

INTRODUCTION TO RESOURCE

Living Simply, Responsibly, and Sustainably

With One Another and All Creation

The 23rd General Chapter was fully aware that the topic of sustainability was one that would require much education to animate our commitment to live sustainably on the personal, communal, provincial and general levels. This is because sustainability is an enormous responsibility with spiritual, emotional and practical aspects.

The purpose of this process is to facilitate personal and communal reflection, conversation and commitment related to our SSND call to live simply, responsibly and sustainably with one another and with all creation because LOVE CANNOT WAIT. This process is designed so that you can use it as an individual or with a group during one session or over the course of several sessions.

You may use the process as a “stand alone,” printed document and/or with the optional online resources which clarify and enhance the process and information. These online resources are available at <http://int.ssnd.org/sustainability-resources>. The links are included in this document at the appropriate places and can be accessed by clicking on them or copying them into your browser. If you choose to use these resources, you will need the ssnd.org user name and password to access them. All the resources are listed in the resource section at the end of the document. If you are using this process with a group, the facilitator should review the resources carefully to determine which ones would be most appropriate for her group. Please note that the PowerPoint for *Song at the Center* must be advanced manually.

Two pertinent events which emphasize the need for us to learn to live simply, responsibly, and sustainably with all Creation are the publication of *Laudato Si'* by Pope Francis and the SSND Shalom Seminar which took place at the Generalate August 8-21, 2015. At the latter, Sister Mary Maher noted that “The human community is faced with two crises which cry out to be addressed and which must be addressed together. I refer to the environmental crisis and the crisis of global poverty.” *Laudato Si'* and its concept of *Integral Ecology* greatly influenced the Shalom document for 2015-18. The encyclical has done much to bring greater awareness, not only of how human behavior is impacting the planet, but also of how inseparable are the human’s and the earth’s thriving. Reading and reflecting on *Laudato Si'* and the documents of the Shalom Seminar will undergird and support our efforts to live simply, responsibly and sustainably with all Creation.

This reflection process on Sustainability has been created by Lois Martens (CP) and Patricia Murphy (AM), members respectively of the Integrity of Creation Committee of Shalom North America and of the Water Committee of the Atlantic-Midwest Province, with input from other members of the IOC and water committees. Formatting and design were prepared by Cheryl Fameli, support staff person at Villa Notre Dame, and communications assistance was provided by Julie Gilberto-Brady, communications coordinator, Collaboration Staff.

Living Simply, Responsibly, and Sustainably



Design: Gen Cassani, SSND

With One Another and All Creation

INITIAL MOMENT

Call to Mindfulness

Begin by taking a deep breath. That one breath contains one quintillion particles from the first flaring forth or God's first breathing of creation. We may be breathing the same air that Jesus breathed or Gandhi or a dinosaur or the most beautiful flower you can imagine. It illustrates for us that we are integrally connected to all creation. Sustainability matters for all Creation.

Opening Hymn

Suggestions: *Song at the Center* by Marty Haugen, YouTube link: https://youtu.be/_v785Eau45I, PowerPoint link: http://bit.ly/song_center_pp; *Mystery* from Missa Gaia composed by Jeremy Geffen and recorded by Paul Winter, YouTube link: http://bit.ly/ioc_mystery; *Morning Has Broken* by Eleanor Farjeon (popularized by Cat Stevens), available on YouTube: http://bit.ly/ioc_morning

Read and reflect on the following icon and its description.

MARY OF THE COSMOS



Artist – Bernadette Bostwick, SGM

This image of Mary of the Cosmos celebrates the beauty of our embodiment and the sacredness and holiness of all matter in this cosmos. In this Icon, the Universe is flowing through Mary, (mother, matter, mater) whose body is made of the star stuff of the cosmos. In her Iconoclastic form with Earth at her center, the planet becomes the birthing bed of Jesus. The three stars represent the cosmological ethics of differentiation, interiority and communion. The relationship between Earth and moon speak of rhythm, tides, and the wisdom of the feminine. The red cloak that Mary wears points to her humanity while the blue undergarment reflects Divinity penetrating her humanity. The flash of flame circling Mary of the Cosmos is the fireball, the initial flaring forth, reminding us of the sacrificial nature of the entire Universe Story. Mary's posture of outstretched arms invites us into that open handed giving for the sake of the whole. The straightforward gaze of Mary as she looks further into the future, reveals a unified vision of matter and spirit, inviting us into the fullness of communion consciousness.

