**WAYS OF TENDING AND NURTURING OUR EARTH**

(As suggested & compiled by Women In Conversation

Of Newman Hall/Holy Spirit Parish and beyond!)

February 2022

**WHAT AN INDIVIDUAL CAN DO:**

***At home, in general -***

 Re-use plastic bags whenever possible, wash used ones

Install solar panels

Drive a hybrid car, if able to purchase one

Install sensor lights for exterior house lighting

Use solar garden lamp posts if possible

**Use long-lasting light bulbs.** (Energy efficient light bulbs reduce greenhouse gas emissions.)

Flip the light switch off when leaving the room

**Use** non-toxic chemicals so that they don’t get into waterways

Turn off faucet while washing face, brushing teeth, etc.

Recycle all trash into correct containers

***When laundering -***

Combine clothing in loads more liberally to save water

Use "Tru Earth Eco Strips" instead of plastic bottles of washing detergent.

Convert washing machine and dry from gas to electric

***In the kitchen specifically –***

 Re-use plastic produce bags

 Forego using paper towels for floor spills; use a dedicated floor sponge

 Use cloth bowl covers for left-overs to reduce use of plastic wrap

 Reduce or eliminate beef in the diet (for inspiration, read “Buffalo for the

 Broken Heart,” by Dan O’Brien)

 Separate food waste from other garbage, add to compost for garden or bin

IMPORTANT WEBSITE ABOUT THIS: [California tackles food waste with largest recycling program in US | California | The Guardian](https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2021/dec/09/california-food-waste-recycling-program-us)

***When clothes shopping –***

 Buy from thrift or consignment stores

 buy only articles made of natural fibers: cotton, linen, wool, silk.

(rayon & microfiber are not natural. Cloth "made from bamboo" is usually rayon; an instance of industry turning a natural material into a synthetic!)

***When grocery shopping –***

 Re-use plastic produce bags or use net bags

Buy yogurt in large containers (lasts beyond expiration date)

 (for individual sizes, invest in small re-usable containers)

Learn how to make smart seafood choices at [www.fishwatch.gov](http://www.fishwatch.gov/).

Buy less plastic and bring a reusable shopping bag

***When shopping, in general –***

Give your business to the local small business, rather than the big companies with power and control

Some specific guides to shopping consciously:

Ethical/Green shopping guides

Clothing, household goods, food, etc.:

<https://www.changetheworldbyhowyoushop.com/kitchen>

<https://www.thehonestconsumer.com/>

<https://betterworldshopper.org/>

<https://www.fairtradeamerica.org/shop-fairtrade/fairtrade-products/>

<https://www.thegoodtrade.com/features/online-ethical-marketplaces>

Clothing only:

<http://www.birds-of-a-thread.com/ethical-womens-clothing>

UK and elsewhere:

<https://thegoodshoppingguide.com/>

Articles with links:

<https://flygrn.com/blog/sustainability-ethical-shopping-apps>

<https://goodonyou.eco/most-ethical-and-sustainable-clothing-brands-from-us-and-canada/>

Websites with links to many fair-trade and eco/green clothing brands:

<https://goodonyou.eco/>

<https://earthhero.com/>

Individual companies to try:

Zero Waste Cartel   [https://zerowastecartel.com/](https://na01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fzerowastecartel.com%2F&data=04%7C01%7C%7C4107da7f214d489f457508d9e08d1203%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C637787718769825868%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=XZC1PIoqSmS304TDSjhCM8hOgl5UWaMwzWZyqtVSBg8%3D&reserved=0)

Ten Thousand Villages    [https://www.tenthousandvillages.com/](https://na01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.tenthousandvillages.com%2F&data=04%7C01%7C%7C4107da7f214d489f457508d9e08d1203%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C637787718769982103%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=2cV%2F0TpdPxHQzFJbSufS%2FLBwa1gsRWX86EYkqMx5rgM%3D&reserved=0)

Additional local and great resource:

The Ecology Center in Berkeley ([https://ecologycenter.org/store/](https://na01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fecologycenter.org%2Fstore%2F&data=04%7C01%7C%7C4107da7f214d489f457508d9e08d1203%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C637787718769825868%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=uopznPn4qAnuWoa05i1icMMNNWRiMBLnJo%2FvrYKwCSc%3D&reserved=0) (Both of things to buy and for info and connection on this journey to save our earth.)

***When eating at a restaurant –***

 Bring your own container for leftovers

***When doing errands –***

 Walk or bike, if possible, to your destination to reduce use of fossil fuel

 Use public transportation when possible, if not walking

***In the garden –***

 Spread coffee grounds and eggshells to feed lemon tree, etc.

