

HEALING EARTH:

FROM CONTRASUMERS
TO REVOLUTIONARIES
OVER FIVE DECADES

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Introduction

Unless we replace our unsustainable socio-economic System we cannot heal our wounded Earth. This conviction emerges for me after a half century of public interest work. Without a radical change we simply cannot heal our wounded Earth. To paraphrase Bill Clinton, "it's the System, stupid." A second conviction: many others have come to the same conclusion but dare not say it -- for fear that they might be labeled as I can assure them I have been. Telling the truth may be purifying, but on this subject it is not a popular thing to do; it may cause us to be declared "touched," "crazy," or simply "irrelevant," since the System is as mighty as the Roman Empire. However, Christians must speak out now as then -- we must emerge from the Catacombs of silence.

Go public. Yes, for we elders have a freedom in our Indian Summer of life to say what we think. I take this occasion on the fortieth anniversary of my book *The Contrasumers: A Citizens Guide to Resource Conservation* (Praeger, 1974). In those early years I did not have the nerve or guts to say what I could not prove. Don't get me wrong. I am not able to prove this to most people's satisfaction, but we may hear the stones cry out if we are silent. The System must go as soon as possible (ASAP). *The Contrasumers* was at the beginning of my healing Earth journey in life. Yes, it was well received and my only "best seller." In fact, one of my former editors suggested that I update the book even though Praeger Publishers no longer operates. Why not reissue after four decades?

The answer is short: it would be dishonest. Certainly reissuing would take time, and in being true to resource conservation, little time (a resource) remains. In a nut shell, *The Contrasumers* was based on naive insights of early public interest science when we thought we could change the socio-economic **System** by promoting a resource conservation ethic that would fix faults and appeal to the general public. In fact, just last year (2013), one Florida multi-millionaire offered to fund my poor parishes and projects by as much as needed if I only stated that the **System** was "the best developed yet by human beings" and also deny that human-caused climate change existed. He said "You can not refuse me." Really, you never say that to a crabby old man, but even after a brief moment of temptation I did refuse him.

Let's lay out the problem of healing Earth from my present perspective and see why the real issue is to trace the evolution from being a contrasumer who tweaks the System to a revolutionary who seeks to change the System. My ultimate goal of a healthy Earth has not changed over these decades, but methods and emphasis on reaching them certainly have. Back then and now, life has been and is a gift worth celebrating, but becomes more precious as it nears its mortal close, it is worth witnessing to by those who are childless. But it is truly quality of life in a broader sense of the community of all beings that

reaches far beyond our human brothers and sisters, both living and to come. It is as broad as the micro- and the macrocosmos. Unfortunately, future agents of change do not yet have voices -- and is why WE must speak HERE and NOW.

The goal of healing our wounded Earth remains steadfast, for it is our only current home, and we must leave this place a better one than when we came -- and that, besides the love we take with us, is our only true legacy. Having said this, another bother surfaces: rational arguments have very limited value for the addicted and our consumer culture makes most of us fit into that category (more later on this subject). Yes, Earth lovers, we are all sadly mistaken if we think we can successfully conclude this through pure rationality. "It ain't a goin' to happen," and I am not going to waste still more time trying to make it so. Face it, we are all social addicts and we have got to be humble enough to look to the lives of those who have broken through the vice of their allurements. Even having said this I am still making one final organized effort to come to terms with who we are at this critical moment in history and so let's strive to frame four basic unanswered questions of which I beg you to help me answer:

a) **Is our Earth wounded by our actions?** We are all aware of multiple forms of air, water, and land pollution as well as the talk about closing the window of time before severe anthropogenic climate changes occurs. In 2014, the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has raised the probability that most global warming is human-caused to 95% from 90% in 2007. With present consumption patterns, global temperatures could rise from 0.3 and 4.8 degrees Celsius (0.5 to 8.6 Fahrenheit).¹ Experts say that even reaching half that range could have a catastrophic effect on those living in low-lying parts of the globe as well as some who will be harmed by hotter growing conditions. Many do not deny the fact of an environmental crisis, while a shrinking group refuse to speak of prudential action may be left unconvinced no matter how much evidence is presented. The goal here is not to persuade deniers, but to set an atmosphere of serious concern.

b) **Does an expanding consumer culture enhance an unsustainable System?** So many of us are deeply involved in our consumer culture and its goals of convenience and comfort, with its current line of propaganda and patriotic hype. True, carbon dioxide levels continue to climb because the world is unable to break its addiction to non-renewable fossil fuels (coal, petroleum, and natural gas) and adjust to reasonable limits of consumption. All the current excellent simple lifestyle suggestions (proper food selection and consumption habits, balanced physical activity, and sufficient rest) are insufficient for catalyzing change in themselves, for they lack a political will and force.² The haunting question for years is, "What if emerging nations follow us and consume at North American and European levels?" Now China, the world's second largest economy, has a shot at

reaching those levels with its catastrophic environmental consequences. But who can stop these people? Certainly not those currently enjoying material privilege. Yes, a different urgency.

c) **Why do we allow privileged wealth to control the System?**

Such permissiveness means forfeiting our democratic duties like gamblers hoping to join the privileged few. Is that sharing, or a ghastly striving to the call of mammon? Are we so fooled to think that to tweak an unsustainable socio-economic System is anything else but a grand act of fiction and utter pretending? Rather than being tolerant of the pretenders, let's perhaps undertake a two-part and simultaneous program of personal reform and social reform. Don't let some fool you by saying we have to seek personal perfection first, for that is an argument against social action -- they are simply court chaplains of the System's privileged few. It is easy to challenge the "Shop till you drop" ethic, 21st century's counterpart to Roman Empire "Bread and Circuses." Another task surfaces when our democratic process is threatened by their grasp on a desensitizing media ignoring a fair tax program that allows the captains of industry and finance to have incomes 350 times the average salary of workers. Inequality explodes even when greater equality means stronger democracy.³ Why permit billionaires? Save their souls and impoverish them like the rest of us.

d) **Do we think we can do this ourselves?** Our secularized culture is blinded by our allurements and is unable to allow for meaningful change to occur. We are helpless without recourse as a people to a Higher Power, because of this deep groove of paralysis based on raising ourselves with our bootstraps. Our founding parents knew what it meant to say "In God we trust." We must be humble enough to pray and discover that we are our brothers' keepers. As Jewish philosopher Emmanuel Levinas says, "We are responsible for the others' responsibility."⁴ Individually, we need good food, rest, and physical exercise; socially, we need to control financial wealth, eliminate tax havens, and afford the jobless employment opportunities. The first are matters of personal responsibility; the second involves global financial and environmental decisions by individual nations, a cooperative process that cannot come any too soon. And democratic citizens must hasten the day.

Over the decades the environmental crisis has deepened. What started for me as a temporary "volunteer" has morphed over time into a "sacred mission" requiring ongoing engagement and leading to radical change in the System. Let us first list similar assumptions, principles, and goals of both then and now, and then add a listing of major differences developing over decades:

* Respect God's **creation** and mother Earth and combine both natural beauty and organization with human enhancing endeavors. Science and religious belief are compatible, and our human activities must be for the greater glory of God;

* Live **simply**, never waste anything, and conserve the good of the past. Since early days living on a post-depression small farm, I always regarded myself as a conservative person in all areas of basic operations with the exception of a current economic, social, and political System that steals from our commons;

* Undertake a ministry that is **educational and research- oriented** but not academic and institutionally based. This entailed avoiding schools with emphasis on athletics, inter- and intradepartmental friction, publish-or-perish pressures, and high and painful tuition for students -- and which would allow my thought to develop to its current form;

* Preserve and pray for the continuation of a **holy anger** against cultural practices that oppress others, and yet always attempt to keep a **balanced disposition** (this started in youth when my Afro-American neighbors had to go to a segregated school and I struggled with holy anger);

* Encourage high **motivation**, but of a non-profit variety with the eventual rejection of wealth acquisition for its own sake. My anti-capitalistic leanings sprang up from earliest times and the hope that people will acquire a spiritually-motivated lifestyle;

* Expand **public interest** with attention for an entire world far beyond local vicinities (daily I devoured international current news starting with Second World War events as a third grader and this has never ceased);

* Regard **competition** as being the first to do one's duty, not struggles to beat another contender. A savage dog-eat-dog competitive spirit was repugnant from early times, yet is deeply ingrained in our American culture. However, changing the world's unsustainable overconsumption patterns must begin somewhere, so why not the U.S.?

* Know **limitations** in my public speaking, conversing, and writing abilities and seek both to improve with time and to invite support in joint projects at all levels;

* Be moved **prophetically** by the Spirit in what relates to pressing matters and not remain silent when something must be said. Granted, this could draw difficult moments, especially when committed within a consecrated organization (the Society of Jesus), but opportunities always arise;

* Champion the **democratic process** and regard this as a portion of citizenship in hopes that some of the best of our tradition could be shared with people throughout the world. This has become more nuanced in time (the historic road to American federalism is a model for global federalism);

* Raise **funds** from free will and personal earnings and do not expect support from wealthy corporate or individual sources. I talked with my Jesuit provincial, Bob Harvanek and he accepted my move from chemistry post-doctorate research at University of Texas at Austin to join Ralph Nader's Washington, DC group. Bob suggested a wise requirement not to burden traditional Jesuit sources for cost of living expenses, something I have followed; and

* Combine exposing and solving environmental problem areas with **artistic expression** in order to obtain an ambiance of where we are, have

been, and aspire to reach. This is expressed in the "Simple Lifestyle Calendar" since 1976 and in continued support of photographic use and poetry related to current problem areas.

On the other hand, my largest difference from early days was seeing that the environmental crisis did not prove to be temporary and could not be easily resolved through proper governmental action. We did lack insight into deeper environmental problems:

- * Power of secularity to change minds through advertizing is little understood by those seeing little need for focusing on self-control. We were naive about how much all of us were in the mentality of materialism and that we were to avoid the subject;

- * Weakness of a purely rational approach to persuasion means healing Earth must become a holistic exercise and not limited to ecological studies or exposure of damage to Earth. Healing involves the entire social, political, economic, and especially spiritual person. One must realize that our own inner forces are not sufficient to change the habits of others;

- * Grip of social addiction on the human person is simply unacknowledged and thus we must turn to ex-addicts and the poor for models of how to act and for leadership in struggles ahead; and

- * Need for divine help in overcoming the Evil One,⁵ whose existence is more denied than even God's presence in our world.

This work-in-progress promotes healing Earth through a globalizing sharing of resources. This process of healing requires a diagnosis of ills (Chapter One), a selection of proper treatments (appropriate technology) and medicine (renewable energy) (Chapter Two), determining what we can do caregiving teams (Chapter Three), and trusting in God for success of this process (Chapter Four).

The audience is not the entire world, no matter how grandiose are our ambitions. We know our limits and that few will take time to read this text. A more realistic intention is to find a few people willing to devote themselves as agents of change and to encourage them to work together to change from a material profit motivation to one of satisfying service for our fellow brothers and sisters. Hopefully, in reading my personal journey you are able to short circuit some wrong turns in yours. But more is intended: we must lay the groundwork for launching the healing process. This requires balanced agents of change who are inwardly at peace and yet externally disturbed about current conditions. Each of the sub-sections of the first four chapters have **highlighted insights and practices**. While some might be obvious, still they were key events in my journey. Record-keeping of these and other issues enhances discernment and spiritual growth.

Radical change is necessary and this will not come easily. We must

become familiar with the impact of environmental issues: the general understanding of pollution and resource waste, renewable energy, rise of global climate change, growing disparity of wealth, and fading of the American Dream. Amid my concerns over erosion of the democratic process, are challenges to right-to-life and livelihood, climate change due to lag in renewable energy production, economic disparity through lack of fair taxes, and failure to face the unsustainable economy. A completely fossil fuel-free economy is key to sustainability, but is not sufficient for curing all ills. Our challenge is to channel a holy impatience of youth into a non-violent process of radical change in which economic equality and a more shared social system arise.

Chapter One: Comprehending the Critical Situation (1970s)

On the first Earth Day in April, 1970 hundreds of us students and faculty attended an event on the mall at the University of Texas at Austin. This location is adjacent to the 307-foot administrative building tower where Charles Whitman on August 1, 1966 killed 12 and wounded 32 others with gunshots from the tower's observation deck on the 29th floor before killing himself. The Earth Day rally was another historic event at UT. I do not recall the specific contents of the speech-making but distinctly remember a spectator seated on the lawn in front of me squashing his filtered cigarette butt in the grass while wildly cheering attacks on major polluters. Environmental confrontation yes, but how I wondered, do we handle individual polluters as this fellow? The problem emerged suddenly: **We are all contributors to the environmental crisis.**

How do we go about healing Earth? I came from a family of healers (two first cousins medical doctors and six first cousin nurses with family engaged in personal healing) and a brother in health care administration. We are more inclined to healing than formal teaching -- though for me both fields can be combined through public interest work. In 1970, fresh from post-doctorate work I responded to an invitation to work in Washington, DC. The idea of doing "public interest science" in the legal center of America if not the world was a challenge. Here one could apply scientific principles and technique to move from problem exposure to well-founded solutions -- though the process was hidden in a cloud of lobbying, posturing, and media over-reaction. The consumer culture of privilege and waste would not allow for easy solutions and this gradually transformed a temporary venture into a lifetime ministry that is far from over as of this moment.

a) Take Public Responsibility for Environmental Damage

Upon arrival in Washington in June 1970, my initial public interest work at Ralph Nader's *Center for the Study of Responsive Law* involved a number of

environmental issues with associated chemical aspects and demanding immediate attention for a greenhorn: possible asbestos in tobacco wrappers, mercury in fish, and lead in gasoline. Were the surfacing reports true and how were they to be verified and rendered credible? Did some manufacturer really put asbestos in those little cigar wrappers that a rather knowledgeable Connecticut gentleman brought to the office? How did the mercury get into fish as now being analyzed and causing nationwide discussion? Why raise octane levels when lead in gasoline is doing a good job? A host of questions deserving answers called for media reaction and testimony before Congress -- and this was a far cry from my chemical research a few months before. Public media demanded quick and precise answers and yet non-profit public interest groups and individuals were just starting. We had little breathing room in the struggle ahead.

The story of my battle with the Tobacco Institute and the interaction with Fred Panzer is another matter. My first test of fire was in reporting to the press that a series of patents had been issued to include asbestos in tobacco filters and product wrapping. This led to a fire storm from the tobacco industry and while they acknowledged patents (they could hardly do otherwise), they still vehemently denied that such had ever occurred. I was totally unprepared for this storm and was frightened by the denials made in the press, yet a certain individual had given me sheets of small cigar wrapping paper that just might contain asbestos if submitted to expensive analysis. I closed the case in part because I was a pipe smoker at the time, had gone to college on income from tobacco grown at our farm, and somehow half trusted the tobacco industry that bought our family crops at reasonably high prices. Unfortunately, when later moving on I discarded those stored sheets to my utter regret, for that issue resurfaced three decades later and the evidence went into the trash can.

Environmental solutions seemed obvious in those heady early activist days. In the year 1970, our only major resource was a praiseworthy issue that had the immediate attention of the general public. Working in DC with Ralph Nader, known widely for his book *Unsafe at Any Speed*¹ and his consumer advocacy, our team had ready access to the media. Issues of pollution of air and water were safer than that of consumer tobacco products and its Big Tobacco protectors who were well versed in attacking the medical evidence showing health damage from smoking. Vast resources were being thrown into creating doubt as to scientific evidence. Telling a story of pollution seemed simple enough, but bringing about corrective changes in proper order was and still is a major public interest problem. We have a nation of convenience and, if some are privileged to use resources extravagantly, then the proof rests with enough evidence to legally halt the practice -- but the legal procedure pits citizens against high-priced and clever lawyers who can generate doubt that needs prudent consideration.

Following Earth Day, manufacturing and business became the focus of media attack. Environmental pollution of both air and water can be photogenic, and thus the polluted Cuyahoga River and belching smoke stacks of the rust belt made news when air- and water-borne dangers were exposed. It seemed so simple: pinpoint the sources and find and fine the culprits! The initial task of the environmental activist was to detect sources and demand proper governmental policing of culprits. However, laws were not that clear and simple procedures of prosecution demanded documentation as to harmful effects and proven pollution elimination technologies that would not damage production or threaten the jobs of workers.

A more disturbing question was whether curbing pollution meant curbing numbers of autos, appliances, and building materials that were essential to a consumer-driven economy. Furthermore, who is to blame totally or in part, and how do we as a nation or world divvy up blame? Congressional testimony on a half dozen problem areas was much of my work those first years of the 1970s, and we did help create a climate of chronic need for the primary environmental laws in that decade, along with the institution of the *U.S. Environmental Protection Agency* (USEPA). These were positive contributions to the elementary steps of healing Earth.

Environment was becoming a global issue. In the course of my early work in June 1972 I went to the citizens gathering at the *United Nations Conference on the Environment* in Stockholm Sweden. My grander hopes included working with the Vatican delegation, and somewhat innocently I even lobbied the Apostolic Delegate himself and attended a reception at his place. However, I was a complete novice at Church politics. Rather, I went to the Stockholm meeting as a private citizen and attended the citizens' forum adjacent to the governmental formal gathering. Each morning during the two-week meeting various priests attending both officially and in the citizen's forum concelebrated Masses in Latin, and we talked about issues afterwards; the formal folks talked about principles and others about practical global environmental problems. We noted that European-led Green Peace was already active.

At the citizen's meeting an adjacent person indicated that their Swedish Prime Minister Olaf Palme (later assassinated in 1986) was sitting unguarded in the audience. I was moved and went over and thanked him for attending our session. At one portion a Brazilian biologist spoke eloquently about massive destruction of the Amazon rain forest, the "lungs of Earth." Many spoke about the need for dramatic action to cut pollutants that harmed individuals -- and some even paraded victims of the Minamata Japan mercury poisoning (*itai itai disease*), though human beings were exploited.

Environmentalism has a social as well as ecological dimension. One instance at the UN Conference stuck deeply. A rather hefty East African

lady approached an all-white, all-male ecology panel swinging her hips and knocking over chairs and panelists and insisted, "This group needs integration." Half the audience was horrified and half of us cheered, but why? The concept was emerging that environmental public interest concerns must be made aware of racial and sexist issues -- and this was more than an academic problem. The feminist activist added that few of her brothers and sisters of color from "Third World" lands had resources to come and be represented; thus, she appointed herself to stand in for Earth's forsaken. But why did some of us cheer? She had added a needed emphasis for consideration.

In the early 1970s I was energized for action, but where must one start? Consumer problems were often overblown and highly self-oriented -- though at times they pointed to deeper issues and could not be dismissed so easily. However, consumer waste problems were serious but with a status quo pressure of enormous proportions driven by moneyed interests. The temptation was evident in such a consumer culture to tweak the System whenever possible and not to rattle trade and industry groups. Thus the agenda was to transfer the onus of proof as quickly as possible from individual opposition groups to legislators to create environmental regulations: air and water pollution curbs, plant and animal threat protection, and toxic chemical safeguards. Could we in a society that champions individual freedom offer curbs to consumers who say "yes" or "no" as exercise of their personal freedom? Here the clash of libertarian choices and widespread governmental controls was starting to emerge.

b) Fashion "The Contrasumers"

The "responsible ownership" problem required an engagement of both producers and consumers. It seemed fitting to make an effective case for consumer awareness of how much individuals contribute to the problem. This would be in the form of a guidebook on consumption patterns allowing concerned citizens to be aware of resources consumed in ordinary life, so that they could become conscientious consumers -- or better, refrain from consumption when possible. Commercialism has a power over us and this must be countered through awareness and proper information. At least that was my thinking, that people could be swayed by rational persuasion. If producers can persuade people to "need" for comfort and convenience, surely we could persuade them not to need such items. But is that so easily done?

My optimism ran heavily throughout this chain of reasoning. Knowing that pollution of air, water and even pristine land is wrong, demands citizen response and participation along with active governmental intervention and restoration, for citizens acting alone and mesmerized by cultural allurements are somewhat helpless to effect change. The UN environmental principles say it well: *The capacity of the Earth to produce vital renewable resources must be*

*maintained and wherever practical restored and improved.*² The anticipated guidebook would be of assistance to this right way of acting.

Individuals & small groups can make a difference. History tells of the influence of individuals with a mission or with driving ambitions. Jesus or Francis of Assisi, on a moral level or Napoleon or Julius Caesar in military matters made differences. Anthropologist Margaret Mead says "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." Paucity of citizens at the start is not a determining factor. Standing up for the Common Good or challenging polluters may start small as well. Our expectations for public interest groups arousing profound change ran high in the 1970s. Certainly Ralph Nader was an individual who had a popular reputation for getting issues before the public -- and he was an individual who made a difference, a champion of the little guy.

To affix consumption quantities measured in individual energy use on our American lifestyle practices would help get a handle on what we consume. Yes, the world wanted autos, central heating and/or cooling, resource intensive animal products, and electronic devices, and the publicity needed to bring these to consumers takes non-renewable energy that could be calculated in "energy units" for all goods and services. The product of this authentic puzzle in pre-computer days was "**The Lifestyle Index**;" this became an appendix to *The Contrasumers*. The concept was reasonable, though estimated expenditures have declined over the four decades through efficiency improvements. Certainly some may have been interested in this novel approach, but its influence was delayed at best, and often ignored, except by some bottom-line-conscious producers.

My question while composing *The Contrasumers* was "How do we convey urgency to a society seeking convenience and comfort?" Can we do this here and now or just add hints that others would accept and implement in an unspecified future? The voluntary and exemplary model approach to change predicated individuals using recognizable methods, but with a luxury of time to promote their respective programs; volunteerism in an area of change was really a luxury of the upper and middle classes. Hungry people can't wait, and so a nagging idea prevailed throughout assembling this guidebook in a commercial world: Who is even willing to be guided?

The doubts really meant *The Contrasumers* was too theoretical and needed a companion volume on implementation; thus, we launched almost immediately into *99 Ways to a Simple Lifestyle*³. We have tried all of these ways, but is that enough? Furthermore, neither knowledge of consumption impacts (1970s) nor individual actions to make changes, as attempted by us in the 1980s, reached the majority of consumers. Small victories do not automatically lead to bigger ones. Generating a sense of expanding solidarity

where lifestyle changes are simultaneously coupled with like-minded communities became an emerging aim during the 1990s.

The Contrasumers began by contrasting differences in lifestyles of a person living in 1876 at the first centennial of our nation, with one living a century later. The locations were a small town (Milford, Ohio), the center of American population reached on July 4, 1876; the second was a suburb of St. Louis where that U.S. population center passed exactly one hundred years later. The contrasting benefits and shortcomings of people living in these different places and times set the tone of measuring consumption patterns at different periods in American history. A horse and buggy age gave way to autos and airplanes, and with dramatic changes came both benefits and problems.

Attribution in consumption patterns emerged as a problem that many overlook. To what country do we attribute soybean carbon content if one produces and another consumes? Which state is the polluter when one generates electricity and another consumes it? To say an individual consumes so much energy and forget social benefits that take resources is false. This is a major issue when it comes to infrastructure maintenance or military defense. Are sailors on an aircraft carrier the per capita consumers of energy driving the ship? Hardly! Then who is it attributed to? To the energy supplier? The ship's terminal port? The general public in America? Among allies? Attribution makes knowing amounts of resources mute except when some of this involves profits to individuals in the process. And why should they benefit without paying the environmental costs? Socially we benefit from major portions of consumption and we do so in unequal ways. Being watchful of individual consumption patterns without considering social dimensions skews the process away from social justice and even leads to questioning significant per capital numbers.

Hypocrisy is a second problem. How do we argue for simplicity at an individual level and still have a society that allows seven-bathroom mansions for the one conscious about personal recycling? Conservation-minded activists did have a history of shorter-term success, ranging from bird-lovers who stopped the practice of putting bird feathers in ladies and gentlemen hats at the turn of the twentieth century, to efforts by wild game hunter President Teddy Roosevelt in fighting for conservation lands and parks. Why conserve when some do and others are hell-bent on consuming? We need to have a balanced picture that includes consumption patterns suggested in *The Contrasumers*: waste recycling centers, more home insulation, energy efficiency, renewable energy implementation, reduced use of dirty coal, hybrid and electric vehicles, water pollution abatement programs, nutritional awareness, and on and on. However, consumption levels are now a major issue in previous affluent countries and the emerging ones.

c) Realize That Overconsumption Leads to Clutter

The connection between consumption of goods and the environmental crisis appeared early; consumer products demand mining, drilling, growing crops, and transporting raw materials, processing them, and commercializing products that are sold to the consuming public. When more and more auto, large homes, and appliances along with resource-rich foods such as animal products are consumed, some impact occurs on the world in the form of air, water, and land pollution, and collection and disposal of wastes -- with some residual toxic materials remaining. Human consumption using modern techniques by larger numbers of people takes a toll on the natural environment, including threatened and endangers plants and animals. Spreading blame becomes a controversial item, and we like to blame others. Mutual blame is never popular and certainly not in the early 1970s; few speakers or writers touched the issue.

The poor unfairly bear the burden of environmental blame. Once pollution problems arose, early post-Earth Day blamers attacked the habits of the poor who were and are numerous and increasing by millions each year. The poor live in highly polluted areas with waste leftovers dumped near their lower-scale backyards and they have few ways of proper disposal. Grimy and junked neighborhoods meant poor ones without proper plumbing and trash collection. In so blaming, additional finger pointing was directed to the Catholic Church for refusing to approve artificial commercial contraceptives and at that time the swelling ranks in parts of the "Third World" appeared to prove their point -- though Muslims were increasing faster. For such finger-pointers, it was overpopulation by darker-skinned folks who were the primary cause of the environmental crisis. At this period there seemed an easy solution -- condoms for all.

Individual consumption varies enormously as do polluters. Missing from this rather naive focus on overpopulation were differences in consumption patterns, only what average consumers required, as though all regions and nations were the same. Thus if all were equal, the poor individuals collectively would be more to blame than the rich. Only when we started to compare differences did we see that even "average" American or European consumers required far more resources than Africans or Asian Indians, sometimes twenty- and thirty-fold differences. Besides, who were the generators of waste materials, not where were they ultimately stored or dumped? Focusing on average people instead of consumers involved a heavy dash of hypocrisy and misplaced blame.

In 1974, U.S. Americans "consumed" approximately one quarter of the world's processed resources (less today) and these along with Canadian and European "first world" people regarded their consuming practices as that of a cultivated, developed, and enlightened people worthy of special privilege.

Relating consumption with lifestyle habits showed affluence to be closely related. However, the question was asked: if consumption is a mark of economic activity, isn't blaming the socio-economic System unpatriotic? Connecting consumption with consumers forced a look into affluence. Thus the idea of *The Contrasumers* germinated during my only extended trip through Europe, riding *Eurail* by night and visiting sites by day -- at least public transportation. Shouldn't petroleum-fueled autos be subject to control in numbers?

We seek to justify living comfortably without counting costs.

Consumption of goods demands both purchase as an event and maintenance and use as an ongoing process. For producers, the challenge is to change need for a product into a short-lived impulse and planned-obsolescence into the desire to discard an item for a more profitable purchase in the shortest possible time -- all for the sake of comfort and convenience. This commercial practice may boost the economy but come at the price of the mining of resources from Earth herself. Discards are an after thought.

A Scranton, Pennsylvania soft drink producer came to the Nader office and explained that as long as all had to recycle bottles he could make a profit. However, when the big producers were able to stamp "dispose responsibly" and gave the burden ultimately to the consumer, then it was far cheaper for producers to dump responsibility as too costly for the bottom line. Thus, they were able to do mass scale distribution with no responsibility for the cleanup or for terminals to pick up recyclables. This was the spell of death to responsible small bottlers.

Passing on goods in primitive communal societies was easy; in a more individualized society with heavy focus on personal possessions, this becomes more complex. Granted some mobile primitives were free to pack up and move on when a location became too junked. However, the settled people everywhere have had problems with discarded materials -- and usually relegated the problem to lower rungs in the social ladder. All of us wonder to whom do we leave cherished items and will they simply become a growing junk burden. A wise 90-year-old, Regina Brett, includes among her 45 lessons, *Get rid of anything that isn't useful. Clutter weighs you down in many ways.*³ One of the weights is that this is the price of a consumer culture that is often ignored at the time of purchase.

