



Ideas for reflection & worship

Suggestions to include in your
livesimply award parish plan



“God has made the earth and all that it contains for all to share.”

Populorum Progressio

Introduction

This sheet suggests ways of enhancing the spiritual life of the parish or community with a focus on *livesimply* principles inspired by the papal letter *Populorum Progressio*.

"God has made the earth and all that it contains for all to share."
Populorum Progressio, Pope Paul VI, 1967


The values of living simply, sustainably and in solidarity with the poor can be brought to life in many situations: in quiet reflection and prayer; liturgy and communal worship; teaching and study.

Starting your journey

A good way to get started is for your *livesimply* group to meet and reflect together on the challenges posed by the call to live simply. Perhaps using scripture, Catholic Social Teaching, and testimonies or pictures from people living in poor countries, take time to think, pray and ask God for guidance as you take the first steps on your journey together. (See the appendix and the resources online at www.livesimplyaward.org.uk)

A *livesimply* mass

A great way of launching the *livesimply* award is to hold a weekend social event, including liturgy. Alternatively, ask your priest if the award can be launched during one of the Sunday masses. He may be happy to preach on *livesimply* and have people give a short talk at the end of each mass. The children's group could bring *livesimply*-themed artwork in as part of the offertory and there could be a stall and Fairtrade coffee afterwards or a community celebration.

Visit livesimplyaward.org.uk to find further resources for ideas marked with this symbol 

Shhhhh!

Hold a silent walk, giving people time and space to reflect together on what it means to walk humbly in God's world, to walk lightly on his earth.

12 baskets

Hold a summer loaves and fishes picnic, including sharing, contemplation and prayer.

"All of them ate and were filled. When they collected the leftover pieces, there were 12 baskets." Luke 9:17

Footwork

Hold a *livesimply* creation walk, vigil or reflection.

Simple ideas

Sometimes worship calls for celebration and ceremony. At others times we find solace and inspiration in a more quiet and reflective time together. As part of the *livesimply* journey, your community's shared experiences can be an opportunity to enjoy a precious glimpse of a life lived simply. It's a chance to be reminded that whatever the pressures around us, God loves us as we are and our challenge is to be ourselves.



"Those who are oppressed by poverty are the object of a love of preference on the part of the Church."



Sustainable ideas

"I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, and with every living creature that is with you."

Genesis 9: 9,10

The liturgical seasons of the Church have their roots in the natural seasons of our Earth. They offer many opportunities to appreciate and celebrate God's glorious gift of creation. The sacraments can help us reconnect with the environment, drawing on elements from the natural world – water, food, wine, oil, light and darkness – to help us meet our God.

Be seasonal

The seasons of Spring, Lent, Summer, Harvest and Winter offer opportunities to include *livesimply* ideas in liturgies. For example, celebrate and recognise our relationship with creation during Spring and Harvest; reflect on fasting and simplicity during Lent.

Eucharist

The Eucharist is a celebration and a transformation. Consider bringing care for creation into prayers, by:

- praising God the creator.
- saying sorry for the harm done to the environment.
- as we share bread and wine, remembering also we share the fruits of the earth with future generations.

St Francis

Celebrate the feast of St Francis (patron saint of the environment) on Oct 4. Perhaps link it with CAFOD's Harvest Fast Day collection. Or celebrate the UN World Environment Day, which is every June 5.

Forest folk

Plant trees for Baptisms and first Holy Communions.

Get fresh!

Hold a service outdoors – encouraging people to see and hear the natural environment around them.

Solidarity ideas

When we come together as a community, we encounter each other as brothers and sisters in God's family. Our hopes and fears – for ourselves and our children – are shared one with another. The Church teaches us that this common love extends especially to those in poverty. We can use these special times together to experience these bonds of love and to make a strong and lasting commitment to live in solidarity with people in poverty.

"Those who are oppressed by poverty are the object of a love of preference on the part of the Church."

