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# Suggested Lenten actions to benefit the Earth

Carol Meyer | Jan. 5, 2011 Eco Catholic

**Cut down on electricity use:**
a) Turn off lights when not in use.
b) Unplug things seldom used.
c) Turn off the TV and radio that are just background noise.
d) Turn off the computer if you won?t be using it for several hours.
e) Use lower wattage bulbs in places that don?t need bright light.
f) Replace your current light bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs that use 75 percent less energy.
g) Have a day a week of no TV, radio, computer, video games, and other electronics use.

**Make earth-beneficial changes in your eating habits:**
a) Eat out less at fast-food restaurants
b) Eat more organic and locally-grown foods
c) Eat less or no meat. Eat beans, grains, brown rice, nuts, seeds, tofu and more vegetables and fruits.
d) Cut back on highly packaged foods and snacks.
e) Eliminate or decrease consumption of soda, bottled water, and drinks purchased in styrofoam or plastic cups/bottles
f) Use canvas bags for your groceries and other purchases

**Make changes in purchases and consumption:**
a) For a certain time period, decide that you will purchase only what is NECESSARY. Have a buying moratorium.
b) When you do need something, look for natural alternatives that are biodegradable and don?t contain toxic chemicals.
c) Make purchases at thrift stores when possible.
d) When you make a purchase, use these guidelines: Is it good for the earth? Do I really need this? Will this have lasting value? Will it complicate my life? Am I willing to give up something to have this? Can I get it used? Will I use it a lot and love it? Can I defer this? Can I get it with less packaging?
e) Clear out your excess and clutter. Simplify your life and share what you don?t need with the poor and needy through a thrift store.
f) Buy appliances that are energy efficient
g) Don?t take the plastic bags at stores. Bring cloth bag if you need one

**Recycle and dispose properly**
a) Use the recyling bin your city provides. Recyle your aluminum and tin cans, plastics, newspapers and other paper. Take your glass to a recycling center.
b) Collect your hazardous wastes and take them to the Hazardous Waste Disposal.
c)T ake your old computers, monitors, and printers to places, where for a small fee, they will disassemble them and remove the contaminants.

**Reduce your energy consumption**

a) Turn your home thermostat down several degrees. Wear several layers of clothes to keep warm. Turn it down even more at night and use more blankets.
b) Drive and fly less. Carpool. Eliminate unnecessary trips or activities. Walk and bike more. Do several errands at the same time.
c) Run your dishwasher only when it?s full
d) Wash clothes in cold or warm water
e) Take brief showers instead of baths; install a low-flow showerhead
f) Lower the temperature of your hot-water heater to l20 degrees or less. Insulate the hot-water heater.
g) Put more insulation in your attic; add more caulking and weather-stripping
h) Get an energy audit for your home and make the energy improvements
i) Buy appliances that are energy efficient

**Work for the earth in the wider sphere**
a) Join local or national environmental groups
b) Give donations to not-for-profit groups that protect the environment
c) Support legislation that protects the earth
d) Initiate and support energy-saving measures at your workplace
e) Become informed through books, DVDs, web sites and other means
f) Be an advocate for the Earth in your congregation
g) Pray regularly for the welfare of the planet, its people and all life forms
h) Do your part to educate people, formally or informally; lead by example

**Make creation a larger part of your spirituality**
a) Learn about creation and its wonders and give thanks to God
b) Spend time in nature and learn about God from it
c) Meditate on your connection to everyone and everything
d) Stop and appreciate the sacred in all things
e) Read books and watch DVDs on creation spirituality

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