

Laudato Si in Action

Buy Nothing: good for the neighborhood *and* the planet

Ever look around your house and realize you have too much stuff? We did. And while the instinct is to make a run to Goodwill or St. Vincent de Paul store, there is an alternative. In your neighborhood, there is most likely a ["Buy Nothing" group on Facebook](#) where neighbors offer up items they wish to rid themselves of, so other neighbors can pick them up from your front porch or other agreed upon location. (Alternately, you can do something close to this which is to put the item out on your parking strip with a "FREE" sign attached to it. This works better for larger items and when the weather is better.)

Not only is this a great way to recycle items you no longer want, but rather than sending the goods to some outfit that you hope can put them to good use, you create a direct connection with someone who most definitely wants your item and will put it to good use -- instantly. Plus, it's a lovely way to connect to your community one on one, properly distanced, of course, and in most cases contactless and without you getting in your car. (This is not to say, that donating to St Vincent de Paul or Goodwill is not also a viable option; it still is, but it's a bit less personal.)

This past weekend, we cleaned house -- quite literally, and in the process sent an office chair, several storage bins, a mop, a drill, children's books and games, a mirror, a cooler, two cast iron frying pans, a lamp, and a keyboard, all in a matter of a couple of days, and in some cases, minutes to happy neighbors. And last week, we happily rehomed a set of bunk beds and an espresso maker. We also put a desk out on our parking strip when no takers were interested online and a couple passing by in a car scooped it up in less than an hour.

Pope Francis talks about wasteful consumerism and our throwaway culture tying it back to the very basis of Christianity in [Laudato Si](#):

Christian spirituality proposes an alternative understanding of the quality of life, and encourages a prophetic and contemplative lifestyle, one capable of deep enjoyment free of the obsession with consumption. We need to take up an ancient lesson, found in different religious traditions and also in the Bible. It is the conviction that "less is more". A constant flood of new consumer goods can baffle the heart and prevent us from cherishing each thing and each moment.

Do you feel burdened by your possessions? Maybe now is the time to let some stuff go and further the cause of "buy nothing" or at least "buy less".

Working together, we can help take care of our common home.

Suzanna and Paul Litwin