Resource consumption expanded rapidly in the post-Second World War. Industry wanted to turn from weapons to consumer products with massive production lines and willing workers. The salvaging and scrapping of the Great Depression was a thing of the past and a new automobile, refrigerator, television, and suburban home was the "order of the day." Resource conservation sank far below convenience and keeping abreast of seemingly prosperous neighbors in the race to display status. In a land of

plenty and at dinner tables with many dishes, the rule following the depression period was to consume as you like, and plenty meant leaving a little food on the plate. High ticket durables began to clutter residences and depending on how neatly arranged were signs of being junky or prosperous. Today in America, one finds 51,000 storage facilities covering 2.3 billion square feet with leftover junk (7 square feet for every person).⁴

Consumption is patriotic. Following "The War," America was the great donor through the Marshall Plan and other assistance programs, which helped Western Europe nations get back on their feet. The consumption resulting from supplying a war-ravaged Europe was good for business, and that meant more money in the pocket of the working class. We were at a stage in history that was one of the most economically equal; the itch of a war-rationed populace was to spend on items desired or now desired through an ever more sophisticated commercial media. For those of us of a more conservationist bent, the desire could not be challenged, provided no one wasted what was being acquired. The individual urge to consume and use, displaying personal freedom's entitlement, was the *American way* and getting things for betterment of children as the American Dream. Few challenged these concepts.

Could excessive consumption be controlled? Self-control is not often discussed in polite society unless someone or a close associate has a drug or drinking problem. However, we were taught from youth that everyone is to practice self-control for both our physical and spiritual health. Fasting and abstaining were accompanied by moral demands during certain seasons or events. Was this simply a private exercise by the scrupulous? Self-control was laughed at by the spending culture, whether it be personal behavior or product consumption, a barrier to the liberation in the twentieth century. For Catholics, meat on Fridays for some meant liberation from a rule; for others, it meant responsible forms of self-control in a world of the poor who could not afford meat one day a week. Freedom to consume meant so many packs a day when doctors touted the benefits of certain brands of cigarettes. Overconsumption became an old wives' tale to the detriment of both individuals and society.

"Contrasumption" was my coinage for addressing this problem. This term is not yet accepted as a new English word, but it ought to be. Reduce consumption to essential levels and thus conserve resources for present and future generations. Does the battle pit those desiring resources for their grandchildren against those who say "eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we will die." Can quality of life be raised by reduction of clutter and junk, the handmaiden of overconsumption? Curbing consumer use reduces volume of processed materials and thus associated air and water emissions. Thus, resource conservation needed a guidebook for concerned citizens who resolved to act rationally. Exposing pollutants was yielding to beneficial solutions, and so the key was rational processes. In composing *The*

Contrasumers I surfaced my deeply troubling question: What if the far less affluent people of China, India, the rest of Asia, Latin America, and Africa join the affluent consumption demands? Was a catastrophe in the offing? The question grows in pertinence through the decades.

Producers create an appetite. Younger folks may be surprised to know that early environmental legislation and agencies were non-partisan, the product of the Republican Nixon and Ford Administrations with broad-based party support. Manufacturers became targets of air, water, and toxic substance legislation and then starting speaking up for uniform regulations. Though producers knew that costs could be passed on to the consuming public, still it wanted clear and uniform regulations over any environment piecemeal approach being applied by certain states and regions. Only with time did anti-environmental lobbying develop.

Overly competitive sports are part of the consumer culture. The days of an ancient wreath of laurel are long gone; in place of these are bargain times when advertisements of related and unrelated sports paraphernalia and multi-million dollar athlete contracts have ushered in a multi-billion dollar program that continues to grow. Competition hype makes for ticket sales and lucrative TV contracts to professional and academic sports games. Instead of fans looking enjoying good athletic play, the thrust is to win for the home town, and see cheers turn to riots. The noise of cheering Seattle fans precipitated a minor earthquake and a notation in the *Guinness Book of World Records* by a competing noisy school. The Roman Empire's "bread and circuses" mentality is still with us after two millennia.

Are there limits to growth? A culture of consumption has a problem related to physical limits to resources and carrying capacity. In 1972 the concept of limits came into the open through discussion of "limits to growth" by the Club of Rome.⁵ That discussion has continued over the decades. Amid impending predictions of resource limits, still questions by profiteers arise: Doesn't material production and growth help build the economy, keep workers employed, and factories operating? If a basic consumer is necessary for essential items, who is to say luxuries are not important if people can afford them? Who can talk about self-controls on individuals or social controls on affluent society? Is it possible that both destitution and over-affluence is to be avoided?

When is enough sufficiently enough? Are there limits within the *consumption continuum* running from basic lacks (destitution) to over-indulgent excess (wanton affluence)? Certainly, a basic quality of life calls for basic essentials that may vary somewhat in different societies. But more importantly, when are there limits to consumption by individuals on the more affluent end of the spectrum? We will struggle to answer this through the decades.

Consumption becomes a competitive game. I am reminded each year on Easter Sunday when the liturgy is followed by the traditional American custom of an Easter Egg Hunt. These little kids are to run out immediately after hearing that Christ gave his life for us that we would help others and not be self-centered. As though mammon wants another message, they are expected and get as many of the limited plastic eggs as possible. It is a contradiction of what was just taught, but one kids remember most -- get what you can and forget about others who struggle beside you. I tell them that we must divide the number of eggs by the number of egg seekers and then get only your share (e.g., 12) and then help others get their equal share. If we cannot either teach or learn this lesson, we have little hope of saving our Earth. No, it is not me the killjoy but the billionaires who take from the commons.

I try to give the basic Christian message one more time: share.

Overconsumption is related to lack of self-control. However it is a challenge to quantify overconsumption in part because resource use moves rapidly into essential areas and people plea that what they have or use is "needed" in order to keep up with peers. I prefer not to be caught in the judgmental game and add -- those who overconsume know in their heart of hearts that this is too much. Those with wealth privileges consume ever greater amounts, and social and political voices chalk it up to freedom when it is really license. Much needed self-control measures pertain to religious or cultural practice and are in short supply.] When drug overdose deaths spike on a new concoction, drug lords say "Sorry, that's the price of playing the game -- collateral damage." Unchecked appetites end up with disorder, clutter, junk accumulation, and lack of sensitivity for those not powerful enough to resist inherent greed. Disorder becomes endemic when 23% of Americans admit to paying bills late because they "can't find them." One quarter of those with two-car garages have to park their cars outdoors. Convenience and materialistic social status drives people to buy more, consume more, and earn more to pay bills.

Distinguishing essential needs involves food for basic nutrition demands; it also includes affordable and adequate housing, domestic fuel, and potable water. It is becoming a problem to expect quality housing and food for an expanding world population that could grow to nine billion by 2050 according to population experts. To give quality life to all these takes food, wood, concrete, etc. However, a modest quality of life is one thing -- luxury living is another, and the auto, excessive air travel, and resource-intensive food are all part of the realm of the luxurious. The public's attack on use of bird feathers on hats in the 1900s, furs in the 1950s, and the current assault on Black Fridays are reactions to blatant resource misuse. Taxes on luxury items or "sin taxes" on certain practices or purchases have been long known and the incentive for expanded gambling and legalization of marijuana.

Certainly decent housing and infrastructure takes materials -- but how much for resource-intensive food? How many trips? What size of house?

* **We all partake in consumption.** There are no "breatharians" in this world living on free air alone. We humans need food, clothes, shelter, transportation, health drugs, and educational materials. Cultural pressures and limits to available resources dictate amounts of materials consumed. The consumption of a primitive tribe in a tropical rain forest is quite small compared to a comparable number of people in a modern urbanized society. Needs are determined by food likes, housing accommodations, travel from place to place, and amount of luggage we bring along. Social status demands higher consumption and people in rising affluence levels join the insatiable rat race to ever greater accumulations of consumer products. Welcome to the **consumer culture** and keeping up with the Joneses.

* **Conservation practices begin at home.** Retaining heated air in winter and excluding outside hot air in summer are good domestic practices that reduce utility bills and still allow for comfort. But more conservation measures are possible, such as shutting off electronic devices placed on standby, lowering automatic heating thermometers in winter and raising cooling temperatures in summer, refraining from excessive air conditioning through airing at cooler nighttime, reducing hot water use in bathing, using cold water for laundry, and hanging clothes outside to dry. The counter-intuitive practice of conserving lighting energy by turning on and off after each use changed with florescent fixtures being left on for at least four-hour spans due to major energy use at start-up. Insulation is a saving practice even for older homes when discovering leakage of heated or cooled air through new devices. These conservation measures opened the way in 1974 for practical applications summarized in our *99 Ways to a Simple Lifestyle* (see Appendix One), all stated to make this a more resourceful world.

* **Should renewable energy be conserved?** This was an honest question asked at a major energy gathering in 1977. We know the need for resource conservation of non-renewable fossil fuels (coal, petroleum, and natural gas). These fuels when burned add carbon dioxide (a greenhouse gas or *GHG*) to the atmosphere and most scientists began to see this as a climate changing agent that would demand addressing at the global level. "Clean coal" was regarded by opponents to be an unsubstantiated myth. The goal to reduce or completely eliminate GHG centered on future non-carbon dioxide-emitting renewable-energy sources such as traditional hydropower,⁶ dependable and clean geothermal,⁷ and rapidly advancing with lower- priced wind,⁸ and late-arriving solar energy sources.⁹ Resource conservation leads to self-control, an urgently needed practice. Note: While non-renewables are needed to meet current demands, still GHG expanded from 1.8% in the 1970-2010 range to 2.2% from 2010-2011 and 3% from 2011-2012, with expanding

emissions due to increase with 1,000 coal-fired plants now under construction.^{9a}

d) Distinguish Forms of Consumerism

During my Washington sojourn (1970-77) several leading consumer advocates asked me to choose their field of consumer advocacy over emerging environmental action. They knew I worked in DC with Ralph Nader, best known for his critique of the Corvair in his best seller, *Unsafe at Any Speed*. Furthermore, when beginning my DC work, the initial projects involved consumer issues (tobacco products, asbestos, lead in gasoline, as well as mercury in fish) all of which also had environmental implications. Over time, my projects began to favor environmental issues over consumer products because I was puzzled about the limited view of "consumerists" (more concerned about personal satisfaction (safety, price, quality) than about broader consumption of goods and effect on the health of Earth.

I favored public interest concern about unfair consumer practices such as deceptive advertising, unfair pricing, short-lived fashions, and panic buying, but few of these middle and upper class "consumers" ventured to discuss simpler lifestyles that addressed consumption and conservation issues. Consumers considered the best bargains in higher quality products that were long lasting and safe in handling. I found this focus valid but hardly as important as to the amount of resources (and resulting pollution) that was part of the total public interest issue. Planned obsolescence hurt the pocketbook for the consumer, but it hurt Earth herself for the environmentalist.

Consumerism is involved in personal pro-choice issues. One small conflict occurred at the time when the food stamp program was under scrutiny. I suggested at CSPI that we take up the issue of not allowing soft drinks (a rapidly emerging no-no among food purists) to be regarded as "food" by governmental programs. Some progressives said that would be impossible, for all people including the poor should have the freedom to use food stamps as they saw fit -- a pro-choice stance that did not address *who* enticed the poor to drink soft drinks. Were not major soft drink producers some of the strongest proponents of food stamps, provided their illustrious products were involved? Over years some states have removed soft drinks from the food stamp item listing, but only a few have worked bottle bills (another resource conservation measure) into state laws. At the first of each month here in Kentucky, clerks testify that shopping baskets are filled with soft drinks, many sold for cash to buy drugs. Beverage producers spend much to keep the status quo in heavier soft drink consuming states.

Acknowledge an unsolved problem. The persistent confusion over individual rights to consumer choices and the public's attempt to put limits on such choices confounded me. An essential desire for food and other basic

materials is worthy of the human person; a luxury item that consumes large amounts of limited resources or hurts portions of our planet must be curbed, discouraged or forbidden. Further, the road to escalated wants of ever more resource-intensive (and profitable) products must be acknowledged and some forms of controls put in place as the governmental level. Unchecked want leads to an insatiable appetite -- and allowing this appetite to go unchecked could lead ultimately to planetary suicide. Why allow multi-millionaires to act as they please and thus become models for a rising middle class to emulate? Pure attention to consumer satisfaction (health, safety, satisfaction and economics) does not address the forces causing the current consumption patterns. What about the lack of socio-economic controls on the overhoused, overfed, and over-traveled?

Puzzlement thickened when realizing that failure to address lack of self-control only plays into the hands of those who think property holding is an absolute right. For them, who else is to be the arbiter of their use of what they own? Isn't this a private matter outside of the jurisdiction of public authorities? I recalled that some buy an energy-efficient refrigerator and then place the discarded one in a storage space to keep soft drinks and beer cool; in such instances total energy costs in refrigeration rise even when consumers pretended to practice energy efficiency. The problem with the consumer culture was that it failed to address personal and communal self-deception -- and a consumer advocate dared not address such issues. Individual patterns of self-deception seemed to be extended to broader aggregates of the population and we could start thinking of **social deception** by those who think less government is better.

Does consumerism has several meanings? For my quandary I discovered that consumerism had several meaning: to maximize the quality of consumer products, and to seek a broader range of consumer products with little regard for ecological consequences.

1. **Consumerism with emphasis on the individual.** In a first meaning a pro-choice freedom to buy did have a governmental regulatory component, provided it expanded the range of purchase and was an arbiter between producer and consumer with respect to improving quantity and quality of goods. When consumers are satisfied (hardly ever totally possible) and producers supply an adequate amount of goods (seldom the case in real time), then the former has an acceptable product and the latter a maximized profit. This is what fuels the 70% consumer-based American economic System. The insatiable appetite for more goods is overlooked in an official American bipartisan line. Maximized personal choices becomes an acquired governmental duty, but for these consumerists it would allow the choices to remain with the individual to the best degree possible provided they are safe, reasonably priced, not deceptively advertized, and short-lived. Consumerism in this individual sense focuses on rights of those who want safe and labeled

commercial products, the arena of *Consumer's Union* and *Consumer Reports*.

Buyer beware! No doubt a field of concern exists. Fraudulent consumer practices abound. Consumer protection calls for regulation of commerce accompanied by consumer/citizen vigilance. Advertisements, especially directed to young people, lead to purchase of high-priced sports clothes. Note that stores often place sugary cereals lower on shelves so kids accompanying parent customers urge this or that advertised product for purchase. In many cases, planned obsolescence is programmed into new product introduction (the disposable razor or watch or even auto). Cheating in measurements is as old as human commerce, and thus governmental regulations ensure that what is purchased is listed with correct amounts and ingredients -- and often potentially dangerous ingredients highlighted. Here ethical consumer protection deals with vigilance and proper response to deeds of unscrupulous perpetrators.

Consumer watchdogs have a place; they want you to get your money's worth through proper labeling, correctly stated and revealing advertisement, high product performance, and guaranteed safety and reasonable length of useful services. The consumer advocates look out for buying colleagues and are watchful in delivering reasonably priced, safe, and long lasting commercial products. *Consumer Reports* has a highly experienced staff to grade and judge certain lines of products worth investigating. Private research is augmented by governmental regulatory agencies such as the *U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission* (CPSC) when ignorance, fraud, or greed hamper the public getting its money's worth. In turn by congressional mandate, CPSC demands clear and concise labeling of ingredients, proof of claims, proper transport and sale of items, and guaranteed quality at commercial outlets.

Shop till you drop! Consumerism as a means to total satisfaction (rally impossible) allows care in purchase but never addresses the excessive purchasing. In fact, the lust for more of a good thing feeds on the lower level of humanity and can harm the soul. Materialism never satisfies, but little effort is made to limit the materialistic and inequality of a society that spends more if more surplus for goods is available. Simply put, affluent consumers or those with money or credit tend to acquire in excess and this is not just an American but a world problem. Smokers puff away using tobacco products that harm them and neighbors alike; autos permit convenience and comfort travel, but exhausts invade the surrounding environment; cell phones give instant communication and keep people connected, but result in ceaseless chatter, kills time, irritates those who are not deaf, and draws attention away from needed operations such as driving. Think about Black Friday after Thanksgiving when panic causes bargain seekers to trample over others to get what they compulsively "want."

2) **Consumerism with emphasis on social ramifications.**

Consumerism has a second but broader public interest issue beyond attacking shoddy, unsafe, and fraudulent practices -- though here a regulatory agenda has benefits as stated. The overlooked weakness of the overly individualistic-oriented consumerism is that what we do privately or individually DOES affect the social structure in some way -- and realizing this by many people is often frightening to many people to say the least. Thus the consumer with no or limited self-control has problems that affect the common good. The orientation of the consumer economy will be to call more attention to high-ticket items, to resource-intensive foods such as animal products, to medicines for diseases of the affluent, and to those items that are fashionable. This type of consumerism caters to the ones with more expendable financial resources and less to those with basic essential needs.

A consumerist culture inflates wants. The practice by producers to create in potential consumers the "need" for a certain product may be healthful to the socio-economic System so dependent upon increased sales. However, this practice of advertisement and commercial growth through allurements is difficult for a planet with limited resources and large numbers of people in essential need for basic supplies. In this form of consumerism the thrust is to want more and more though an insatiable appetite and to produce more and more to fill the created needs. The economy grows but the wounded Earth suffers all the more. Material profit motivation sparks the engine and the appetite for insatiable material things and energizes the driver to go faster.

Earth's limited resources cannot meet inflated wants. In this second social sense, consumerism is the perverse force at work to stoke an ever growing market and to prepare people to buy the products manufactured. Producer and consumer: one feeds on the other. In earlier periods countering this feedback loop was the call to self-abnegation through religious or cultural auspices. The thrust was to achieve free choice of simpler lifestyle that would permit individual to reduce excessive consumption and focus on what is good for the entire society -- and ultimately the individual. Essential needs come first, but is this possible to effect on more than a chosen few who are willing to break loose? Here religious discipline has a message to give, but it is not a popular message in a consumer culture like ours.

Naive hopes? In some ways those who oppose consumerism under this definition can be victims of wishful thinking: the proper procedure will prevail by individuals turning from excess to moderation. The problem is one of pressures to conform to the needs of the spirit and the needs of the world around us; these pressures are in contrast to those that allure people to more consumer buying, the panic at getting the new item. Those closely connected to the mass media imbibe the consumer culture; they who refrain from that media or limit access severely can be free to make changes on an individual level. The problem is that we are all in some way caught up into the

enticements of the System.

An example of conflict of terms. One may buy a pound of red meat, a perfectly inspected chuck of grain-fed product that required extensive resources to produce and market. It is regulated in its production, selection, processing, labeling, measurement, safe transport, proper refrigeration, arrival at home and food preparation. The first form of consumerism is fully functioning both by the individual producer, consumer, and governmental inspection agents. Here "consumerists" direct their attention to the person who can afford the purchase in the first place -- for it is a luxury item from the world perspective of limited food reserves. The second type of consumerist critic raises questions about the resource-intensive selection in the first place and limits of such selection to the privileged few. Here the emphasis is on choosing at rare occasions or going veggie.

Consumerism is a pejorative term to ecologists. Stated strongly, those who refrain from meat products would say the first form of consumerism has limited benefits and can even be detrimental to a thrust for simpler lifestyles and Earth's long-term viability. Yes, the planet is capable of supplying essential needs but never runaway wants as Mohandas Gandhi observed. Affluence tends to convert enticed wants into cultural "needs," thus triggering consumption by the privileged and profits for the profiteers -- materialism inviting exposure.

A limited perspective. In my 1970s era, I emphasized a service economy in contrast to excessive purchasing of goods. Granted, educational, health care, food, recreation, environmental cleanup, security, insurance, and banking services need goods to work properly, but they are not the luxury of ever-increasing acquisition and disposal to salve our conscience in order to buy the latest fashion. The problem became how to move to a service-oriented economy through governmental funding of education, health, and home care programs. However, the greater challenge involves self-control and limits to consumption, the unsustainable dilemma we are in and the germs to radical change. Was I prepared at that time to talk about social limits to the consumer culture? No way!

A note on "sustainability." The term could have two interpretations: continuing a practice that is a profit-making success; discontinuing a practice that is harmful to the environment in the long-term. What precisely do we want to sustain: a current socio-economic System or a broader ecological natural process? Thus, my preference is to talk about **unsustainability** of the current System.

Social Limits to growth. Concerning the limits to material growth, people raised important questions in the 1970s. Can forests, wildlife populations, fisheries, and water resources sustain the onslaught of growing

consumer demands? These resources are limited and certain civilizations have crashed in the past due to lack of water, food, or land fertility. Specific consumption related to threatening wildlife species was emerging; forests were unable to sustain demands placed on their recovery; uncontrolled demand for ivory were depleting walrus and elephant herds; Japanese fishermen would defy the whaling ban and called the harvest over the next few decades of 10,000 whales for "research purposes" with no scientific literature for proof. *The Contransumers* raised questions and took preliminary steps to critique consumption patterns and even suggest defensive environmental actions.

e) Prioritize Environmental Pollutants

In my seven-year stay in Washington in the 1970s I had the opportunity to be on a governmental committee that set the first criteria for classifying toxic and industrial chemicals. This was directed to the new USEPA, which incidentally has not yet (as of this writing) settled on a systematic procedure to test a vast number of industrial chemicals (including the leaking chemical that closed down the water system in and around Charleston, West Virginia in January 2014). There are many industrial chemicals out there in the public domain (some estimate 80,000), but only about 200 have been fully tested as of this writing. We considered a criteria to be volume expended (easily obtained), another to be persistence in the environment (known through experience), and a major unknown concern to be wide-ranging toxicity.

Several other environment-related issues emerged in the priority-setting stage. One dealt with worker safety. Our first Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) office existed by the good graces of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers component of the AFL-CIO headquarters in Washington.¹⁰ Workers were aware in the vast chemical industry that products they worked with could shorten their lives or cause immediate harm if improperly handled. Secondly, these workers did not know much about the chemicals that could be shortening their lives. This triggered a substantial effort on our part to talk about the limits to trade secrecy when dealing with potentially toxic substances.

Does responsible action demand trade secret revelation? Some consider revealing the toxic nature of a highly-used chemical substance to be confined to those who have professional duties of safeguarding the environment. Transparency can have business implications as to who has a competitive edge with certain secret ingredients within the process or within the final commercial item or its degradation products. Revealing trade secrets became a challenge to those in public interest work, for who is to say how much a worker, a local inhabitant, or a user of products should be exposed to a certain environmental chemical? Don't these have a right to know what threatens them? In 1977, through our *Technical Information Project* we organized a conference at Berkeley Springs, West Virginia on the subject of

toxic substances and trade secrecy as a public interest concern. The problem was discussed but the issue is still before us, for efforts to reveal toxicity is like a Catch-22 involving suspicion and knowledge of tested products. The potential places for dangers in this world of toxic chemicals are numerous and embrace air, water and land areas.

Air purity was of utmost concern because of obvious health effects. Air, that primary essential for life, is an area of the commons that has been contaminated to the advantage of industrial polluters. Smokestacks emit pollutants such as particulate matter; autos generate ozone¹¹ and other pollutants that highly affect congested areas; powerplants have sulfur oxides and a host of other pollutants including the more worrisome carbon dioxides from combustion of coal or to a lesser degree that of natural gas. The consuming public makes growing demands on resources and this affects the environment. Belching smokestacks were signs of prosperity when I was growing up, and by the 1970s they became signs of environmental threat. These exhausts from the carbon economy plus those from poorly vented domestic structures¹² all compound the need for regulations in a world of environmental threats. Beyond this, poorly-vented and inefficient cooking stoves annually contribute to two million early deaths.

Water quality and quantity were emerging as major concerns, for water is an essential for life, can be easily contaminated, and materials when water soluble can easily dissipate far and wide given the right circulatory conditions. In the 1970s, the public was aware that the Cuyahoga River in the Cleveland area caught fire. They knew during summer vacation times of closed waterways and beaches to swimming and fishing due to sewage and other forms of water contamination. With proper regulations, these areas have been cleaned up over the years. However, water excess in floods and shortage in droughts have plagued civilization. This leads to demands for flood protection (after Sandy in 2011) and water conservation measures.¹³ Much serviceable water is needed for irrigation and more recently for extraction of fracked fossil fuels, all of which makes both water quality and quantity a major political issue in many parts of the world.

By the 1970s, water purification and desalination, while technical practices especially in Middle East countries, were proving costly and required proper expertise and maintenance. Furthermore, trace amounts of highly potent commercial chemicals such as popular steroids that remain after standard purification processes became a global worry; studies showing decreased sperm counts in wildlife and human beings make this a matter of growing -- not receding -- concern. Contamination of oceans and over-fishing by corporate trawlers resulted in massive waste of marine life that continues today.¹⁴

Land quality was also a matter of concern. Land can evidently be

contaminated through industry and when abandoned as "brown fields" or chemical wastes sites requires environmental cleanup. Land contamination was a subject of our 1970s work at different times, and is still a major issue when chemicals spill in storage or use. Most were aware of radioactive contamination and that this could affect uranium mining and processing areas without proper safeguards; some safety issue cases are still pending today. Toxic chemicals cause harm to residents both humans and animals. Commercial chemical pesticides and other pollutants have been responsible for dramatic declines in many plant and animal species such as the honey bee¹⁵ and numerous bird species. Mercury and heavy metals have a long history of harm to those near processing (smelters or coal-fired power plants) and utilization (mad hatters and chemical applicators). Lead, a contaminant of air, water and land¹⁶ was a matter of concern in gasoline and domestic paint until curbed and halted through public interest efforts.

Recycling versus new products give mixed messages. A conservation ethic is at the heart of preserving air, water and land quality. Simple rules include: don't use a material if it can't be controlled; use only when necessary; reuse through the conservation measure of recycling. From an ecological standpoint, elementary resource conservation practices can be successful at all levels: individual, domestic, local, regional, and national. Recycling paper, plastics, glass, and metals is beneficial from the economic standpoint of users and a recycling system. How would GM or Toyota react if we follow Cuba's example of extending the life of half-century-old autos? Yard sales are recycling opportunities: furnishings, clothes, copper wiring, kitchenware, and electric appliances and devices. In the Depression era recycling involved all our waste materials on our farm from food wastes fed to hogs to glass crushed into concrete. Recycled aluminum required a small fraction of the energy to make the metal from bauxite. But what about recycling consumer culture wastes by creative ways?¹⁷

f) Appropriate the Unique HERE in Life

During my DC years I felt the need to stay close to the land. "You can take the farmer out of the country but not the country out of the farmer." I needed a way to cope with Washington's stressful conditions, so I would retreat occasionally to the rural countryside (generally the rustic Jesuit Bellarmine Retreat Center at Blue Ridge Summit Pennsylvania near Camp David). I craved open space, sight of wildlife, smell of the forest, and fresh breezes and solitude of the hills. Somehow we must experience environment first hand, and not take the words of some popular writer, poet, or philosopher. Experience creation first hand, for to mimic experts is to deny a unique authenticity coming from personal experience with nature. In fact, an "environmental relativity" must be a component of our spiritual journey of faith; this involves the **HERENESS** of our lives which I developed in reflection during this decade of the 1970s.

HERE means being aware of where we are at a given time and place. We have this unique experience that includes our past sense of time and place and includes a desire to know our directions and bearing. We like knowing much about conditions and topography: from where the wind is blowing, how the temperature changes (to predict daily weather prospects), movement and color of clouds (saying much about the coming day), species of major native trees and plants (whether we know the scientific name or not), awareness and respect for local wildlife (for our own protection), and flow of the rivers (giving us general watershed knowledge). Awareness means a keener sense of sight, sound, smell, taste, and feel of our surroundings. We can learn to be sensitive from others who love their native place, but it is important that we appropriate (make our own) conditions around where we reside -- and be confident in making these our own. Returning to roots is itself a longing for connections as demonstrated in our book *Appalachian Sensations*.¹⁸

HERENESS reveals a meeting place with the Spirit, making this an authentic sacred space and time for each of us. It is not something borrowed from another but a freedom to be oneself while realizing that this occurs with loved ones, associates, and those in community. We grow in our freedom of the Spirit and that includes a sense of time and place. Within the parameters of our current circumstances we are influenced by the immediate surroundings and know it -- and sometimes these disturb us as much as comfort us. We may have to settle in all the more or move on.