 Plant drought tolerant native plants to attract birds & butterflies

 (East Bay Wilds Native Plants Nursery)

 Water plants from water caught in small buckets at sinks & shower

 Save vegetable cooking water for the garden

***For continuing appreciation of and connection to the Earth’s gifts –***

 Walk for enjoyment

Take close-up photos of flowers – enlarge them for framing and gifting

Learn about trees (and wildflowers & birds & insects) by:

 Sitting still in Nature, observing

 Webinars, some suggestions:

The two Yale School of Forest Forum webinar offerings (Links to recordings on the title)

"[Celebrating Old Growth](https://orionmagazine.org/2021/10/old-growth-video/?mc_cid=21614ccd7d&mc_eid=b2a016407e): *A Conversation with Robin Wall Kimmerer, Robert Macfarlane, and David Haskell,”* September 18, 2021

 [“On Trees”](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5CJeannie%5CAppData%5CLocal%5CPackages%5Cmicrosoft.windowscommunicationsapps_8wekyb3d8bbwe%5CLocalState%5CFiles%5CS0%5C1634%5CAttachments%5CTrees%2C%20forests%2C%20relatedness%2C%20that%E2%80%99s%20where%20I%E2%80%99m%20intentionally%20taking%20up%20%20%20In%20Laudato%20Si%2C%20Pope%20Francis%20writes%20that%20the%20ecological%20conversion%20we%20are%20called%20to%20%20) *A Conversation with Peter Wohlleben, Jessica J. Lee, and*

*Sumana Roy.* January 11, 2022

Reading - some suggestions:

Robin Wall Kimmerer’s *Braiding Sweetgrass*; *Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants*

*Old Growth*: some of the best writing about trees from *Orion* magazine. (2021)

Suzanne Simard’s *Finding the Mother Tree.*

 Al Gore’s “*The Inconvenient Truth”*

Hiking - some suggestions:

 Tilden Park (Berkeley), Fitzgerald Park (near Half Moon Bay)

 Trails above Montero and Pacifica

 Point Lobos (near Carmel)

 Marin Headlands

 Muir Woods

 Joaquin Miller Park

 One’s neighborhood!

 Drawing, painting, sculpting, creating art from natural materials

***With investments –***

 Study your investments and make changes to socially responsible stocks and funds.

***As a grounding principle (literally and figuratively) –***

“… the best way to care for our earth, is to care for each other! By caring for and staying in touch with others, it frees up the energy taken by worry, and perhaps loneliness, so that we can now use that energy to return loving care to our earth. Planting or tending gardens refreshes the soul of all who notice the beauty. It refreshes the gardener and helps the bees and pollinators to find diverse plants/food, pollinating our crops, and then feeding us! The circle is indeed a circle, as the "win: win" of helping, being helped, and back to the ability to help some more. continues.

So, when you don't feel like you have the bandwidth for much more, go dig in a garden, or pull weeds for someone who finds it difficult to kneel to do

that. Being Catholics, we have lots of practice with kneeling!” (Marie Retherford)

**WHAT A GROUP CAN DO:**

***To impact Nature –***

Make a specific plan to plant trees

Collectively keep a log of “carbon footprint”  by utilizing a Footprint Calculator that some organizations utilize: Cool Climate Network - <https://coolclimate.berkeley.edu/calculator>.  (Or as WIC can design our own way to track our carbon footprints.)

Volunteer for cleanups in the community

***To invest responsibly -***

A parish, for example, could study their investments and make changes to socially responsible stocks and funds.

In a sweeping pastoral, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines called for church institutions to press their banks to phase out fossil fuel holdings and to deny donations with ties to the fossil fuel and extractive industries.

***To engage in Collective Activism,*** some current suggestions for safe and at-home participation:

a) **California Environmental Justice Alliance**: to work for clean air in the Richmond area, especially that affecting children and families of color with respiratory problems.

b)   **Climate Change Lobby**:  To support congressional legislation for price carbon

c)   **Third Act—(for people over 60)—“making good trouble”**- works on different campaigns to protect democracy by supporting “voter rights"

d)   **Elder Climate Action**: This is a way to stay active by using our handy cell phones!  Quick, easy, and effective!

e)   **California Food Policy Advocates**:—To advocate for policies to support children and families to eliminate bureaucratic and legal obstacles so they may access healthy and fresh foods for schools and homes.

f)   **Far🕊mworkers Union**— To support policies to protect farmworkers from toxic chemicals and poor working conditions as they work to bring food to our tables.

***To pay attention to how and where we spend our money*.** A suggestion:

Create a guide to earth-friendly, sustainable, fair-trade, ethical brands and websites for products that don’t pollute or create other problems.

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