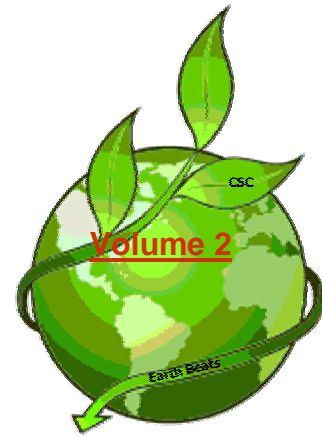


# EARTH BEATS

## Regional E & E Commission Newsletter, November 2008

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### Information/Reflection:

#### **Forms of Ritual and Symbols . . .**

A contemporary example of opening forms of ritual and symbol to include the ecological reality is the *Earth Mass*, which has been celebrated for the last two decades in October on the feast of St. Francis of Assisi at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City. Many local parishes across the country have been inspired to hold similar rituals.

References from the natural world underlie Christian ritual and symbols; for instance, the Christian liturgical cycle is set entirely within the larger rhythms of nature's seasons. We situate Christmas at the winter solstice; Easter is celebrated at the spring equinox and the renewal of life. At Eucharist we use bread and wine associated with harvest, thanksgiving and life-regenerating processes. Baptism uses water to welcome an individual into a community of faith.

**Taken from Religions Enter an Ecological Phase** by M. E. Tucker

**WWJD . . . ?** The Evangelical Christian community routinely asks: *What Would Jesus Do?* Recently a group of *The Evangelical Environmental Network* launched a campaign against gas-guzzling cars so WWJD has been expanded to include: *What Would Jesus Drive?*

#### **What on Earth Have We Been Doing?**

At our meeting on September 12 in the library at the Manor we:

. . . **reviewed** our goal as one of the Mission Groups in this region: To help educate, liberate and motivate towards preserving the earth and environment "for all generations";

. . . **questioned** ourselves, as Mission Groups around the congregation are doing: *How does this particular commission tie into the Mission of Holy Cross as educators for liberation?*

. . . **responded** by drawing up the following to help raise our awareness, become better informed to choose the actions that can be taken:

#### **A: The Environmental Cost of Bottled Water** [from "Tapped Out", in *Green Living*]

It's ironic! In many parts of the world there is no access to safe drinking water. Here in the United States clean, drinkable water flows straight from the tap, and yet Americans buy a staggering amount of bottled water . . . paying more than \$20 billion a year for it. Bottling water has major environmental consequences. Production of the 30 billion plastic bottles that entered the waste stream in 2006 used the equivalent of 17 million barrels of oil and created 2.5 million tons of carbon dioxide. Three gallons of water were wasted for every gallon bottled. We pay .002 cents per gallon for municipal water which makes bottled water 1,000 times more expensive.

**question:** *In my local house, in my bonded group, in my work place, am I still using bottled water? Why?*

**action:** Find other ways to have access to safe drinking water. If there are questions, search the internet [see *The Beat Goes On* section below] Continue our commitment to saving trees and oil by using \*non-plastic and non-paper water containers, plates, napkins . . .  
\*Remembering to bring along the cloth supermarket bags is getting a bit easier, probably.

### **B: Conserving Electricity for a Cleaner Environment**

It's a question of light bulbs and power strips. Many of us have power strips around the house. By turning off these power strips we can save money and help create a cleaner environment.

**questions and actions:** *How do we go about breaking the habit of leaving computers on 24/7 ?* Power strips help the "hooked on to a gazillion cables" scenario! Please share ideas that help you change your habits . . . We will publish them in the next EARTH BEATS!

*Do we really need electrically wired clocks?* What about changing them for battery run clocks? They're cheaper and, when there's a power outage we'll know how long the power was off!

*In my community, house, how many energy saving light bulbs are we using?*

### **The Beat Goes On**

- Check [www.holycrossjustice.org](http://www.holycrossjustice.org) home page: *Climate Change* for resources
- Check [org/climate411/category/green-living/drinking water](http://org/climate411/category/green-living/drinking%20water)
- View the film "FLOW," an award-winning documentary investigation into what experts label the most important political and environmental issue of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century - *The World Water Crises*.
- "The Story of Stuff" by Annie Leonard (20 minutes) can be viewed online at [www.storyofstuff.com](http://www.storyofstuff.com)
- Networking reminder: GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE has been chosen as the broad congregational umbrella under which the regions of Peru, Haiti, Canada and the United States educate and call one another to action. As educators for liberation, we make this commitment in collaboration with the Holy Cross International Justice Office and the other branches of the Holy Cross Family.
- *If you and your community are networking with other environmentalists would you tell us how that is going?*

### **What else can we do to help end the climate crisis and save \$:**

. . . turn out room lights and unplug chargers when not in use. Enable energy-saving modes on your computers.

. . . drink tap water, not bottled water. If you want a higher quality of water, install a water purifier on your faucet.

. . . use recycled paper; print on both sides. Even better, ask: How much has to really be put to paper? *We are committed to using one sheet, both sides, for these Newsletters.*

***"You will contribute to preparing the world for better times than ours"***

*[Basile Moreau]*