Can we tarry awhile? We crave the sense of preserving experiences with the help of others. As satisfaction with our place grows in awareness of the Spirit in our midst we realize that respect for place is a component of happiness. Our journey of faith becomes comforting and knowing the physical surroundings gives a deeper sense of wellbeing. We grow in our self-awareness with respect to our immediate surroundings. We bask when the environment is well preserved and we are hurt in a compassionate way when the land around us is damaged. The Spirit directs us to both admire surrounding nature in her pristine state, and to enhance nature especially through a healing male and female hand.¹⁹

Nature can be enhanced by human activity. Rene Dubos, a noted environmentalist (and consultant of our newly established *Center for Science in the Public Interest*), addressed a large gathering at the annual meeting of the *American Association for the Advancement of Science* in DC and argued that it was "natural" that human being become involved in improvement of landscape and making this livable. He mentioned the draining of swampland in his native France as an example; he proposed that human improvement was a natural thing to do, for we are part of nature and worthy of acting within the bounds of environmental propriety for the benefit of all. I felt a kinship with his arguments for mine was a mystery-filled world inviting greater service through

enhancement.

Mystery pervades our hereness. Mystery involves the partly unanswered perennial question of "why?" Here the most profound of puzzles bother one in a special way. If we are true to ourselves we never let that question leave us, for the WHY is beyond the horizon, a mortal journey that ends in death and for the believer goes beyond in an eternal quest. Mystery is both beyond us and is still grounding our HERENESS, where we find ourselves at a given time. We are tempted to stop and reflect, and take precious moments for prayer, meditation, and celebration. Environment enters into our preliminary answers to our work-in-progress, a work that embraces at times looking down to see where we are and then glancing out to see where we are going. Our vision of the horizon ahead keeps us focused on the future.

I was being called home. Washington DC was surrounded by five of the wealthiest counties in America; it was not the place to simplify life in a very challenging manner. Our CSPI Appalachian Surface Mining Project funded by West Virginia's Jay Rockefeller (then state treasurer) took me back to troubled Appalachia several times. My Jesuit provincial superior (Dan Flaherty) appointed me Province social ministries director while continuing to perform my environmental work. Appalachia brought back memories.

I recalled the attraction as a youth looking out of the east facing milk-room window and watching the sun rise over neighboring Lewis County hills. Mountains were my homing compass, for urban stress had increased trembles in my hands. Go back home. Sick land needs compassion from those with close kinship. Appalachia was being raped by excessive extraction of coal, minerals, and forest products, and two mid-1970s devastating floods in Central Appalachia added ruin to striped and mismanaged forestlands. This is an ideal place to implement *99 Ways to a Simple Lifestyle*.

What is the First Level of Eco-Humility? Returning home would be calling to know our place and respect its natural setting. In being observant throughout that decade, we were quite aware of the trouble afflicting our troubled Earth calling out for healing. Those troubles were evidenced by polluted air, water, and land. The first level of an eco-humility is admission that we have damaged our earth, a mortal misdeed that threatens planetary life. We are culprits and all must take responsibility for misdeeds.

Questions for Reflection

* **Is glorifying creation adequate for an environmental spirituality?** Certainly creation when properly respected has a sense of glory, provided we bypass mishaps by greedy and careless people. Nature seems more glorious when left untouched?

*** Is the Judeo-Christian religious tradition and its emphasis on subduing creation to blame for the environmental crisis?** The Lynn White *Science* article in 1967²⁰ (the all-time most quoted scientific article) placed blame on the culture of conquest and exploitation of primitive peoples by those of this tradition. Is that fair or a misapplication of that tradition?

*** What does the Scripture mean by mastery?** *God blessed them and said to them, 'Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, and conquer it. Be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of the heaven, and all living animals on the earth.'* (Genesis 1:28) Believers prefer to emphasize being responsible masters of nature, not exploiters of nature or oppressors of people.

*** Ought we to acknowledge mistakes and take positive steps to diagnose ill and halt such practices through regulatory measures?** Human activity pertains to everything from population growth to responsible consumption of goods. Some emphasized the former as a cause for the environmental crisis, but is that proper?

*** Does the need to control production extend to control to consumption patterns as well?** The issue challenges the libertarian philosophy of being free to use resources as desired. What is the extent of governmental controls versus the "free market"?

Chapter Two: Assessing Needs and Urgency to Act (1980s)

Radical change may come gradually or abruptly and that holds for any form of eco-revolution. Urgency began to present itself in the 1980s, which called for abandoning the gradualist approach since pollution did irreparable damage and harmed and endangered human beings and other creatures. Returning to Appalachia tested my patience for we are limited on time to achieve what we seek to do. However, our environmental crisis, a micro second in geologic time, demands immediate response even if healing consumes our mortal span and beyond. In all fairness, Washington is more attuned to crisis management than is Appalachia. The drawback is that in the capital, counter to its national and global protestations, was filled with personal agendas. Appalachia has a sense of being contented, with its isolationist bent coming from early settlers who abandoned the crowded East Coast for peace and quiet. Why hurry?

Religious efforts in Appalachia have included the local communities where "church" means the gathering community in the particular holler or mountainside for singing and preaching and high pitched voices and emotional arm waving. Through the 19th and into the 20th century, mainline Protestant

and later Catholic groups focused on education in mission schools and healing through small hospitals and clinics. With these came a broader understanding of "church." Unfortunately, some mission schools prepared students with a pass to migrate from the region to higher-paying opportunities and most are now closed or have changed their mission to that of community art and social centers. Only a remnant of these mission schools remains.

In 1973-4, while in DC, I was invited to be on the Bishops' "Appalachian Pastoral" team, formulated through the efforts of the Catholic Committee of Appalachia (CCA). This pastoral was originally meant to be a series of listening sessions, a statement of need, and then coupled with an action plan (my charge) to implement those needs. The statement was written in beautiful poetic form by a non-Appalachian, Joe Holland; it was well received by the other religious workers and bishops and by national religious publications. My regional efforts to get general assistance for the action plan were met by a diatribe against Catholics that had no place in the project. My personal revision of the plan contained a central focus on establishing an Appalachian lobby in DC. The issuance of the pastoral was well received by the general media but the CCA charged with the action plan found it too challenged and thus rejected it. For them, simply promoting the Pastoral would be action enough, and so words trumped deeds. I chalked it up as a temporary lost skirmish.

In 1979, I was in a Canton Ohio TV environmental discussion with Barry Commoner, a well known ecologist.¹ What was meant to be a lively and mutually affirming discussion turned into sort of a debate. I contested Barry's exclusive thrust in blaming the environmental crisis on outside socio-economic interests alone. I injected that individual consumer actions contributed to the environmental crisis for reasons given in the last chapter; certainly they were induced by corporate practices but their lack of self control and wise choice was part of the problem. We are ALL to blame to some degree for the environmental crisis and this affirmation of solidarity in weakness is the beginnings of meaningful action. After the show Barry asked whether I thought he had a chance to be a serious presidential candidate. Well, in my frank way, I mentioned that third parties have little chance of winning but can focus issues that must be raised. He did run in 1980 and was smothered, as have been other third-party candidates, except for successful Abe Lincoln in a four-way race.

The promising 1980s. Expanding environmental protection and preserving techniques became major goals of the 1980s. However, attempts to speed these processes came face to face with the gray areas of mixed environmental healing techniques. Those who were not in actual dirty work of making changes made their choice methods sound so clearcut - but reality has gray shadows. Often tradeoffs are involved, corners shaved, and methods have unforeseen difficulties. Cleaning up a polluted river may involve

damaging riverbanks in the process; solar cooking may be great, but Asian Indians like certain cultural foods like the chapati that require more intense heating than delivered by solar cookers. Cultural, social, and health ramifications are often overlooked.

The short-lived Carter Administration (essentially 1977-80) gave way in my utter surprise to a victory by Ronald Reagan who came to power in January 1981. The reality hit us that a renewable energy economy was going nowhere fast. Carter's (and originally Nixon's) goal of energy independence was postponed; the price of gasoline rose precipitously and fellow Americans were held captive in a surrounded embassy in Teheran. Furthermore, the smooth-talking Ronald Reagan resonated with bread-and-butter folks even like my life-long Democrat mother. The rapid alert and panic in the 1970s to ever newer exposures to dangers began to wear thin and media fatigue had set in. Reagan removed solar units from the White House and deliberately belittled renewable energy.

One of the reasons for breaking with the Washington, DC scene and coming back to Kentucky was to implement ideas enunciated in our *99 Ways to a Simple Lifestyle*. The mission of our newly formed *Appalachia-Science in the Public Interest* (ASPI) was to make science and technology responsive to the needs of the poor in Central Appalachia: an ambitious undertaking. If the poor could change, then hopefully through hands-on demonstration an awaiting world would follow suit and live more simply. Hastening citizen action by focusing on appropriate technology (AT) was a challenge that went beyond individual and local actions to becoming a regional venture. We launched the new public interest center with federal funding and high hopes -- but time mellowed expectations.

a) Demonstrating Appropriate Technology

ASPI was rewarded one of the eleven grants from Senator Teddy Kennedy's *Science for Citizens Program*. We anticipated working successfully with the National Science Foundation (NSF) after a previous successful project dealing with Trade secrecy and the public's right to know toxic constituents of commercial and industrial substances. The incoming Reagan Administration called into question federal funding on our non-profit environmental groups, and so I was called in February, 1981 by the NSF to appear at the White House transition team's meeting to explain the use of federal grant money already slated for our already approved "Science for Citizens Program." I got up and spoke one sentence and a person (later identified as from the Reagan transition team) sitting behind the head of the NSF shouted, "Next person please." Reagan had suddenly abolished our program in an instant.

Since we had good track record from other projects by NSF and USEPA, NSF's Rachelle Hollander got me to quickly rewrite the grant for funding from

another program, from which we had previously received a grant. Now the attention was to investigate ethical land-use practices in Appalachia with recommendations from activist groups in the region as to tackling basic regional land attitudes. Our project was saved under another rubric of ethical considerations -- but we had the new mandate to assemble a regional land conference in a year with professional academics as the main speakers -- a shift from within to outside the region. The original specifically-targeted appropriate technology program was shelved as far as federal money was concerned and the favoritism of the Carter Administration towards AT faded into history. We were able to share this new grant with non-profit environmental groups from the five central Appalachian states.

Funding became a major AT issue. Our ASPI demonstration work was quickly burdened to find sources of funding for a new non-profit group in a poor region of our country. We still promoted renewable energy and AT methods (including the first complete solar house), better foods through new forms of intensive gardening, more efficient solar fueled cars, individual rainwater and groundwater systems, waste disposal techniques such as composting toilets (four designs), and a variety of AT housing techniques.

"Technology" during the pre-Internet and personal computer days had a more generic meaning that resembled those of E.F. Schumacher.² (My mother was a Schumacher whose grandfather had migrated from the Rhineland where E.F. called home, so I felt a close kinship). Besides, I always favored small counter forces against big corporate marketing. In essence, one does not need a large tractor on a small plot that cannot easily handle such a device; a better hoe is a superior tool of choice -- and so was AT better suited to Appalachian small communities when it was low cost, readily learned, easily maintained, and environmentally benign. Appalachia is a perfect AT proving grounds.

Efficiency became one but not the only issue. Economies of scale often omit the human element that gives life its flavor. The love and care of the small-scale producer touches on something closer to the Appalachian heart. We certainly can be proud of using new autos that improve mileage per gallon and compare older conventional vehicles with hybrids and electric cars. Efficient farming (tractor versus horses) may work better as a replacement on a corporate farm, but neither may be suited for the small-time farmer in a more primitive culture. Efficiency arguments puzzled me since youth when the tractor changed the character of our horse- powered farming methods; our world changed at home but my uncles farm next door stayed in the horse age until he passed on. Factors bringing about change included pressure to expand acreage and cash return, and willingness to enter the new economics. For better or worse, "efficiency" forced us deeper into the consumer System.

A new consumer economy was emerging. Following the Second

World War in Kentucky, we experienced a minor revolution when tank factories returned to making tractors. On our family farm in 1946 we celebrated the move from a horse-to-tractor economy rapidly with this immense technology shift. For millennia countless ancestors used domesticated animals for crop-growing; the fuel to feed beasts of burden (grass, hay, and corn) was grown on the land through one's own resources. Besides homegrown feed, our horses needed rest stops every mile or so, and required special care to maintain and to operate efficiently (shoeing, combing, medicines, proper harness, and protection from bad weather). Farming care and concern changed when mindless tractors replaced temperamental horses. The stage was set for fewer hands and larger farms. Within a decade our family farm expanded from one to two and a rented third farm. Horse rests gave way to longer hours of field work and need to pay for commercial fuel. We went from a small independent self-sustaining economy to an interdependent economy -- and called it "progress." Homesteading gave way to the market economy -- and somehow it was becoming less human.

Should we champion local sources for materials? For any economy to be truly sustainable the bulk components of energy, housing, food, and water ought to come from the local level: energy is homegrown feed (solar) in contrast to beholding to Big Oil; food is homegrown, not shipped from distant places; water is from cisterns or wells and not from a consolidated water district, and local wood, stone or clay is the source of building a home. However, homesteaders can only go so far; they are tempted or forced into a consumer economy and need funds for petroleum-powered vehicles, health insurance, and college education. It becomes a Catch-22: to live in a human way demanded entering the inhuman System in an ever deeper way. Local independence gave way to distant interdependence. Appalachia was caught in these challenges. Our tentative answer was an AT demonstration center that strived to use local bulk resources and yet take ideas from all parts of the world, since an idea did not take much resource to be transmitted. Let's take each bulk material in turn:

* **Energy sources** were always plentiful in Appalachia in the form of wood and coal, and to a lesser degree gas and oil. So was abundance of hydropower that was the prime energy source of the Tennessee Valley Authority in the 1930s. In my current county (Estill) abundance of forest for charcoal and iron ore in the 19th century led to one of America's earliest iron industries; with time this industry moved on to Pittsburgh in the north and Alabama in the south with coal being the fuel of choice. A regionally available energy source replaced limited local wood.

Appalachia always had a problem due to limited arable land for raising animal feed. With mechanization, fossil fuels were enticing as apparently less expensive and more convenient -- but were they? The transition in Appalachia was from a home source throughout the mountains (wood) to one demanding

more capital to develop, process, and transport. A region was quickly becoming beholden to foreign corporate investments to develop railroads, barges, pipelines, and roads to transport fossil fuels to points of need and especially for mining and extracting fossil fuels, a major source of income.

Returning to a smaller locally-controlled economy through environmentally-benign sources was the goal of AT as applied both in our Appalachian region and globally. Note that this struggle to overcome long-distance sources continues in many regions and has appeared to be accommodated in the last few years due to the new phenomenon of fracking in order to obtain closer natural gas and petroleum. In one way, America becomes more independent; in another, cheap gas is slowing the resolution of the climatic change phenomenon by delaying the advent of a totally renewable energy economy. In the start of our AT center during the end of the Carter Administration we experienced a friendly atmosphere for promoting solar and I joined and became president of the *Solar Unity Network*, with non-profit centers represented from all Southeastern states. This group later became a major contributor to the 1982 *Knoxville World Fair*. Our non-profit coalition led by Alabama director David Pate obtained the only original structure on the Knoxville Fair grounds and we made it a completely solarized house, a rare pleasant spot recalled by visitors years later.

ASPI regarded the use of solar energy (in a region with less wind potential than the Great Plains) as a key to a return to the local small-scale economy. Solar was our future energy source when in 1979 we constructed an ASPI solar house, the first completely self-sustaining domicile in America. We included a cistern to catch rainwater, a greenhouse to grow foods, solar collectors (purchased used) to furnish energy for lighting, solar hot water heating on the roof, and a *Clivus Multrum* compost toilet for collecting waste materials for reuse. Our building resources, partly by volunteer labor, were certainly limited.

In due time, the costs of solar collectors would decrease, and "distributed" solar energy collected on rooftops would become popular in states with generous tax incentives. What was started in the early 1980s has now become a mainstay emerging economy in the second decade of this century with wind, solar, hydro, geothermal, and tidal sources challenging traditional fossil fuels. These techniques and others are described in our book *Healing Appalachia*.³ Furthermore they were found in "ASPI Technical Reports" that were written in the 1980s and 1990s and available on the Internet. Developing these papers allowed us to cease verbally repeating to interested visitors one or other specific AT application, the details of which could not be totally comprehended in a single tour or conversation.

Affordable housing was the second component of the move back to the ideals of the homesteading culture and yet interconnected to a friendly

world willing to exchange ideas for the benefit of all. Large-scale housing developments are not the only choice in this age. We chose to construct the solar house on a hillside that the previous owner, Judge Van Hook, knew contained a seam of coal but he wanted it to remain undeveloped and forested. Thus we looked for ways to use local building materials, though wood seemed the material of immediate choice over clay, stone, or earth materials. AT favors best possible construction techniques so the structures are comfortable, affordable, and relatively safe from extreme natural events -- though we wondered about possible earthquakes.

With a number of volunteers we built the solar house and subsequent dwelling on a hillside to keep it above the flood plain of the nearby Rockcastle River. It was a cantilevered pole house, though its appearance was not traditionally Appalachian. Community creativity involves designing and erecting structures that exhibit regional culture to some degree, so we left the surrounding trees as best we could -- and used Appalachian wood to the degree possible. Until the time of the early 20th century blight, the American chestnut was highly prized. But being in the heart of the mixed Mesophytic Forest with immense variety of tree species, other wood products do very well such as oak, ash, poplar, and even locust. With proper forest management, the wood supply is renewable.

Following the solar house we developed on the ASPI grounds a number of additional structures including a small geodesic dome that uses smaller amounts of structural wood; we constructed a yurt built with rough-cut wood in the style of a Mongolian tent though of permanent construction.⁴ Likewise in 1986 we used local wood to make a cordwood-walled structure of about 1000 square feet; we later utilized cordwood for covering the exterior of a mobile home and thus made something somewhat temporary into a permanent dwelling.⁵ We used local stone for a number of retaining walls and for walkways. Our efforts at pressed earth were not as successful, but others in the region had been successful in their subregions.

Food production is a key to local AT success. Many small gardens may seem inefficient when compared to large-scaled corporate operations with massive acres of single crops grown to schedules and specifications. However, these small plots can furnish a host of benefits ranging from personal pride, economics, and responsibility in backyard gardens to return of land to productivity. Those desiring can grow crops with less commercial chemical pesticides involved. We elderly recall that human care and ingenuity ushered in thirty million American "victory gardens" during the Second World War. Today, small garden plots of equal number have reappeared. Individual gardening experiences had psychological, economic, environmental, and spiritual benefits.⁶ During this time we constructed organic raised-bed garden plots on our Rockcastle River flood plain.

Small-scale gardening shows high potential as an enhancing community concern with one gardener encouraging another and each exchanging fresh produce with neighbors. Salad greens require less space to grow and allows for instant transfer from producing area to kitchen without the transport and actual waste associated with movement over long distances. Efficiency in little matters does not necessarily mean uniformity. Thus we introduced Jerusalem artichokes to shield our greenhouse from summer heat and other varieties not known locally, such as salsify (oyster plant) and kohlrabi that we shared with those unfamiliar. Seasonal surpluses were sold through the beginning farmers' market. Furthermore, leftover seasonal produce was preserved through several methods: canning, freezing, a root cellar under the Solar House, and a solar food dryer,⁷ designed and constructed by my dad.

A bonding through working the land permeates the neighborhood and leads to a beautified and variegated landscape. To eat locally makes us become what we eat, and thus become more locally rooted. One should taste local food whenever visiting a place to get a flavor of the place. Large-scale agriculture may yield some major crops such as corn and soybeans, but smaller plots encourage a more human economy and introduce us to foods of less resource intensity, but still nutritionally sound.

Food diets deserve individual and group scrutiny. Actually, national policy could direct choice of lower resource-intensive foods. Charts⁸ show that on a pound or pint basis red meat (beef or pork) stands highest at 5.7, with butter at 3.1, chicken breast at 2.7 and fish at about 1.8 and rice, average fruit, and average vegetables slightly behind, followed by eggs (nine) and beans near 1.0 and milk, sugar, bread pasta, and flour in the 0.5 range. What is so evident is that red meat is the major culprit and moving away from it releases far more corn and soybean lands for less resource intensive grains and oils.

Potable water emerged as a rather complex issue, for here it is more efficient to gather collectively and install community water systems as was already popular during the 1980s. However, our AT homesteading methods were available to help provide, preserve, and improve the quality and quantity for essential human needs. At ASPI, we did not want to go into the regional water distribution system for that would encourage vacation and second-home development of our undeveloped Rockcastle River valley and further down the road, since we were a mile from a heavily-traveled Interstate-75 exit. Thus we championed and built five cisterns⁹ with the emphasis on proper sealing to keep out varmints and seepage. A cistern could easily be drained if water is not frugally dispensed in domestic or irrigation use, especially outside of midday.

Our AT efforts were also extended water wise to curbing domestic consumption that some estimated for Americans at one hundred gallons per

person per day; almost half is flushing of potable water. Dry composting toilets¹⁰ became a focus throughout our building stage, for this is an answer to large-scale domestic water needs. We installed five composting toilets of existing commercial or ASPI design. No water is needed, for composting requires insertion of dry organic matter that, along with healthful bacteria, will turn human and kitchen wastes into composting materials to be used within certain growing areas. Private water needs are coupled with strict water conservation, for precious water takes resources to collect, purify, and deliver.

b) Attending to Cultural Differences

In March 1980, I was invited to the World Council of Churches consultation on "Appropriate Technology" at Versailles near Paris, France. We assembled and discussed needs of the world's poor. A difference began to emerge as to the key understanding of "appropriate technology;" one is a **colonial** preference for giving from an "advanced culture" to a lesser developed one in an appropriating or dispensing fashion; a second is that even primitive cultures have simple and human-friendly techniques to be appropriated in a **democratic** sense to other cultures for adjusting to their particular needs. In defending the latter model it became evident that "appropriate" has multiple meanings in both French and English, one academically elitist and one AT democratic.

We were committed in the early 1980s to an NSF grant to assemble an Appalachian land conference at Dungannon, Virginia. Our land attitudes have a long history back in the roots of our culture, with some traces of Roman law and Saxon/Anglo-Saxon practice. See *Reclaiming the Commons*, Chapter Three.¹¹ Add to this the particular flavor of American individualism and hidden or open hostility to Native Americans whose common lands were seized especially during the Jackson Administration, but really throughout all of early American history. Excuses for expulsion and abrogation of solemn treaties were for Indian safety, improvement, and protection from annihilation by aggressive white settlers. Private versus common land struggles continue to today.

How do various cultures contribute to AT? Practical AT people do not reflect much on abstract cultural concepts. In 1977, I moved from one rather wealthy DC sub-culture to a lower Appalachian one on the national outlook scale, though that is somewhat misleading. DC and Appalachia have cultural aspects worth praising or rejecting. Over time, differences on all levels of society emerged and were worth contrasting. The System promoted Western cultural superiority during the Cold War but in looking beyond the West people were finding value in all cultures, a paradigmatic shift at that time. Through our land study we found that European/American- settler land concepts were distant from Aboriginal ones -- and those had some variation as

well.

The environmental crisis is a cultural crisis. In Appalachia, land was being surface mined, which involved less worker risks than traditional deep mining methods, but the landscape was severely damaged in the process -- and reclamation was shoddy at best. The thoughtless blamed local residents for the conditions, forgetting that electric generation from coal is environmentally costly to those who can pay to dispose of wastes in distant places. To extract coal and destroy a mountain in Appalachia takes its toll on the local population, but electricity generated benefits a broader and often distant constituency. Resource extraction takes its toll on air, water, and land with natural beauty marred and wildlife harmed; domestic tranquility is fractured, an urge to migrate grows, and people lose hope in rebuilding their communities. A culture can be shattered.

Ecumenical ecological participation was sought. The land issues made us seek out religiously-committed people, hoping that ecumenically a strong voice for reform could be raised. In 1986, I accepted a four-month position as resident scholar at the National Cathedral, a major Episcopalian institution in Washington, DC and this allowed time to work on a book, *Renew the Face of the Earth*.¹² The stay at the Cathedral involved many pleasant meetings and helped persuade the institution to assemble a gathering that took place in 1990 with the dedication of an environmental facade. I give a series of talks, a retreat, conferences, and one Sunday liturgical sermon. At this time several scattered citizen environmentalists discussed the possibility of a North American conference for coming to a consensus on healing our wounded Earth.

In our haste to assemble the Conference with virtually no budget we mistakenly ignored the different personal agendas of members. Certainly some had an evangelical fervor with their personal commitment, others preferred a national power trip, and others of us sought a cooperative but radical agenda to confront the System. This oversight took its toll not so much at the Conference itself (a relative success) but in trying to perpetuate it afterwards. We were not dealing directly with formal church leadership, but rather in a bottom up approach. In retrospect, the *North American Conference on Christianity and Ecology* (NACCE) successfully brought together 500 people at North Webster, Indiana in August 1987 with over 100 varied talks. Here Wendell Berry gave a keynote and Bob Sears introduced the idea of a Resurrection-centered Spirituality. John Freda organized the largest collection of environmental art ever assembled and much of the religious press took favorable note of the event.

Had the conference concluded at that festive event, matters would have awaited a successive event as well. However, power groups saw opportunities to reach audiences on a wider level; some wanted an evangelical platform;

others, including those espousing Creation-centered Spirituality, proved very divisive and had the influence of money resources to back up taking over the reigns of the Conference structure. I had a death in the family at the very time of the event. Furthermore, those of us more interested in activism lost interest in the political intrigues. Another replaced me as NACCE president with bitter exchanges in the process, driving me and friends permanently away from broad-based ecumenical activism. In fact, Christians tried various assemblies afterwards with various degrees of success. May they do well! Some major religious leadership groups got a Pew Grant for projects but never again was there a repeat of the '87 bottoms-up approach.

Globalization was coming. The world of the 1980s was coming together in political, military, economic, and communicative ways and the term *globalization* was appearing. Transportation moved faster and container ships were being designed. Jobs were also starting to be destabilized, and factory work moved from relatively higher paying lands to those of cheaper labor and less worker and environmental safeguards. Furthermore, financial transactions and money was moving across borders with ever greater frequency, with some landing in rather secretive tax havens. Migration to lands or parts of countries with more plentiful employment opportunities was occurring on a massive scale never before seen in human history (when including internal movement from rural to urban areas). The effects of globalization were changing second language choices, financial practices, clothes fashion, artistic expression, food choices, and political aspirations.

* **Globalization involves people** crossing language barriers, demanding greater literacy and dual languages, and availability of translation services. The major UN languages (English, Chinese, Russian, Spanish, French, and Arabic) benefitted in second language educational programs; medium sized languages struggled but held; minor local languages came under pressure; and local dialects were threatened with extinction to the detriment of cultural diversity. Young people turned to the major UN languages for social means of communication. However, while learning languages is mind-expanding, loss of minor languages is severe (now losing two dozen a year and expected to lose half the world's languages by the end of this century). Cultural diversity is like plant and animal diversity; it adds to global cultural richness that is worth preserving and sharing.

* **Globalization can affect cultural artifacts in various ways.** Development in emerging countries can result in overlooking environmental standards and thus air, water, and land pollution can occur and be accelerated. The movement of peoples can put a wear and tear on artifacts that have been preserved due to lack of notice. Unprotected shrines suffer from lack of tourist regulation; the sacred Ganges becomes too polluted for Hindus to make the ritualistic bathing; the trails to Mount Everest are now so jammed that trash is appearing much of the way up the slopes. The current Syrian Civil War and

affected populations lead to Syria's archeological wealth being stolen and taken abroad. Developing landscape through urban construction threatens important historic sites. Cultural monuments are unable to withstand higher levels of air pollution that erodes building stones within our sight as when witnessing the erosion on European cathedrals and hearing marble fizzling in hot moist urban air.

* **Food choices are changing** along with needs to have self- control to fight obesity. That is a challenge for a rising middle class that wants all good things found in affluent homes and restaurants. The environmentally concerned call for a new generation to eat less red meat and consume less resource-intensive animal products (all the while, meat consumption rises dramatically in certain emerging countries). The movement of rapid air freight from opposite North/South nations is bringing non-seasonal food to markets in increasing amounts and expanding the tastes of the affluent for greater variations in menus. On the other hand, the globalization of food outlets has created a monotony of fast food menus in nations where rich variety had previously been a hallmark.

* **Preserving culture is more than tradition.** Some battle for the status quo or a return to past glory -- at least in the mind of the presenter. A Medieval Age advocate, John Horvat II¹³, bases an argument on "property" and "free enterprise." For Horvat, medieval methods were better but instead of pressing for a right to the commons he espouses the right to unlimited property, and he faults those who think it ought to be redistributed. What Horvat and others of his free-enterprise defenders overlook is that rights to essential services today demands new forms of redistribution. Medieval ethical conduct with its checks and balances has given way over the years to greed and uncontrolled materialism that needs to be countered by governmental controls. Instead of past glory such efforts are globalizing absolutist property rights with no space for maximization of wealth limits.

