

## GOING GREEN IN THE FALL

### PRAYER:

1. In daily personal prayer spend contemplative time outdoors or looking out a window praying with and for the EARTH.
2. As you say grace before meals (and after) include thanking not only God but the EARTH and all who till and care for her for the food you have.
3. Allow current issues, like climate change, mountaintop removal, Keystone XL Pipeline to be a spur to prayer.
4. When you are leader of corporate prayer include EARTH in spoken intentions/petitions; or design a weekly prayer for EARTHs needs.
5. Choose a location and time of day that can accommodate you or your group and which has immediate access to the outdoors (weather permitting).
6. If your gathering space is indoors, plan to include EARTH elements in the setting—especially, EARTH, Air, Fire and Water
7. In your ministry--within parish, school, family or volunteer activities raise up EARTH concerns when you are gathered for prayer.

### HONORING EARTH:

1. Become an EARTH advocate by encouraging others to honor, celebrate and care for EARTH
2. Journal some experiences you've had with God's good EARTH
3. Spend some time outdoors on a regular basis to see and soak in the beauty of nature
4. Visit a garden to smell the flowers or admire the fall harvest.
5. Plan a regularly scheduled meeting for an outdoor venue on the grounds or at a nearby park and maybe bring a picnic lunch.

### ENERGY USE:

1. Lower the heat in winter. Buy programmable thermostats. Set them so that heat or AC is regulated for when you and your family are there and adjusted for when you are at work or in bed. When out of your home for a prolonged time—out of town or vacation—adjust your thermostat.
2. Be sure home insulation, seals around doors & windows, etc. are secure and well-functioning; do an audit at the turn of the seasons.
3. Schedule an energy audit of your home, workplace, school, church, etc. Look at helpful websites to locate resources—groups like IPL—Interfaith Power and Light—can offer tips and resources to get started.
4. Always turn out lights when leaving a room—unless someone else is there.
  - a. Use compact fluorescent or the new LED lights
  - b. When replacing fixtures, look for “Energy Star” items which are rated to use less power. “Cheap” items are usually no bargain.
5. Choose an energy-efficient car; learn to drive with gas-saving techniques.
6. Use drapes/blinds on windows to keep out hot sun in summer, let in, in winter; also use to insulate windows in winter.

7. When using electronic devices power off to conserve batteries when not in use; if items are plugged in, use a power strip or shut off completely when not in use—avoid “stand-by” mode that continues to use electricity.
8. Whenever you use electricity (usually coal-generated), gasoline, natural gas or other fossil fuels, remember the cost not only in dollars, but to EARTH as it is extracted, refined, transported and burned. Pollution, land devastation and climate change are real.
9. Choose alternative energy sources when possible—especially when building or remodeling: Geothermal heating/cooling; solar and wind energy sources or supplements to existing systems
10. Buy as much “green” energy from your local electricity supplier as you can.

#### CLOTHES:

1. Pull your woolies out of storage.
2. Put on a sweater; the heavier the sweater the more energy you save
3. Organize a clothes swap.
4. Shop at thrift stores (Salvation Army, Goodwill, Amvets, etc.) where you're helping others have a better life while recycling items passed on by still others.
5. Plan your fall/winter wardrobe BEFORE shopping; this cuts down on impulse purchases.
6. Buy timeless styles you will love year after year.
7. Repurpose clothes. E.g. make seat cushions from leather jackets
8. Repair instead of discarding. Make your clothes last longer!”
9. Look for green dry cleaners, return wire hangers and get rid of dry cleaner bags that can hold chemicals in your clothes.

