

# ISSUES AND ACTIONS

March, 2008



## UN Millennium Goals

1. Eradicate extreme poverty & hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership for development

### Earth as Teacher...

This was the title of a recent think tank sponsored by LCWR for Leadership Team members and Peace & Justice Committee members. Sisters Mary Lange, Diane Maguire, and Guadalupe Partida participated from our Community.

Paula Gonzalez, SC was the presenter/facilitator. She has tremendous energy and commitment to sharing the news that Mother Earth needs us and that we must do something. We are living in a moment of crisis - danger or opportunity.

There is danger in that we must reduce our carbon footprint for the sake of the viability of Earth. There is opportunity in that there are sources of new wisdom and we can do something to make a difference. Among these sources of new wisdom are women, indigenous people, youth, science, and the universe itself. Nature knows best.

*We stand at a critical moment in Earth's history, a time when humanity must choose its future. As the world becomes increasingly interdependent and fragile, the future at once holds great peril and great promise. To move forward we must recognize that in the midst of a magnificent diversity of cultures and life forms we are one human family and one Earth community with a common destiny. We must join together to bring forth a sustainable global society founded on respect for nature, universal human rights, economic justice, and a culture of peace. Towards this end, it is imperative that we, the peoples of Earth, declare our responsibility to one another, to the greater community of life, and to future generations (The Earth Charter, PREAMBLE, 1).*

## WHAT CAN I DO?

- Visit [redefiningprogress.org](http://redefiningprogress.org) - click on ecological footprint quiz.
- Eat less meat.
- Drive a fuel-efficient car.
- Avoid purchasing disposable items with lots of packaging.
- Visit the *GreenMarketplace*, an online green shopping center, for all sorts of environmentally friendly products.
- Share magazines and catalogs
- Reuse and recycle packing materials
- What are you and others presently doing already?

Pope John Paul II addressed concern for Mother Earth in his 1990 New Year's message: *If one looks at the regions of our planet, one realizes immediately that humanity has unhesitatingly devastated wooded plains and valleys, polluted the waters, deformed the Earth's habitat, made the air unbreathable, upset the hydrogeological and atmospheric systems lighted green spaces, implemented uncontrolled forms of industrialization, humiliating the Earth, that flowerbed that is our dwelling.*

He also says that the ecological crisis is a moral issue. We do not often think about it in those terms.

We can choose to feel overwhelmed by the seriousness of the present crisis of Earth. We can also choose to do something. In the words of Paula Gonzalez, SC:

- Realize that you *can* make a difference.
- Commit your energies to one area of Earth-healing.
- Pray to know which area God is calling you to adopt. Then find the groups or organizations that are doing this work and join them.

### **We pray**

Divine Creator, how astounded we are to know how carefully and creatively you have fashioned us. Your patient tending began so long ago and continues in this very moment. Truly, we are blessed. Help us to grow in awareness of how we are part of the Body of Creation, how we are connected to all that has been, all that is, all that will be. Help us to be conscious of Life, to understand how significant our role is, and to participate in your work by becoming co-creators with you. May we make choices that reflect care for our home in the universe, allowing your love to be expressed everywhere and to all. Amen.  
[This prayer was used at *Earth as Teacher*.]

Submitted by the Peace and Justice Committee