The clash of the cultures over property. More primitive hunter/gatherer cultures tend to hold things in common or at least establish rather exclusive territories for a tribe or group. Those that settle in agricultural modes may designate small plots or land for free-holding and stewardship purposes; here, more powerful elites may gain some form of control over designated areas and then require volunteer or forced service (by serfs or slaves) for the use of what they regard as the master's property. European settlers brought their notions of property across the ocean and imposed them on Native Americans. Many laid claim to the newly discovered lands in the name of monarchs who financed trips of discovery and settlement. Thus, personal debts to the crown were repaid by seizing the common property of aboriginals. Amazingly with all our enlightenment, the practice of seizing the commons (air waves, etc.) has never ceased.

Colonizing powers, first Spain and then Portugal, France, England, Holland, Sweden, and Russia, arrived in the Western Hemisphere with an attitude of superiority and with settlers or adventurers willing to change the aboriginal occupancy patterns. Good will soon melted away, and colonizing motivation was permeated with an energizing greed defined by might and firearms. Distant monarchs were the only legitimate rulers with little respect for native cultural values. Through land dedication ceremonies the respective crowns of settler states bestowed "free" land onto their loyal associates who led conquest ventures. Cultural superiority and greed became a bitter brew and extended to land, minerals, furs, timber, and fish. Since these exploiters felt privileged, they looked about for those to do the dirty work, first seizing natives who refused or died rather than submit, then turning to enslaved Africans for hard labor in harsh climates.

Colonialism remains in new forms. The sense of resource acquisition through privilege backed up by military might has become the method of domination well into our times. Perhaps the peak occurred in the start of the twentieth century when virtually all of Africa and Oceania and two-thirds of Asia were under European powers along with the U.S. By the time of the American Revolution, the privileged class created the myth that they have a legal right to use what has been un- or underused by native peoples, and which became their possession through some sort of legal fiction. That misguided colonialist sense of privilege was supported by a misguided sense of religious righteousness that ended in a general division of land among colonizing powers. The combination of capitalistic greed mixed with patriotic power and an overlay of furthering missionary zeal combined to parse out much of the planet.

American territorial expansionism of the 19th century fit into the colonialist mold with its territorial greed called "Manifest destiny," and became a U.S. hallmark in much of our nation's history. European powers were not to interfere in this Hemisphere for this is the American sphere of influence. Richard Kluger¹⁴ narrates the tale of a U.S. venture to spread from sea to sea and often to occupy virgin lands on the East Coast, and then after intensive cultivation and non-replenishment of nutrients moving on to other virgin lands. From the original boundaries set by the Treaty of Paris in 1783 on territory east of the Mississippi the expanding U.S. added the following: Louisiana Purchase (1803), Florida (1819), Republic of Texas (1845), Oregon territory (1846), Mexican cession at Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848), Alaska (1867), Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and Guam (1898) and even the Philippines for half a century, along with other smaller island purchases and trusteeships.

Native Americans took the brunt of this land grabbing stampede. Absolute individual (and legally based) property rights permeated Western colonial practice and clashed with aboriginal landholding practices. These native tribes were offered treaty after treaty involving the surrender of their

territory ultimately to land speculators, settlers and railroad builders, their tribes and clans being relegated to often distant and unwanted land and the Indian territory of Oklahoma. Indian rights advocate Vine Deloria, Jr. noted that over those expansive years the U.S. government entered into more than four hundred treaties with Indians that required them to surrender ancestral lands -- and that it proceeded to violate every one of these agreements.¹⁵ Kluger observed that Native Americans were not spared from the encroachment of white settlers. He said treaties were signed promising tribal sanctuaries "but were slackly enforced or ignored altogether."¹⁶ The sorry records were clear.

Merchants and settlers followed the flag, first in colonial times through the largesse and favoritism of the distant crowned rulers, and later during American Administrations through a lax corps of enforcers. Too often the voices of ethical concern such as missionaries were muted by the permission to convert residents unimpeded or through a sense of superiority. However, some spoke about abuses such as the 1830s chorus of objections to the merciless removal of the five Civilized Tribes from the Southeast by the Jackson and succeeding Administrations. Often the religious leaders forgot that spreading Good News is ultimately a two-way street; natural revelation by hard-working sustaining cultures is good news for newcomers. Recall that Pilgrims ignorant of food-gathering in hostile New World forestlands learned survival from native inhabitants. Overlooked were lessons of seeing God as revealing divine goodness in the whole creation, with native "savages" possessing some qualities worthy of mutual respect.

c) Conserving Health

Settling down in Appalachia brought unexpected shocks: poor middle-aged smokers looked older than their years; obesity was a plague brought on by overeating too much of the wrong foods and by habits involving too little exercise.¹⁷ Psychologically, a sense of community eroded with those whose physical surroundings were damaged through resource extraction and then left unreclaimed. For those with a gracious sense of wellbeing, all forms of physical or mental health are fragile gifts demanding care and respect at all levels: personal, domestic, workplace, and community. When experiencing individual or loved one's health problems we learn to value positive efforts at preservation. However, neglect of health can set in when people see little hope for improvement of self or community and this attitude beset all too many Appalachians.

Too often residents express their desolation through drugs at a higher than average American rate. But that was not all: a variety of new general health issues surfaced for us: effects of environmental tobacco smoke on non-smoking dwellers, worker safety in mines and factories, and new forms of chemical toxicity. Many small Appalachian farmers lived in tobacco dependent

(for livelihood) counties and lost their major source of income with the partial demise of raising tobacco.

Food is often poorly distributed. One billion or more people on this planet go to bed hungry and an additional equal number lack proper food diets. As Pope Francis says, "Can we continue to stand by while food is wasted and people are starving."¹⁸ The facts are sobering and even more so when reflecting that, by Oxfam estimates, 40 to 50% of food is wasted. Too often the malnourished will take what is available to fill hunger pangs, and cheaper carbohydrates are accessible when more nutritious fruits, vegetables, nuts and whole grains prove expensive. Whether food is short or plentiful in a more sophisticated consumer culture, the popular choice is for prepared commercial foods doused with sugar and salt. A hidden famine in the midst of plenty stalks the food junkies in Appalachia and elsewhere. Those of us working in the region puzzled over what to do and encouraged sessions to teach and develop good food purchase and cooking classes, backyard gardening, restricted access to sugary soft drinks, and balanced school breakfast and lunch programs.

Health is the right of every person. Many of us are slow at accepting this somewhat obvious insight. The reason, plain and simple, is that it is hard enough to achieve total health coverage in our wealthy nation; how on Earth are we to champion total health care for a world of acute health needs? There are seven billion plus persons out there. On closer reflection, the problem is not always lack of health care procedures or proper medicine but rather lack of health access. And health access is a monetary problem in our world and redistribution is not an impossible task. Recall the revolutionary words of Scripture, *Nothing will be impossible with God* (Luke 1:37). Health is a security issue, especially at the family and individual level and yet a trillion dollars in funds is available in military security budgets. Perhaps it is not a question of ready financial resources but misplacement of security budgets.

At the time of this writing the bitter national debate on available health care goes on and on though Obama care was succeeding in enrolling large numbers of the uninsured. Some of the naysayers opposed sections with legitimate reasons, but to oppose the concept of proper health for all is privileged elitism in the worse sense. Health security is part of the commons that is to be available to all. Recall that the medical advancements came for a greater part through government taxpayer funds, and so the advancements belong to all people -- even those beyond national boundaries. If that is the case, why do the wealthy receive proper health care while the uninsured are denied it? Good health is a form of national and global security, and to extend this to the world is the reason this must be universalized.¹⁹

Just unloosening the trillions of dollars in tax havens and making these resources available for the health of all would add immense amounts of money

in circulation to educate primary health providers, build clinics, advance research in medicines, and offer home care for millions of shut-ins and elderly. Many are eager for a multitude of meaningful jobs waiting in caregiving. All the while the corporations have salted away billions of dollars in a wait- and-see attitude about where to expand in the System.

In Appalachia, we have access to good but limited clinics and hospitals, but a helicopter ride to more equipped regional facilities one hundred miles away can cost \$27,000. An ambulance ride by road could be in the high hundreds of dollars, often partly or totally at the cost of the patient. The sirens carrying the sick to a distant hospital is like Ross Perot's sucking sound of funds leaving our nation through international trade agreements. Health, like education, is an arena where scarcity ought to be compensated by taxing a broader state or region for the good of all.²⁰ The challenge in health areas is to broaden services to a waiting and suffering world and to redirect military budgeting and taxes to pay for this. In fact, the enhanced health industry would actually stimulate a global economy through more services rather than goods. Appalachia awaits funding to compensate for resources removed from the region for the benefit of distant profiteers and this is acute in health care issues.

Substance abuse in Appalachia became pronounced in various forms: drugs, tobacco, alcohol, and excessive food afflicts all, especially the poor in an unequal society where many find it hopeless to advance to a higher quality of life. In Appalachia, the abuse of over-the-counter drugs is a major problem. The tragic effects are found in the story of legal and illegal drug overdoses²¹ that equal or exceed deaths at middle age from all other causes. The national advertizing of medicines turns our nation from a drug overdose problem by one fraction of the population to a problem by the great majority. People were developing a cavalier approach to ingestion of chemicals of a variety of kinds -- and here Appalachia was no exception. We were well aware, especially in tobacco-growing areas, that smoking involved health risks and reminding smokers of this became a risk in itself. Kentucky had (and still does have) the highest smoking rate in America. Furthermore, tobacco-growing methods had changed with increased commercial fertilizers, sucker control agents, and pesticides that added to the harm to smokers and loved ones.²²

What is said of substance abuse from tobacco or drugs can be extended to an entire consumer culture. How can pressure be applied to change habits? It is difficult and risky to tell someone who finds benefit in a certain food or product that too much of a good thing is bad. That applies to over-the-counter drugs, some vitamins, and many foods with refined sugar and excess salt. Health and safety is less an issue for the young, but the incidents of obese youth were changing the debate. Too much of a good thing combined with inability to say "no" added up to an emerging consumer problem. These

seemingly "good things" extended to snacks, electronic devices, guns, computer games, and a host of consumer products in an age of high pressure sales talk and ease of credit. The crisis was one of self-control, but the consumer culture kept a bombardment of the opposite -- buy, buy, buy.

Upon returning to Appalachia I observed people my age and younger, suffer, wither, and die from a variety of diseases. With each passing year the gift of good health became more deeply appreciated and needed sharing with others. By jogging over a 43 year period I kept weight at a 180 pound range - - and lost the weight battle when jogging halted. I gave up smoking forever in 1982 as the health message finally reached home. Fellow smokers denied their own deteriorating condition, "It ain't so!" The excuse was "I can save my precious hide and the world be damned." This veiled threat bumper sticker appeared "Complaining about my smoking could be dangerous to your health." None of this was confronted in *The Contrasumers* but became a 1980s' concern.

Substance abusers can be prey to deceptive diagnosis. Discomforts for them can be overcome by palliative measures or in recent years to move to electronic cigarettes. A fictional bliss of our prevailing culture seemed to suffice. Headaches, wheezing, and other discomforts are overlooked. Big Tobacco taught a whole generation the wrong thing and only in the 21st century have ads been considered with skepticism. Addiction in any form was seen as a disturbing and difficult issue to handle, though these problems called for a spiritual discernment process.²³

d) Perform Environmental Resource Assessments

In 1982, after realizing that our new Appalachian Institute's funding could not receive further federal grants during the hostile Reagan Administration, Paul Gallimore and I developed a plan to perform "environmental resource assessments" (ERAs). These generally involved a ten-year plan to look at key areas of a physical environment (land use, water use, energy applications, transportation, indoor environment, waste treatment, forest, and community relations) and project a systematic improvement based on the actual resources of the community group and its ability to implement change.

The goal was to make property environmentally greener without resorting to some form of disordered activist approach. In the course of the next two or more decades we completed over 200, which were performed in 33 states, the district of Columbia, and two Canadian provinces. Only when the difficult work of travel and compilation of reports became burdensome did I reluctantly ease away from this type of work -- though I found it immensely enjoyable in the decade of the 1980s and 1990s.

Greening property requires environmental resource planning.

ERAs require keen observation, good note gathering and video recording, penetrating questions to the leadership and staff, and systematic organization of results to make a useful action plan for host groups. At the same time we had to work within the limitations presented (personnel, time, finances, and existing property). Many of these non-profit groups wanted to green their property but were unable to organize resources for the transition. The problem was where to start and how to make meaningful progress over time. Non-profit groups tended to bite off too much too fast and thus initiate projects that were hard to complete simultaneously. This was a source of discouragement and burnout.

Environmental resource assessments were our vehicles of funding and still a way to bring about change for an influential group. Transmitting ideas from one AT group to another is a highly productive way to advance experience to all parties. Most non-profit organizations that wanted to be good exemplars of environmental responsibility saw the added benefits of economic savings, possibilities that all members might gain experiences, and that this was good publicity for their financial and moral supporters. And a number of these host groups became highly successful in their respective greening process. Host groups needed the added encouragement that we were able to give and to actually appreciate the many resources they had at hand (soil, strategic location, well-built facilities, formal organization, solar potential, habit of properly using resources, and well ordered lives). We refrained from naming specific success stories because others who were successful could become offended.

The key to a successful ERA was to have an organizer who was enthusiastic, hard-working and practical, and who worked well with the respective administration. When such talent was present our assessment would bear fruit. Without good agents of change, whether leaders or amiable workers, the reports would simply sit on the shelf and gather dust. Over time we insisted before performing an ERA that such persons were available. We simply did not accept theoretical interest in saving the environment as a basic criteria, but rather presence of someone available to see the project to completion. Some groups wanted to green because it was a fad, and this complicated our work to some degree.

ERAs were aided by the communications revolution. Many of the projects such as the ERAs and our other educational programs were greatly assisted by personal computers in processing and record keeping. To have completed such paperwork in the typewriter age before word processing would have been far more burdensome and would slow our completion of one assessment a month with all our other undertakings. The trusty though improved typewriter gave way quickly to word process by office computers and attached printers along with office duplicating devices. Computers offered

greater ease in composition as well as retrieval of recorded supplementary materials. At the very end of pre-computer days in 1982 one of our major reports had to be retyped from single space to double space for publication; it took an associate several weeks to retype in a presentable fashion and format; only a few years later, the same operation could have been achieved in a few hours at most by a single computer and printing operation -- and mistakes more easily detected and corrected.

Literacy became more necessity in an age of globalizing communications. Not only are major languages and especially English needed for more to have access, but so is knowing how to present materials in any language to be understood by others. Speed of communication as well as access to larger audiences makes literacy all the more urgent. Driving speed makes road signage and directions more important for travelers. Everyday business of financial and civic transactions and information and literacy importance advances further. Though TV and radio became secondary to the fast-advancing Internet as information sources, both still remained instrumental for general and weather information, as well as music and other entertainment.

I did not have access to TV in the regions where I lived in Appalachia and soon dismissed the need for it. A combination of public radio for instant communication and serious periodicals for more in-depth study of issues was satisfactory. What became evident to non-TV people when watching on rare occasions was shallowness of content and how it affected those on a steady TV diet with a laziness for serious reading. TV commercials were horribly distracting and lured those who were exhausted or docile into a mesmerized condition. In fact, this may have started the trend to lowering newspaper readerships and loss of facile literacy skills. The deeper in-depth treatment of issues by reporters was beginning to suffer by this movement to mediocrity.

Good volunteers were jewels. During this period non-profit work loads continued to climb, but it was becoming more difficult to meet personnel needs. Dedicated and simple living volunteers were always welcome but we noted as the decade wore on and academic tuition (and indebtedness) was rising that the number of summer volunteers did not equal those of the previous decade. We sought funds to bring and sustain these good folks for summer spans or other times -- and that was difficult enough. However, some progressive schools were beginning to assist with their own in-service volunteers since our non-profit groups were actually furnishing part of a student's education.

Reports do not surpass face-to-face meetings. Letters, phone calls, and newly activated FAXs were not sufficient to effect total communication needs with peers who were wanting to green their non-profit institutions. This was prior to the age of teleconferencing and so person-to-person conferences

were quite popular in this decade. With enough energy I attended a host of talks, conferences, and retreats to a wide assortment of places and groups. Certainly the itinerant nature of a Jesuit calling was elicited while energy remained.

I still served as president of the Washington DC based *Technical Information Project* (TIP) that Art Purcell and I founded in 1974. For my first four years after returning to Kentucky I traveled back to DC every month. TIP ran a series of USEPA-sponsored resource conservation conferences in major cities during the late 1970s and early 80s. I attended and gave talks at the majority and surprisingly the best attended was of all places -- Anchorage, Alaska. Resource conservation was an intriguing area and one answer for environmental problems -- and many citizens wanted positive answers. Better use of commercial materials still did not tackle the issue of immersion in the consumer culture.

e) Act for the Urgent Time is Now

Urgency in environmental matters was sidestepped as an issue in the 1980s under the Reagan/Poppy Bush Administrations. However, bipartisanship was strong and congenial during this period, and governmental paralysis awaited a new century. First Earth Day urgency eroded with a misplaced trust that government would care for all problems: air and water pollution, major toxic spills and cleanup, reclamation of spilled strip-mined land, and other issues that were arising. Environmentalists were genuinely frustrated, especially when special business interests opposed tightening regulations. Recall this was the decade that the solar water heating on the roof of the White House was dismantled and Reagan spoke of "polluting aerosols" coming from pine and evergreen forests -- a natural phenomenon. While some blatant forms of air and water pollution were being addressed through recently passed regulations, still new areas of pollution surfaced: noise pollution, indoor environmental smoke and other contaminants, ozone depletion, brown fields, and nuclear power safety.

The disasters after Three Mile Island partial meltdown of the core of the Number 2 unit on March 28, 1979, followed by a more serious Chernobyl, Ukraine nuclear meltdown in 1983 changed the U.S. nuclear power strategy with essentially an informal moratorium on new powerplant construction. Higher construction costs resulting from increased regulations and unsolved problems related to disposal of waste problems surfaced and puzzled policy makers.

Activism took a radical turn. In the 1980s, activists sought new ways that went beyond traditional public interest methods of publicity in mainline media and legal actions to draw public attention. Ecotage surfaced as a deliberate act of halting a pollution practice by frustrating the operation and

making it less or unprofitable to continue the status quo. For instance, housing developments were sabotaged, timber-laden forests were spiked, tree sit-ins near harvesting operations organized, and engineering stakes were pulled up or changed at new contested development sites. Radical groups such as *Earth First!* were in the forefront in its public form of radicalism. John Davis, who helped us extensively as an associate in the early 1980s, moved from Kentucky to the West where radical activities were more focused.

Governmental agencies immediately took the side of propertyholders and issued warnings and made arrests, while activists drew greater media attention by focusing on threatened areas of resource extraction and development. For a time the clashes made headlines. While radical action occurred nationwide including Appalachia, still better known events occurred in California and Western states. Environmental activists knew that one can only cry "fire" so many times. As always, the public media has a short attention span while environmental protection is a long-term issue. Possible arrests and convictions for plotting ecotage operations by Earth First! and others were hushed through a pressured change of tactics. Among the informal settlements with arrested activists were out of court settlements to direct energy to publishing peer-reviewed academic articles. Moderate voices called for turning activism to trash cleanup and volunteerism.

NOWNESS is a defining state. To counter the complacency and business associations of the Reagan/Bush 1980s required a double emphasis on urgency and acting ASAP. Throughout this period the nation's merchants of doubt were active, especially Big Tobacco with reference to smoking issues though environmental smoke affecting those near but not actually smoking. Big Oil was in the forefront with demands for favorable tax treatment allowing further petroleum and gas exploration and the quest for energy independence receded. The counterbalance was to show urgency in whatever way possible. However, the battle to be conscious of limited time clashes against status quo proponents, but being on guard and vigilant emphasizes the need to show urgency in various ways.

| The second level of eco-humility emerged, namely, remedial activities to eliminate environmental degradation had humbling gray areas (imperfect solutions, short-lived materials, hidden safety and others). For instance, a major Cornell economist conceived the novel idea of making a clocked rotating solar reflection panel to boil water for a solar irrigation pump; this was to be done using bicycle parts. He brought the device to our center in 1982 for field testing. We had access to my brother, a heat transfer mechanical engineer and he came with his sons to study the device. He soon gave it a thumbs down because of lack of safety in the water boiling component and the lack of rigor in the structure -- plus use of rather pure municipal water was not like the water in agricultural areas. The inventor was disheartened because ASPI did not accept what was a very original idea.

Many hippies of the 1960s and 70s tried their hand at homesteading and AT-type work. In fact, a famous gathering place was *The Farm* in south central Tennessee where the crowd that congregated numbered over a thousand at one point. The organization started many credible projects (we got our first solar panels from them). Actually, The Farm had some grand projects with steel structures and educational facilities started but never completed. At one point the group discharged loafers and hangers-on and the population dropped dramatically. AT was difficult work, took great attention, and required resources that required longer term commitments generally as life-long homesteaders. The affluent with rich parents, lost interest or suffered burnout and moved on.

Environmental solutions were far more than wishful thinking, and ran into sophisticated opposition. Special interest groups like Big Tobacco and Big Energy pretended that scientifically settled matters were really controversial and need not be considered finalized. These merchants of doubt²⁴ were skillful at attracting the media to offer two sides in debate: when 98% of scientists were in agreement, then the 2% in disagreement were worthy of equal time. This helped stall regulations by the skillful insertion of doubt through use of the paid "scientific expert" hacks. Over the next two decades these merchants often used the same hacks, extending to such public policy issues as acid rain, ozone depletion, secondary tobacco smoke, and climate change. The ultimate targets were policy makers and legislators subsidized by favorable regulations and tax breaks for specific industries, all to prolong profits long after regulations were reasonably due.

Besides the pro-business types of systematic attack, the public interest suffered from limited resources. ASPI had its share of mishaps in the form of building damage during windstorms and floods of the river adjacent to the property. Likewise, we had several mishaps including the already reported death of Russell Parmes on his bicycle by a student hurrying to class in a speeding vehicle. Furthermore, our grounds manager Tommy Lambden was murdered and in investigating the crime scene the local sheriff found his house filled with marijuana plants awaiting transplanting later in the spring, quite likely onto parts of our forestlands. Neighbors were implicated in the mysterious destruction of a house we were in the process of building. Our area was well known for illegal pot cultivation and this made cross-country traverse in the summer growing season somewhat perilous. We had our problems.

The decade that started on such high hopes closed with the modest achievements expected when working with and becoming poor. In 1980 it seemed that the solar age had dawned and that eager non-profit groups were in the forefront of a global change. We had a local *Kentucky Solar Alliance* with a newsletter along with a strong regional solar group (*SUNREP*), and a budding nationally directed *Solar Lobby* in Washington DC. The AT program

was well funded and with high expectations as to publicity and conference potential. At the end of this decade the solar organizations were gone and all that remained was our Solar House, functioning through the graces of volunteers and through fees from ERAs, small donations and calendar sales. Renewable energy had to await a new century.

Questions for Reflection

*** What does being with the poor mean?** I confided to fellow Jesuit poet and activist Dan Berrigan, who was a visiting professor to nearby Berea College, that the difficult part of moving from DC to Appalachia was accepting small changes when expecting big ones. He said, "Welcome to being like the poor Christ."

*** In environmental work where does gratitude enter the picture?** In becoming poor, little things become precious gifts worth thanksgiving. Serving others rather than self becomes an ongoing personal revelation, a time of hidden spiritual growth.

*** Dare we to seek to be countercultural and mess up the System?** The triumphant 1970s passed to the 1980s when prudence called for reaching goals in an orderly manner. Healing Earth means emergency response and long-term convalesce through AT. Patience endurance clashes head on with urgent action.

*** What does it mean to be an agent of change with all its limitations?** Change involves risks, discouragement, and fading idealism. Cultural issues enter how we act NOW.

*** Is the call to service of others one that justifies colonialism, slavery, or excessive wealth?** The question was certainly a long-term one arising with each succeeding decade.

Chapter Three: Joining Forces with Others (1990s)

During the last decade of the twentieth century we sought to present our insights, experiences, and accumulating information in a number of ways. I conducted at least two dozen retreats at Milford Ohio and Oshkosh Wisconsin during this period, many with a strong environmental emphasis. Some of the retreatants accepted this quite well but others seemed mildly hostile to aspects of environment, having often been successful businessmen with some hostility to greening the world. When my regular pastoral ministry began in the next decade, retreat opportunities were sharply curtailed, since weekends were consumed with scheduled liturgies.

During this decade our ERAs reached the height of popularity, with over half the total performed in that decade. Likewise we sought to bring together those who had sponsored our assessment work so that notes could be compared. We held these cooperative meetings at our Kentucky center, at St. Louis, at Oldenburg Indiana, at Milford and Loveland Ohio, and at Durham, New Hampshire. Over this period, our own AT experience advanced in areas of solar energy (retrofitted a gas car to solar) and through acquisition of a sizeable building and grounds at Mount Vernon, the county seat. This enlarged urban office space allowed us to separate the library/office from the rural forested Nature Center, whose dampness threatened books and paper files in the wooded Rockcastle Valley. Half of the extensive parking of the acquired building was turned into garden space and a cistern, solar panels, solar hot water, and greenhouse were added to make a unique urbanized AT model.

ASPI received a USEPA grant to furnish Appalachian people with a series of 50 Television interviews (presented on WOBZ at London, Kentucky) and extended this beyond the grant period with still more. The subjects were exemplar Appalachian agents of change in a wide variety of fields, from wild edibles to forest management. However, I learned to listen intensely to guests interviewed and this could not but help make for better understanding of the Appalachian problems. What was starting to happen through this TV series was an understanding of the qualities of agents of change to assist the radical movement needing to come; qualities of humor, articulation, balance, and solidarity with people shown through.

Gradually, ideals gave way to hard knocks of a gray world of imperfections, where theory met practice and simple living clashed with crass commercialism. Perhaps it was late in coming but a rational approach without a spiritual underpinning appeared to be like building a house on sand, and hoping others somehow firm up the foundations. Just how far could a rational approach work with people caught in the throes of consumerism or cowed into passivity while the elite maneuvered their predominantly materialistic culture. Could we somehow stop the onrush of this modern unsustainable culture geared to forgetting the past and glorifying every new device in the "material heaven" ahead?

In the 1990s, addressing the materialistic consumer culture became an issue with the triumphant overturning of the USSR Empire. I frankly was bothered: Could we critique the System that was materialistic and capitalistic and was regarded as the global future? If I spoke what was in my heart, private donors (even when we accepted no corporate money) would be turned off and we would lose our meager means of support. Here for the first time I saw that being poor and committed to simple lifestyle was utterly necessary or otherwise we would not be free to speak. Should addressing overconsumerism be silenced by a desire not to rock the boat of monetary support from those aspiring to be affluent?

I had spoken of the sin of affluence and one head of a charitable group (a priest) took me to task publicly, saying how much affluence was a blessing and not a sin. I extended my inquisitiveness to those religiously-based educational institutions who needed the largesse of the wealthy to keep their institutions functioning. But did this also apply to me and our ASPI operation to a lesser degree since many donors sought to be both green and materially successful? On the other hand, was my disdain for Capitalism something I voiced to close friends but never outside of a trusted circle? My courage was not yet bolstered by the freedom of old age -- but it was starting to express itself. To me, silence could be golden or cowardly.

The decade was a time of learning new lessons. Recycling became popular and yet littering was a continued problem in our landscape. We championed hiking through a constructed trail system on our property that included the Michael Francis Zalla Trail, maintained by volunteers; also the property is very near the 315 mile Shelton Trace National Recreational Trail maintained by the Daniel Boone National Forest. ASPI promoted biking and yet one of our associates lost his life riding on a narrow but busy Appalachian highway. Our organization promoted tourism and historic sites, and yet the local Civil War Wildcat Mountain Battle site was threatened by logging before we brought it to public attention.

For the greater part, blatant abuses of air and water were being tackled at the national level, but it took testimony and citizen attention to keep the beautiful free-flowing and white-water rafting Rockcastle River from being dammed. Nutritional imbalances were being exposed and yet the great majority of Appalachians had not yet learned to improve diets. Still, the socio-economic System in all its vagueness went uncontested. The question arose: why not look more deeply and discover the connection between this environmental crisis and that System, even while satisfied that the USSR and its sorry environmental record were being laid to rest? Perhaps materialism in all its forms was behind a lack of spiritual respect for creation, and this required ongoing attack on the surviving Capitalistic System.

