



Adapted by the
Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet



PARTICIPANT GUIDE

simple living

God's Vision of Abundant Life

2023 EARTH DAY PROGRAM



simple living: God's Vision of Abundant Life

2023 EARTH DAY PARTICIPANT PROGRAM GUIDE

Video (11 MINUTES) ****Please watch before this program!****

Please watch this video directly on [YouTube](#) or [download](#) the video to your computer. Captions can be auto-generated in Japanese and Spanish.

Welcome and Opening Prayer

OPENING PRAYER

Vision of Wholeness

God of grace,
creator of a world of plenty,
the heavens declare your glory
and the earth your generosity.
In love, you created us
and in your likeness, you made us
to be partners in creation.
In greed, we have turned away
and have marred your image in us
to fashion a fragmented world.

Renew in us your vision of wholeness,
that the rich may restore wealth to the poor
and the poor share blessings with the rich.
Revive in us a passion for justice,
that the tyranny of profit be quelled
and whispers of freedom find voice.
Refresh in us our sense of calling,
that we may follow Christ in serving others
and live simply with those who simply live.

Amen.

By [Annabel Shilson-Thomas/CAFOD](#) (Used with permission)



Readings

READING #1

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. (Mt 5:3-12).

A thief comes only to steal and slaughter and destroy;

I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly. (John 10:10)

READING #2:

Towards a new lifestyle, passages from [*Laudato Si'*](#)

A change in lifestyle could bring healthy pressure to bear on those who wield political, economic and social power. This is what consumer movements accomplish by boycotting certain products. They prove successful in changing the way businesses operate, forcing them to consider their environmental footprint and their patterns of production. When social pressure affects their earnings, businesses clearly have to find ways to produce differently. This shows us the great need for a sense of social responsibility on the part of consumers. "Purchasing is always a moral—and not simply economic—act." Today, in a word, "the issue of environmental degradation challenges us to examine our lifestyle." (#206) ... We are always capable of going out of ourselves towards the other. Unless we do this, other creatures will not be recognized for their true worth; we are unconcerned about caring for things for the sake of others; we fail to set limits on ourselves in order to avoid the suffering of others or the deterioration of our surroundings. Disinterested concern for others, and the rejection of every form of self-centeredness and self-absorption, are essential if we truly wish to care for our brothers and sisters and for the natural environment. These attitudes also attune us to the moral imperative of assessing the impact of our every action and personal decision on the world around us. If we can overcome individualism, we will truly be able to develop a different lifestyle and bring about significant changes in society. (#208)

READING #3

"The Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles is grounded in the idea of sufficiency and promoting sobriety in the use of resources and energy. Actions could include reducing waste and recycling, adopting sustainable dietary habits (opting for a more plant-based diet and reducing meat consumption), greater use of public transport, active mobility (walking, cycling), and avoiding single use items (e.g., plastic, etc.)." ([Laudato Si' Action Platform's Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles Goal](#))

READING #4

These are some responses to a survey conducted by *Salt Magazine*:

"The biggest incentive for living a simpler lifestyle is...

- Live simply so others may simply live
- To contribute to the equality of people by not using more than one's fair share of the Earth's resources
- Because of the poor
- Simplifying gives life meaning and value



- Simplifying makes one feel less rushed
- Simplifying allows one to live as Jesus lived
- Becoming less “thing”-centered frees people to focus on relationships
- Learning to put others first; learning to prioritize - learning to become less selfish
- Helping the environment
- Contributing to your own health by gaining a longer and better life.”

from “Simple Living Leads to Spiritual Growth: A Catholic Volunteer Network Archives Resource”

Small Group Discussion (25 MINUTES)

1. How has the secular understanding of “abundant living” (i.e., accumulation of wealth, abundant material possessions, consumerism, throwaway society) impacted our common home and our relationship with God?
2. What is a faithful understanding of “God’s vision of abundant living”?
3. How would your life and the life of your community change if you/your community adopted a simpler lifestyle and promoted a faithful vision of abundant living on Earth?
4. What is your biggest incentive for living a simpler lifestyle? What is your biggest obstacle?

Suggested Actions (15 MINUTES)

CREATING A LIVING SIMPLY ACTION PLAN

The following pages contain some ideas¹ to get you and your community started on living simply. This is not an exhaustive list, and you are encouraged to add your own ideas. Remember, you can start small and build upon your efforts.

There are two columns after each suggested action to choose from: one for individual/family action and one for community (parish, school, etc.) action. Some of the suggested actions are more individual/family actions and some are more appropriate for a community.

1. **Your individual/family actions:** From the list, choose at least one activity from the small steps section and one activity from the bigger steps section that you/your family can commit to do in the coming months (or write-in your own). Write your commitment at the end of the worksheet.
2. **Community action discussion:** Which actions on the list did you choose for possible “community action”? As a group, discuss at least one simple living action your parish, school or religious community could commit to do in the coming months. How could you and your community get these done? Write your proposed action at the end of the worksheet.

