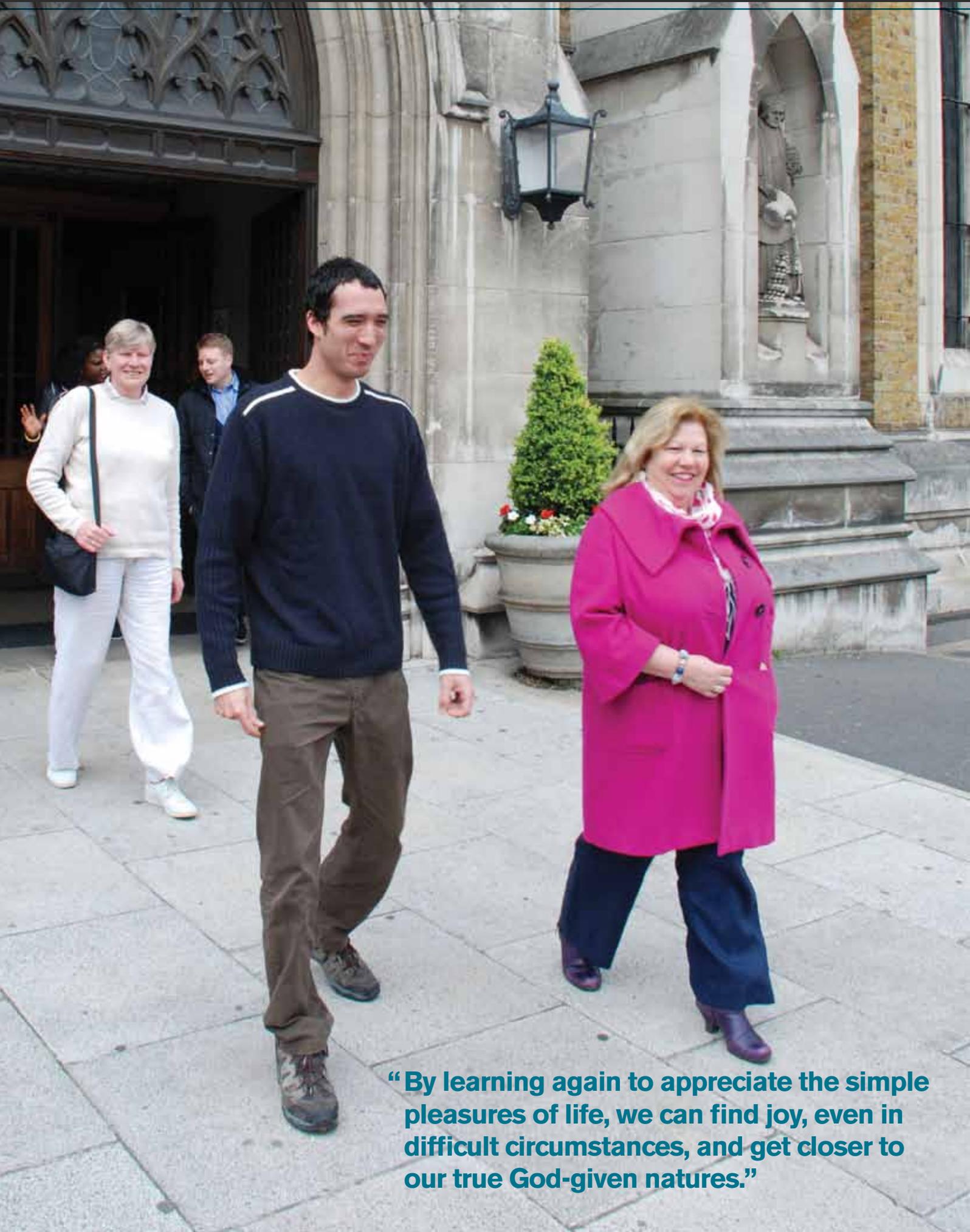




Taking *livesimply* home

Ideas for individuals



“By learning again to appreciate the simple pleasures of life, we can find joy, even in difficult circumstances, and get closer to our true God-given natures.”

Introduction

One of the requirements of a *livesimply* parish or community is that it reaches out to the wider community with the principles of living simply, sustainably and in solidarity with the poor.

This sheet contains suggestions for ways people can take *livesimply* home with them.

To encourage and support people in their *livesimply* journey why not consider some of the following:

- Lenten or Advent calendar – with a *livesimply* idea for each day.
- *livesimply* tip of the week in your parish newsletter or on the noticeboard.
- Pledging ceremony – asking people to make a public commitment to a particular lifestyle change.



Simple ideas

To live simply is to take only what we need from the Earth, not to demand more and more. By learning again to appreciate the simple pleasures of life, and by reducing the noise of desire and greed around us, we can find joy, even in difficult circumstances, and get closer to our true God-given natures.

Get rid of “stuff”

Ways to reduce the amount of “stuff” in your life – and put what you don't need to good use:

- Use Freecycle or Freegle to give (and get) unwanted stuff for free in your neighbourhood.
- Pass household goods onto homeless people moving into accommodation. The Furniture Reuse Network lists local schemes.
- Support charity shops.



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

Dump the junk

Reduce the amount of junk mail you receive by registering with the Mailing Preference Society.

Get real

Don't shop 'til you drop. Re-discover the pleasure of doing and making things for yourself. Build a treehouse. Write a poem. Knit. Sew. Sing. Be individual. Find out what it is to 'simply live' for a little while. Discover the God-given you – freed from commercial or peer pressures to live a certain way.