#### HOME:

1. Stop drafts coming under doors by getting the kids to make Draft Snakes from neck ties.
2. Insulate, insulate, insulate.
3. Insulate pipes.
4. Seal your ducts
5. Keep your curtains closed
6. Lower your water thermostat
7. Limit showers to twice a week and collect the water, as you wait for it to heat up, in a bucket to be used to water plants.
8. Bring plants in to help clean indoor air.
9. Plug in an energy monitor to see which appliances are power pigs.
10. Decorate for fall with natural items rather than buying new ones
11. De-clutter so there is less to clean and post your unwanted items on eBay Classifieds.
12. Use reusable cloth towels instead of paper towels.
13. Replace one electrical appliance with a manual device, then never use the electrical one again. E.g. Choose a hand cranked can opener.
14. Buy pre-owned furniture. Keeps furniture out of the landfill and eliminates pollution associated with manufacturing.
15. Use stainless steel water bottles. They are BPA free, can save you money by using your own water and will reduce the amount of plastic in landfills.
16. Make sure windows and doors close tightly

17. Have your chimney cleaned
18. Clean and store summer equipment
19. Clean the gutters
20. Check your safety devices — Grab a step ladder and change out the batteries on your safety devices.
21. Compost fallen leaves

#### SHOPPING AND MEALS:

1. Use green bags for groceries and other shopping.
2. Make a shopping list and stick to it
3. Use a cloth napkin and remember why you do so. Be grateful for the trees saved by not using disposables.
4. Cook at least one meal “from scratch” each week, taking the time to be creative, learn new recipes, expand your taste buds and support your health.
  1. Try to eliminate processed foods
  2. Use leftovers
  3. Use locally produced food
5. If you eat meals prepared by others—whether a food-service, in-house cafeteria, or even a local restaurant (NOT fast food) ask kitchen staff/manager to utilize fresh, in-season fruits and vegetables whenever possible. Be sure to compliment them when they do—and eat heartily!
6. Read labels—note country of origin, number of long-syllable chemical ingredients, whether it contains GMO ingredients (or proclaims that it **doesn't** since the US doesn't demand fair labeling), as well as looking for Organic items.
7. Don't buy products with excess packaging (eg. wrapped “single-serving” items) or use single use paper and plastic ware, etc.
8. Never use hot, running water to defrost frozen foods. Plan ahead and place frozen items in the refrigerator overnight or use the microwave oven
9. Rinse vegetables and fruits in a sink or a pan filled with water instead of under running water
10. One more way to get eight glasses of water a day is to re-use the water left over from cooked or steamed foods to start a scrumptious and nutritious soup

#### SCHOOL:

1. Buy eco-friendly school and office products
2. Check to make sure that the screen saver, power saver, sleep, or other options on your computer - PC or Mac; desktop or laptop - are set so they use less power and conserve energy.
3. If you live close enough, walk with your kids to school. International Walk to School Month is October 2013!
4. Ask school officials to adopt a no-idling policy. Idling school buses waste fuel and pollute the air. Children are especially sensitive to diesel exhaust, which causes respiratory problems and worsens allergies and asthma
5. Encourage school officials to look into EPA's new Healthy School Environments program which helps facility managers, school administrators, architects, design engineers,

school nurses, parents, and teachers find the resources they need to address environmental health issues in school.

6. Talk to your school officials about joining [Clean School Bus USA](#).
7. Ask your school officials to look into the governments [Energy Star](#) program to help your school become more energy efficient

#### PERSONAL PRACTICES:

1. Combine trips to town/store/doctor, etc. for yourself and/or carpool.
2. Take public transportation, walk or bike for local trips whenever you can.
3. Buy no bottled water.
4. Take your car to a car wash that recycles its wash water. If washing your car at home, use a bucket of water and sponge. Rinse quickly at the end. Never allow the hose to run continuously.
5. While staying in a hotel or even at home, reuse your towels
6. Limit the use of all plastics to emergencies

#### RESOURCES:

[http://www.ehow.com/how\\_2383569\\_go-green-fall.html](http://www.ehow.com/how_2383569_go-green-fall.html)

<http://www.oprah.com/omagazine/4-Ways-to-Go-Green-This-Fall#ixzz2SRPSQ5wp>

<http://www.thedailygreen.com/> - provides green shopping tips and recipes

[www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov)

<http://www.iwalktoschool.org/>

The above suggestions can be adjusted to your particular circumstances and needs. You probably have many other practices that you already do. Discuss with your local living group/family other ideas that you could do to raise awareness. Make changes in a step-at-a-time fashion—adding a new focus or practice each month. Be patient and persevering—the Planet is worth it. We are all in it for the long haul.