- Bernadette Bostwick, SGM

Reflection/Sharing: What captures your attention in the icon or in the artist's description?

Process 1: Reflection on Creation and Simplicity in *YAS* and in the *Directional Statements* of the General Chapters Since 1987.

Spend a few moments with these words taken from You Are Sent and the Directional Statements.

Creation and Simplicity in *You Are Sent*

C 9	As the desire of Jesus that all be one becomes more fully our own, our striving for unity embraces all humanity and the whole of creation .
C 15	We endeavor to live simply in fact and in spirit .
C 16	We express our spirit of poverty by holding all things in common, living simply, sharing materially and spiritually, receiving gratefully and reverencing created things .
C 17	To confront injustice credibly requires that we ourselves act justly. We strive to live simply , to value human labor rightly, and to respect the dignity of every person, witnessing that living these values is a possibility for humanity.
GD 19a.	Because the earth and its resources are God's gift to all humanity , we are reverent, just, and sparing in our use of created things, concerned for the needs of present and future generations.
GD 20a	Our personal and communal life flows from, expresses, and deepens our commitment to Christ: we live simply: We reflect this simplicity especially in our convent homes, food, clothing, purchases, travel, and recreation .
C 22	For us, education means enabling persons to reach the fullness of their potential as individuals created in God's image and assisting them to direct their gifts toward building the earth .
C 25	Through our ministry, we and those to whom we are sent are mutually enriched. We are enabled to grow in communion with God and with one another and in acceptance of responsibility for the earth and its people . This mutual giving and receiving is itself a witness in our interdependent world.

Creation and Simplicity in the *Acts of the General Chapters 1987-2012*

<i>Directional Statement</i> 1987	We commit ourselves to live simply and gratefully.
<i>Mandate for Action</i> 1992	Implementing the Directional Statement, we have heard anew the voices of the poor, the cry of creation , and the call for justice. <i>We reverence all creation as a sacred revelation of God.</i> Establishing a right and just relationship with creation , each sister and local community will counteract the tendency toward consumerism and embrace a radically simple lifestyle.
<i>Call of the 20th General Chapter</i> 1997	We commit ourselves to reverse those personal and communal choices which exploit the earth and impoverished peoples.
<i>Call to Transformation</i> 2002	We have heard the cry of our world. Although precious and beautiful in God's design, the earth and its peoples exist today in a fragile, divided, and fragmented condition. We open ourselves to the personal and communal conversions necessary to embrace our Gospel responsibility to live simply , making the concerns of the poor our own, and reverencing all creation.
<i>Call to Solidarity</i> 2007	Called to solidarity with all Creation , we are ready, personally and communally, to risk all we are and all we have for the sake of the mission of Jesus Christ.
<i>Love Cannot Wait</i> 2012	We, the School Sisters of Notre Dame, are profoundly affected and challenged by the many divisions in our world and church today and by the social, economic and ecological crises of our times. As an international congregation of apostolic women religious, we are called and sent to address these divisions and crises with audacity and hope.
In fidelity to our charism of unity in diversity, we commit to live more simply, responsibly and sustainably with one another and with all of creation	
<i>Holding All in Common</i> 2012	Accepting our responsibility for the earth and its people ... and trusting in the Triune God's loving providence and in one another, we claim our current congregational reality — our rich heritage, our sisters and our material resources

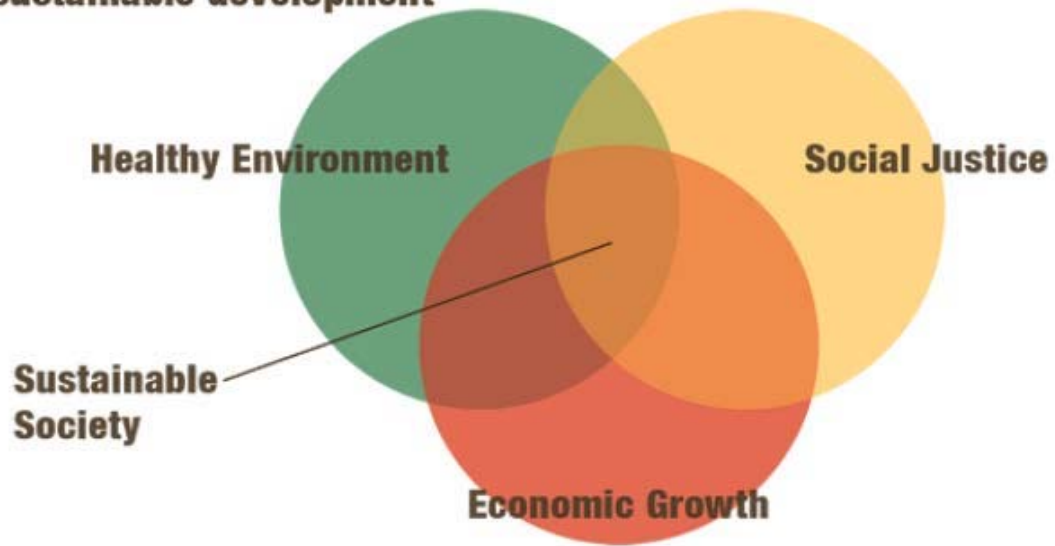
Reflection/Sharing: Which of these quotes inspires you? Challenges you? Why?