Instruction on Christian Freedom and Liberation, 68, 1986

Pope John Paul II said that the option for the poor affects all Christians because we seek to imitate the life of Christ, but it, "applies equally to our social responsibilities and hence to our manner of living..." *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis, 42, 1987.*

Bidding prayers

Consider including these prayers of intercession in masses:

- For poor communities, those most vulnerable to the effects of climate change; that we keep them close in our hearts
- For those who work to create the goods we buy; that we never rob them of their human dignity
- For those around the world affected by the extraction of fuel, metals and minerals from the Earth; that they and we can live in harmony with creation and each other
- For world leaders; that they might be inspired in their decisions by Christ's example of giving preference to the poorest and most vulnerable in society
- For all of us; that we may be inspired to take action to protect the integrity of God's creation



Community of prayer

Join Christians throughout Britain in praying for creation and justice each Wednesday sometime between 6am and 9am or 9pm and midnight. Connect through Christian Ecology Link who will email prayer suggestions to you.

Big picture

Show "Call of Creation" - CAFOD's beautiful gallery of photos from around the world - as part of a liturgy.

Get wet

At Baptisms, include reflection on the preciousness of water, solidarity with those for whom water is scarce, and its symbolic power of healing and renewal.

Fast Days

Join with Catholics throughout England and Wales raising money and taking action for CAFOD's long-term development work in poor countries each Lent and Harvest Fast Day.

Resources

Inspiration can be found in the scripture and in Catholic Social Teaching. A wealth of resources is available, including some suitable for primary and secondary schools, adult study, confirmation groups, parents and toddlers, children's liturgy, first communion and youth groups.

Links to resources for all the ideas in this sheet and many more are at www.livesimplyaward.org.uk

You can also use the website to share ideas and get advice from other Catholic parishes who are working towards a *livesimply* award.

Jesus brings life for all: John 10: 10-15

Jesus commands his followers: Mark 12: 28-34

Jesus as the author of all creation: Colossians 1:15-20

Man causes creation's suffering – and will be its deliverance: Romans 8:18-25

Prayers

Compassionate and loving God,
you created the world for us all to share,
a world of beauty and plenty.
Create in us a desire to live simply,
so that our lives may reflect your generosity.
Creator God,
You gave us responsibility for the earth,
a world of riches and delight.
Create in us a desire to live sustainably,
so that those who follow after us
may enjoy the fruits of your creation.
God of peace and justice,
You give us the capacity to change,
to bring about a world that mirrors your wisdom.
Create in us a desire to act in solidarity,
so that the pillars of injustice crumble
and those now crushed are set free.
Amen.

Linda Jones/CAFOD

Creator God,
We see you in our earth;
We see and feel your love and care for us;
Your earth feeds us and clothes us.
Forgive our greed and selfish use of this gift.
May we learn to share the earth,
To work it and care for it,
So that all who live now and in the future
may enjoy its care for us.
Amen

From Renewing the Earth, CAFOD

Other prayers are available to download and print at www.livesimplyaward.org.uk

Appendix

Scripture and Catholic Social Teaching

(These are available in full to download and print at www.livesimplyaward.org.uk)

Jesus warns about materialism: Matthew 6: 25-33

The Sabbath principle: Genesis 2: 2-3, Exodus 10: 8-11

All creation is the work of God: Psalms 148: 3-5, Job 38: 3-18, Job 12: 7-10

God gives humankind a responsibility to care for creation:

Genesis 1: 28-30, Genesis 2:15, Leviticus 23:22 25:24, Leviticus 25:23

God's covenant with us: Genesis 9:8-17

Human's disconnect from nature: Isaiah 24:4-5, Jeremiah 16:10-12

God is with us when faced with disaster: Psalm 46: 1-11

The work of creation continues: Isaiah 65: 17-23

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The *livesimply* award is being coordinated by Eco-Congregations on behalf of CAFOD, a member of the *livesimply* network.

CAFOD Registered charity no. 285776.

Photography: Wilde Fry, Marcella Haddad, Simon Rawles

Design: Stadium Creative

livesimplyaward.org.uk

Printed on 100% recycled paper

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