

Simple Living at St. Joseph

World Clutter

December 2003



Should the whole world
live like me?

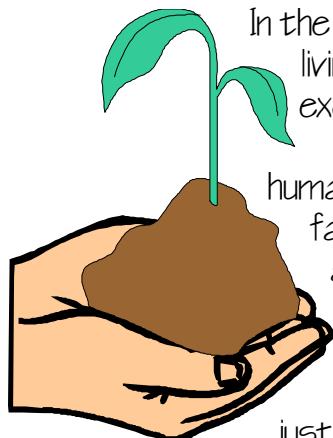
Does my community support living simply?
Do people have a right to luxurious lives? Simple lives?
What can I do to relieve
world clutter?

As consumers, believers can promote social justice or injustice. In an affluent culture that suggests that what we have defines who we are, we can live more simply. When we purchase goods and services, we can choose to support companies that defend human life, treat workers fairly, protect creation, and respect other basic moral values at home and abroad. We can also make conscious efforts to consume less...

As citizens in the world's leading democracy, Catholics in the United States have special responsibilities to protect human life and dignity and to stand with those who are poor and vulnerable.

— U.S. Catholic Bishops, 1998

We must be the change we wish to see in the world. -M.K. Gandhi



In the final analysis, accepting and living by sufficiency rather than excess offers a return to what is, culturally speaking, the human home: the ancient order of family, community, good work and good life; to a reverence for excellence of craftsmanship; to a true materialism that does not just care about things but cares for them; to communities worth spending a lifetime in. —Alan Thein Durning



In order to live, people consume natural resources. This is not bad if we don't take more than the Earth has to offer. Are we taking more than we should? The Ecological Footprint provides the most complete comparison of natural resources demand and supply available.

A population's Ecological Footprint is the biologically productive area (land) needed to produce the resources used and absorb the waste generated by that population.

It is calculated based on the following factors:

- ◆ Food consumption
- ◆ Goods consumed and discarded
- ◆ Living space and utility use
- ◆ Transportation

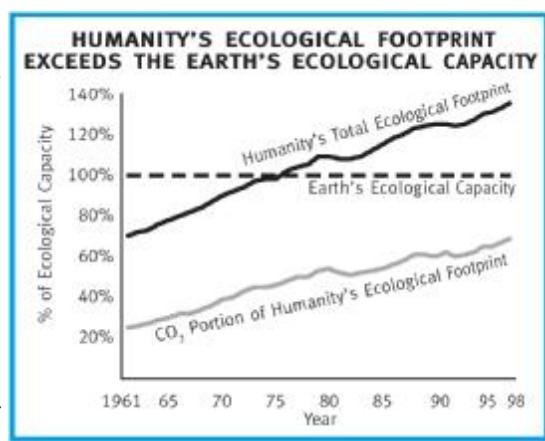


The average world citizen has an Ecological Footprint of 2.9 global hectares (7.1 acres), the average German's is 6.0 global hectares (15 acres), and the average American's is 12.5 global hectares (31 acres).

There are only 2.1 global hectares (5.3 acres) of biologically productive space available per person on the Earth.

Information provided by Redefining Progress, a nonprofit organization

that develops policies and tools that reorient the economy to value people and nature first. www.redefiningprogress.org, 1904 Franklin Street 6th Floor, Oakland.



Calculate your ecological footprint at
www.stewardshipparish.org/footprint

You have heard it said

that because of hunger in Third World countries
we should not overeat.

But I say unto you
that the abuse of your body, mind, and soul
is never justified.

You have heard it said
conserve for the sake of crisis
because of limited amounts available to us.

But I say to you
the only wise use
is that which brings glory to God.

Let not your hearts be troubled by this kingdom
but let your bodies and energies be dedicated
in service to God and man.

Surely you will find the future kingdom
already being fulfilled in your life.

Martin Penner, Recife, Brazil

By Paul S. Wilson

*(with gratitude to singer/songwriter
Fred Small, from whose concert
introduction to his song
"Simple Living"
this is
taken)*

**For a long time I had a bumper sticker on my car.
"Live Simply So That Others May Simply Live," it said.**

I read it, and read it, and read it.

**Finally, last month,
I sold the car.**

Really, it's been great.

**There are some things
I just can't do any more.**

**Like back to back meetings on
opposite sides of town.**



Grateful for the gift of creation...