¹ Some of these ideas come from CAFOD’s [LiveSimply campaign](#).



Abundant Living Worksheet²

A list with ideas for living simply, sustainably and in solidarity as an individual, a family and community. Use the links for more information.

SMALL STEPS

Know your carbon footprint and take steps to reduce it. You can calculate your carbon footprint with the [carbon footprint calculator](#) from the EPA or the [Lifestyle Calculator](#) from the United Nations.

	Individual/ Family	Community
Have at least one meat-free day every week. (Check out resources from the Sisters of Mercy and Meatless Mondays .)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Find items on the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet's Recommended Sustainable Products webpage that you can swap out for less sustainable ones.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commit to buy nothing "new to you" (repurpose, borrow, thrift, use neighborhood "Buy Nothing" groups , etc.).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Challenge yourself, your family and your community to walk, cycle or use public transportation everywhere you can to benefit your mind, body and soul.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Make your family and community meetings and events planet-friendly :		
• Choose FairTrade tea, coffee and chocolate.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Use real dinnerware	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Do the cleaning and washing up with environmentally friendly products.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Reduce the amount of paper you print for Mass, events and meetings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

[Reduce your use of energy](#) in your facilities and at home:

² NOTE: www.GodsPlanet.us is a website created to accompany the U.S. Catholic community as it embarks on this seven-year sustainability journey and where you will find lots of resources and information. By completing this worksheet, you have created the action plan for the Sustainable Lifestyles goal of the Laudato Si' Action Platform!



	Individual/ Family	Community
• Use LED light bulbs and turn them off when they're not needed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Adjust your thermostat to 68°F or lower in the winter and 78°F or higher in the summer.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Turn off electronics when not in use.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Encourage people to walk to Mass and meetings or to carpool (display bus or train information in the parish).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Check that you are recycling and composting as efficiently as possible.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Challenge yourself to a personal, family or group “unplugged” day—everyone can pledge to live without their tablets, phone, TV or radio. Instead head outside, visit a park, enjoy each other’s company and God’s creation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Make time for silence and prayer in your day. Consider using the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet’s Earth Month Prayer Journal .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

BIGGER STEPS

	Individual/ Family	Community
Offset your carbon footprint by supporting our Trees for Tacna program that plants trees at Fe y Alegría School in Tacna, Peru.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Follow our congregation’s work and commit to act with our international Sisters of St Joseph as we participate through our CSJ UN-NGO in the International Negotiating Committee of the UN Plastic Pollution Treaty.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Join the Encounter Campaign to advocate for just energy and climate policies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enroll in the Laudato Si’ Action Platform as an individual/family or as a community (parish, school, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

YOUR IDEAS

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YOUR SIMPLE LIVING COMMITMENTS

After you have read and discussed the preceding list, what will you and your community commit to do? Write your commitments of how you will live simply, sustainably and in solidarity with God’s creation and how your community might live more simply and sustainably. Take the worksheet home and let it help you get started in your journey to a simpler and more “abundant life.”

Individual/family commitment:

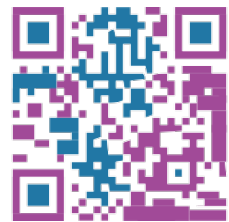
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Possible³ community (parish, school, religious order, etc.) commitment:

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WANT TO SHARE YOUR COMMITMENTS WITH CATHOLIC CLIMATE COVENANT?

You are invited to submit your “Simple Living Commitments” both as individuals/families and as a community using [Catholic Climate Covenant’s online commitment form](#) or scan the QR code. CCC would love to know of your commitments and share the ideas and actions as possible stories on [www.GodsPlanet.us](#). You can also take a photo of your group gathered or in action and email it to CCC with your commitment(s) with the words “Simple Living Commitments” in the subject line to info@catholicclimatecovenant.org, and we can share the photo(s) on social media.



³ We understand that you may need to have further discussions and planning meetings to decide on your community commitment(s).



Closing Prayer

Creator God,
As we feast our eyes on autumn reds and yellows,
we sense your creative power.
As we marvel at the uniqueness of each winter flake,
we rejoice that you know us each by name.
As we hear the songs of birds of spring,
we yearn to sing your praises.
As we breathe the delicious scents of summer flowers,
our souls rest in your love.

Forgiving God,
We have not lived out our responsibility to be
faithful stewards of creation.
For this, we seek your pardon.
Our over-consumption has impacted the poorest
members of our human family most of all.
For this, we ask your mercy.
Our actions have endangered both the lives of our
children today as well as those yet to be born.
For this, we seek your forgiveness.

Living God,
As we meet you in nature,
inspire us to see anew our place in the web of life.
In our daily lives,
help us to make daily choices that reflect global solidarity.
As we reflect on the teaching of our faith,
equip us to advocate for laws and policies that
reflect your call to faithful stewardship.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives
and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God for ever and ever. Amen.

From USCCB handout for [World Day of Peace 2010](#)



For more information:
info@catholicclimatecovenant.org



csjcarondelet.org/earth