



## Ecospirituality & Francis (Actions) by Loren Kerkof, OFM

### Consumer Choices that Matter Most (in order of importance)

#### Transportation

According to UCS, making and using cars and trucks causes *more environmental damage*-especially air pollution and global warming-*than any other single consumer spending category.*

UCS advice:

1. **Choose a place to live that reduces the need to drive.**
2. **Think twice before purchasing an additional car.**
3. **Choose a fuel efficient, low polluting car.**
4. **Set concrete goals for reducing your travel. Skip a car trip each week this Lent.**

The average American drives over 250 miles each week. Replace a *weekly* 20 mile car trip by telecommuting, biking or combining errands and you'll reduce your annual emissions of the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide by nearly a thousand pounds!

5. **Whenever practical, walk, bicycle, or take public transportation.**

#### Food

Food production will always be resource-intensive. Cutting the average household's consumption of **red meat and poultry** in half and replacing it with the

nutritional equivalent of grains would cut food-related land use by 30% and common water pollution by 24 %. That doesn't mean vegetarians are off the hook. Even if you dine primarily on plants, the plants you choose make a difference. Conventional farming practices rely heavily on pesticides, fertilizers and precious water resources. Organic farming is much kinder to the land.

UCS advice:

6. **Eat less meat.**

**Replace one beef meal each week; Maybe during Lent, you could skip another day besides Friday.** For every 1,000 of us who take this action, we save over 70,000 pounds of grain, 70,000 pounds of topsoil and 40 million gallons of water per year.

7. **Buy certified organic produce.**

**Buy local** produce. A lot of energy is expended freezing, refrigerating, and trucking food around the world. Eating locally grown food means less fossil fuel burned in preparation and transport.

#### Household Operations

In this category, **home heating, hot water and air conditioning** have the most impact on the environment, followed by **appliances and lighting, household water, sewage and solid waste disposal** and **building new homes.**

UCS advice:

**8. Choose your home or apartment carefully, considering environmental implications. (including transportation, size of home, energy conservation)**

**9. Reduce the environmental costs of heating and hot water.**

**Lower your thermostat.** Just by turning the thermostat down three degrees in the winter and up three degrees in the summer, you can prevent the emission of nearly 1,100 pounds of carbon dioxide annually. At least try 1° or 2°F shift. You could turn down your thermostat on the hot water heater. Or try washing clothes in cold water.

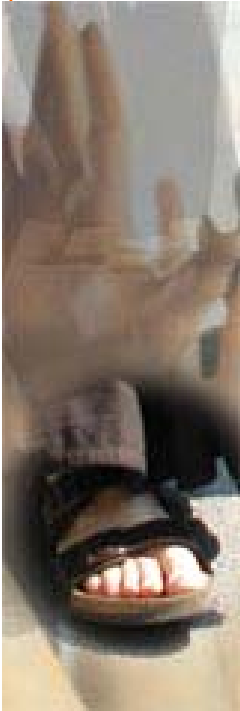
**10. Install efficient lighting and appliances.**

Replace four standard light bulbs with energy-efficient compact fluorescent lights (CFLs) and you'll reduce your electricity bills by more than \$100 over the lives of those bulbs!

More importantly, you'll prevent the emission of five thousand pounds of carbon dioxide.

**11. Choose an electricity supplier offering renewable energy (like wind generated power).**

## JPIC Reflections



*This brochure is one of a series on various themes in justice, peace and the integrity of Creation. You may read them on our website [www.sbfranciscans.org](http://www.sbfranciscans.org).*

*You are invited to download them as well from this website and to use them as a way to quickly bring a Franciscan perspective to your discussion group, prayer group or social justice dialogue.*

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**Any one of these actions, even the smallest taken up this lent, can deepen our reverence and respect for the gift of Creation and increase our awareness of the earth as the all-encompassing sacrament of the self-giving love of God.**

### SUMMARY

- **Reduce** our use of resources;
- **Reuse/ Recycle** whatever we can;
- **Remind** local and national governments of their obligations and commitments to the environment;
- **Remind** businesses to work within sustainable standards;
- **Remind** businesses to investigate The Natural Step program;
- **Remind** everyone to live lightly on the earth.
- **Register to vote and vote for candidates who want to:**
  - Make the marketplace work for the environment,
  - Set high standards for environmental impacts,
  - Invest in the environment, and
  - Make land use an environmental issue.

**Justice, Peace & the  
Integrity of Creation**

## **Ecospirituality**

**&**

## **Francis**

## **(Actions)**

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