Catholics and men and women of good will in every walk of life to consider with us the moral issues raised by the environmental crisis.... These are matters of powerful urgency and major consequence. They constitute an exceptional call to conversion. As individuals, as institutions, as a people, we need a change of heart to preserve and protect the planet for our children and for generations yet unborn.

— U.S. Catholic Bishops, 1992



The amount of energy used by one American is equivalent to that used by:

- ◊ 3 Germans
- ◊ 6 Mexicans
- ◊ 14 Chinese
- ◊ 38 Indians
- ◊ 168 Bangladeshi

When they had had their fill, he said to his disciples, "Gather the fragments left over, so that nothing will be wasted."

John 6:12



The bright sun shines unblinkingly.
Wind sweeps the land. No rain.
Old people shake their heads.
Little children and women move to the food camps. Already there are more than 200,000 in camps.
We all pray for rain.

In the towns and cities people stand in line. As sugar, cornmeal, flour, and oil decrease, tensions in the lines increase.
Lean years are upon us.

Teach us to care, O God,
In the Somali-Muslim way
Which does not hoard
Nor store for the future
But shares gladly
Regardless of how little.

*Bertha Beachy, Mogadiscio,
Somali Democratic Republic*



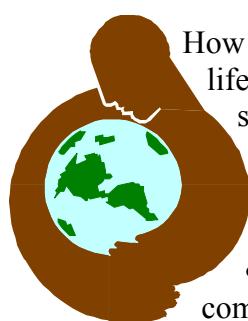
O God,

*We've wasted
we've complained
we've grumbled.
We've misused our resources
We've confused our needs
with our wants.*

*For these sins
Father, forgive us.
Help us
reset our priorities
according to Your will.
Amen.*

*Norma Johnson
Lobatse, Botswana*

Dec. 20-21 • What can I do to relieve world clutter?



How will I choose to simplify my own life? How will I choose to promote simplicity in my community?

- Reduce, reuse, recycle
- Healthy lifestyle: walk, bike, bus, BART and read
- Consider my world and community whenever I spend money.

- Pray with my family
- Buy only what I need for food, shelter, and clothing
- Commit to learning more about how my actions affect others.

As we ask the question, "how much is enough?" we are asking deep questions about the good life, about living in ways that reflect positive values, and about how to do our part to ensure a healthy future for our children. Leading a simpler, more abundant life calls for us to look at our core values. In fact, evaluating what we need and changing what we consume can be profoundly spiritual activities. More than likely, if you are a person of faith, you are putting the question of "how much is enough?" in the context of your own spirituality. And, chances are, you can make connections through your own faith to the concept of simpler living and caring for the environment.

The Center for a New American Dream
<http://www.newdream.org>



St. Joseph Community
Serving Alameda, CA
and surrounding areas

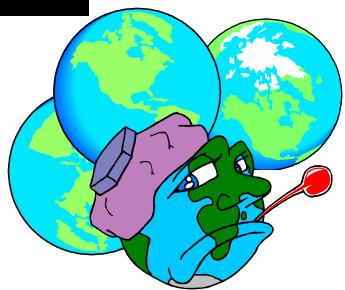


For more information about simple living at St. Joseph and available resources, see: www.stewardshipparish.org

Nov. 29-30 • Should the whole world live like me?

How does my living affect the earth?

- It would require four earths for everybody on the planet to live the lifestyle of North Americans.
- Percentage of the world's goods and services consumed by the world's richest 20%: **86%**; by the poorest 20%: **1.3%**.
- Am I aware of what I use and throw away?



Dec. 6-7 • Does my community support living simply?

Family • Friends • Business • Local, state, and federal government

- How do these parts of my community support me and others in living simply?
- How can I transform my community to encourage simplicity?

Dec. 13-14 • Do people have a right to luxurious lives?

Do people have a right to simple lives?

- Was birth in a manger simple life or substandard life?
- What defines a simple life: food, clothing, shelter, community?
- Do people have the right to food, clothing and shelter or merely the right for equal opportunities to attain these?
- Do people have equal opportunities to attain food, clothing and shelter?



**World prayers
from the *More
With Less
Cookbook*.**

**Statistics from *All-
Consuming
Passion* by the
New Road Map
Foundation and
Northwest
Environment
Watch, 1998.**

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