



Ecological Justice Resources



LIVE INTO IT

Thank you SO MUCH for coming to the Jesuit Volunteer Corps (JVC) Northwest ecological justice breakout session at the Ignatian Family Teach-In! We need to make both systemic and individual changes—and quickly—in order to avoid a rapidly warming planet. It was inspiring for us to be with you and feel your energy to protect and restore the earth.

One main guiding thought in terms of both ecological and social justice is, “What do I want to see more of?” Do I want to see living wages? Healthy coral in the oceans? Polar bears surviving and not facing extinction? The great Pacific garbage heap disappear (and not by breaking down into tiny pieces of plastic that are then ingested by sea life)? Then ask, “How do I want to make choices that support that vision of life and the world?” What feels right? Then live into it. For example, I feel frustrated with myself when I don’t finish a meal and get a take out box that cannot be recycled. What feels right to me is carrying my own Tupperware and water bottle, so I feel I’m living in line with my integrity and values. You might make choices about what garments you purchase and where and how they were made, or what food to buy or what to eat or not eat. Let these questions guide you: What do I want to see more of? What feels right to me? Then live into it.

We wanted to send you some resources about what you can do, some websites with further resources, and some quotes for inspiration. Please, please, PLEASE share this newsletter with your friends, on campus, to clubs, print out and put in the bathroom stalls....however you think it might be effective to spread the word.

We have our work cut out for us, but as we said, we believe this is *our* cause and we as a generation **will mobilize** around climate change and care for the earth, as our forbearers gave their blood, sweat and tears for civil rights and peace in the era of Vietnam.

We can do this! Keep up your good work!

Remember that all beings (animals and plants) are your relatives not your resources.

-from “How To Be An Ally To Indigenous Peoples”

ECOLOGICAL EXAMEN: JOSEPH CARVER, SJ (SEATTLE, WA '93-94)



1. All creation reflects the beauty and blessing of God's image. Where were you most aware of this today?
2. Recall the day. What ways did you make a conscious effort to care for God's creation?
3. What challenges or joys did you experience as you recall your care for creation?
4. How can I repair breaks in my relationship with creation, in my unspoken sense of superiority?
5. As I imagine tomorrow, I ask for the grace to see the Incarnate Christ in the dynamic interconnections of all Creation.

Conclude with the prayer of Jesus:

The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- ♦ What is your local water source? Where does your water go after it drains? How is the water cycle in your area affected by the actions of humans?
- ♦ Where does your food come from? What are the impacts of your food choices on the environment? Where does your trash go after you throw it away?
- ♦ How are Ecological Justice and Social Justice intertwined?



QUOTES ABOUT ECOJUSTICE & SUSTAINABILITY



"Ralph Waldo Emerson once asked what we would do if the stars only came out once every thousand years. No one would sleep that night, of course. The world would create new religions overnight. We would be ecstatic, delirious, made rapturous by the glory of God. Instead, the stars come out every night and we watch television." -from Northwest Earth Institute course book "Choices for Sustainable Living"

"Where do people get this idea that they can't influence things when they're at the bottom of the food chain? People affect their peers, bosses, teachers, students, spouses, children, friends, fellow bus riders and rush hour drivers. The simplest of interactions can start a chain reaction." -Rodrigo Baena, life coach



"Few people during their lifetimes come anywhere near exhausting the resources dwelling within them. There are deep wells of strength that are never used." -Richard Byrd

"In a few decades, the relationship between the environment, resources and conflict may seem almost as obvious as the connection we see today between human rights, democracy and peace." -Wangari Maathai



"Sustainability is a new idea to many people, and many find it hard to understand. But all over the world there are people who have entered into the exercise of imagining and bringing into being a sustainable world. They see it as a world to move toward not reluctantly, but joyfully, not with a sense of sacrifice, but a sense of adventure. A sustainable world could be very much better than the one we live in today." -Donella H. Meadows, *The Limits to Growth: The 30-Year Update*

"Pathwalker, there is no path. You must make the path as you walk." -Antonio Machado, poet

Questions or comments? Connect with us via email at program@jvcnorthwest.org or by calling 503-335-8202. Check out our website and learn how to apply at www.jvcnorthwest.org.

WHAT CAN I DO?

One of the ways Jesuit Volunteer Corps Northwest supports its volunteers is by suggesting ways to be conscious about environmental impact. Here are some actions we often suggest:

- ♦ **Advocate.** Keep ecological justice on our legislators' minds. Write a handwritten letter to your state's senators and representatives. A handwritten or snail mailed letter gets much more attention than hundreds of email blasts.
- ♦ **Eat local.** The average food travels 1500 miles to get to your plate. Support your local farmers as well as keep those emissions down.
- ♦ **Host a clothing swap** (i.e. Naked Lady Party!) rather than buying new clothing.
- ♦ **Limit your travel**, particularly on planes. Read [this article](#) by FJV Eric Holthaus (Woodburn, OR '03-04), who vows never to fly again.
- ♦ **Use "alternative" transportation.** Biking, busing, and walking reduce your carbon footprint. One hundred years ago, 99.9% of people got by without cars (source: World Wildlife Fund, www.worldwildlife.org).
- ♦ **Go vegetarian or vegan**, even for one day a week. The average American eats 194 pounds of meat ANNUALLY. Cornell University researchers estimate that "producing a pound of animal protein requires, on average, 100 times more water than a pound of vegetable protein." According to the US Geological Survey, a typical hamburger requires a whopping 4,000-18,000 gallons of water to make (Oregonian, "All choked up over a day with no meat"). Statistics show that eliminating animal products from your diet, even one day a week, reduces greenhouse gases dramatically.
- ♦ **Use less water.** Wondering how? "If it's yellow, let it mellow"; say "no" to water refills in restaurants; keep showers short; save pre-shower water in buckets for flushing toilet/ watering plants and garden.
- ♦ **Think about disposables.** The United States alone adds 20 million plastic baggies to landfills EVERY SINGLE DAY. Each reusable bag used keeps as many as 1000 plastic bags out of the waste stream. In addition, last year Americans went through 50 billion plastic water bottles (source: World Wildlife Fund, www.worldwildlife.org).

WEBSITES

www.350.org: a grassroots organizing campaign to get below 350 parts per million of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere

[Catholic Coalition on Climate Change](#): care for creation and care for those who are poor

[Syracuse Cultural Workers](#): great resources like inspiring posters and shirts that spread the word

[The Northwest Earth Institute](#): discussion classes on all kinds of earth-related topics like simplicity, sustainability, and ecology

[Eco-Challenge](#): dozens of ideas to reduce your water and energy consumption, food waste, etc.

[Environmental Working Group](#): guide to healthy cleaning, discusses the toxicity levels of personal care products and cosmetics, etc.

[Earth 911](#): innovative and inspiring ways to reduce waste (and make your own gifts!)

Check out these great [Tips for a Zero Waste Household](#).

[Good Guide](#): a helpful site that rates products on their ecological and social impacts. Want non-toxic cosmetics? A pH neutral bath soap? Fairly traded chocolate? Check it out!

Check out this comical speaker from a TEDx conference in Portland, OR, who presents his idea on [how to better use paper towels](#).

Go beyond the well known story of stuff! [Explore the story of water, cosmetics, etc.!](#)

Do you think it is possible to live a plastic free life? Check out this website that explores [plastic free living](#).

The [Sustainable Table](#) is a site with information about what local and sustainable means and why its important and what to do if its not an option.

Watch how some 2011-12 JVC Northwest communities embrace simple living and ecological justice [here](#).

