

Co-Creators

Congregational Eco Policy

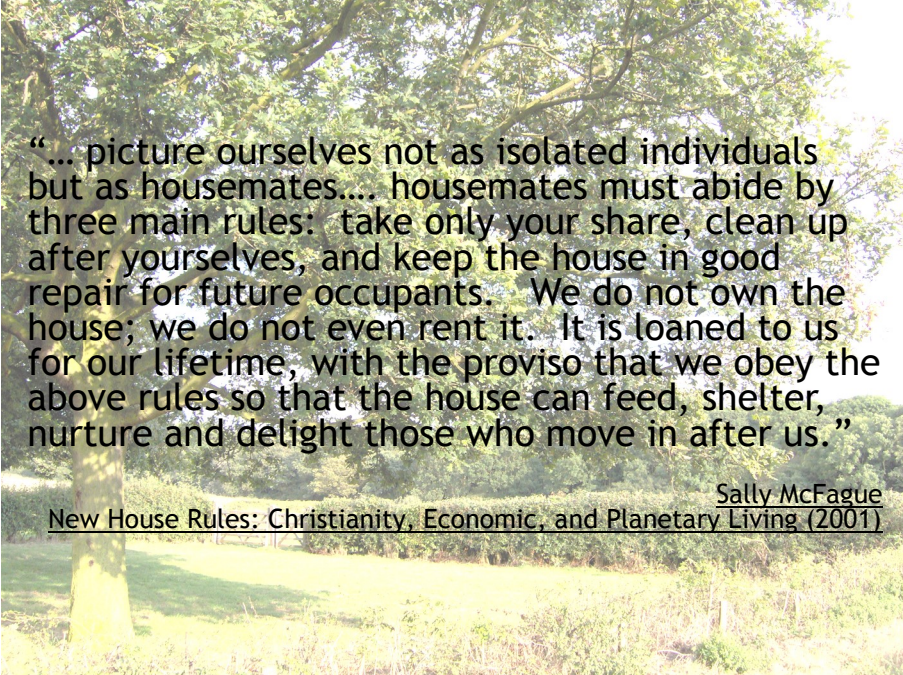


Sisters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary



CONGREGATIONAL ECO POLICY

Co-Creators



“... picture ourselves not as isolated individuals but as housemates.... housemates must abide by three main rules: take only your share, clean up after yourselves, and keep the house in good repair for future occupants. We do not own the house; we do not even rent it. It is loaned to us for our lifetime, with the proviso that we obey the above rules so that the house can feed, shelter, nurture and delight those who move in after us.”

Sally McFague

New House Rules: Christianity, Economic, and Planetary Living (2001)

Sisters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary

A congregational policy to acknowledge our response to God's Creation.

Launched in 2008 - The International Year of Planet Earth (Unesco).

Forward

“Modern society will find no solution to the ecological problem unless it takes a serious look at its life-style. In many parts of the world society is given to instant gratification and consumerism while remaining indifferent to the damage which these cause... The seriousness of the ecological issue lays bare the depths of humanity’s moral crisis. If an appreciation of the value of the human person and of human life is lacking, we will also lose an interest in others and in the earth itself. Simplicity, moderation and discipline, as well as a spirit of sacrifice, must become part of everyday life, lest all suffer the negative consequences of the careless habits of a few... Today the dramatic threat of ecological breakdown is teaching us the extent to which greed and selfishness both – individual and collective – are contrary to the order of creation.”

Pope John Paul II 1990 – Peace with God the Creator – Peace with All of Creation.



“In the beginning, when God began to create the heavens and the earth, the earth had no form and was void; darkness was over the deep and the Spirit of God hovered over the waters.”

Gen 1:1-2

Aim

We see the beauty and pain of our fragile earth and recognise the interdependence of all creation. As co-creators of the earth, guardians of the planet, we commit ourselves to the task of preserving, healing and safeguarding the integrity of creation.

Vision Statement

Responsive to the anguish of peoples and planet, and realising the interdependence between ourselves, the earth and God, we stewards of God's creation allow the Spirit to lead us to a deeper appreciation and respect for the diversity and the beauty of our world and the balance of nature.