Ginseng was a gift. During this period ASPI strove to expand its audience by taking on new issues. One concern was the collapse of the tobacco economy in Kentucky and central Appalachia (where most of the tobacco dependent counties with small farmers made their living on the relatively lucrative tobacco crop). One possible solution was the wild ginseng that is highly prized in China for supposed medicinal purposes. The roots could sell for upward of a thousand dollars a pound. Syl Yunker, a ginseng grower, convinced us that his "virtually wild ginseng" (identifying and assisting wild ginseng patches to be more productive) was an economic opportunity. ASPI sponsored the *Appalachian Ginseng Foundation* along with a newsletter. We opened a small lab to extract ginsenosides from wild ginseng root for analysis

and eventual commercial synthesis. We furnished isolated extract fractions to Laura Murphy at the Department of Physiology of the School of Medicine at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. We also assembled and published a manual on virtually wild ginseng,¹ and this work inspired our Kristin Johannsen to write a book on the subject.²

a) Balance Limited Space and Time

Because we can say, "The Lord is the only God, there is no other," but then live as if he was not the only God and have other deities at our disposal...There is a danger of idolatry: idolatry, which is brought to us through the spirit of the world.

Pope Francis in June 2013 homily

Each year my religious life includes an eight-day retreat in which progress in spiritual growth is reappraised. Jesuits are expected to reserve this period to move once more through the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius -- and I look forward to this annual opportunity. For me, a key ingredient is to get away to the wilderness, and to speak to God. During this decade I still engaged in primitive camping, though of this writing I have accepted living in a vacation home in the U.S. Red River Gorge Wilderness Area owned by the Kohrs family of Bellevue, Kentucky. Why choose wilderness surroundings? We must remain in close touch with the mystery of God's creation in personal ways.

To be green today means to have courage, a gift of the Holy Spirit, and wilderness has a way of emboldening us. To reserve sacred time and space takes determination in this age of hyperactivity. One can invent a million excuses to keep grinding at daily routine and only one good one for making a retreat: we need it. Each of our senses need to be tuned to place and time (the reason for our publishing *Appalachian Sensations: A Journey through the Seasons*). Furthermore, we need to attune these senses through the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Reflection space and time are essential. Working with others in a collaborative fashion demands knowing and respecting their own space and time. All of us need patience, taking time to listen and pacing ourselves through periods of rest. Prayers help set the rhythm that is needed for our entire life ventures. On the other hand, glorifying modern quick-fix technology threatens private and public space and time. Nerves become frayed, human relationships are tried, and trust needed for sharing is broken down. Those of us affected by "sound pollution" and lack of rest are frustrated warriors unable to coordinate resources with diverse and often distant allies. Rapidly composed, emotionally-laden communications whether by face-to-face contact, phone, or letter (and especially emails) can damage personal relationships. Ignoring an authentic pause that refreshes can be disastrous for human

relations. Ironically, the overly busy often regard rest and silent reflection as an assault on their free space, but really the obsessive filling of time is devastating; human balance needs a rhythm of work and rest.

Balance sound and silent space time and place. Sound pollution and its devastating effect have been well documented.³ Annoying physical sounds range from motorized toy carts to lawn mowers, from jackhammers to revved motorcycles, from house parties to traffic congestion in general. Stress levels rise and a sense of hopelessness prevails for the annoyed. The challenge is for civic controls that can quiet a neighborhood, but these are not always a matter for the local police force. Some individuals take delight in calling attention for others to notice their presence; others suffer silently and hesitate to set boundaries for their silent space. This creates tension by a failure to compromise in conflicting sets of local environmental values. Amazingly, it is balancing silence/noise issues where fundamental environmental change has an opportunity for success -- encouraging respect for differing personalities and goals in a limited world.

Busyness/overconnectedness is an emerging phenomenon where a lacking compromise surfaces even within public places and private homes. We note that NPR runs interviews with people who are transfixed by computer games or glued to TV football games, often in disregard for others in the same household who truly despise noise and seek quiet reflection time. For the average American, time spent watching TV amounts to 72 days out of each year -- and that creates a noisy and busy milieu. On top of this, for some multi-tasking persons, simultaneously watching TV and talking on cell phones ensures the mind is semi-active with voice cords working. These watchers/talkers think those of us, the "TV-less" and "cell phone-less," bear the stamp of being handicapped; these busybodies neglect and even fear silence as something frightening in our modern world where activity has priority over rest.

To appear busy with the hand or head-held device adds to peer status as much as fashionable clothing and choice of words. Today, it is common for walkers, sitters, and even drivers of autos or larger vehicles to be conversing on cell phones. One non-cell rebel fetched a discarded cell phone from his pocket and said out loud, "This creep beside me is disturbing my silent space." A crowd at Warsaw Poland was photographed awaiting a bus and ALL were talking on their cell phones -- an apparent global phenomenon making the "cell-less" into freaks. Being quiet is a rare opportunity to be alone with our thoughts and seeking God within, a forgotten connectedness free of monthly phone bill and free to engage in deeper conversation.

Light pollution like sound pollution, is a cultural arena of concern that has emerged as a problem in recent decades -- both technical innovation and concern about quality of life through times and places of physical darkness

demands compromise. Preserving restful space and time includes conditions that are often intruded upon by modernity -- and dark space is one of these. When I observed excessive public lighting at one college campus during an environmental resource assessment, the grounds manager said he heard only a series of complaints that were opposite, namely, parents demanding more lighting for safety of students and teachers. It was a struggle between darkness needed for sound sleep colliding with lighting needed for outdoor night travel or indoor activities. Some students want to keep interior lights burning; a partner or neighbor prefers a different time for sleeping, studying, or reading. Unfortunately the modern noise- or light-makers hold precedence; silence and darkness are secondary and expected to yield to sound and lights.

From a communal standpoint, light pollution concerns pristine skyscape now being denied to residents, mainly through excess of a good thing (urban street, commercial and home flood lights). Today, over half the world is urbanized in centers with varied amounts of regular external street lighting so that the urban sky glows up to airline travelers, and that glow obscures the starlight for those residents below -- a costly trade off. A short-term volunteer from Chicago staying at our Nature Center rose after a night saying, "It is really dark here." Before I finished the sentence that he could have looked up to see stars for the first time, he had packed and left. For him, darkness was a frightening unknown. Some large metropolitan areas like Lagos in Nigeria actually crave the privilege of night lighting due to undependable electric grids and lack of safety. However, in many urban areas haze and smog obscure the heavens -- a pity since for millennia folks enjoyed star-lit grandeur.

Again, compromises call for respect for those demanding some urban lighting and some times of darkness. Excessive lighting, whether indoors or outdoors, can be reduced by controls and dampening techniques on lamp devices and can be timed for maximum benefit of affected populations. Street lighting can be directed downward so that urban glow is minimized and residents have a chance to see the free celestial night show. However, this requires domestic and community environmental compromising, possible if all work together to achieve a balanced environment.

Visual pollution includes commercial signage and blinking lights that appear often in congested urban areas. It is advantageous to observe clearly marked directions when traveling in these congested areas, for drivers need split second timing to flow successfully with the traffic. However, too much of a good thing can become a blur. Attempts to control excessive congestion can reduce the landscape to an artificial jungle often mesmerizing, but devoid of beauty and attractiveness. Personal comfort is dulled; attention-grabbing tires some to become irritated or insensitive, and visual clutter can turn good souls into zombies.

Both excessive sounds and sights can intrude, but modern life demands

space and time compromises. Maximizing quality of life involves sight and sound compromise. We need safe walkways and the chance to observe the heavens, to converse and to reflect, to get directions from signs and to be left alone. Our music has sweet sounds and rests. We need the "sacred silence" required in monasteries and the excitement of festivals. All in all, we crave environmental balance, only established through human compromise.

Smell pollution is often more annoying than unhealthy. A prime example is vast corporate animal farming operations. Hog farmers, especially in the Midwest and parts of the South smell profits, and thus deaden their noses to the penetrating aroma that can carry for miles and degrade the quality of life for entire neighborhoods and rural counties. However, urban odors can be just as noticeable and annoying. One California processing business made a strong popular hot sauce that brings a burning nose and throat sensation to local residents; community adjustment and compromise was called for. Both rural and urban smells may alert residents to possible annoying or toxic pollutants. Over time the nose can become deadened to a persistent odor and that can be good or bad. Deodorants do not change the atmosphere, but only paralyze the ability to detect the particular odor; some use these to "rid" a place of an unpleasant fish odor or tobacco smoke, though the former is annoying and the latter harmful to human health.

Taste pollution is harder to specify, but efforts are made to standardize what people like, and all of this to the profit-making fast-food shop's delight through possible increased sales of their fried and salty products. Some people develop exotic tastes for foods and drinks that others do not regard as even pleasant. The high price of certain items may be discomforting to some, but connoisseurs go to great lengths for a moment with special wines or discriminating restaurant dishes. All in all, food standardization through fast-food chains actually crowds out the local and regional variants in mom-and-pop diners and cultural dishes become a forgotten delight. We have championed the tastes of Appalachia,⁴ though realizing that some of these are becoming endangered experiences calling out for preservation.

Feelings of being crowded or isolated can be part of the need for quality space for connection or separation; a dwelling, meeting room, or office can be too spacious or too congested. Conserving living and work space becomes a major issue when congestion grows and space rental or purchase exceeds what many can afford. Larger quarters take more construction materials, maintenance, heating and cooling energy, and more land resources. Those who experience their young ones flown from the nest suddenly are left with the decision to downsize, affording less property taxes, and less need for maintenance. Two can live at the price of one and often this opens a social morass. Occupancy numbers grew during the Great Recession when college grads stayed put or returned home because they could not afford rentals. Compromises include sound-proofing and modified heating and cooling of

domestic space.

b) Welcoming the World's Poor as Cooperative Participants

Woe to those who add house to house and join field to field until everything belongs to them and they re the sole inhabitants of the land.
(Isaiah 4:8)

Positive ventures. During the 1990s our environmental research team traveled to several foreign lands, mainly on solar application missions. I organized a team composed of Paul Gallimore, Don Martin, and fellow Jesuit Dick Murphy (who acted as interpreter), to visit Peru in 1990 for promoting community solar cookers. Paul and I also went to Dominican Republic and Haiti with the same mission in 1992. In subsequent periods of the decade our local Jesuit community in Kentucky sponsored Mark Schimmoeller and Andy McDonald to return to Peru and help set up a woman's solar cooker cooperative with the Medical Missionary Sisters in Arequipa. Later we sponsored Mark to do similar related solar cooker and efficient wood-cooking stoves in Honduras in Central America and Malawi in Africa. We performed these outsourcing AT projects only where and when invited, and we regarded them as joint R&D for host and our sending agency. Our hope was to avoid being elite colonialists bringing expertise to a undeveloped area. The results of our experience were presented at the National Solar Energy Conference in St. Paul and at other venues.

Negative ventures. Our anti-nuclear power efforts continued through the 1990s. During this furlough of American nuclear powerplant construction after Three Mile Island and Chernobyl, focus shifted principally from nuclear safety and disposal issues to the connection of enrichment of fuel for nuclear powerplants and weapons. Mary Davis continued her work with French anti-nuclear activists by writing two books in French on the subject, and she gathered information pertaining to worker safety issues at the Piketon, Ohio nuclear enrichment facility, still an active issue years after her untimely passing.

Proliferation of nuclear weapons had spread first among the five permanent UN Security Council members to India, Pakistan, and Israel and then North Korea -- though some nations (South Africa and Latin American countries) abandoned attempts at nuclear weaponry generation. Ukraine later surrendered all its USSR-related nuclear materials for proper dismantling. Peace activists remind us of the American guilt complex initiated by dropping atomic bombs on two Japanese cities of no specific military importance; those horrible episodes resulted in deaths of 150,000+ innocent civilians. Nuclear testing over decades, even with test ban treaties by many nuclear bomb-containing nations, had slowed but not totally eliminated this inherent radioactive release and associated threats to safety. Mere possession of

nuclear weaponry along with powerplants adds to global and regional tensions. The dissolving of the USSR added a worry that nuclear weaponry and enriched fuel could fall into terrorists' hands, and the U.S. became involved in helping collect such materials for "peacetime" uses.

Concessions are made that the "peacetime atom" has its place in medical treatments, all while nuclear power electricity generation is the major user of the fuel. The Achilles heel of nuclear fuel utilization is evident. To process uranium to a non-weapons grade limit required facilities that had a capacity to convert materials to weapon's grade level through longer and more intensive processing. National pride and corporate greed presses some nations like Iran to ever higher levels of utility, and this makes nuclear power a good example of the Genesis account of the "Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil." Today's Adam and Eve want the taste of nuclear power -- promoted by early proponents as "too cheap to charge." This taste is utterly misleading!

Nuclear power is like a phoenix; it may just rise again and again. This power source was highly suspect in the U.S., especially since the Three Mile Island accident. Other nations have continued to expand nuclear facilities, but powerplants are becoming more costly. However, the possibility of AT-related renewable energy replacement (wind, solar, and others) of the 20% nuclear portion of the U.S. electricity capacity was not yet convincing -- though the major renewables have an excellent environmental record and no major safety issues. Hydropower was really our nation's first centralized electricity-producing source, though taking second place over time to fossil and nuclear fuels.

National security without a Cold War antagonist was called into question by persistent and long-term peace groups. Random acts of terrorism (marine barracks bombing in Lebanon and embassy attacks in east Africa along with damage to American destroyer Cole in Yemen) were used as justification for continuing a high military budget including manufacture and storage of nuclear weapons. Colonial minutemen had their historic moment, and so do their modern counterparts (the military/industrial complex that departing President Eisenhower warned against). An ingrained cultural misinterpretation of guns and military for safety extends to nuclear weaponry and by association to the nuclear power facilities and need for additional enriched uranium. Values as to peacetime uses of the atom clashed, and peace activists demanded a route to disarmament. Just the presence of thousands of nuclear weapons, especially in American and old Soviet stockpiles was disturbing. A "solution" similar to destruction of chemical weapons' stockpiles was farther along, though the U.S. is late in final implementation.

Climate change gained traction in this decade with the advent of sophisticated scientific models showing human causation. Mobility of GHGs (greenhouse gases) has extended beyond local and even regional concern; the

entire planet could be affected. By the 1990s proponents of tackling the GHG issue succeeded in organizing an international conference in 1997 at Kyoto, Japan. This meeting to coordinate national policies on the issue was well attended by a hundred national delegations and a high level American one as well. Vice President Al Gore led the U.S. governmental delegation and the conference drafted a proposed treaty committed to carbon dioxide reductions by 2012. However, major emitters U.S., China, and India did not sign. Europe took the issue far more seriously, but only a few nations reached anticipated benchmarks. Carbon dioxide levels continued to rise. Japan, the host of the conference and strongest proponent promised to reduce GHG levels 6% below 1990 levels by 2008 and had actually exceeded them by 9% by 2009;⁵ few signers exceeded those levels.

Global citizens are needed. Noted scientist and environmental writer Rene Dubos coined the catchy phrase, "Think Globally and Act Locally." However, the phrase did not convey what was starting to emerge and a more complete but less catchy phrase might be: *Think globally and act locally so that We can act globally.* Local action is insufficient in itself, and in order to heal our wounded Earth all people are called to be global -- not NIMBY (not in my backyard) -- citizens. During the 1990s I attended a conference sponsored by the E.F. Schumacher Society in Massachusetts, and a guest author on local activism stumbled while answering a question on how small simple-living communities could successfully handle global environmental air and water problems at a local level. Politics might, in former Speaker of the House Tip O'Neill's words, be essentially local, but NOT environmental problems. Air and water pollutants do not respect local or regional national boundaries; they are mobile.

The *Principle of Subsidiarity* has been used for decades in Catholic social justice circles as a way of delegating practices to the level closest to the people who can make effective change. Through this principle we seek meaningful action at the lowest level (personal, domestic, local, regional, national and international) provided proper governance is operative. In an age of environmental awareness and financial flow, lower levels are unable to handle situations beyond some localized infringements, such as processing trash or curbing local noise levels. Water and air move about and yet national laws are limited and lack broad-based enforcement. Infringement on the commons means citizens in the 21st century must look to larger units for regulation to ensure all are protected -- including unborn future generations.

Global citizens must assume global responsibilities through a ripple effect going out from local points of intense activity. This ripple effect would be a process of concatenation, linking one neighborhood to another in a global fashion of creating a tidal wave of environmental concern. The problem with the ripple effect is the same as that with chain letters; the instigator benefits or becomes an expert and pivotal focus, but the ones down the line

consider matters of less importance, and concern tapers off over distance and time. Working at intensive cooperative endeavors is difficult to excite. Urgency is not contagious in areas of low social consciousness and high self-interest.

Asian, African, and Latin American nations have gained from manufacturing and other services' exodus from developed lands. Profiteers with no social sense took escape industries to lower wage-paying lands and simply abandoned communities that had depended on them for livelihoods. This became a late 20th century abomination, especially when worker safety or environmental safeguards were jeopardized. The 1990s saw the quickening pace of escape industries from our Appalachian and other rural American towns. Protective efforts were essentially nil, while foreign groups enticed these irresponsible industries and services to go elsewhere and forsake workers and environmental safeguards.

Environmental land issues were more regionalized. Land issues have a regional flavor. However, in attempting to address the land issues that arose in our early 1980s, we became concerned about land care and proper management, especially if foisted by outside ownership groups. Unfortunately most of the land used for major resource extraction was owned by outside individuals or groups. Thus, power rests outside the region where problems occurred. ASPI joined a project to help determine the health of our regional forests, which were threatened by mismanagement and unsustainable development practices; our group joined forces with Professors Orié Loucks of the Biology Department of Miami University and Paul Kalisz of the Forestry School of the University of Kentucky to assess and document the condition of Central Appalachian forests. These woodlands are part of the Mixed Mesophytic Forest (MMF) -- the oldest and most varied temperate forest in the world.

On the 150 or so wooded acres at our ASPI nature center, Kalisz identified the presence of about one hundred varieties of trees and woody plants, not including the American chestnut that died out in the early part of the twentieth through a blight (in fact, ASPI planted two blight-resistant American chestnuts on the grounds and these are now bearing fruit). Our teamwork included doing forest management projects on our own property and furnishing personnel to lay out specific regional plots in Kentucky to be monitored for accumulated damage. The difficulty was that the project would take decades to complete, but it was a start. Teamwork of academics and activists became an example for future earthhealing projects. ASPI sponsored a "Forest Commons" conference bringing together folks from the central Appalachian region to discuss these issues. Solving land and other environmental issues demanded a *WE*.

Robin Hoods are not *WE*, even with their own legitimate roles to play.

Individuals may see problems clearly but it takes more than social vigilantes to effect healing of our troubled Earth. At times, certain prophetic individuals see the need more clearly, but they can only do so much. Followers do not arise automatically and this is the dilemma for the potential agent of change. He or she may be moved to act secretly or through civil disobedience when moved by the Spirit, rather than by a pure form of altruism. Lone rangers can be fooled about their own abilities to convey the urgency they sense within. These need support and advice from like-minded individuals, not just those who are comfortable with the status quo. They crave encouragement when misunderstood, ostracized, or branded as terrorists or leftists. Prophets both know their time and still are ahead of it, and they, along with whistle blowers, risk being misinterpreted.

Teamwork must arise; easier said than done. Prophetic voices fall on the deaf ears of independent spirits, rugged homesteaders, lone rangers and those inspired to speak their mind. Mutual discernment has never had a strong following in Appalachia. Problem-solving exceeds problem-alerting. Teamwork with a democratic spirit confronts naysayers who denigrate the efforts of unique change agents. Effective working teams can both encourage individual agents of change and also offer self-corrective strategies. Fund raising, public media attention, and sharing efforts in critical times take teamwork. Examples exist even in individualistic regions like ours: cooperative banks and savings unions, wilderness development and housing projects, and labor union organizing.

c) Know the Limits of Green Capitalism

No one can be the slave of two masters: he will either hate the first and love the second, or treat the first with respect and the second with scorn. You cannot be the slave both of God and of money. (Matthew 6:24)

My growing distance from mainstay environmentalists who worked easily with the Reagan/Bush forces lengthened into this decade. The status quo seekers seemed to be abandoning the pure public interest ideals of the first Earth Day and had mainstream high- sounding environmental achievements to flaunt to the public. A few abandoned the anti-nuke stance of the previous decade. I resented that these types kowtowed to industry hacks and joined forces with them, though their secret agreements made it hard to prove. These were the forerunners of a green Capitalism that considered it possible to modify the prevailing and triumphant System by creating their own green/industry win-win situation in which business would thrive and environmentalists would live "high on the hog." All the while the scientific evidence for climate change was being documented and becoming a major problem area.

Basically, **greenwashing** involves painting over an environmentally-

costly product or practice with a thin layer of ecological greenery so as to appear to be political correct and acceptable to the general public. It appeared that *pretending* was a major problem in a materialistic society bent on fiction, game play, gambling, unhealthy dietary practices, cosmetics, credit cards, and inflated CVs. Yes, pro-business individuals could advocate gimmicks to save resources on the short term, but if citizens are worth their salt they must be committed to the long term. By pretending to be conservationists through popular recycling practices, many gave lip service to little things but were failing miserably in the major environmental issues.

In the 1990s, many promoted overconsumption and included so-called green products that wasted resources. Urgency demanded meaningful priorities in teamwork, since no single simple-living person could change this needy world by him- or herself. Enlightened self-interest began to emerge as a terrible form of pretending to be green. Granted, simple individuals working in the public interest had a power through example --but it became evident that this was not enough; united with others they could multiply their power manyfold. Individual power was recognized by a changing Chinese autocratic regime that did not mind when an individual spoke in his or her own self-interest even in a dramatic fashion, but one dared not use "we," for public interest and cooperative efforts were anathema and threatening. But were proponents of Western Capitalism any better in this consumer- product driven culture?

I refrained from speaking publicly of my growing concern that the close of the Cold War would open the flood gates to overconsumption in the Western fashion among developing or "Third World" countries. The hopes of changing our consumer culture in the 1980s had not materialized, for America consumed more cars and energy demands continued to grow. Planned auto obsolescence or raw consumer consumption of ever newer models had a far greater carbon footprint than energy efficiency of the moving vehicle, and yet this was ignored because auto-making jobs were involved. Only with trusted friends did I use the term "Godless Capitalism," though later distinguishing that the System was not godless, for it adored the god *money*. The classic Christian battle between good and evil was at stake and all wrapped into a patriotism for an unsustainable materialistic economy. Would that we could have the backbone to challenge the System, but I lacked the economics needed for such a task. This became my excuse of that decade.

What about global sustainability? I always dreamed of sustainable countries from youth on, and yet the capitalistic system was unsustainable even though some futuristic eco-thinking thought it just might be. If the climate was truly affected as large numbers of scientists were suggesting, then our new terms "earthhealing" or "healing wounded Earth" meant more than just trying to stop an illness, for it would demand an entire new treatment or socio-economy. Dreams of a new sustainable system that incorporated the

current firmly entrenched fossil-fuel economy with its inherent pollution made it impossible. Must I be tempted to settle for the best of a bad economic situation -- or throw up my hands and say it is best System possible? At this period I was sorely tempted to find a truce with Capitalism and hope that taxes would somewhat soften a hardened System I never ever believed in.

Part of my and others' confusion at the time was that East Germany and other eastern European liberated nations burnt their own soft coal (lignite) for fuel; this was and still is extremely harsh on regional environment, and so it did appear that green Capitalism might have a slender hope as the Soviet Union faded. Unfortunately, the move to free trade agreements and the flow of finances across national boundaries was making this phenomenon of globalization a new matter of contention. My struggles with Capitalism went back to college days when I did not want to be beholden to the chemical industry for a livelihood and conceived for the first time of a "public interest science." I gave a graduate seminar on that subject and it was surprisingly well received. I kept silent about the cozy relationships of industry to the academic chemistry departments. Government, **yes**; non-profits, **yes**; private industry with its obscene profits, **no**.

For me, Capitalism was allied with "mammon" (wealth as an object of worship and pursuit), and I was no more fond of it than of atheistic materialism. I kept my life-long anti-establishment views to myself, but on rare occasions it broke through. I defaced the pro-Joe-McCarthy college petition back in 1954. I couldn't resist scrawling in big letters "Adolf Hitler." In 1970, fellow Jesuit and respected economist Ted Purcell chaired a small economics think tank based at Georgetown University. He considered that he was doing me an immense favor upon my arrival in Washington, DC. He could recommend me to the starting board of an interfaith group monitoring corporate responsibility. I immediately declined saying, "Ted, you know I am not a Capitalist." He replied in shock that this may be grounds to report me to Jesuit superiors. My response harkened back to my college debating days, "Go ahead." That response was perhaps too quick, for I could have learned economics in that group.

Was silence a wiser course for public interest scientists? Over years I kept part of my anti-business position to myself, knowing for certain that it would disturb kinfolks and other private donors. From a religious stance, I always regarded wealth as a hindrance to personal salvation, for Jesus says it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than a rich man to be saved. Wealth and Christianity do not go together, and so to remove wealth from people becomes an evangelistic Christian duty. My ministry always advocated divesting the wealthy of possessions either voluntarily or by some forceful means, so they could save their immortal souls. Furthermore, the Catholic Church for centuries was highly suspicious of Capitalism, and I still regard my stance as an authentic conservative position.

I have been in total agreement with Ralph Nader's critique of large corporations, and for that reason my several groups never ever accepted grants from corporations or trade associations (I had to turn one offer down) -- only non-profit foundations. The only difference I had in respect to Nader's CSRL and our Washington-based CSPI funding policies was that I have taken governmental funds (National Science foundation, USEPA, and the U.S. Department of Energy) first for the *Technical Information Project* in DC and later our Kentucky-based ASPI. Both CSRL and CSPI to my knowledge never took any industry or corporate funding of any sort, nor any governmental funds.

Maximization of profits is at the heart of my dislike of Capitalism -- both social justice and environmental concerns are secondary at best for many businesses. Does "non-excessive" as opposed to moderate Capitalism even exist? Many investors get nervous when CEOs use money for social justice purposes, such as caring about jobless workers when they move plants to a distant place in this globalizing era. It is "their" investor money meant to attain more money; abandoned workers have to find new work -- if it exists. Workers are expected to compete in the race to the bottom (lowest pay possible per unit product) while the corporation is bent on stretching moral conduct to its legal limit.

Capitalism exists as a secular and established religion that, for those in favor of separation of church and state must be confronted. Financiers and experts are religious leaders; Wall Street is the cathedral; brokers are priests; constant market reports are prescribed prayers; credit ratings are membership cards; and questioning the system is heresy. The true "faithful" are those who listen with sacred awe to stock reports, respect the advice of priestly financial advisors, and use their own money with a tremendous sense of religiosity. They trust in the god of money and regard this as sacred with an axiomatic creed that if not adhered to is heresy. Patriotism and lust for money go hand-in-hand and lead people to become gamblers with the game of venture investment.

| **Green Capitalism is a sham.** In the 1990s environmentalists wed themselves to the System and craved respectability by becoming pro-business by creating win-win green business fictions. "Natural Capitalism" guru Paul Hawkins was realistic in saying, *Despite all the good work, we still face the sobering fact. If every company on the planet were to adopt the best environmental practices of the "leading" companies -- say, the Body Shop, Patagonia or 3M -- the world would still be moving toward degradation and collapse... Quite simply our business practices are destroying life on earth.*⁶

Richard Smith, in a comprehensive review of Green Capitalism,⁷ brings up five weaknesses of this marriage between business and supposed green

practices. In essence, the problem is that environmental advocates working hand and hand with industry ignore the principle of maximization of profits, and whether through ignorance or oversight pretended to compromise with this inherently flawed System. The trouble with greens who played the game was either to deflate long-term environmental costs or to overly inflate substituted green practices as to resource saving. They forgot that maximizing profits and saving the planet are inherently at odds. Furthermore, a **carbon tax** is really a non-starter in a tax sensitive world. Likewise ignored was economic growth leading to catastrophic eco-collapse; proponents overestimate the potential of "clean green" production. Consumerism and overconsumption are indispensable to the System.

Green forest certification doesn't work. The green market economy sought to allow timber to be extracted from the world's shrinking tropical and temperate forests through green management practices that were certified by neutral parties. It sounded good on paper, but some of us were skeptical from the start, since the certifying groups would either take the harvester's word or have to mount an immense policing operation of which they had few resources. In theory, a good idea, but in practice, it simply would allow polluters to continue and absolve them of wasteful practices through publicity showing minor tweaking of the System.