Process 2: Reflections on Sustainability and Why It Matters

What is Sustainability?

Consider the graphic and the definitions that follow it.

The three components of sustainable development



Optional Resource: *Sustainability Easily Explained* (4 minutes):
http://bit.ly/ioc_sustainability_explained

Bruntland Commission:

In 1987 the UN held a conference on the Human Environment and the report of that conference entitled Our Common Future but more commonly known as the Bruntland report defined sustainable development as *“development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”*

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency:

Sustainability is based on a simple principle: Everything that we need for our survival and well-being depends, either directly or indirectly, on our natural environment.

Sustainability creates and maintains the conditions under which humans and nature can exist in productive harmony, that permit fulfilling the social, economic and other requirements of present and future generations.

Sustainability is important to making sure that we have and will continue to have, the water, materials, and resources to protect human health and our environment.

The United Kingdom National Planning Policy Framework:

The draft NPPF defines sustainable development as:

Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It is central to the economic, environmental and social success of the country and is the core principle underpinning planning. Simply stated, the principle recognises the importance of ensuring that all people should be able to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life, both now and in the future.

Canadian Federal Sustainable Development Act:

Sustainable development is about meeting the needs of today without compromising the needs of future generations. It is about improving the standard of living by protecting human health, conserving the environment, using resources efficiently and advancing long-term economic competitiveness. It requires the integration of environmental, economic and social priorities into policies and programs and requires action at all levels - citizens, industry, and governments.