Values Statement

As we awaken to a new understanding of reality, we deepen our interest in the beauty and mystery of the Earth. We continue to explore the ongoing search for meaning within the broadest possible context, evoking a sense of Awe and Wonder, Gratitude and Compassion.

As we awaken to a new understanding of how our use of the earth's resources affects the inhabitants of the planet, we continue to explore ways of living a simple lifestyle.

These are our enduring values as we come to realise that the Universe is alive and Sacred and we are part of it.

Policy

Accepting our God-given responsibility to care for the earth, we



constantly thank God for the sacredness, wonders and beauty of creation.



have a personal and corporate responsibility to be good stewards of God's creation.



commit ourselves as a congregation to using only the resources of the earth that are essential to our living with dignity and thus bear witness to the generosity of our provident God.



commit ourselves to work for the well-being of peoples and planet by participating in the many initiatives available to us.



join organisations that have as their focus the care of the earth and the support of all life.



we encourage sustainable living programmes for energy, water, reforestation, transport, organic produce and waste disposal.



educate ourselves, and others, to tread with gentle footsteps on all of creation.

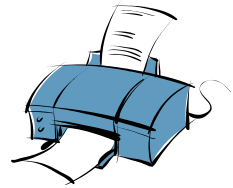
How can we be good stewards?

Lots of ideas have been offered. You might like to discuss the following suggestions in your community and see which ones could be implemented.

Paper

THINK BEFORE YOU PRINT.

- Don't print out e mails with only one sentence on the page.
- Use both sides of the page when printing information.
- Re -use paper which has one side blank wherever possible.
- Buy recycled paper where possible.
- Stop junk mail, if you can't stop it, recycle it.
- Re-use and recycle whenever possible.
- Protest against over-packaging of products.



Water

DON'T USE MORE WATER THAN YOU 'OUGHTA'

- Wait to wash dishes until the sink is full (or machine full if you have a dishwasher)
- Wait to wash clothes until you have a full machine, or perhaps share the machine.
- Don't leave the tap running when brushing teeth.
- Fix any leaking taps immediately.
- Recycle water by reusing it to water plants.



Fuel

SAVING FUEL IS VERY COOL.

- Walk instead of driving – it's good for the planet and for your health.
- Plan your trips to use less fuel.
- Combine your shopping to make fewer trips.
- Keep your car serviced to avoid burning extra fuel.
- Don't keep heavy items in your car – it uses more fuel to carry the weight.
- Drive smoothly; accelerating and braking use fuel, try to avoid doing this.
- Use public transport wherever possible.
- Keep petrol tank topped up – an empty tank means more petrol evaporates.



Energy (electricity/gas)

EXPEND A LITTLE ENERGY TO SAVE A LOT OF ENERGY.

- Unplug every appliance that uses energy when you stop using it. All appliances use small amounts of energy even in a sleep mode.
- Don't leave lights on in empty rooms. Even fluorescent bulbs are better turned off if you leave the room.
- Use low energy light bulbs.
- After considering the needs of your particular community, you may think about turning the heating down a degree or two. (Another benefit is that for each degree the thermostat is turned down, 3-5% of heating costs may be saved.)
- Don't leave the refrigerator door open - decide what you want to eat before you open it!



- Keep your freezer compartment clean and defrosted.
- Keep your refrigerator full – a full 'fridge uses less energy.
- Use curtains and windows to your advantage. In winter, open curtains when the sun is out to let in heat, but close them when it is dark to keep in heat. In the summer open windows and curtains at night to let in cool air and close them to keep out heat during the hot daytime.
- Clean or replace dirty filters in furnace or air conditioner ducts.

Eco friendly

PRESERVE OUR PLANET.

- Use cloth napkins instead of paper napkins.
- Use cloth towels instead of paper towels.
- Buy recycled products whenever possible.
- Use paper instead of plastic.
- Take your own bags when you go shopping.
- Choose products that come in recyclable packaging.
- Use non-toxic earth friendly soaps and cleaning products.
- Recycle wherever possible.
- Make a compost pile with biodegradable waste such as scraps from fruit and vegetables where practical.
- Plant a tree or wildflower.