During our environmental resource assessment days I received a call from a major church group and was asked whether I would join a budding Appalachian forest certification group. I had already heard that one of the busy bodies who gave us such grief in our 1986-88 NACCE eco-ecumenical days (and who knew absolutely nothing about forestry) was planning to get into the green forest certification racket. When I enquired whether this fellow was involved and told he was, I immediately declined. The program was never fully implemented, and certified wood products today does not stop shoppers with a taste for exotic wood products who are immersed in consumption-based affluence. Furthermore, rival certifiers have a habit of bidding down requirements to satisfy clientele and so "certified" tropical wood has little meaning except to allow greenwashed consumers to continue in traditional ways.

Cap and Trade is another market scheme that was a boondoggle from the start. Opponents talked about "buying indulgences" by Catholics and failed to allow their religious bias to know that it was precisely a theological misunderstanding of a historic period in church history. In fact, the indulgence was granted for good works (it digressed into raising money for building St. Peter's in Rome under Pope Julius II), for remission of the added social effects AFTER a sin had been forgiven, and to repair the social consequences of what the sinner had done. In fact, restitution of forest lands by planting trees as a good will gesture could be a correct practice according to that ill-fated scheme of five centuries ago. Instead, cap-and-trade called for paying by those who

exceeded an allowable limit or were performing "eco-sinning" if another plants a tree simultaneously. Thus, social damage continued from such a flawed system of passing social responsibility to others. Hypocrisy reigns supreme by cap and traders.

Cap-and-trade is really a corporate version of the game of neutralizing one's carbon expenditure from fossil fuel.⁸ "Carbon neutral" means canceling the bad effects of someone's personal greenhouse gas emissions, so that a particular personal activity does not ultimately harm the environment. For instance, one burns a bit of wood; that is negative, for carbon dioxide is released; then the person plants a tree that takes up carbon dioxide and that becomes a "carbon offset," namely something positive. The two add together and neutralize each other. Fair enough only if the tree lives and flourishes, and many do not.

Take another scenario: a poor Indian burns wood to make a meal, but she does not have time to plant a tree that day because it took eight hours to gather wood; totally negative. Another burns wood to have a cozy fireplace effect, also negative, but the affluent enjoying the fireplace pays someone to plant a tree. Absolved? The poor person may plant the tree and it may live, or as we observed in Haiti, many got eaten up by the goats. Today China is getting a fair chunk of carbon trading funds and yet it is the world's greatest GHG emitter. Why call this neutral? Offsetting with "neutral carbon" is pure hypocrisy!

Green Capitalism perpetrates disparity of wealth. How can a billionaire call a destitute person his "brother"? This is perverse inequality (the 85 richest, reported Oxfam in 2014, have more money than the lower half of the human race). The income of the top 1% is 17.2% of total global income, while the bottom 50% is 15.1%. Hidden tax havens hold, by a conservative estimate, 21 trillion dollars. Such inequality leads to immense resentment by people who lack essentials or desire a better quality of life, or sense a fading of the American Dream or its equivalent. Differences in wealth are sustained by tax laws favoring those who propose and promote their special interest legislation. Quality of life issues are well-documented by Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett⁹ using graphs of different indices, including social ills associated with advanced societies.

A broader attack on inequality comes from popular French economist Thomas Piketty;¹⁰ he argues that wealth concentrates because returns to capital are consistently higher than economic growth – and he calls for a progressive wealth tax. This view has brought on the ire of status-quo seekers in the financial world,¹¹ who "expose" doubtful statistics, discrepancies within the bounds of reasonable professional judgment, and supposed errors. Why all this fury, which has not been settled as of this writing? Simply put, governmental taxes could initiate a redistribution of wealth.

Governments exist for the good of society and its people, not for the special interests of the privileged or propertied. Even with high-sounding words, this fact was not fully appreciated even by our founding parents; at first only the propertied privileged could vote. Over time more of the people were able to participate, but still libertarian-types who desire less government really expect government to protect their narrow privileges. For more socially-oriented citizens the Common Good is a broader concept, and benefit to all together is a benefit to the individuals within the group. Government is meant to defend the commons, protect the quality of life for all, and permit limited private property holdings to the degree it does not exclude others and assists in the quality of life of holders. Limits on what those possessions are is a necessity, especially in times of globalization.

A few decades back I was invited and attended a program being organized by a regional forest protection group, Indiana-based *Heartwood*, and several of us challenged the deliberate attack on the U.S. Forest Service by this "Liberty" group that had funded the conference. At first it appeared that some attendees were naive enough to believe that their ongoing criticism of the U.S. Forest Service would allow them to join Liberty folks who preferred the non-existence of the Service. It was a deliberate attempt to enlist critics into an anti-government crusade, rather than to make the agency a better functioning body. Pro-business groups, hell-bent on tax breaks, deliberately continue to belittle and disparage governments to whom they are dependent for the privilege to act freely. We need minimum wage laws **and maximum income laws** as well for the good of our society and we need good government to bring this about.

d) Rise from Powerlessness to Empowerment

A Christian who is not a revolutionary today is not a Christian.

Pope Francis

Empowerment is needed to achieve good functioning government within our society. Bob Sears, a Jesuit theologian and later president of the *Association of Christian Therapists*, has been a long-time member of my environmental support group. Over the years our discussions were directed to the emergence of personal and social growth in a world heavily plagued by the consumer culture. We shared our profound dislike for the emerging Creation-centered spirituality people (Matthew Fox, Thomas Berry, and others). This was not so much because of what they said, but that this issue went beyond areas of their concerns; it takes more than some rational insights to bring about profound change.

Bob first proposed *A Resurrection-centered Spirituality* at the NACCE Conference in 1987. Our concerns during the early 1990s were to make this

insight that primacy of focus is not only creation alone, but also on redemption and renewal, and that we all participate in a growing awareness of ever-deepening faith in our life's journey. One cannot stop at merely reaching a level of perceiving a rational aspect of our immersion in nature, thinking here is a solution that goes beyond the false domination theories of our misinterpreted Biblical traditions. Bob speaks of maturing faith and movement to familial and group levels of consciousness. He verifies this insight through his experience in counseling and therapy work, with its broader social and healing implications.

Environmental understanding involves a growth of consciousness. My *Down to Earth Spirituality*¹¹ complements the resurrection-centered approach and is a component part of healing our wounded Earth. An authentic journey of faith includes a better understanding of our physical world where I experience environment at an individual and personal level. To fully appreciate this unique environmental experience each of us must use our hands, head, and heart to renew our broken world. Each agent of renewal experiences her or his HERE and confronts it by taking responsibility to heal what has been broken right NOW. Knowledge alone is not sufficient; responsible healing or environmental action is part of the deeper emotional and whole-life service necessary for individual and corporate salvation of the world. Knowing in tandem with doing expands our growth of consciousness to imitate Jesus who *increased in wisdom, in stature, and in favour with God and men* (Luke 2:52), even in his journey narrative and that of the Church as recorded in the *Acts of the Apostles*.¹²

Bob Sears and I co-authored a book in the 1990s combining his Resurrection and my *Down to Earth* approach. The latest revised edition of *Earth Healing* is found online among *Brassica Books*.¹³ In this book Bob stresses the process of growing in faith through five phases, and I tried to couple this with concurrent chapters dealing with events and the process of coming to renewal through a resurrection-centered approach. In essence, we concluded that a healing process requires ongoing discernment. Creative ways will be found by healers working together in solidarity, and this is especially true when the poor are welcomed as equal partners: these operate on fewer resources, present a humble stance of gratitude for gifts given, and reach out to others who are struggling.

| Acknowledge powerlessness as the foundation for authentic empowerment. In 1998, a major insight in my work at Marquette University while occupying the Wade Chair involved empowerment through acceptance of powerlessness. This insight still awaits full integration. The concept is actually close to Theresa of Lisieux's "Little Way": *To be little means recognizing one's nothingness, expecting everything from the good God, as a little child expects everything from its Father*.¹⁴ Granted, this understanding of powerlessness and spiritual empowerment needs further distinction in the light of activists

seeking to heal our troubled Earth. We need to distinguish types of powerlessness: a secular sense of when people are too fragmented and afraid to enter the democratic process; and a spiritual sense of peace of soul in the Theresa little way, and then rising to become instruments to spread Good News to others. More in the next chapter.

Empowerment comes in different forms, but how are these similar and how different? Can those without a sense of spirituality become empowered, or is there a perverse spirituality at the root of the physical empowering phenomenon? The world has seen "powerful" people, some acting for good and some for naught.

Diabolic power? Certainly, those who read the Scriptures find ample references to the power of mammon at work -- and Jesus directly contends with that power on numerous occasions. Today, many believers in God would say little about a devil in our world, or personified evil. Is part of the power of personified evil that it succeeds in denying its own existence and even suggests this is a good worth touting? Does atheism have its own perversity as well as does absence of personified evil? Does reflection on our perverse consumer culture bring a conclusion that there is diabolic activity in our materialistic System?

Secular empowerment -- Is poverty as combination of paucity in resources and hopelessness the seedbed of secular empowerment? Community and political organizing in the Saul Alinski model has been successful. This model was later applied to Obama's presidential campaigns. Empowerment comes to the disorganized when perceiving power in organized numbers. Groups are energized by acknowledging the need to overcome their own weaknesses. Petitioning legislators about certain issues on Move-on.org is community organizing at a national level, a nod towards participatory democracy. Are Internet-transmitted petitions gathered in large numbers and delivered to decision-makers realizing support forms of empowerment at work?

Spiritual empowerment begins with an experience of individual powerlessness before God or through humble acknowledgement of lack of life essentials, our impoverishing alluring escapes, or our current condition of angst. Often when communities are damaged, social capital erodes, and this becomes a community form of spiritual impoverishment. When affluence erodes, civility and mammon replaces godly practice. Here failure to act shows social impoverishment. However, awareness of lack of power can become moments of grace. We cannot pull ourselves out of the mud by our bootstraps; we need the help of God in whom we trust. Without divine assistance the forms of secular empowerment do not work successfully. Allowing persistent physical or psychological poverty to continue to exist impoverishes our world through a paralysis brought on by lack of faith. Calling for divine help is the start of spiritual empowerment.

Observe the poor. Ultimately we will all experience powerlessness, if for some at the moment of death. Christians know that ignoring the poor is grounds for condemnation (Matthew 25). The affluent become insensitive and fail to feed the hungry or cloth the naked and through this omission lose their souls. Jesus tells us that insensitivity is no excuse, for we must be responsible for our brothers and sisters. Volunteers who exit from places of affluence in order to "experience" the poor are seeking the most **elementary level** of poverty and thus, seeing them from a distance. This may be a moment of movement towards "them" as different from "us." In some way donors of charity from a distance also are at this level and can be considered as seeing, but not among or at one with the poor.

Assist the poor. This is a deeper level of social interaction. Here volunteers are willing to come among the poor and begin at this **deeper level** of solidarity to lose part of the distance and even find saying "we" could include these others. Compassion breaks down the distance and bonds are established at this level between those poor and those knowing they are different to some degree. At this level, the poor are regarded as in need and it is more than our self-centered fear of condemnation that drives an altruistic effort to assist others in a meaningful way, and in hope that the gap between them and us can be narrowed or even in some way eliminated.

Become poor. A **third level** of experience is when one identifies with the poor and cease being "them" and "us" and instead create an identity that can say in all honesty "WE the poor." It is the recognition when Damien de Veuster, "apostle of lepers" realizes that he also has contracted leprosy. Seeing the poor and answering through offering charity and service still has distance that must be narrowed so that compassion can be most deeply felt. In many cases this is done by giving away everything, or in some form of suffering where former health and mobility is now diminished. Distance has disappeared and identity is now shared with the poor of the world.

Remaining poor. Is it not the Christian duty to raise people from destitution and give a basic quality of life for all? Certainly, and this is a duty on all who believe in the dignity of human beings. Remaining poor in Spirit means while accepting what is needed for a quality of life, the agent of change must share responsibility with all others to raise all to a higher level through compassion. In this way, each of us does not merely seek to enter the community of the poor, but must recognize that all of us are within that community in one way or another. Social awareness becomes the recognition of our poverty before God. All people must make an effort and this means suffering with others.

Communion with the poor is part of a move in recent years to be of community service as part of a formal education. In order for young people to

experience poverty, many social justice concerned high schools and colleges offer **immersion experiences** and **service-oriented** projects to students. Such programs can be partly self-serving and promote the schools' social justice record; they can enhance student's CVs and spice chances for future college selection or advancement. Needless to say, they are also ways to help students learn to work together to build a better world. In the 1990s, ASPI began to sponsor such immersion experiences in shorter- (up to a week) and longer-term (a summer or a semester) work periods. In the early stage these were ways for our group to get work assistance while giving the volunteer an experience of poverty in our region. Over time it became evident that preparation before the experience and reflection afterwards required the third phase of reflection at the time of the experience itself. However, this takes extra effort by the host organization.

Since immersion experiences are performed by those with sufficient resources to travel, this is something that those involuntary poor who lack resources could only experience while being receivers of charity or volunteer services. Dipping in and out of the particular poverty experience can be good conservation, but real change depends of extra effort. Service volunteers whether young or old are an American phenomenon, but not unique to the U.S. alone. Through such encounters all parties could potentially learn valuable lessons.

The three degrees of awareness in respect to human communities extends to our fragile and wounded Earth. The **first level** is one of observation and sensitivity to Earth, the HERE spoken of earlier. Rather than merely praising the richness of Earth, the person engages in a struggle for Earth's vitality so as to save one's soul and not be condemned to live on an inhospitable planet. Really applying such a degree of seeing what is happening to Earth is an experience that never before confronted the human race. Our failures in respect could cause death to Earth's vitality.

Merely perceiving the effects of pollution gives way to doing things that will halt Earth destruction, a setting of priority for urgent action or a **second level** of eco-awareness. For the most part the movement can be regarded as imperfect, for it is simply tweaking an imperfect system, and the thoughtful person begins to see a need for more profound change. On this level, unsustainability is never full addressed. A person goes from a distant observer of Earth's miseries to a compassionate feeling of pain because Earth is wounded.

Those who are compassionate about plants, animals, and Earth herself seek a deeper **third level** of eco-awareness, though this has difficult moments. *The Contrasumers* accepted that it was possible to tweak a broken system, but that is simply prolonging the agony before authentic healing begins. Our honestly acknowledged impoverishment throws us to the spiritual

realms of seeking solutions and to become what was regarded as being "Poor in Spirit." Questions are raised as to how to be poor and whether this could even be achieved while living an affluent lifestyle. Is the only voluntary way to give up all and become poor?

America with its heavy emphasis on individualistic achievement is part of what Roberto Unger calls the American Religion of Possibility.¹⁵ Homesteading has its limits, even when only physical; spiritual homesteading presents many forms of isolation. In the depths of anguish I meet the grace already offered to find God's presence, not my own inserting of God into my life -- for that is a power play in itself. God is HERE and NOW. The call is for openness, for the possibility of a WE. At this fundamental moment of new-found divine power the "I" is not yet the WE who must be willing to confront powerlessness in its depths -- and to believe that we are not doomed but at a horizon wherein new power is possible.

God empowers us to continue, to go on in the emptiness of our own physical grouping. I am reclothed in the energy it takes to rise; I am aware that I am not alone but have a powerful Companion who is with us all during this struggle. With this realization I discover a surging power, not something of my own or caused so much by my action, but a gift of power that comes from a Higher Power within, and thus one worthy of gratitude and attention. If working in a group, the entire body could be tempted to see empowerment as coming through their own talents and abilities -- and certainly the many talents can imprint character and endurance. However, a sense of independence is that of Adam and Eve, a temptation to idolize our own individuality. Sole reliance on ourselves isolates us from a universal interdependence needed in Earthhealing.

A sense of a moving WE is similar to the so-called Durkheim effervescence of a crowd's interior dynamics. Hindus at the world's largest religious event *Maha Kumbh Mela* talk about health benefits from the effect of a crowd's shared identity. Nick Hopkins of the University of Dundee says one thinks in terms of "we" rather than "I" and alters a relationship with other people. This is a fundamental shift from seeing people as other to seeing them as intimate. Support is given and received, competition turns to cooperation, and people realize their goals in ways different than from acting alone.¹⁶ Do these Hindu pilgrims tell us something?

e) **Promote the WE in Our Lives**

During the Clinton Administration years ASPI received a U.S. EPA grant to conduct half-hour TV interviews with fifty agents of environmental change in Appalachia; these along with dozens of unfunded ones were aired on Station WOBZ in London, Kentucky. By listening to these movers and shakers our program team learned an immense amount about human resources in our

poor Appalachian region. Our befriending and recognizing their talent and gifts gave encouragement to these rather isolated agents of change. In turn, by listening to and recording their messages we gained confidence that change agents can trigger catalytic involvement by local people who can be empowered to act -- with God's grace.

WE can act as one. Electronic media, especially TV and through the Internet awakens the desire to reach out and communicate hopes and desires to people who would otherwise be thought of as too marginalized and unable to effect profound change. In fact, the mentality that they need our service overlooks the more important fact that they are the ones to lead the radical change. WE are the ones who do not stand back but are an integral part in the healing process. WE need not be fooled into awaiting the privileged to make the first move; rather, the poor must take matters into our own hands. WE can do it! Through social media the scattered who desire change find fellow aspiring agents of change. "WE are the people!"

Awaken involuntarily poor. One billion people live below a poverty level on less than \$2 per person per day; a second billion lack one or more of quality health, lodging, nutrition, education and/or potable water. The physically poor who are oppressed include the racially segregated, religiously persecuted, those lacking freedom of speech or mobility, or lack work opportunities for proper livelihood by those desiring to hold a meaningful job. The spiritually poor are those who suffer or make a responsible effort to enter into solidarity with all the poor. And as each realizes the paucity of resources at our disposal the poor becomes aware of its hidden oneness. Our profession of faith together is that movement to becoming more aware of our oneness.

These are not new circumstances. In fact, at times glimmers of hope appeared among honest but imperfect forebears. One example is Andrew Jackson's action in vetoing the rechartering of the Bank of the United States; his biographer Robert Remini calls the message of this tornado-like veto almost a call to class warfare and says that "Certainly nothing like it has ever come from a President before -- or ever would again."

It is to be regretted that the rich and powerful too often bend the acts of government to their selfish purposes. Distinctions in society will always exist under every just government ... every man is equally entitled to protection by law; but when the laws undertake to add to these natural and just advantages artificial distinctions to grant titles, gratuities, and exclusive privileges, to make the rich richer and the potent more powerful, the humble members of society - the farmers, mechanics, and laborers -- who have neither the time nor the means of securing like favors to themselves, have a right to complain of the injustice of their government...

Andrew Jackson Message at veto of Bank bill July 10, 1832.¹⁷

The third level of eco-awareness is where WE the poor experience our inabilities, addictions, and lack of courage together; publicly WE confess our inadequacies and our determination to pursue liberation together in an act that is waiting to happen. WE are becoming aware of our social shortcomings demanding a level of empowerment that is emerging over time. Secular solutions are not sufficient, and yet agents of change are not yet able to grasp fully the humbling task ahead. Yes, all must act together, but our bonds are not perfect and so the separated need God's help to effect solidarity.

Questions for Reflection

* **How is globalization beneficial and how detrimental?** Trade moves more freely as do financial transactions and investment, but if unregulated, just how beneficial is that? Our local clothing and other industries were decimated by outsourcing and loss of jobs, first to Latin America and then to South Asia; environmental and worker safety issues were overlooked in the stampede to get cheaper consumer goods from outsourced factories.

* **How does one compromise when it comes to sound pollution?** The challenge is to make everyone happy, and yet to respect the space and time of all parties -- an environmental resource challenge requiring respect for all parties.

* **Is Green Capitalism an abandonment of earlier public interest values and a sham?** Some who are deep within the prevailing System banter about win-win situations. Their goal is to retain the System and its consumer culture while advancing environmental protection at the same time. A secondary question is about allowing the privileged to pollute provided it is paid for by others through trade-offs -- the sham component!

* **Are we able to cash in on a military dividend resulting from the end of the Cold War?** The military/industrial complex seems to have a life all its own, with representatives from heavily affected districts perpetrating use of tax money for useless expensive weaponry of no value for national security. Health care, a real global safety issue, goes unchecked for lack of available funds.

Chapter Four: Realizing Global Difficulties (2000's)

Teach us to count how few days we have and so gain wisdom of heart.
(Psalm 90:12)

We approached the year 2000 with great expectations. I was preparing to retire from ASPI administrative work during 2002, exactly at the end of a

quarter century tenure as director. Turning the work over to younger folks meant selecting a successor. This involved going from my unsalaried position to providing a moderate income and I sought and obtained a grant to cover the first year of the new director's salary. In fact, much of my last year or so involved establishing more cushion than at any other time in my 32-year history of fund raising, that most despised portion of public interest work. Freedom from administration would allow me to develop a series of "Daily Reflections" on the Internet, along with some anticipated books. My waning energy was noticeable, and so conserving shortened time span became a new goal. Besides, I was convinced that older people should not be administrators, for it takes a balancing act of meeting staff and donor expectations that was becoming harder to juggle and to enjoy with a smile.

The poor will rise. Why not find joy in the Good News that the poor must be incorporated in the work of healing our wounded Earth? This insight found in Mary's Magnificat ¹ emerged with ever greater force while working in central Appalachia. Why expect the trickle down of wealthy largesse when it most likely would never come and is part of the American game of pretending? Take what is rightly ours and do this non-violently through spiritual empowerment.² Empower the poor to be instrumental in changing the world, for wealth corrupts those who think they have a privilege to lead, when in fact they are desensitized to knowing the real needs of the great majority of poor folks.

The initial insight of doing this without a cushion of money came from my acquaintance with the work of Becky and Bobby Simpson (who was blind) at Crank's Creek Survival Center. They sponsored general repair of hundreds of dwellings each year in Harlan County, Kentucky and across into western Virginia through mustering support of volunteers from churches and colleges -- and they did this while living on a single disability check. In serving on their board, I realized that the poor can rise and take leadership roles equal to or better than the better off agents of change.

Indian Summer shines. God gives good health and limited time, and so one must "make hay while the sun shines" and "strike while the iron is hot." Why not recruit agents of change from among the poor while keeping their past experience in mind? In looking around at my directorship resignation (at the suggestion of my provincial Dick Baumann), I visited West Virginia Jesuit University and could have certainly done some good academic work there in my late sixties, but I was drawn to be still closer to the poor. Furthermore, Central Appalachia with its many poverty problems is terribly short of pastoral personnel. By sheer need I was drawn to continue in needy parishes in eastern Kentucky.

Pastoral work involves juggling. Academic folks may not be drawn to pastoral non-academic work for the needy (celebrating the Liturgy,

anointing the sick, hearing confessions, etc.). However, this is more than personally rewarding on a spiritual plane; it is life-giving in a global sense, for it allows all who participate fully to enter into solidarity with the world's poor. Should I be an aloof researcher and teacher, or should I be called to taste impoverishment all the more?

I was fortunate after beginning my 2002 singular sabbatical to hear of a instant parish need arising at Somerset, Kentucky and to fill in as a temporary replacement; I volunteered for about seven months until June 2003 -- and then resumed my sabbatical. Then in autumn of this second attempt, another instance arose to fill a 1000-family parish at Frankfort, Kentucky, lasting from October, 2003 to July 2004. My only stipulation in both cases was that I spend half time in my public interest research efforts -- and not go to unnecessary meetings. This honored stipulation has endured to the time of this writing and I am eternally grateful, for I find many meetings quite draining.

a) Feel the Effects of Social Addiction

A problem arose early in my public interest career: What if the consumer culture is so mesmerizing that rational approaches have little meaning? What if all of us are pretending to do good, while really a state of paralysis has set in due to the System? When I was drafting this section, the highly popular American musician and environmentalist Peter Seeger passed away at 94 years. He was one of our early CSPI advisors. I sent him a copy of "The Lifestyle Index" that appeared in *The Contrasumers*, and he said bluntly that he did not like the rational approach. In essence, he considered this beyond what ordinary people could do in changing their lives. He had a highly successful musical approach, way beyond my talents. Purely rational approaches were not his cup of tea, and perhaps not mine as well. But what is?

Do Consumers change and how? The world seemed mesmerized by the modern consumer culture with its inherent captivation for many, if not most. The mindset involves keeping up with peers and neighbors, and that takes time, energy, and capital maintaining an obese comfort zone that constantly fails to satisfy. Few want to face the fact known to philosophers and religious thinkers for millennia: don't count on insatiable material things to satisfy. It is a simple lesson, but few in our culture catch the message. Yes, Francis of Assisi and others break loose from their world, but the pressure is heavy to stay with it.

The quest for the Christmas tree loaded with gifts is a year-round goal -- and without thinking about it can become a lifetime one as well. It starts early in life, but can be so enticing since all of us consume things and those things are gifts from the Creator. True, the quest for consumer goods can become *addictive*. Since so many of us are involved and the economy's health results

in great part from our spending, this is really *socially* addictive.

New century hopes bloomed amid shadows. The United Nations set forth general goals for tackling major poverty and health problems in the first decades of the new century. The Cold War had ended and a military dividend could be redirected to underlying causes of insecurity, at least that was the expectations of many of us in 2000. Consumer culture was becoming globalized as Asian, African, and Latin American economies expanded, and their millions of hungry folks wanted the showroom items the affluent could afford. A popular demand for materialism was ready to bloom.

Forces arose to scuttle some of these hopes: Islamist radical terrorists discovered that well-placed monkey wrenches can play havoc with complex and sophisticated communications and transportation systems, which they regarded as Godless. Autocratic China and other emerging nations were tinkering with global Capitalism in non-democratic ways. Globalization included the smell of wealth inequality with a privileged few rising and a large majority treading water or sinking. Furthermore, non-renewable energy use was not halting but growing, and a mass movement of hundreds of millions of people to ballooning urban areas was happening all at the same time. On top of this, add the critical mass of discontented un- or underemployed youth.

The 9-11 (2001) episode dulled our shallow optimism. Well-planned acts of terror aimed at the U.S. by al-Qaeda disrupted the world on that single fatal September day in 2001. These attacks struck squarely at the commercial (New York Twin Towers) and political (Pentagon) symbols of the most powerful nation on Earth. In a few hours, America was thrown into a hidden war and responded to growing materialistic insecurity through use of its powerful military force. First came the Afghanistan military action lasting over a dozen years, and then the unfortunate Bush adventure into Iraq (second Gulf War) and its insoluble religious conflicts triggered by possible but never found weapons of mass destruction; this occurred within a Middle East quagmire of near perpetual cultural and religious tensions.

A long series of conflicts directed against al-Qaeda in Afghanistan and Iraq ensued with a three-quarters-of-a-trillion-dollar price tag, along with thousands of dead on every side. This war of attrition sapped American and Allied optimism and drained the idealism of those engaged in the conflict. Homeland security became the order of the day, along with forms of surveillance that infringed upon privacy rights. Was there a pattern in terrorist madness? Middle East military involvement came in the middle of sectarian strife between Sunnis and Shiites, as well as civil conflicts in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Syria and extended into central Africa and elsewhere. Peace was elusive.

Social addiction surfaces. The suspicion that the rank and file were

socially addicted weighed on me for decades. Even George Bush talked about the addiction to oil; others mentioned drugs, both legal and illegal; and then Big Energy became drugged on fracked natural gas. But didn't our addiction(s) within the consumer culture go beyond these to include all forms of consumer goods? It is hard to face social addictions because it is like looking into the mirror and reflecting on our entire *Weltanschauung*. What if answers are not found in think tanks and among learned elites, or even in expensive treatment centers and added individual relaxation practices? What if answers were not with those treating addiction, but those who have suffered and are now on the road to recovery? What if answers are from among ex-addicts and recovering souls, hideaways in a busy culture?

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) participants are keenly aware that a major step in conquering addictions is to see that the answer cannot come from the addict him or herself, for addiction bears a forceful grip, a powerlessness to change. However, a spark of hope springs in an individual's awareness that he or she is helpless; perhaps another can help (a divine gift, a spiritual insight, a grace). The soul calls out in trouble and hears a faint whisper that there is a horizon. Reach in desperation to Another, a Higher Power, a believer's God. Addicts realize that they can not heal themselves by themselves; they congregate in order to address their personal addiction through public acknowledgment, social interaction, and group encouragement. The addict sees the need for outside help, both from among fellow addicts and in the search for outside "spiritual empowerment."

