







# Sustainable Living - Advent 2011

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p><u>1st Sunday of Advent</u></p> <p><i>"Earth teach me quiet - as the grasses are still with new light."</i></p> 	<p>28</p> <p><b>"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed it's the only thing that ever has."</b> (Margaret Mead)</p>	<p>29</p> <p><b>Did you know?</b> Every item we buy contains embodied energy, water and waste in its production, packaging, transport and disposal. Can we buy a bit less?</p>	<p>30</p> <p>Buy Christmas Cards that are made of recycled paper and where the purchase supports a charity - or make your own!</p>	<p>1</p> <p><b>Gatherings and End of Year Celebrations</b></p> <p>The challenge is to avoid disposable party type products. This includes cutlery, cups, plates, streamers, etc</p>	<p>2</p> <p>'A spirituality is a mode of being in which not only the divine and the human commune with each other, but we discover ourselves in the universe and the universe discovers itself in us.' (Thomas Berry)</p>	<p>3</p> <p><b>Recycle</b> gift-wrap paper and ribbons.</p> 
<p><u>2nd Sunday of Advent</u></p> <p><i>"Earth teach me humility - as the blossoms are humble with beginning."</i></p> 	<p>5</p> <p>We cannot wait for big businesses or governments. <b>We have to take significant steps ourselves</b> because it is vitally important that groups like us begin by making small changes.</p>	<p>6</p> <p><b>Gifts</b></p>  <p>Give the gift of a living plant - a native or herbs!</p>	<p>7</p> <p><b>Gifts</b> Consider making something (including wrapping paper and cards) Or Give the gift of your time.</p>	<p>8</p> <p><b>Planning Christmas Dinner?</b> Use vegetables and fruit that are in season!</p>	<p>9</p> <p><b>"It's your time Mother Earth to receive from us. For so long we have taken so thoughtlessly from you. It's your time."</b> (Song - Monica Brown, One People One Land)</p>	<p>10</p> <p><b>Recycle!</b> Donate things that you no longer use to charity - St Vincent de Paul or Salvation Army. They're not much use sitting in a box in the shed.</p>
<p><u>3rd Sunday of Advent</u></p> <p><i>"Earth teach me courage - as the tree that stands alone."</i></p> 	<p>12</p> <p><b>"It is a wholesome and necessary thing for us to turn again and again to the earth and in the contemplation of her beauties to know of wonder and humility."</b> (Rachel Carson 1907 -1964)</p>	<p>13</p> <p><b>Decorations, parties and packaging:</b>  Consider the purchase! If you know you are going to throw it out soon after buying - just leave it on the shelf and use what you already have.</p>	<p>14</p> <p><b>Gifts</b> Avoid the purchase of single-use products e.g. disposable cameras. Avoid products that need batteries, use electricity, have lots of packaging or have a short life. Sew, bake or make things!</p>	<p>15</p> <p><b>Decorations</b> Look for eco-friendly decorations . Use long lasting, in-season flowers.</p> <p><b>Eco-friendly stationery and decorations</b> - look for handmade, local or Fairtrade.</p>	<p>16</p> <p><b>"There will be no 'peace on earth' until there is peace with earth"</b> (Julia Butterfly-Hill"</p> 	<p>17</p> <p><b>Did you know?</b> In the US - from Thanksgiving to New Year's Day household waste increases by 25%. Annual trash from gift wrapping and shopping bags totals four million tons.</p>

4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent

**"Earth teach me renewal**  
- as the seed rises in  
Spring." \*



**"Earth teach me caring -**  
as the mother who  
secures her young."

19

**Did you know?**

We produce more  
rubbish at Christmas-  
time than at any other  
time of the year.

Food banks are already  
running out of food. If  
you are able to help,  
remember those who  
are struggling and  
donate to the Food  
Bank.

**Earth teach me**  
**limitation** - as the ant  
which crawls on the  
ground."

20

One of the simplest  
actions each of us  
can take is to avoid  
buying bottled  
water, because the  
waste from the  
discarded plastic  
bottles amounts to  
huge amounts of  
toxic waste.

**"Earth teach me**  
**freedom** - as the  
eagle which soars in  
the sky."

21

**Planning Christmas**  
**Dinner?**

Choose fresh and local  
fruit and vegetables  
and avoid packaging!



22

If you do generate  
waste make sure it is  
either reusable or  
able to be recycled.

Be ready to put your  
left-overs into  
reusable containers  
with lids rather than  
using foil and cling  
wrap.

**"Earth teach me**  
**resignation** - as the  
leaves which die in  
the autumn."

23

*"My soul proclaims  
the greatness of the  
Lord and my spirit  
rejoices in God my  
Saviour".*

As we prepare for  
Christ's coming this  
Christmas let us  
give thanks for the  
wonderful gifts of  
creation.

**"Earth teach me to**  
**forget myself** - as  
melted snow forgets  
its life."

24

We are people of the  
"Good News" - our  
great expectation and  
hope is the birth of  
'Emmanuel, 'God-with-  
us'.

May the God who  
dances in creation,  
who embraces us in  
the human love of our  
friends, bless us this  
Christmas with the  
gift of gratitude.

**"Earth teach me to**  
**remember kindness** -  
as dry fields weep in  
the rain."  
Ute prayer, USA

**CHRISTMAS DAY**



**"Let not earth alone rejoice,  
Seas and skies unite their voice,  
In a new song, to the morn  
When the Lord of life was born."  
(Evening Prayer, Christmas Day)**

**His birth bound heaven to earth in  
harmony and peace.**

**May that same peace be established  
among nations and peoples today.**

*Oh Little Town of Bethlehem .....*

**Did you know?**

Bethlehem today is surrounded by a high wall with only one entrance. This entrance is patrolled by teenage soldiers armed with machine guns. On Friday evenings people gather to pray at the wall near a beautiful icon of the Virgin Mary painted onto the wall. Banksie, the graffiti artist, has drawn a number of images on the wall - a soldier being patted down by a little girl, a dove of peace in a flak jacket, and one showing the Magi arriving but being unable to enter Bethlehem because of the wall.

There are three refugee camps in Bethlehem. One has 14,000 residents, down from 17,000. All the people have of their homes are their keys and many of these keys hang at the entrance of the camp as a symbol of their plight.

There are many religious orders working in Bethlehem doing wonderful work - in Caritas Baby Hospital, at the Creche (a foundling home), in education, etc, etc. The University of Bethlehem, whose Vice-Chancellor is New Zealander, Br Peter Bray FSC, is educating leaders for the new Palestine. The 2010 Living Stones Solidarity Award was presented to the University of Bethlehem in recognition of its achievement of "its primary mission of the betterment of the lives of Palestinians and Christians at large" through education, advocacy and solidarity initiatives.

About 2,500 Palestinian labourers living in Bethlehem work inside Israel, mostly in Jerusalem just a few miles away. Because they must pass through a special check-point each day they need to be at the check-point between 2.00 am and 4.00 am to get to work on time. This check-point system, with its arbitrary delays, seems designed to inconvenience and dehumanise those who have to pass through.