

Animator Notes

U.S. Secular Franciscan Presence in the World
Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation

~*~ Issue 9 ~*~

2015 Lenten Edition



“Lent is a time of renewal for the whole Church, for each communities and every believer. Above all it is a ‘time of grace.’” ~ Pope Francis’ 2015 Lenten Message



The Global Catholic
Climate Movement

“Please, I would like to ask all those who have positions of responsibility in economic, political and social life, and all men and women of good will: let us be “protectors” of creation, protectors of God’s plan inscribed in nature, protectors of one another and of the environment.” ~ Pope Francis

As Pope Francis has demonstrated his care for all of God’s creation, now we as Franciscans need to follow his courageous example and pray this fast will be the start of a global shift in the way we respond to climate crises.

Beginning Lent (February 18 – April 2) 2015, the **Global Catholic Climate Movement** (GCCM, www.catholicclimatemovement.global/fast), an international coalition of Catholics collaborating to bring awareness to the climate crises, would like to urge Catholics around the world to pray and fast in solidarity with those who are most affected by the changing global climate. The traditional fast on Ash Wednesday (February 18) will commence the global effort and we ask that Catholics in every country include in their daily prayers our troubled Earth and especially those who are affected most by its violent climate shifts; the poor and those who live along coastal communities. Each subsequent day of Lent, will be assigned to a different country; **the United States will fast on Monday, March 16, 2015.**

You can fast from anything from food, especially fast food, using plastics, lessening water use, electronics, and anything that consumes too much from Mother Earth. Attached to this newsletter will be resources giving you suggestions for fasts.

Our Lady, Queen of Angels Emerging Fraternity in Columbia, S.C. will fast on Thursday, February 19th. I encourage any fraternity or region who will join the fast to please share with me about your fasting experience. If you would like to send a brief paragraph or a short video, I would much appreciate it.

This is also in anticipation of Pope Francis’ encyclical on climate justice due out this year.

“Moreover they should respect all creatures, animate and inanimate, which ‘bear the imprint of the Most High,’ and they should strive to move from the temptation of exploiting creation to the Franciscan concept of universal kinship.” ~ OFS Rule, Article 18



Walking in the Footsteps of Jesus Christian Simplicity

“The earth is the LORD's and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it; for he founded it upon the seas and established it upon the waters.” ~ Psalm 24:1-2

The Earth is our home. It is holy ground. From the beginning, God declared it good. Now there is growing awareness that God's planet is being damaged and its resources are not fairly shared. Caring for creation and living more simply are an essential part of faith for those who follow in the footsteps of Jesus today.

“Hail, Queen Wisdom! May the Lord save you with your sister holy pure simplicity!”

~ From the Salutation of the Virtues by Francis of Assisi

The Gospel challenges Christians to transform the way we understand, use and consume this planet. Jesus spoke frequently about the dangers of excessive consumption. He warned of the spiritual peril brought on by too much stuff.

Simplicity does not mean moving into a cave or only eating berries. Living simply means setting limits that reflect our faith values **by taking only what we need – not hoarding, not taking in excess**. It fashions a life that is outwardly simple and inwardly rich.

When viewed through the lens of the Gospel, simplicity becomes liberating for the prosperous and life-affirming for those who are poor. By voluntarily choosing simplicity, Christians reorient their hearts toward finding a treasure which will never perish. At the same time, when the value of simplicity influences our personal consumption habits, we can bring about a just society and protect God's creation for generations to come. Lent is a great time to start.

How can each step we take on Earth be a blessing, walking in the footsteps of Jesus?

*~ Taken from **Lent 4.5** by the Passionist Earth & Spirit Center*



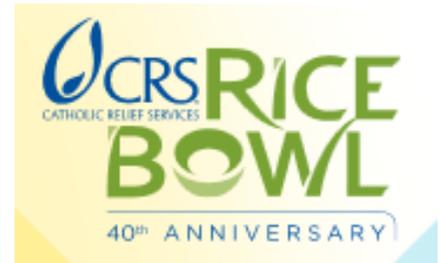


“Small yet strong in the love of God, like Saint Francis of Assisi, all of us, as Christians, are called to watch over and protect the fragile world in which we live, and all its peoples.”

~ Pope Francis, **The Joy of the Gospel**, 216



Forty years ago, Catholics in the United States wanted to respond to famine in Africa. Could people who were hungry and starving be helped through Lenten prayers, fasting and almsgiving? The answer was yes – and the help came in the form of a small cardboard box, marking the beginning of “Operation Rice Bowl” 40 years ago in parishes in Allentown, Pennsylvania. Today, **CRS Rice Bowl** is a tradition for millions of Catholics in the U.S., who employ the Lenten pillars of praying, fasting and almsgiving to change the lives of others while enriching their own. CRS Rice Bowl is available in paper, web and through a mobile app in both English and Spanish.



In 1976, Operation Rice Bowl was adopted by the **United State Conference of Catholic Bishops** as a national program. In 1977, they voted to make Operation Rice Bowl the official program of Catholic Relief Services. A cardboard or homemade CRS Rice Bowl is a tool for collecting your Lenten alms. Rice Bowls can be ordered in quantities of 25 from crsricebowl.org or 1-800-222-0025 for free. The CRS Rice Bowl app also allows you to create a virtual Rice Bowl on a mobile device.



Justice Peace Integrity of Creation

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