Social addiction afflicts our society. The term **Social addiction** deserves our attention for a world seems to be involved in some degree. This appears to be a current movement of society to doing things in such a fashion that it creates grooves of application, then finding ourselves so patterned by usage that exits are overlooked. It is easier to point out substance abuse addicts and see their staggering misery and pity their inabilities to change habits. Isn't even a single one of these a tragedy?

Living as a social being appears at first to be another matter, but is it? The entire body is affected, for it hits home and involves the WE. To say WE are party to the practice and in need of collective awareness is challenging, and in this moment of truth strikes at our very souls. Those "others" who suffer substance abuse are not totally other, for all of us belong to a society that seems to have the common thread of overuse of consumer goods. Globalization penetrates into our collective souls and catches ever so many in the web of consumer goods. Let's concede that some isolated primitives are still outside of the world web. But for all intents globalization is rapidly turning us all into a single culture desirous of autos, phones, types of food and drink, and other artifacts. Enticement itself is globalization -- and mammon smiles. The afflicted are cowed into silence for to acknowledge our condition is unnerving and requires courage.

Who has the affliction? If it is true that powerlessness to personal addictions is not broken by interiorly generated secular answers, for only a Power outside of the individual can possibly bring salvation, then does the same apply for social addiction? Why is it so hard for committed believers to accept this condition, except that all flee from impoverishment and the powerlessness implied? Doesn't it seem most desirable to distance oneself from the affliction, even the social addiction that involves each and every one of us? Has the model of Pope Francis, who first defines himself as a sinner in that famous 2013 interview, brought a message for all of us -- namely, our commonly shared addiction leads to our collective moment of truth and commonly shared acknowledgement of our affliction.

Temptations haunt us. Our culture constantly clamors that each of us is in control of consumer choices and our everyday lives, but is there not that hidden and frightening similarity between individual and social addictions? In the depths of our common affliction we discover togetherness with co-sufferers in the world of consumer allurements. False aspirations flood our addicted culture. The expert has climbed out and can exert power by showing a formal expertise that others can follow. The ability to rise beyond the System then becomes a mark of fame leading to fortune. However, this is all the allurement of the false prophet, "You can follow me and climb beyond the web of addiction; pay me and I will show you the way." The power of the temptation involves **denying** that it has power over the false prophet or each one who follows such a person

Social forces can be tempting. The bankruptcy of individuals lifting themselves by their bootstraps extends to that of addicted communities as well. A gang of drunks is not the paragon of sobriety. A community of homesteaders may become more abstemious and live conservationist lifestyles, but there are limits to what they can do for the larger society through their escapist methods. Perhaps if a community is large enough to develop power through number they can use some violent means and break the social addiction. Autocrats have shown an ability to control societies for certain lengths of time through their forceful corralling of members. Tito held Yugoslavia together for a period, and so did Saddam in Iraq. Using force could break social addiction to consumer products. Ration consumer products! Imprison the overusers! Limit expenditures! If one cannot control himself or herself, why not **excuse** individual powerlessness and accept group power even at the sacrifice of individual freedom or being bothered by civic responsibilities?

Democratic culture is tempted to be permissive. The affliction stands before us that requires acknowledgment, but the problem surfaces: How can our society preserve individual freedom to some degree and still treat the social affliction that paralyzes us as an individual? At this point the

temptation that exists so deeply in our society resurfaces: "I cannot handle this, for life is too short. Let everyone escape to do what they want, and forget about the consequences." In a globalized society that allows maximum freedom to all, some take advantage through existing communication and transportation devices and take over a fluid financial situation. Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow you will die. **Escape** to the world where some have great advantages and let it be so for life will soon end. "Our permissiveness is its own reward, for others who also escape like us all the more." The libertarian temptation besets us.

Overcoming temptation is what this exercise is all about. Let's not **deny** the extent of this social addiction on the human race, or **excuse** ourselves from the consequences, or **escape** to other concerns. The good Spirit speaks within our heart of hearts: there is something more, for good overcomes evil -- and these temptations are from mammon. The illness called *Affluenza*³ afflicts us all to some degree. Observe a post-Thanksgiving rush for bargains, those standing in line overnight for a new electronic device, and the purchase of over-the-counter medical drugs. Contagion grows, the consumer culture epidemic is global. Can there be change? How much? Who? Everyone? Simultaneously or gradually over time? Partisan positions are part and parcel of the same malaise that afflicts us. Social empowerment awaits acknowledgment of our condition and our powerlessness. WE must look beyond.

Silence is not always golden. A culture that professes freedom to do whatever one likes (if it doesn't affect others) fails to see the social nature of individual choices taken collectively. A massive number of similar bad choices mount up over time and become the ingredients of this consumer culture. Why should individual consumers challenge those who are judged to practice over-consumption? Who are to make such judgments? Is our silence due to not wanting to appear judgmental? Do citizens remain silent for fear of disrupting the System and thus endangering its democratic underpinnings? Does not permissive silence spread the addiction? Something within the believer says to act, to call out, to find a greater community of beings who can assist with answers.

Social reparation acknowledges both our condition and the falsehood that we remain silent to what others do (if it doesn't affect others). Injustice of any sort DOES affect others, including us. If a billionaire takes from the commons, it is my (and more socially) our commons. I may choose to suffer the injustice in silence if it is against ME; I cannot remain silent and save my soul if the injustice is against US. Excessive consumption (whether easily defined or not) brings on the need for WE the people to act. Duty tells us that reparation must be made even after a person ceases, for individual acts have consequences that go beyond change of individual heart and forgiveness. A person who steals is expected to repay the damage even if now resolved to

steal no more. A culture that steals from a future generation has need of reparation. We need not wait to all members are so inclined to be socially responsible; it is incumbent that believers take up their responsibility and act.

Responsible citizens stand up and confront the environmental damage done by excessive consumption. Democratic citizens may publicly demonstrate or engage in other civic activities: letter-writing, petitioning, attending meetings. Prayer for change breaks the paralysis of social addiction. If every unjust act has a global detrimental effect, so does every just act have a beneficial effect. The act of prayer and cooperative sacrifice, when done through a faithful witness, has its own social effect. A living faith hears Christ say that such acts are always heard by God and never go unanswered. A self-righteousness of being "habit-free" or being immune or needing an escape benefits no one. The social stance when prayer, whether by the shut-in or prisoner, by young or old, finds in its simple way a hidden power that comes in the moment of utter powerlessness.

b) Champion "In God We Trust"

Not to share one's wealth with the poor is to steal from them and to take away their livelihood. It is not our own goods which we hold, but theirs.⁴

St. John Chrysostom

In moving to revolution we confront the accumulated wealth of a privileged few and the insecurity experienced by the many. Some ask for a misplaced trust that the "trickle down theory" will work, while a growing condition of violent inequality cries to heaven for God's help in bringing about change. Emotion can cloud the mind and even panic for some. Where does one turn? Our crisis boils down to one of trust, misdirected trust, and generation of actual distrust of mammon. God is trustful and so ought believers be in a prayerful manner.

A social discernment of spirits is needed at this critical hour. For the worldly, mammon calls to trust wealth and the wealthy, to be greedy and selfish, to listen to merchants of doubt, and to seek prosperity religion. A "spirit" is at work, whether regarded by the modern secular as neutral, or positive and inanimate; however, in more traditional religious terms spirit is personal -- either a good or bad spirit. The relativism of our age allows each to do his or her own thing, and if someone is spiritual, that has a higher status than those groveling in material aspects of life. But what if that spirit does have objective qualitative values? What if the prevailing System has its own spirit, which can be either good or bad? Now the struggle quickly devolves into a titanic battle of good and evil, of which proper choices demands prayerful discernment.

Basic trust is needed for survival. If you do not trust the other driver

on the highway, you would cease driving out of fear. If you do not trust your local bank or credit union you will be left without the ability to do ordinary financial transactions. If you do not trust the quality of food, you revert to patronizing only certain growers or grow your own produce. Our lives and our communications function through elaborate webs of trust from infancy to old age. With time all of us discern our levels of trust to what and to whom. The child is not to trust strangers, but on the other hand is to trust parents and guardians. Believers extend trust to a Higher Power, a Divine Being, God.

In God we trust. This motto of the United States was not articulated at the founding, but occurred in the text of the *Star Spangled Banner* three decade later. Some now say that the motto became the glue that holds this nation together. Our founding parents had this trust in God as weak individuals and colonies struggling to break bonds with Mother England, the strongest sea power in the world. The motherland's basic democracy was really not disputed, only the heavy-handed rule of the reigning monarch. In the 1770s world of kings and queens with their various degrees of authoritarianism, our founders strived to mold a republic with few and scattered global friends -- and so trust in God was all the more imperative with a new found form of government (though a few republics had and were existing). The motto remains popular, with recent polls showing that 87% of Americans want to keep the American motto "In God We Trust" on coins, paper money and public records, while about 13% would like to abolish it. Once I was invited to speak at a Unitarian service and was asked not to mention the "G" word. I replied, "Oh my God, what am I getting into?" Who else can give us trust but the Almighty?

Reinforcing this motto may be required. Amazingly, a founding episode is unfolding with a new breed of global citizens; these are beguiled today with a similar situation as with the founding of our republic. The struggle on global terms is to affirm or break with the prevailing mammon and with the disruptive wealthy nobility who have captured the System. A liberating force must overcome the quagmire of materialism just as a band of colonists waged a war of independence. But people can't lift themselves by their bootstraps. The challenge is to break loose from the ecocidal addiction to our current consumer culture, and to discover pathways trod by individual ex-addicts. Would one possible model as *modus operandi* be that of AA? WE are part of the collective *anawim*, the oppressed, the neglected, the alienated, the powerless in society who must respond. With God's help, WE the poor can overcome slavery, and experience an exodus through spiritual sharing with other likeminded people. This emerging community of activists reaches out to all for a trusting solidarity.

Trust in unity, not uniformity. Can social addiction be broken without the consensus of all the addicted? Must they all profess trust in a Higher Power in a uniform process? If it takes everyone, then non-believers who are

contrarian can trump the consensus-building process of the believing WE; they can even seize autocratic control over the political agenda. Must remedial social action occur only when all affirm the same way of proceeding? Indeed, the prospect of uniformity appears virtually impossible. If uniformity is needed, the power of the secularist world would seemingly overwhelm that of the believer's. God works differently. Consensus in democratic action becomes a powerful bargaining chip, but unity among those believers and not uniformity becomes the goal; we can act even with some opposition and do so responsibly and effectively.

Agents of change can be trustworthy. With proper citizen oversight agents of change lead the way. Much depends on these knowing their individual and collective limits and showing a degree of humility befitting the task of healing a troubled Earth. Divine help is needed to overcome social addiction and that includes the added task of simultaneously working for our individual and social improvement. A precondition is a honest sense of powerlessness as to what can be done by acting alone. With God's help, WE when knowing our limits discover the power to do godly deeds. *The Mighty one has done great things for me.* Authentic action respecting the rights of individual members grows through trust in the Almighty, a trust that overcomes selfishness and gives us the energy to reach lasting goals.

Trust in God grows among the poor. A basic hope is that the mighty multitude harbors an innate aspiration for a better life, and the critical point is whether that means for "me" or for "us" -- and just how broad is the "us." From the recent independence movement in Africa (and partly through carving of boundaries of nations) tribal tensions devolve into severe degrees of infighting. The poor are not perfect and so broadening the "us" takes time to effect. America's inclusion took place gradually and first included the non-propertied; then came Afro-American men, women, Native Americans, and younger citizens (that is about 98% more than those at the start).

Let's hope that our revolutionary aspirations can confront the status quo and be universalized by overcoming the allurements of mammon that hold us all back. Broadening the perspective demands encouragement from those with similar aspirations. WE become like children who trust parents and distrust strangers; WE expand a national motto to a global one: **In God, healing comes to Earth.** Only those with hunger pangs can be the final deliverers of God-given daily bread and the radical sharing entailed.

Trust the poor to arise successfully. Something deliberate must be forthcoming, a rising of those with common aspirations. Our trust must extend to bringing a new movement forward with success, provided agents of change are at the right place and time. In Roberto Unger's words: *It is the enhancement of the powers and the broadening of the opportunities enjoyed by ordinary men and women on the basis of piecemeal but cumulative*

reorganization of the state and the economy. Even more important seems the shocking expression he uses, *Its watchword is not the humanization of society; it is the divinization of humanity.*⁵ Believers in the family of God can find some challenge in talking about divinization of humanity -- a movement to godliness that is simple, loving, organized, and affirmed by Church Fathers within the authentic Christian tradition of entering the divine family at Baptism.

Trust includes successfully sharing resources. Greed or grabbing for oneself is destructive to society. On the other hand, benefits through sharing and cooperative endeavors mean improvement of quality of life. This improvement includes a growing solidarity, but is a goal inimical to the current System. Through a down-to-earth spirituality that is directed to empowering the poor, the divine presence becomes manifest in our empowered actions. When the Israelites cried out in desperation, "the Lord raised up for them a deliverer" (Judges 3:15). Authentic sharers are the ears of the Lord who hears the cry of the poor, and in solidarity with them WE grow in our relationship with God.⁶ "How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods, and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses to help?" (1 John 3:17). Sharing makes a global neighborhood. Through sensitivity to global needs WE create an internal covenant, a fulfillment of divine promises. WE are committed to co-suffer in the pattern of Christ, who gave himself up for all (Philippians 3:10-13).

Trust involves empowerment of the poor. In the pattern of our father in the faith, Abraham, WE surrender to God's call. God the rock is with us in our changing world -- and gives foundation and anchor to our journeying quest. Recognition is not through some superior noetic experience, not through a particular creative insight, but rather through shared suffering with our poor brothers and sisters; it is learning to know who we are by working together as co-sufferers with a single goal. Through compassionate suffering all come to know impoverishment and discover that severe physical hunger and need cannot be tolerated. Empowerment does not come from ourselves acting alone, but, like Mary's faith and joy in the Magnificat, it surges with a realization that God is doing great things for us and through us, an original blessing unfolding before our eyes (see Chapter Five).

Trust involves Power to act. If WE trust and have a sense of urgency to act, a holy ASAP, we are able to act while time is running out. WE can succeed with deliberate speed. A disturbing nightmare is when taking a timed examination one is stuck at the starting question. On first awaking, we gain immediate relief in realizing it is only a dream -- but is it? WE need "Temporal Conservation;" it takes courage to reject mammon's temptation that urgency is a mirage; it takes double courage to respond as hungry people and to act HERE and NOW. Secular caution advises delay; faith gives encouragement that WE will discover agents of change and unite with them for acting in a sure confidence that others will follow. Faith overcomes inherent powerless feelings

within, enlightens the soul to act, stays the nerves through will power, and encourages solidarity in working together. With faith, Scripture says trees can be uprooted and mountains leveled.

Let's become "either/or" people. Christ teaches that we can not trust both God and mammon, for we have to reject mammon (the evil efforts mentioned here in personal and social ways). Those who tweak the System strive to be "both/and" people, and in a misguided manner are perpetrating a current condition of destabilizing our wounded Earth. "Both/and" religionists seek that compromise that is ultimately impossible. To trust a dysfunctional System is to become part of it, even while using the name "God." Religious institutions are easily tempted to speak highly of the System's benefactors so as to reap monetary benefits. Too often church leader form an allegiance with the business world and seek the largesse from legalized thieves of the System. Consumer beware! It is better to receive needed funding from the poor in small amounts. Wealthy donors can be dictatorial in expecting us to support a System that permitted them to become and remain rich.

Choose the poor, not the wealthy. Excessive wealth is as much a stumbling block now as owning slaves as property was to America's founders. To allow this small wealthy 1% who are growing more powerful by the day to continue in their acquisition of today's wealth without objection is to deny the great majority its will. Yes, citizens are silently watching plutocracy overwhelm democracy. The wealthy privileged few, who hold their property through some sort of "divine right," captivate the imaginations of many of the have-nots. Change is inevitable, for the current unsustainable System must go -- but that conviction comes slowly. Inequality, where the top 1% has one-third of all the recent wealth and the bottom 50% hold only 5% of the nation's wealth, is an unsustainable condition, an abomination crying to heaven. Mega-banks, which are 0.2% in total number but control the majority of the nation's wealth, have already failed; they thrive by the grace of a still silent poor. People enjoy the cool breeze that comes before a mighty storm, but it will not last.

Consumer culture has an Achilles Heel. Public distrust of the System can be expressed abruptly by terrorist bombings, or calmly by those with a sense of growing spiritual power. Should we seek to conquer the System that appears so powerful that opposition is regarded as unpatriotic and scoffed it by the media? Have people intertwined religious belief with the socio-economic System? Have we shown fear of violence to come by revolt when violence is already present within the status quo? The destitute know this violence and can be encouraged when knowing that there's a multitude in a similar position. With critical mass, revolution will occur. This is a call to create a measured distrust of a System whose capitalistic roots are based on trust in materialism and money's power. It lacks endurance and is ready for its own demise, though hindered in its fall by the tweekers of the System. To truly trust in God is to distrust an unsustainable System and our own powers

to act alone. The Achilles heel is exposed when we remove the covering of displaced trust and get others to follow. Break the trusty System's grip! Trust in God!

The call is for liberation. The inability of people to liberate themselves from compulsive consumer practices leads to a social malaise of titanic proportions. This goes beyond being an American or North American/European problem: this has global dimensions. The fly in the ointment is social addictive behavior resulting from excessive consumerism that has in recent decades become globalized. In a nut shell, Earth is divided among those with a trickle down economic belief of "wait and your turn will come," and an abrupt demand for radical change. This current social-economic System, riddled with materialism, brings on paralysis and pulls otherwise good potential change agents into a quagmire of materialism as tweekers of Green Capitalism. Liberating the democratic processes will bring on global liberation.

Proper trust includes the scientific community. Misplaced trust in the System is built on the mirage of material satisfaction that demands more and more resources and is ultimately eco-suicidal. On the other hand, those who trust in God discover power in believing in success amid limited resources. Certainly essential needs must be met for higher quality of life, but uncontrolled wants by a consumer culture become excessive and threaten Earth's vitality. The scientific modeling of catastrophe by the year 2100 is sound enough to demand prudence on the part of all. As part of the scientific community I accept evidence that seems solid and is accepted by 98% of that community, for neither I nor any other individual have resources to reinvent the wheel. I trust the scientific community because its history includes correct thinking over time.

Distrust and expose merchants of doubt. Some have misplaced trust in producers of consumer items, and focus doubt and distrust on prudent researchers who find difficulties with consumer excess causing harm to human health or to Earth's vitality. Merchants of doubt range from Big Tobacco to Big Energy⁷ and create distrust in traditional scientific expertise. As Jesus tells us, we can learn cleverness from the worldly -- and that includes profiteers who cast doubt on their critics by using certain "experts for hire" to contest scientific expertise. However, response must be equally clever. Commercially manufactured doubt ranges from issues such as cancer caused by smoking, to toxic air pollutants, to environmental tobacco smoke harming others, to freons in the atmosphere, and to denial of anthropogenic climate change. Profiteers are creators of doubt as proponents of materialism's insatiable appetite, and prolonging doubt extends profit-making, even though all know harm occurs. Merchants of doubt use distrust of the scientific community to finagle their paths as co-equals in current public interest matters on talk shows and debates. Other such merchants exist in mega-banks, Big Energy, and uncontrolled global finances.

Distrust mammon in its various forms. Pope Francis says *we can no longer trust in the unseen forces and the invisible hand of the market*⁸ and that includes the socio-economic System where we find ourselves, with its commercial ads, promises, and gimmicks in a profit-motivated society. Doesn't trust grow through community sharing; basic distrust through selfishness? Doesn't individual license spoil the socializing and sharing process, draw attention to self at the expense of the commons, and diminish social responsibility and support of protective agencies (governments and private institutions such as churches, labor unions, and civic groups)? Doesn't it erode public interest and override rights of community for livelihood in contrast to so-called "property rights?" Lack of social controls leads to disorder; overly imposed social controls leads to restrictions on individual freedom. Ultimately both extremes must be avoided.

Distrust Prosperity Christianity. The doctrine of glorified affluence as derived by God's good favor to profiteers is a perversity that has infiltrated American religion and shows the power of false prophets. Materialism is to be distrusted and certainly not praised, as though those who are righteous about mammon will be blessed with success. Prosperity-based congregations have triumphant strutting, bejeweled leaders who say they stand as models for followers to imitate. This becomes a religious Ponzi scheme, where head honchos pass blessings to the next in command and on down to the least in the gullible congregation. Success is displayed by large buildings, increasing membership, and the promise that to act properly means becoming rich in the "free market economy." The message is: "Trust profiteers and you will be materially successful." This reasoning resembles Appalachian snake-handlers who taunt congregations, "If you have the Spirit, snakes won't bite; if you refuse to handle snakes you show lack of Spirit; if you get bitten, that shows you didn't have it." Let's recall the Old Testaments false prophets; their stage shows continue down through the ages.

Let's arouse proper distrust. Banking is built on trust and if we break this false trust of the mega-banks, we could change the System. Believers are aware of the battle for minds and for trust and distrust, each in their proper order. WE trust in God; we focus also on distrust of mammon. Is it time to start belittling the stock market's daily quotations and Wall street mechanization? Is the goal to establish a rival system much as the Polish workers tried with the fall of the USSR -- with a quick ultimatum by international banking interests to conform to the System or be strangled to death by the world powers? Will parallel alternative economic systems work? If we painstakingly enhance our trust, will WE ultimately succeed?

c) Promote Public Transportation and Communication

In order for the poor to work in solidarity, WE must be willing to use

modern modes of transportation and communication, so that our solidarity might grow. Unfortunately, there are resource drawbacks in our choices: energy resources for private forms of travel can be squandered; and time loss in modern types of communication and social media enticements can be wasted. Using these gifts properly is key to whether anticipated radical change will be successful. Depending on our choices these modern means can be curses or blessings. Let's take each mode in turn.

Travel, even global travel, is beneficial. In my middle years I traveled and enjoyed the freedom involved and it seems hypocritical to discourage others to being mobile today. However, my attitudes are changing and travel is quite possible for large numbers but at lower resource cost via subways, urban bus transit, lower-cost train, and high-speed intercity transport systems. Reduced use of autos for private travel and reduced use of energy-inefficient air travel could be emphasized. Private auto travel could be more resourceful by using car pooling along with combined-purpose trips. Travel allows us to appreciate distant peoples, ancestry, cultural places of origin, sacred sites for pilgrims, and recreation destinations. Well-maintained roads and airports as well as good vehicles are needed to safely reach these destinations and we take them for granted. Good accommodations help break isolation, inspire group creativity, and become a liberating force for people -- but it takes resources.

Highways remind us of those first master empire- and road-builders, the Romans, some of whose roadway masterpieces are still used. Roman bridges, types of pavement, drainage ditches, arched viaducts, and even rest areas were well ahead of their times and built to endure. While bulk commerce was cheaper by rivers and seas, still a serviceable road network allowed for Roman postal service and human travel. Over centuries it became evident that superb roads deteriorate through lack of protection, constant oversight, and ongoing maintenance. Today, many of us in richer countries take our travel facilities for granted; distance is measured by time rather than mileage, and drivers speed in order to shave minutes and seconds during routine trips. However, modern roads invite higher speeds, greater risks when safety is omitted, less pedestrian mobility, and other problems.⁹

Private travel enhances the environmental crisis. Automobile and motorized private transportation beyond walking and biking takes resources. Yet bikers and walkers by the millions want to drive their own cars -- a wish that could devastate our planet's energy resource base. The demand for adequate highways and parking plus the cost of building, maintaining and operating these vehicles will strain available materials and land. Populous China alone, the world's number one auto purchaser, is finding out the need for vast infrastructure to accommodate private vehicles. Bikes used by millions in urban China a few decades ago are parked, while roadways and streets are congested in the North American and European style. Traffic snarls along with

associated problems, as well as auto safety issues are globalizing -- and that is big business.

When a toddler I recall the Wood Lane, a mud road that bordered our farm and is now a two-lane highway. We (Mama and a car full of kids) went to visit her godmother, Aunt Mary. Once our Model A Ford got stuck in the mud, and she had to walk to a neighbor farmer and get him to bring his horse team over to pull us out. That was the late 1930s when many of our farm roads made for horse-use were not yet even fully macadamized. Hardened surfaces called for road-building projects that gave way first to local and state and then to national two-lane highways, and finally to an Interstate System, the pride of America and liberation for the isolated. Today I use a relatively good two-lane highway between my two parishes. However, area residents, like commuting workers are always late and travel rapidly during morning and evening rush hours when cops are scarce. In my decade of driving this route I have observed several major and fatal accidents. Good roads are a mixed blessing, but they come at costs. Skunks and other wildlife risk lives crossing rural roads.

Encourage walking and biking. Auto use could be reduced by a world friendly to pedestrian and bikers. My biking days in Washington DC involved some narrow misses, for it is difficult to combine auto and bike in a mixed traffic flow. Certainly, when weather permits biking and walking are good physical exercises, though a better resource saver is to make the home into a full or part time office and avoid commuter traffic altogether. In cities where biking is encouraged, auto-caused pollution is low, resulting in a higher quality life.¹⁰ A biking network in both urban and suburban areas, as well as longer distance rails-to-coordinated-trails and other programs, permit pedestrians friendly walking and biking routes.

Observe safety regulations. In the course of aging my own driving demands more caution. It seems that folks drive faster, but maybe the aged are imagining things. Perhaps a little of both. Insurance rates are getting higher. However, it is safe to say that there are more distracted drivers with cell phones and other devices. So much of the resources in road travel is used in vehicle production itself (over half), and as stated, vehicles may be getting more efficient and safer. Still the world of consumers act more in unison than expected: they want the latest model, sending resource expenditure even higher. Safety and convenience become resource conservation issues that are of high priority.¹¹

Reduce air travel even though public. Certainly air travel would be more comfortable than riding a steamboat and overland stage coach of two centuries ago, or even a motor car of 1900. A little jet lag is small compared to the bone-chilling tiredness resulting from traffic congestion -- and thus the term "journey" or day's work. Getting to a place fast and somewhat

conveniently is an air travel plus. However, in recent years (since *The Conrasumer* publication) we are becoming acquainted with high fuel expenditure in air travel -- more energy to cross the U.S. in one airplane ride than the energy used by an average world family in an entire year. A carbon tax on air tickets is one possibility. Furthermore, it is more ideal if people enjoyed distant places while in their living rooms via virtual travel on TV or Internet.¹²

Vacation near home and reduce exotic travel. The principle that we proposed in *Ecotourism in Appalachia*¹³ is operative: the farther the travel, the more infrequent the trips. Transpose routine vacation from something that must be done at a distance to something closer to home. Only rarely take the distant trip. Actually, improvement of local recreation facilities would be the best preparation for changing national travel habits. Why go to exotic places except once in a lifetime? Stay at home, improve local employment prospects, and respect our local environment. In fact, as a regional policy this could prove a major resource conservation measure and far more effective than pressuring people to become immobile.¹⁴

Keep autos longer. In 1993 Umwelt and Prognose Institute of Heidelberg, Germany performed a life-cycle study of autos and found that 40% of a car's average pollution was due to the driving phase and 60% to other stages (extraction of materials, manufacture, and disposal).^{14a} In *The Conrasumers* we called for "auto birth control," with full awareness that it would never happen on a this consumer-product oriented world. Much attention has been given to fuel efficiency, but little is said about fashionable upgrade of vehicles every few years -- to auto makers delight. Vehicle production is at an all-time high today (even when fuel efficiency is certainly improving). As of this writing, Toyota (a major plant an hour away from me here) is making ten million vehicles in 2013, with General Motors and Volkswagen almost at this magic number as well; and a half dozen other carmakers are reaching the annual two to seven million car per year range.¹⁵ China is buying about ten million vehicles each year, having surpassed U.S. auto sales, and an emerging world has millions seeking the car ownership dream.

Return to the railroads. High speed rail traffic will require immense resources for installment of infrastructure, and transport experts say this is a good investment. Today's railroads are publicized to move one ton of freight 450 miles on one gallon of fuel. When compared with the congestion on public highways, railroads are more resource efficient, since many rail networks are already in place and safety records are fairly good. Certainly for medium-sized trips (500 to 1,000 miles) passengers would be far more resourceful to travel by train than either by auto or airlines. Support trains when possible; they are good investments in needed infrastructure with good payback over time.¹⁶

Communication changes are revolutionary. Public internet accessibility is to communication what public modes of travel are to transportation. At the end of the first decade of this century the communications' field was strikingly different from that of the 1990s. Almost the entire world has since been connected with the Internet; a disconnected developing world (much without land phones) leaped over the costly land phone generation and became intertwined through cell phones for billions of people. Education and information retrieval took note and modes of classroom assembly and paper periodicals started to be threatened. A revolution was underway, though it was hard on those fixated on gathering for lectures and reading morning newspapers. Youth adapt far more rapidly to this revolution before our eyes.

