is charged with the grandeur of God.
It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;
It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil
Crushed. Why do men then now not reckon his rod?
Generations have trod, have trod, have trod;
And all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toil;
And wears man's smudge and shares man's smell: the soil
Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod.

And for all this, nature is never spent;
There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;
And though the last lights off the black West went
Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs—
Because the Holy Ghost over the bent
World broods with warm breast and with ah!
bright wings.

- ∞ When I read the poem, what words shout out for my attention? What is the invitation?
- ∞ How do I experience God's grandeur in nature? How does my human activity impact creation?

Journal Pages

Reading our Constitutions through the Lens of Creation



“Our call to peacemaking permeates all aspects of our lives together. ... It pervades our prayer and calls us to a life of simplicity and service.”

(Constitution 15)

- ∞ The reference is to *all* aspects of our lives ... How am I consciously trying to make this a reality?
- ∞ In my daily life, how do I practice being a peacemaker in relation to creation?

“The call to live community for mission comes to us from Jesus whose Spirit is the source of our unity. Our sensitivity to this call is heightened by the needs of poor and oppressed people, by the joys and sorrows of our sisters and brothers, and by our confidence that the saving action of Jesus continues in and through humankind.”

(Constitution 13)

- ∞ How do I feel called to stand in solidarity and act in justice with marginalized people whose lives are already affected by the devastation of Earth?

Our history calls us to a special love of those who are poor.
(Constitution 21)

CSG Commitments

Sisters and Associates gathered in May and June 2010 to reflect on our commitment to identify and reduce our carbon footprint. Below is a condensed version of responses from across the Congregation.

Individual Commitments:

Drive less and combine trips.

Set out in good time so there is time to drive slower.

Book non-stop flights when possible.

Carpool and use public transportation.

Walking (for the HEALTH of it!).

Plan a meatless or vegetarian meal on a regular basis.

Cut down on take-out foods.

Buy local produce.

Grow some of our own food; if small space can grow in containers.

Be more aware of what I purchase – choose recycled, organic, energy efficient products.

Check sources of wood and peat when buying furniture or compost.

Remember to use/bring cloth shopping bags.

Using cloth napkins and dish towels in lieu of paper napkins and paper towels.

Use green household cleaners.

Use hand tools instead of electric ones.

Unplug appliances when not in use.

Use a clothesline to dry clothes in lieu of dryer.

Consolidate loads of laundry.

Replace toilets with low flow system when renovating.

Example of Saint Francis

Today we remember St Francis of Assisi, your faithful servant, who had such a love of your creation and all your creatures.

We give thanks for the example of Saint Francis. His gentleness, vows of poverty, obedience to God and his simple, deep love for all God's creatures led him to the heights of heavenly perfection and turned many hearts to follow God's will. Today we come here searching for peace and guidance in our troubled world.

May his example and his love of this fragile earth inspire us as we pray. May our prayers today be a time of inspiration.

(Churches Together in Britain and Ireland)



Pledge of St. Francis

For use by families, individuals or parishes:

I/We Pledge to:

PRAY and reflect on the duty to care for God's creation and protect the poor and vulnerable.

LEARN about and educate others on the causes and moral dimensions of climate change.

ASSESS how we-as individuals and in our families, parishes and other affiliations-contribute to climate change by our own energy use, consumption, waste, etc.

ACT to change our choices and behaviors to reduce the ways we contribute to climate change.

ADVOCATE for Catholic principles and priorities in climate change discussions and decisions, especially as they impact those who are poor and vulnerable.

(Catholic Coalition on Climate Change)

Use less water when prepping dishes for the dishwasher.
Take shorter showers.

Become more educated on global warming.
Support legislation to reduce CO2 emission and clean air.
Be more aware each day that I am in relationship not only with humans but with Mother Earth.
Grow in awareness of how I can care for creation.
Endeavour to carry on living sustainably.

Support and affirm my grandchildren when they conserve.
Discuss carbon footprint with family.
Educate others in ministry to understand carbon footprints and act collaboratively.
Spread the good news of what can be done and how we might be destroying God's world for future generations.

Pray for conversion of hearts among 1st world people.
Pray daily for the reduction of global carbon footprints.
Daily ask God to help me to be more responsible for caring for creation.

Group Commitments Made by CSGs:

Continue to bring cloth napkins to CSG meetings.
Look for other ways to reduce carbon at our meetings.
Set up at least one meeting using the internet.
Share Carbon Footprint 101 video with others.
Share meeting agenda with other groups.
Write to supermarket headquarters to highlight the awful waste of packaging.

∞ What was my commitment? How am I living into this commitment?

∞ Am I inspired to take any further actions to deepen my commitment?

CSG Reflections

The following reflections are quoted from the CSGs held in May and June 2010 across the Congregation.

“It was very interesting and sometimes amusing as each of us recalled childhood interaction and awareness of the natural world. ... This was a very enjoyable conversation. We learned many things about each other that we did not know before.”

“Many of us noted how relevant today is the 1866 writing of Mother Clare, e.g. ‘...the country which was in God’s keeping then, has but little improved since it came into the keeping of man.’”

“We certainly are more aware of Carbon Footprints and Global Warming over the past 25 years due principally to CSJP initiative, very active J&P Group, and there is more overt discussion time given – perhaps because of it affecting all of us adversely.”

“The term of old of humanity being ‘in charge’ of earth has now become more of a “relationship with.”

“We commend the fact that the Congregation is looking at alternative ways of communication eg. conference calling as a way to reduce the use of air travel.”

“As a whole the CSG felt that each person carries a responsibility to be better informed on all ‘Green’ issues and commit ourselves to action both as individual citizens and as a Congregation in reducing our carbon footprint.”

“We felt that it was important to take action, not just take away the knowledge.”

Unity with the Church

“In unity with the church
and with all of creation
we give praise and thanks to the Giver
of all gifts.

(Constitution 28)

In our Seeds of Peace Chapter Act, we commit ourselves to collaborate with others, including faith groups, who are addressing climate change.

The **Catholic Coalition on Climate Change** brings together parishes and organizations in the United States to protect creation and advocate on behalf of people in poverty. This campaign seems very relevant to our Chapter Act. You may wish to share the “Saint Francis Pledge” on the page 9 with family, friends, or coworkers who wish to deepen their own commitment to creation.

www.catholicclimatecovenant.org

Churches Together in Britain and Ireland provides resources to faith communities related to the environment and climate change. Their website provides many resources for reflection, including the “Example of Saint Francis” prayer on page 10.

www.ctbi.org.uk

Mother Francis Clare spent many years in a Poor Clare convent before founding our community.

☞ How might I call upon this Franciscan connection to deepen my own commitment to creation?