Resources for Reflection and Prayer

Readings:

Genesis!

Job 12:7-10

Eph 2:10

Canticle of Daniel Chapter 3:52.....

Canticle of the Sun – St. Francis of Assisi

Psalm 8

Psalm 19

Psalm 104

John 10:10



Psalm 65: 7-14

By your power you set up the mountains.
By your strength the seas were calmed;
you lull their roaring waves
and the turmoil of the nations.

Those who dwell at the ends of the earth
stand in awe of your marvellous deeds.
You make joyful the dawn
and the coming of dusk.

You water the land and care for it,
enriching it with natural resources.
God's stream is filled with water;
so you prepare the earth to give us its fruits.
You drench the furrows in the land
and level the ridges,
you soften the soil with showers
and bless its crops.

You crown the year with your goodness
abundance flows everywhere.
The deserts have become pasture land,
the hills are clothed with gladness,
the meadows covered with flocks,
the valley's decked with grain -
they shout and sing for joy.

Intercessions

Let us pray, that we look for and listen to the Heart of our God beating at the very centre of all created life and so, "To take off our shoes (the shoes of violence, aggression, hatred and destruction), for the ground on which we tread is holy ground.

Let us pray, that we always tread with gentle footsteps on all of creation, especially in our relationships with our sisters and brothers, thus acknowledging the Lord of life who dwells at the very centre of all creation.

Let us pray, that we see God at work in and through all things, all people and all situations. We ask for our eyes to be opened with compassion for those who are made poorer by consumerism and greed.

Creation Creed:

We believe that God creates all things,
renews all things and celebrates all things.

We believe Earth is a sanctuary,
a sacred planet filled with God's presence,
a home for us to share with our kin.

We believe that God became flesh and blood,
became a piece of Earth,
a human being called Jesus Christ,
who lived and breathed and spoke among us,
suffered and died on a cross,
for all human beings and for all creation.

We believe that the risen Jesus
is the Christ at the core of creation
reconciling all things to God,
renewing all creation and filling the cosmos.

We believe the Spirit renews life in creation
groans in empathy with a suffering creation,
and waits with us for the rebirth of creation.

We believe that with Christ we will rise
and with Christ we will celebrate a new creation.

www.seasonofcreation.com



Chief Seattle

Reader: Every part of this earth is sacred.

All: Whatever befalls the earth befalls the children
of the earth.

Reader: The air is precious;

All: for all of us share the same breath.

Reader: This we know, the earth does not belong to us:

All: we belong to the earth.

Reader: This we know, all things are connected;

All: like the blood which unites one family.

Reader: Our God is the same God,

All: whose compassion is equal for all.

Reader: For we did not weave the web of life:

All: we are merely a strand in it.

Reader: Whatever we do to the web

All: we do to ourselves.

Reader: Whatever befalls the earth befalls the children
of the earth.

All: Every part of this earth is sacred.

Adapted from a speech by Chief Seattle (1854)



Penitential Prayer

Lord Jesus, champion of justice and righteousness, all that you made from nothing in creation seems to be falling apart in the hands of human greed and ambition.

Forgive us and change us.

Enable us and use us.

Where you shout for justice, only corruption seems to win the day.

Forgive us...

We abuse the world you have given us by pollution and waste.

Forgive us...

Our planet is changing. The ice melts, the crops fail, the floods come and we go on as usual.

Forgive us...

(Adapted from Christian Ecology Link)

“We cannot interfere in one area of the ecosystem without paying due attention both to the consequences of such interference in other areas and to the well being of future generations”.

The Ecological Crisis: A Common Responsibility, Pope John Paul II



“You have made us co-creators of the earth! Guardians of the planet! To care for all your creatures, to tend the land, sea, and the air we breathe; and all you have made, you have placed in our hands.”

(Psalms for Praying, Nan C Merrill, Psalm 8)

This booklet has been compiled from responses from our Ecology Link Sisters in all parts of the world. We would like to thank everyone who has contributed in any way to the finished product.