***Consider/discuss: What similar elements are expressed in the above definitions?
Are there significant differences?***

What is Global Warming? *Source: timeforchange.org*

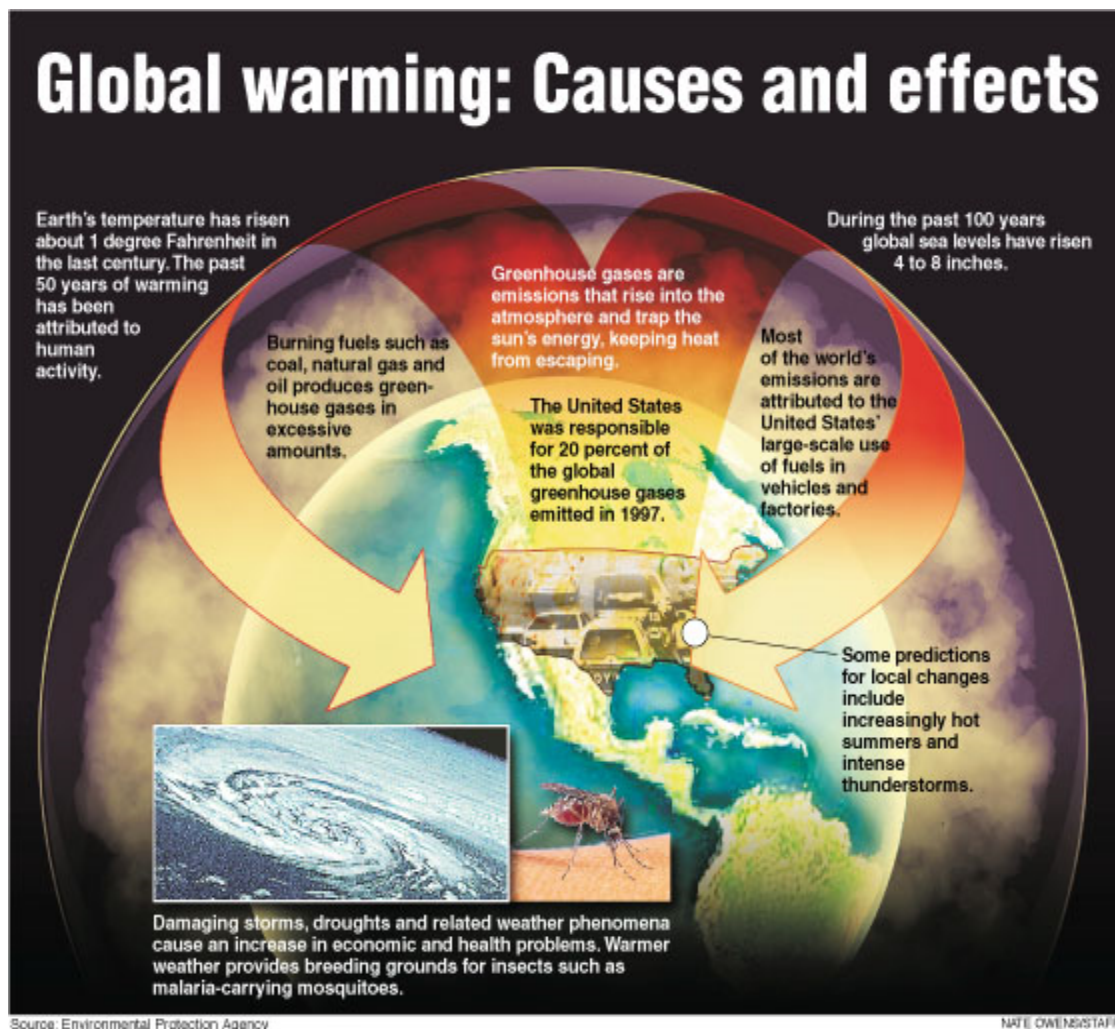
Global warming is the observed and projected increases in the average temperature of Earth's atmosphere and oceans. Earth's average temperature rose about 0.6° Celsius (1.1° Fahrenheit) in the 20th century.

Global Warming: Why It Matters:

(Optional) View video from the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)

1 ½ minutes – available as online resource: http://bit.ly/ioc_warming

Examine the chart below



Reflection /Sharing: How has your region or that of family/friends/ SSNDs globally experienced the effects of global warming?

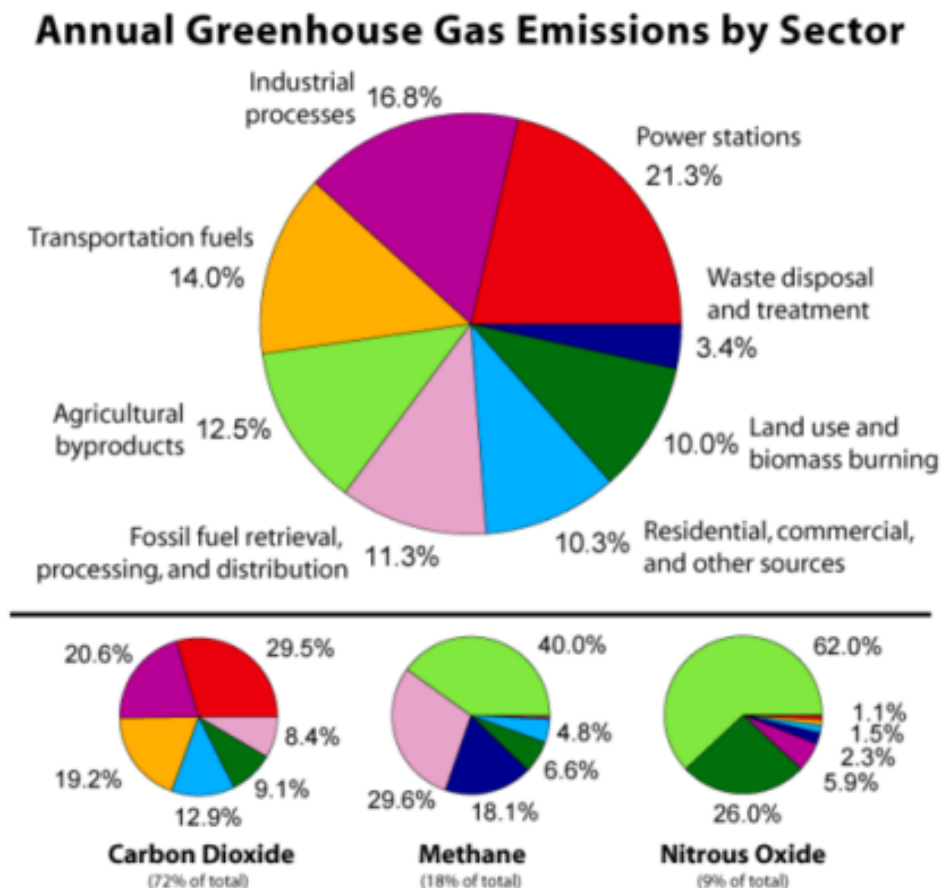
Process 3: What We Can Do About Living Sustainably