Grow your own

Growing your own fruit and vegetables is good for the environment especially if you use organic practices. It saves money and is spiritually satisfying. Even if you don't have a garden, you can still put pots on windowsills.

Go for a walk

Or find other ways of reconnecting with the natural world. Get wet. Dig the earth. Stare at the clouds.

Pray

Nurture your relationship with God and yourself – as well as the people and the environment around you. Make time in your life for regular reflection on the Scriptures. Quiet time spent in prayer, meditation, or reflection is a valuable boost to your energy for life.

Say thanks

It might seem old-fashioned to count your blessings, but this simple exercise is good for your mental health: find time each day to say a silent thank you for people, experiences, anything for which you feel appreciation.

Smile

It costs nothing, but lifts the spirit of giver and receiver. What's more, it might catch on...



Sustainable ideas

Changing lightbulbs and recycling is a start. But how many of us sometimes drive when we could walk, turn up the heating instead of putting on a jumper, or hope we can afford to fly to a holiday in the sun?

The more we learn about climate change, the destruction of the environment and the part we play in it, the more we are likely to understand how the way we live – our energy consumption, waste and pollution – has an impact on this and how we have an effect on the lives of some of the poorest communities around the world.

To live sustainably is to take account of the impact of all our choices on other people and on the earth that nourishes us.

One of the most important things we can do at home is find ways to reduce our energy consumption. Any appliance or vehicle that uses gas, electricity, petrol, oil or coal is responsible for emitting carbon into the atmosphere. This contributes to global warming, which in turn is changing the climate – with devastating effects for future generations. People living in poor countries are being hit first, hardest and have fewer resources to adapt.

Check your footprint

Want to know if you're a carbon guzzler? Use one of the carbon calculators to check your footprint. Search online or go to www.livesimplyaward.uk/resources

Save energy – and money!

Lots of little changes could cut the amount of carbon your household appliances pump into the atmosphere – and cut your fuel bills too.

- Turn it off: British people pay £163 million every year for electricity used in keeping their appliances on stand-by.
- Don't leave phone chargers on all day – or night.
- Run washing machines and dishwashers with full loads only; wash clothes on cool cycles and hang clothes – don't tumble-dry.
- Cook two things at once when the oven's on, and put lids on saucepans.
- Buy energy-efficient light bulbs; and when replacing appliances, go for A-rated products.
- Don't boil a whole kettle of water for just one cup of tea.

Don't over-heat

- Insulate loft and walls and the hot water cistern.
- Turn the central heating thermostat down 1 or 2 degrees.
- Turn the hot water thermostat down to 45-50 degrees and have it on a timer.
- Wear a jumper in the winter.

Befriend your milkman

Switch to a regular delivery. Reusable bottles and electric milkfloats make milkmen eco-heros.

Cut your car use

- Walk, cycle, take the bus, tram or train whenever you can.
- If you need to drive, don't speed – every 10mph increase in speed reduces your fuel economy by 4mpg – and check your tyre pressure is correct.
- Car-share your journey to church, school or work.

Save Water

- Shower, don't bathe.
- Turn off taps while washing dishes or teeth.

Fabulous food

- Cook leftovers.
- Excessive meat and dairy production is eating the planet. Why not try a meat-free day at least once a week?
- Make your own lunch – save money and packaging.

Get into compost

Use a compost bin or wormery to dispose of garden and kitchen vegetable waste. In landfill these release methane; instead feed the worms! If you haven't got a garden, use the compost on your pot plants – or sprinkle it round trees in your neighbourhood.

Learn

Learn more about environmental issues and how to build a sustainable world.

Solidarity ideas

The Church teaches us that: "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). This is known as the "preferential option for the poor" and it means we should put the needs of the poorest people before the wants of others.

To live in solidarity is to recognise that every person has a duty to help build a flourishing community, as well as the right to benefit from it.

"Solidarity is a firm and persevering determination, to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say to the good of all and of each individual because we are all really responsible for all."

Pope John Paul II, Sollicitudo Rei Socialis, 38

"To live in solidarity is to recognise that every person has a duty to help build a flourishing community."

Nightstop

Could you offer temporary accommodation to a homeless young person? The Depaul Nightstop project needs volunteer hosts to provide a bed, meals, an opportunity to shower and wash clothes, and a friendly listening ear. It's usually for a few days or weeks, giving agencies time to look for more permanent options.

Take Action

Join one of the *livesimply* member organisation's campaign actions. Members of *livesimply* work on behalf of the Catholic community to promote change and to build justice throughout the world. CAFOD promote regular campaigns issues for parishes and communities to support. Other campaigners include: Progressio, Housing Justice, Pax Christi and YCW. There are different ways to get involved in campaigns, from joining a march to signing a postcard, from lobbying your MP to giving a talk after Mass. There's an action for everyone!

Volunteering

Volunteering is an excellent way of building community and supporting the work of local projects. You may already know about organisations in your area which use volunteers.

Fareshare

Fareshare collects surpluses from the food industry and distributes to people in need. You can volunteer as a driver, navigator or sorter. You may discover that there are other foodbanks in your locality.

Community living for young people

Chances for young people to spend a year living simply in community, and volunteering in UK cities. Opportunities include the Jesuit Volunteer Community programme and Bosco Volunteer Action.



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Resources

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 to make links with others who are working towards a *livesimply award*.



In partnership with

CAFOD
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