Carbon Footprint *Source: timeforchange.org*

Consider/discuss the following information

A carbon footprint is defined as:

The total amount of greenhouse gases produced to directly and indirectly support human activities, usually expressed in equivalent tons of carbon dioxide (CO₂). In other words: When you drive a car, the engine burns fuel which creates a certain amount of CO₂, depending on its fuel consumption and the driving distance. (CO₂ is the chemical symbol for carbon dioxide). When you heat your house with oil, gas or coal, then you also generate CO₂. Even if you heat your house with electricity, the generation of the electrical power may also have emitted a certain amount of CO₂. When you buy food and goods, the production of the food and goods also emitted some quantities of CO₂. Your carbon footprint is the sum of all emissions of CO₂ (carbon dioxide), which were induced by your activities in a given time frame. Usually a carbon footprint is calculated for the time period of a year.



Ecological Overshoot: What is it?

Earth Overshoot Day is the annual marker of when we begin living beyond our means in a given year. While only a rough estimate of time and resource trends, Earth Overshoot Day is as close as science can be to measuring the gap between our demand for ecological resources and services, and how much the planet can provide. In 2015, Earth Overshoot Day was on August 13. In 2016, Earth Overshoot Day was on August 8. In 2017, Earth Overshoot Day was on August 2.

<https://youtu.be/zMvpAz38qSo>

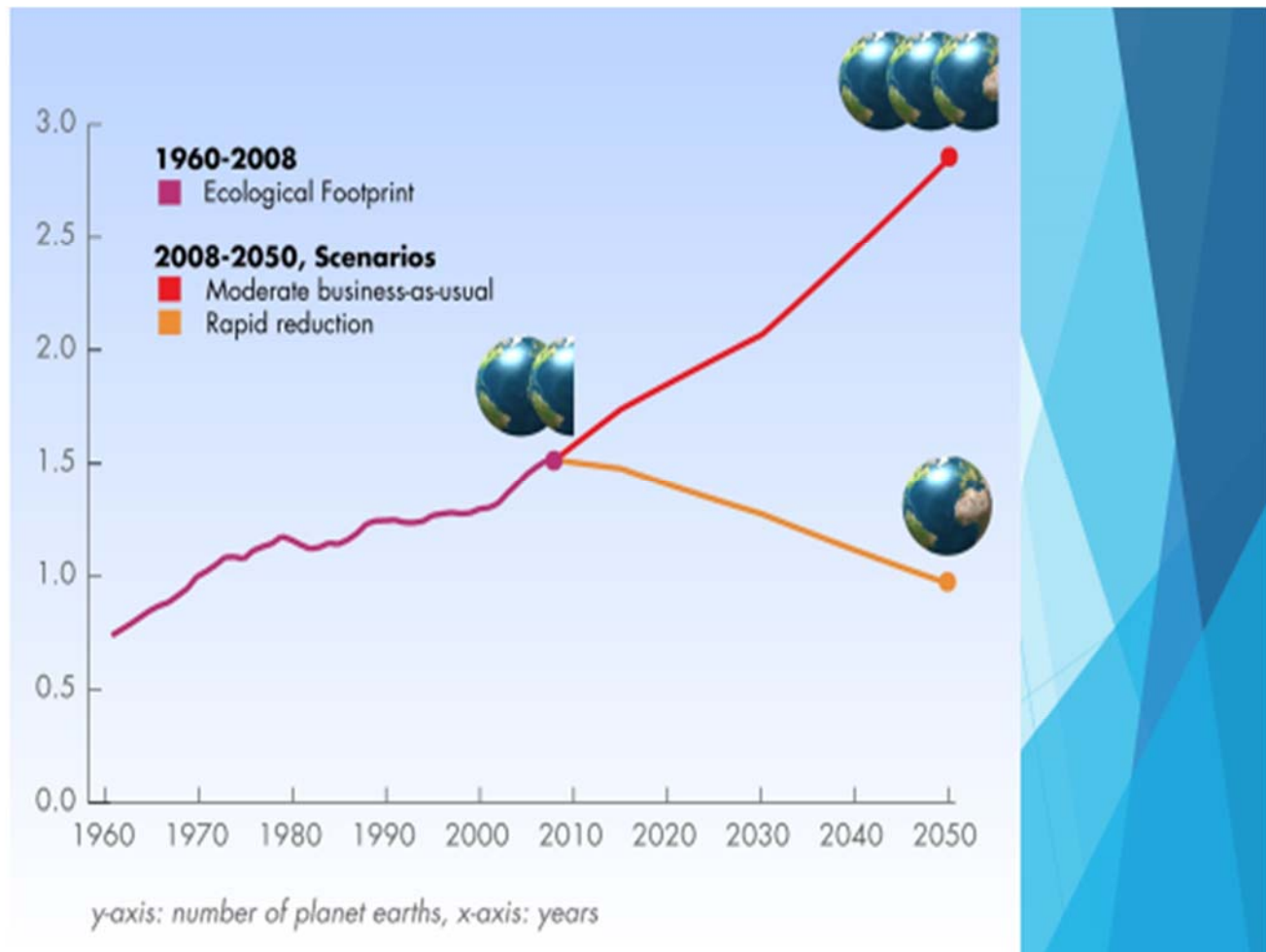
(Optional online resource)

Overshoot Day and Planets Required for Ecological Footprint (2008)

While this chart is a few years old, it is instructive in terms of the countries where most sisters in the Atlantic-Midwest and Central Pacific provinces live. It compares our carbon footprint to a balanced budget and indicates when Earth would have spent her annual budget if all on Earth lived like the people in the particular country. Note the number of Earths required to make up the annual deficit.

▶ <u>Balanced Budget</u>	<u>Deficit Budget</u>
▶ USA March 21	4.56 Earths
▶ Canada April 17	3.41 Earths
▶ UK May 22	2.57 Earths
▶ Chile September 8	1.45 Earths
▶ Thailand December 20	1.03 Earths

Number of Earths Needed to Support Our Corporate (All of Earth) Ecological Footprint



Source: http://www.footprintnetwork.org/en/index.php/GFN/page/world_footprint/.

Calculate Your Carbon Footprint:

(Optional) Carbon Footprint Calculator for individuals or households: available as online resource
<http://www.nature.org/greenliving/carboncalculator/>

Reduce your carbon footprint:

Begin by exploring and practicing the 4 Rs. The first R flows from our SSND documents:

REVERENCE for all creation as a sacred revelation of God. The other three Rs are Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. It is important to note that they are defined as three distinct actions and that they are listed in priority order.

► **REDUCE:**

Keeping purchases to a minimum is an important way of reducing the toll on the Earth's resources. Lowering consumption is the key to the concept of reducing, which can apply to physical objects as well as natural resources, such as gas, electricity and water. Not to be confused with reusing or recycling, reducing means lowering or eradicating use from the start. Cutting back on unnecessary purchases or on the consumption of meat or foods not locally or sustainably produced lowers the rate at which materials are used, but also effectively lowers the energy, gas and transportation costs that are accrued when an item is made and sold. The term “reduce” clearly applies to lifestyle.

► **REUSE/REPURPOSE:**

"Reuse" is a broad term that combines reusing materials and using items that have reusable qualities. Paper plates are an example of a nonreusable product. Cutlery that can be reused prevents waste at the landfill, but it also lowers the amount of energy needed to manufacture new products. Less pollution results and more natural resources are left intact. Consider the possibilities of an item before discarding it, as it might be reused toward a different purpose than originally intended. An old shirt may become a car rag. Plastic bags may be woven into sleeping mats for the homeless. Though reuse is different from reducing use, when an item is reused, consumption is reduced as a by-product.

► **RECYCLE:**

The term "recycle" refers to the process in which an item or its components are used to create something new. Plastic bottles are recycled and made into carpet, pathways and benches. Glass and aluminum are other commonly recycled materials. Recycling is technically a form of reusing, but it refers more specifically to items that are discarded and broken down into their raw materials. Recycling companies convert the original item and then sell the now-usable material. Some companies purchase secondhand material and use it to manufacture a new product, which is another form of recycling. Of course, recycling costs both money and resources that reducing and reusing don't.

Putting It All Together

Combined, reverence, reduce, reuse and recycle form a complete circle that can preserve natural resources; reduce waste, energy consumption and pollutants; and protect the planet.

One way of putting it together is to explore your current living situation to determine concrete options for living sustainably. In preparation for completing the grid below, examine the resource *Earth as Our Home* (<http://bit.ly/eaoh-booklet>) and its accompanying prayer service, *Pilgrimage of Blessing* (http://bit.ly/eaoh_prayer_service) and pray and reflect on its contents. You may also want to refer to the Integrity of Creation Survey and Pledge Form on living sustainably (<http://bit.ly/survey-pledge-form>), which was previously shared with you. Both of these are available as online resources.

The grid on the next page refers to where you live. You might want also to add where and how you travel for work or for pleasure.

Use the grid for personal reflection and response and then as a basis for communal discussion and commitment.

ACTION COMMITMENT: I/we commit myself/ourselves to . . .

Closing

Repeat your opening hymn or choose another.

You are encouraged to share your commitment with others.

Living Simply, Responsibly and Sustainably

Consider physical objects, natural resources (gas/electricity/ water/chemicals),
food (production/transportation/packaging)

REVERENCE ALL CREATION AS A SACRED REVELATION OF GOD

ROOM	REDUCE	REUSE/REPURPOSE	RECYCLE
Living Room/Community Room		Example: Donate magazines to a hospital	
Kitchen	Example: Reduce consumption of meat		Example: papers, plastic bags, glass
Dining Room	Example: replace paper napkins with cloth ones		
Laundry			
Bedroom/Bathroom		Example: Take reusable clothing to a swap shop	
Other			Example: Check local resources for recycling unusable clothing or other textile materials

Online resources for “Introduction to Sustainability”

These resources are available at <http://int.ssnd.org/sustainability-resources>

Song at the Center – Marty Haugen*: https://youtu.be/_v785Eau45I (YouTube) or http://bit.ly/song_center_pp (PowerPoint)

Mystery – performed by Paul Winter; composed by Jeremy Geffen*: http://bit.ly/ioc_mystery

Morning Has Broken – composed by Eleanor Farjeon, performed by Cat Stevens: http://bit.ly/ioc_morning

This is What Global Warming Looks Like – video from the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)*: http://bit.ly/ioc_warming

Earth as Our Home and its accompanying prayer service, *Pilgrimage of Blessing* – A project of Catholic Sisters for a Healthy Earth*: <http://bit.ly/eaoh-booklet> and http://bit.ly/eaoh_prayer_service

Carbon Footprint Calculator – <http://www.nature.org/greenliving/carboncalculator/>

Earth Overshoot Day: <https://youtu.be/zMvpAz38qSo>

Integrity of Creation Survey and Pledge Form: <http://bit.ly/survey-pledge-form>

Sustainability Easily Explained (4 minutes): http://bit.ly/ioc_sustainability_explained

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Other Resources

Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home – Pope Francis' Encyclical on the Environment: http://bit.ly/ioc_laudato-si

NCR Readers' Guide for *Laudato Si'* by Father Thomas Reece: <http://ncrnews.org/documents/NCR%20Readers%20guide.pdf>

Laudato Si' Discussion Guide from USCCB: http://bit.ly/ioc_usccb_discussion_guide

Resources from the July 2015 Shalom Seminar:

S. Mary Maher's address - <http://bit.ly/address-shalom-2015>

Shalom Focus & Commitments - <http://bit.ly/shalom-focus-15-18>

Global Warming 101 – video from National Geographic: http://bit.ly/ioc_warming101

LCWR – Resolutions to Action – excellent information with suggested actions on a variety of ecological topics – www.lcwr.org/social-justice – click on Resolutions to Action in column on left

St. Francis Pledge to Care for Creation and the Poor (and other resources): www.CatholicClimateCovenant.org – The pledge is here: <http://www.catholicclimatecovenant.org/pledge>

What Was Once the Largest Shopping Center in Northern Ohio Was Built Where There Had Been a Pond I Used to Visit Every Summer Afternoon, copyright by Mary Oliver from *Why I Wake Early*

If you know of other resources, please send the information to communications@ssnd.org so they can be shared.