A communications' revolution is here. In 2003, while on sabbatical, my first set of website *Daily Reflections* was not properly installed and only a few daily issues went to viewers. I was unaware of this until others who were on-line told me they had difficulties, and this required new site management. The next year, an experienced Janet Powell, who had assisted in our forestry work through wild flower photography at ASPI, used her Internet talents to tackle the Google search engine. She became web manager and multiplied our readership manifold, with a relatively high placement on specialty search engines. Earthhealing has reached out to readers in over 110 countries. In fact, our first full year (2004) had a total number of hits that we now receive in a single day. Interestingly, operation costs did not climb with numbers, and so while relatively poor we have a global reach.

Connections are a blessing. We look back at the slow communications of several centuries ago with astonishment. In early January 2015 the two-hundredth anniversary of the important battle of New Orleans will have its revelations. In fact, the War of 1812 was over through negotiations at Ghent in Europe a few weeks **before** the battle. However, none of the combatants were aware that peace was declared. In fact, they had difficulties knowing where the opposing warring parties were when only dozens of miles away in the Louisiana swamps.

Preciseness in location now through satellite networking is commonplace and that makes life **easier** for us all. Today, along with **instant** global messaging, we get information only seconds or minutes old. For years, we struggled to get our **specialty information** to others at relatively **low cost**, for only then could the poor have a chance to communicate over distances. Through better **access**, social intercourse is now possible in ways not previously imagined. The potential for **change** is magnified, for a communications revolution raises our levels of consciousness.

Communication is easy. We can reach others with far less effort than in times past. Word-processing is now achieved with far greater ease, even

though some old-timers find new techniques a great challenge. Think back three decades when draft articles were laboriously corrected and retyped over and over. Mistakes still creep in, even to the most vigilant eye. Today, word processing takes far less time. Book publishing is far easier; this is true for costs of manuscript preparation to presentation to a broader audience through **Amazon. org** and other digital outlets. Letter-writing is now an email phenomenon and surpasses snail mail days. Past processes of painstaking data collection, assembly, communicating over long distances and time periods, typing, proofing and diligently retyping, then submitting to a publisher who may judge it unprofitable, is much less burdensome today.

Communication is instant. We send an email and in seconds the message is sent -- and received, if the person is at the computer or electronic device. People like the immediacy of talking through Facebook and Twitter with participation exploding globally -- not always for the better. In one day this month I sent messages to colleagues who reside on five different continents and thought little of this blessing. Daily, each of us phone others within our neighborhood, country, or world at relatively low cost, and can do this in a matter of minutes not days a century ago, or weeks a few centuries ago. In the 16th century King Philip II in Spain, ruler of the world's largest empire, stayed up at night before a ship departed, blotting out certain parts of his personally composed narrative to a subordinate general and rewriting instructions by hand that would not be read for weeks.

Communication includes Good News. Internet can spread the Good News, but one has to attract notice. It is like a world's fair with a host of competing booths for attention. The evangelization possibilities are astounding, but we still have to bring the message before others with ever shorter attention spans. This global instrument has the same potential for good as did the Roman road system for St. Paul. We have an opportunity for good, but so do the "weed sowers" of the world, scattering in the grainfields. Blessings, yes, but truly mixed blessings.

Communications is accessible. Social media allows a broader mix of conversational partners as well as frequency of people contacted. The age of social media is upon us and this is evidently a time when kindred spirits can come together on a regular basis and exchange ideas. Learning about others of like-mindedness has immense potential, but again the blessings can be mixed with the lower-based desires of false allurements. Some demand chatter as part of life, even when is it a waste of time or a distraction. This access demand safeguards for some would like to restrict access and threaten "net neutrality," which holds that network operators must uphold traffic equality. Privacy concerns also arise with ease of accessibility.

| **Communications is a source of socio-economic revolution.** If the revolution is on, just how far will it go, or are there in-built controls? This

revolution may be an opening chapter in a revolution in the socio-economic System where ease in use, instant presence, and accessibility can become the components of something more, and controls are lacking because too many are involved. The information is too easily moved or hidden to be censored; and through the current networking systems the world itself is connected. Part of the change of awareness rests in peoples of different races, tribes, and nations discovering that aspirations among different peoples are quite similar. Through common languages and translation facilities we discover that transportation and communication makes this world a local neighborhood with similar hopes and dreams.

Through modern transportation our HERE expands; through modern communication our minds find a common NOW that conveys urgency. If the American Revolution occurred through movement of body and mind over long distances and through paper pamphlets, why with all today's more facile tools is it impossible for the WE to come to radical change? At critical times in world history similar or mutual developments occurred, e.g., development of calculus and stereochemistry along with revolutionary ideas at relatively great distances. Feel the vibrations! Time is ripe for change, so let's reach out by seizing modern opportunities. Have faith that good can be achieved. As budding agents of change, let's mention seven conditions to help us serve as catalysts of radical change:

1. Proclaim Good News frankly and openly. One of the blessings of being an elder is that we dare speak what others would hesitate to say. Their hesitancy may be due to need for peer acceptability by the public. When one gets older, it is harder to prevaricate, and so the expression. "What's the use, here is what I think." Frankness reveals a deep spirituality, for facing the truth is done when with impunity and the tongue is loosened at the proper time and place. Elders are better versed through experiences, but the Spirit is full of surprises. Change is possible and change is needed so speak out even amid a gullible world filled with the static of information overload.

2. Keep minds active. Mobility in body and mind will naturally slow down, especially for the aging, who take more time to walk, rise, and get and receive directions. "Stay active" becomes harder with years and even reaches a point when elders ask, "What's the use?" Hearing dulls, eyesight dims, and breath and time span shortens. Dialogue more through modern communications and less through travel. Make more Internet connections and do not apologize for it. My physical stamina and energy fades, my mind grows less agile, names are harder to recall and memories are lost, especially what happened yesterday, last week, and last month -- and walls are filled with reminders until they are lost in the jumble. Still, continued peace of soul calls for courage. A successful revolution includes elders and youth, the slow and the speedy, the wise and the experimental. All the while each of us should seek diverse ways to keep minds sharp and pray for fortitude.

3. Know and respect the past. Internet access gives us a library at our fingertips so why travel far? Almost any idea can be accessed through search engines. Treasures at our fingertips include autobiographies of historic and moral leaders and works of the prominent or obscure (James Madison and Thomas Paine). Our American founding parents were change agents with radical ideas and yet sons of their age. Thomas Jefferson say, "God forbid we would ever be 20 years without a rebellion" but the statement has been taken out of context to become a misquoted "every generation needs a new revolution".¹⁷ However, both Paine and Jefferson affirmed the right to revolution as part of a movement to a democratic society. Paine, Samuel Adams, and Patrick Henry were loud and Jefferson, Ben Franklin, and John Adams wise but more subdued. Past variety was bent on unity and not uniformity.

4. Accept risks. Our American founding parents took great risks in proposing and moving forward to make a nation. They decided to hang together or hang separately, and thus were true **risk takers**. The risk was to be called downright treasonous by Loyalists who were numerous and at times powerful. John Hancock and others knew signing the Declaration of Independence involved risks. They were uncertain of victory until the very last days of the struggle at Yorktown in 1781. Even with this victory, the next two years (to 1783) were times of grave risks to find a peace that worked.¹⁸ Risks today may not be as life threatening, but do involve communications: misunderstandings, competition by merchants of denial, lack of media neutrality, and ability to incite others to become willing to change when mesmerized by the status quo. Must that risk include civil disobedience?

5. Stay focused. Information is a blessing; it's overload, a curse. We can accept the duty to sign petitions on proper causes and then be overburdened by too many requests. We have to stay focused though willing to be interrupted when others are in grave need, for the hungry need help now. In some strange way they can keep us focused on the critical needs of our time. Our founding parents stayed focused on taxation without representation, equality among the colonies, independence, and a national vitality. WE must stay focused on the interlocked issues of growing inequality, global climate change, fair taxation as a non-violent means of revolution, and global vitality. Our risks as a social group are life threatening in a different way.

6. Ignore status quo modifiers. Recall in the American Revolution a major body of Loyalists were urging small reforms to stay in the British Empire. Even those closer to home, such as able commander Benedict Arnold, who changed back to the Loyalist side along with the son of Benjamin Franklin and promoted a form of tweaking the imperial System. They chose instead of radical change the act of repairing the status quo of English overlording and

military controls. Let's not forget much of the mass media are fed by the System and thus are far more prone to be tweakers rather than change agents; they won't bite the hands that feed them. People desiring radical change must be willing to live simply and with the least amount of additional resources so that they stay mobile and not beholden to special interests. Enlightened whimphood is to be avoided.

7. Listen to the clear call. Agents of change accept lessons from the past but look to the future. If the message is clear enough others will follow, so all eyes are fixed forward and not in counting the numbers of followers behind. Goals keep us watchful, but holding confident that clarity will ultimately triumph. At the time of preparations for the Second Iraq Episode, George W. Bush was interviewed sitting on a pleasure boat off the New England Coast and assured Americans that we were in this coming conflict together. Really? Where was the need for self-sacrifice, as FDR proclaimed at the start of the Second World War? The mixed message was that the poor would fight, and the elite would profit from a consumer culture worth upholding. Then came the Great Recession! Self-interest clashed with public interest and won a battle, but not the war. It is time to clarify issues through proper communications.

8. Prepare to confront the violent. Violence often attends revolution (French, Russian, and Chinese examples already mentioned); the Violet Revolution may have been an exception. But we recall that violence preceded many revolutions and became precondition of radical change. However, we are not saying that our changes demand a new form of violence, for economic violence is occurring right now through global hunger, poor housing, and other forms of insecurity. Violence occurs now! With the world's highest incarceration rate, an automatic gun-bearing population, and the homicide of capital punishment in the majority of states, we Americans are violent people, as expressed virtually everyday. Denial of livelihood to the unemployed is violence. Rest assured: changes in our global System will be resisted by those already violent. However, WE must be peacemakers and revolutionaries all wrapped into one.

Gradualism or abrupt action? Some say act now! Others, go slow! Can both be revolutionary? I deeply admire the radical Catholic Worker Movement led by New York urban-based Dorothy Day and rural associate Peter Maurin. Though I never met either, I directed ERA's on Catholic Worker centers in West Virginia and New York (a trail bears my name at the Peter Maurin farm). Catholic Workers serve the poor as peacemakers and activists with open hands for the homeless and hungry.

Aims and Means of the Catholic Worker

In economics, private and state capitalism bring about an unjust

distribution of wealth, for the profit motive guides decisions. Those in power live off of the sweat of others' brows, while those without power are robbed of a just return of their work. Usury (the charging of interests above administrative costs) is a major contributor to the wrongdoing intrinsic to this system. We note, especially, how the world debt crisis leads poor countries into greater deprivation and a dependency to which there is no foreseeable escape. Here at home, the number of the hungry and homeless and unemployed people rises in the midst of increasing affluence. *The Catholic Worker* (May, 2014)

Which is best? Those who act impulsively seldom have lasting impact; those who act slowly and deliberately fail to show urgency. Is it possible that both are inspired? Past benefits deserve preservation; future benefits are worth struggling for. Healing our wounded Earth demands emergency measures and long periods of convalescing, immediate action to stop climate change and longer term solar applications, both contributing to the total revolution. Healing Earth involves a cooperative community of persons, a tighter bonded teamwork of various talents. The goal is healing.

d) Promote the Right to Life and Economic Justice

The thirst for power and possessions knows no limits. In this system, which tends to devour everything which stands in the way of increased profits, whatever is fragile like the environment is defenseless before the interests of a deified market, which becomes the only rule.

Pope Francis, "Evangelii Gaudium" #56

Affirm life in all its forms: the life of fetus and elderly, of prisoners and the ill, of workers wanting to earn a livelihood, and the life of Earth herself. Too often the culture of death overwhelms us and life demands our reaffirmation: all must maximize freedom in order to fulfill our destiny. For the believer this is an eternal destiny up ahead, but what about non-believers? Many neo-conservatives restrict discussion to abortion and human death issues; many neo-liberals harp on broadening a range of individual choices. Both miss the point that life must include the ability to enjoy livelihood of sufficient quality, and so right to life must broaden to include peace, livelihood, and environmental harmony.

Decadence versus enlightenment? Political correctness is a land mine for it demands that social conservatives speak up in these critical times. *Enlightenment* occurs when a public position on a moral issue is called into question and demands for change are made by some who regard themselves as holding a new higher ground (e.g., abolition of slavery). *Decadence* is when the religious values of a citizenry is considered old-fashioned, and rules are imposed to force submission to a correct way of thinking about issues held

sacred by a given number who were a majority at a previous time; this decadence places forceful demands on believers to acknowledge a new circumstance, such as considering forms of contraception included in health care regulations.

Right to life focuses on certain issues. Abortion and so-called mercy killing are hot-button life issues that are foremost struggles of pro-life advocates who desire change of policies or new ones to safeguard life. The right to choose places individual liberties in contrast to the rights of others (fetus). In some way, this is a continuation of the abolition of slavery issue. Do the rights of an individual owner (slave) or controller (parent) take precedence over the right of the owned or controlled? Only by denying the second's right does the issue continue to fester -- and the public is finally beginning to consider this. Palliative care in dying gives respect to the final moments of a human being who some regard has a "right to die," much to the profit of insurers and other for-profits. The perverse consumer culture is at work. Also, capital punishment is taking a progressive stance in seeing this as a legal form of homicide, harkening back to a century ago, when public hangings were family entertainment.

The right to livelihood is a sub-set of right to life; this includes the right and duty to work in order to uphold life with dignity. Profiteers are not the ultimate deciders of who is to work, for they tend to place money over people and see idle workers as a pool for cheap labor as each unfortunate underbids a neighbor. For some of us who are social conservatives and still believe strongly in the role of government, the demand for **universal employment** is part of the demand for life -- and to define right to life narrowly does injustice to the total range of social justice concerns. Unfortunately, the term "right to work" has been co-opted by those wanting to exclude unions from their rightful place in labor relations; thus, we introduce a "right to a livelihood."

Rights have responsibilities. The right to a job entails the corresponding duties to perform and not to avoid work in any way. *We gave you a rule when we were with you: not to let anyone have any food if he refused to do any work* (II Thessalonians 3:10). This simple rule by the Apostle Paul is not the hardest to enforce in any society, but expecting meaningful work from certain ones is forced labor of sorts -- but why impress that working for a living is a great opportunity? Do-gooders ought not tolerate shirking, nor ought those concerned with administrating support funds. Religious communities have obedience rules that can apply to working relationships; so ought local communities and governments. Laziness is nipped in the bud by withholding food. Let's give all a chance to work and regard this as a citizen's legitimate right.

Franklin D. Roosevelt's Economic Bill of Rights State of the Union Address, January 14, 1944

- * The right to a useful and remunerative job in the industries or shops or farms or mines in the nation.
 - * The right to earn enough to provide adequate food and clothing and recreation.
 - * The right of every farmer to raise and sell his products at a return which will give him and his family a decent living.
 - * The right of every businessman, large and small, to trade in an atmosphere of freedom from unfair competition and domination by monopolies at home or abroad.
 - * The right of every family to a decent home.
 - * The right to adequate medical care and the opportunity to achieve and enjoy good health.
 - * The right to adequate protection from the economic fears of old age, sickness, accident, and unemployment.
 - * The right to good education.
-

Meaningful work opportunities exist. My farming father repeated many times at the beginning of the day, "There's work to be done." Unaccomplished work abounds, and willing workers are needed, though it may be a challenge for some to carry their load. Even with labor-saving techniques, renewing Earth takes all the support we can muster, provided creative work managers have the resources to find work, though not necessarily "highly economically rewarding work." Jobs need to be done that are beneficial to society and spiritually rewarding. However, the unsustainable System has no material profit motivation for full employment, for how else could one freely choose from a pool of competing job seekers? What about home care, literacy and language training, environmental cleanup, physical therapy exercises, and infrastructure improvement: renewable energy utilities, accessible ports, safe all-weather roads, and an expanded dependable grid and energy storage system? Three basic facts stand out: plentiful work opportunities; multitudes willing to work (300 million); and hidden resources by private groups that should be taxed to work for the common good (work, workers, and resources to couple the two).

Champion democratic work places. Unfortunately, not everyone is master of his or her own living and working site. In fact, the great majority of people work for others. While this is the condition of labor today, it is not necessarily the best. People are not now bound to the land as serfs or slaves of old, nor behold to industries and businesses under trying working conditions. Over time workers have gained the right to organize, to gain a living wage, and to operate in safe working environments. The control of such conditions must be nearer to home where feedback is possible and decision-

makers respond to local needs. Distant decision-making can become insensitive. Captains of modern industry often make sole decisions such as production, location of plants, and termination of jobs, with no regard to human effects on local communities -- only profits. CEOs and company investors ought to be accountable to democratic process.

Worker-owned establishments. Working alternatives are possible and actually exist.¹⁹ In some specific cases workers have taken charge of a work place and continued through elected management to operate and do a good job. Some succeed and some battle larger market forces. Among worker-owned companies are large ones such as the American Polaroid Corporation and the British retailers *John Lewis Partnership*, with 68,000 workers. Globally perhaps, the best known worker cooperative is that of the Spanish Basque region's *Mondragon Corporation*, with about 40,000 worker owners; this has an extensive network of various sub-divisions in production, services, and educational facilities.

Non-profits flourish. As previously mentioned, some of us can be highly motivated by a cause worth fighting for rather than a materialistic money-making goal. In fact, today a non-profit economy co-exists with the profit one.²⁰ Gar Alperovitz mentions a wide variety of existing non-profits; in the twenty largest American cities these include 40% of the two hundred largest corporations: health care facilities, academic institutions, and a host of other non-profit organizations. Added to this are 2,000 municipal electric utilities that supply electricity to one eighth of the American population, along with many public waterworks as well as other facilities. Since non-profits do not have to make money for shareholders, many public utilities can be ten percent cheaper than privately-held counterparts. These can be highly motivated can even be proof of a healthy non-profit world. Raising quality of life along with reducing insecurities can be spiritually rewarding outside of a capitalistic banking system.

Sacrificing for others is fitting work. Not all people are qualified for certain fields -- or to engage in labor right now. We exclude the young, old, physically ill, and mentally sick. Some who are unable to work in our Jesuit order are commissioned to be "praying for the Church and the Society," which may most likely be my last assignment. To the degree possible, those praying are not retired but hold an important place in the world of full labor, for their work keeps the world enlivened as seen through the eyes of faith. The good will of those praying and yet too young or too old to work is part of the creation of a positive environment needed to heal our wounded Earth. A spiritual aspect to good work performance makes it easier for the disabled to do menial jobs or for the ill to offer up their suffering for the good of all.

Governments are employers of last resort; all forms of joblessness are a contamination that festers, breeds discontent, and is destructive of the

dignity of the human person. Why should such issues related to the social life of a community be handled at a national or global level when best done locally or regionally, with sensitivity to cultural differences? Governmental agencies should help furnish jobs for the unemployed with tax reserves taken from the wealthy. Unequal opportunities and wealth disparities could be addressed by fair taxes (90% or more, making this publication officially despised by the privileged). The key is combining work needed, ready workers, and money put to good use.

A word on those who seek jobs. Many migrants muster resources to change the situation by striking out on their own even amid high-travel costs and unsafe conditions. Migrants seek freedom or better quality life and work. Current movements of immigrants represent the largest movement of people in human history. By 2013, the total number of global immigrants was 232 million, or 3.2% of the world's population, while only 170 million in 2000 and 154 million in 1990. Currently Mexico is the largest source of immigrants, but Africa as a continent far exceeds this one nation -- and exiting numbers of Africans are dramatically rising. This has to be a highly nuanced problem area because it is generally better to keep potential employees closer to their traditional residences and families than for them to move to distant places.

Right to life includes planet viability. Needless to say, our right to life has a strong human flavor, but our economy of creation makes us one family; our human quality of life is enhanced by the welfare of all creation. If some species are threatened or extinguished by human misdeeds, then all suffer. Impending climate change threatens a major die-back in the hosts of plants and animals -- and that becomes a human tragedy and an infringement on the right to life. Broadening the range of the right to life issues strengthens the total cause. Unfortunately, neo-conservative climate change deniers strive mightily to limit the issue, for fear it infringes on property rights. All need to work together in maintaining health, keeping upbeat, and on and on. Believers affirm that life is worth living.

e) Defend Democratic Process and Fair Taxes

When I was young, I created a fake nation called *Caspadea*; this being the first printed revelation I hesitate on how to spell this imaginary utopia. My ideal land was surrounded by hostile forces and so had to close its borders, satisfy itself with limited resources in order to be totally self-sustaining, and strong enough to maintain its independence. In this ideal state all inhabitants were fully employed and living in a state of emergency and cooperation much like our nation during the Second World War. There was no inequality because income was virtually the same, with fair taxes and both maximum and minimum income levels. Most people worked on small farms, businesses, and craft shops. Medical professionals were subsidized in their education and were compensated by the satisfaction of their work. All essentially made a basic

income and all goods and services were under enough controls that each would get a good salary and not be threatened by unemployment. Amazingly, Caspadea needs to manifest soon.

The democratic process is threatened. **A fortiori**, this applies to our general participation in healing Earth. To restate for emphasis, the power of the super rich to use the mass media to exert autocratic influence endangers our democracy. Besides this lawlessness of wealthy autocrats, our individual rights to privacy, free speech, and free exercise of our conscience are also under attack from "Big Brother" agencies both public and private. The opportunity stemming from the Supreme Court's declaration that corporations are persons (Did any ever go to jail?) allows such institutions (CEOs holding the puppet strings) to have free reign on influencing our democratic process.

The common good is at stake. The poor must have decent amounts of food, potable water, affordable lodging, recreational space, adequate health, and basic education; these are threatened. Social justice and civility declines when the cult of death and the cult of excessive wealth combine to strangle the democratic process. In order to counter such conditions a number of public policy issues must be championed:

* **Insist on democratic elections.** High costs of campaigning allows the wealthy to have an advantage over the average citizen. A current problem is the existing *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* Supreme Court ruling, which allows political spending as a form of protected speech under the First Amendment; currently, the government may not keep corporations or unions from spending money in the form of ads to support or denounce individual candidates in elections. A second court ruling in the Spring of 2014, *McCutcheon vs. Election Commission*, added fuel to the fire by removing cash limits to partisan groups and essentially gutting restrictions on donations all in the name of free speech.

In opposing these decisions, Associate Judge Stevens said corporations could threaten elected officials with negative ads, the public's faith in the electoral process is adversely affected, qualities unique to corporations give a unique advantage, and these can raise vast sums of money that few individuals can match. Efforts, including a possible constitutional amendment to repeal this ruling are ongoing. Furthermore, the costly nature of campaigns makes fewer people want to endure the rigid scrutiny of private life and running the gauntlet of public opinion. Rather than public campaign financing of elections, a better option is to regulate equal campaign exposure by all candidates.

* **Assure that all vote.** Voting is a privilege and a moral obligation in a democratic society. In areas of great inequality in the U.S., the numbers of those who vote declines. This is especially true when some say it is useless to

compete against those with large war chests. Frequently, road blocks to voter participation are similar today to effects of Southern poll taxes a century or more ago. Today, the subterfuge is that in order to avoid fraud, new requirements must be imposed to prove citizenship on the part of poor voters. Actually, cases of such fraud are extremely rare, and burdens of proof through photos or other documentation is a heavy burden on non-drivers. Some states now restrict voting times and places, creating discouraging long voter lines.

* **Voting is a duty.** One way to overcome voting barriers is to require the vote by citizens. Seeing voting as a duty (just like jury duty or the requirement to pay taxes) means extending the duty to those burdened by immobility via use of posted or electronic balloting. Facility becomes the goal, not restrictions, for duty requires all to exercise their citizen rights and thus strengthens the democratic process. Voters can still return a blank ballot or add a write-in name if objecting to the slate -- but vote all must. Furthermore, this "all" ought to include ex-felons. Voting in a healthy democracy ought to be a duty, not a mere option.

* **Charity is not a proper alternative to justice.** Charity is regarded as a good in society, especially when people have special needs; giving in such circumstances benefits recipient and donor alike. However, getting at the root of the need can be a greater good, especially if the cause is a lack of social justice. In fact, when justice is unattended, certain charity can be toxic and harmful to recipients.²¹ This is especially true when it becomes a disincentive to work or to furnish one's own livelihood, or when it replaces a means of livelihood that would be so much more dignified for the recipient than direct handouts. People prefer to earn their livelihood through farms, businesses, services, or exercise some control through worker ownership -- and governments can help.

* **"Occupy Wall Street" is a democratic form of rebellion.** In 2011, when revolution began to ripple throughout the Middle East, a spirit of change rose in America and ushered in the short-lived *Occupy Wall Street* movement first in Manhattan and then in other parts of the U.S. and elsewhere. People craved a change from the System of profiteering and expressed this at the seat of profit's power. Revolution is possible when all ask, "Why are there billionaires?" Why 800 military bases to secure Pax Americana? Why not be the first nation to abandon the consumer culture? Why not a global Manifest Destiny? Why not global civic action taken together? Why not a new socio-economic order? Throughout history, people from Augustine to Thomas More and from Ben Franklin to Franklin Roosevelt dreamed, spoke and wrote of greater goals. Norman Thomas said that *Men still laugh at Jesus the dreamer, or wistfully sigh for ideals beyond their grasp.*²² His kingdom emerges while some disparage dreams pointing to justice for all.

| Legacy emerges as democratically based. What brings on youthful

visions and late life dreams? Perhaps the will to make a mark, or to leave one upon departure. Maybe it is dissatisfaction that *The American Dream*²³ was too materialistic and self-centered. Parents want the best for offspring; the parentless want a better world for a broader family. St. Theresa, the Little Flower, prayed that her good works might flourish after her mortal life, and her heaven has consisted of doing good on Earth; miracles and a most popular autobiography followed. Can radical change be our legacy? Was Theresa's request selfish or an utter selfless desire that God's will be done? Let an eternal wish be to help heal our wounded Earth. An unrecognized founder of our country, Thomas Paine, believed in violent revolution if necessary. We seek a non-violent revolution through redistribution of wealth.

Promote fair taxes. According to the New York Times in 2010, General Electric made over \$14.2 billion in profits, but paid no federal tax. None! Furthermore, in the same year due to what GE spent on lobbying, American taxpayers actually owed GE \$3.2 billion in tax credits. That was the year GE cut retirement benefits among its non-union workers and paid their CEO a 100% pay raise. It was the year that GE CEO Jeff Immelt was chair of the President's Council on Jobs and Competitiveness.²⁴ I pay more through fuel taxes on gasoline that consume a quarter of my expenses, but admit they are fair to help maintain safe roads. Yes, and electric and non-carbon fueled vehicles need to pay fuel tax equivalents. But all in all, the wealthy ought to pay more -- far more. They use the media to inspire money-short lap dogs to mouth a dislike for taxes when, in fact, the latter ought to be proponents of more taxes for the wealthy. The rich take from the commons as though legal thieves; they must pay fair tax returns (at least 90%).

Taxing the wealthy raises the question, how much? President Franklin Roosevelt (FDR) wanted to finance the Second World War through stiff taxes on the wealthy and did succeed to a major degree. FDR proposed a 100% top tax rate in time of "grave national danger". At the start of the War FDR told Congress that "No American citizen ought to have a net income, after he has paid his taxes, of more than \$25,000 dollars a year (about \$350,000 in today's money).²⁵ At the end of that war the supertax did reach 94%. Today, we face a far graver global danger, and such taxes are right and just. Some will call it "confiscation," but it is really merciful redistribution, provided honest government does the extracting. And precisely here an aroused citizenry is called for. We must stop retention of wealth, an elitism that smacks of empty nobility and rank, which is a threat and violence to a democratic society. Justifying wealth Scripturally is like trying to justify slavery; removing it is like abolition and its time has come.

Citizens favor fair taxes. Major reasons against the rich being the arbiters of wealth include: it is troublesome and undemocratic to recognize "wealthy autocrats" in a democratic society (not "nobles" for they have no sense of *noblesse oblige*); the materially privileged are poor judges when it

comes to their supposed property limits, for greed can easily enter the picture; they generally defend the status quo, which demands this unsustainable System; and they continued to exist even under the high-tax Second World War period. The affluent indulge in large homes, cars, boats, and air travel; how about high taxes?

Redistribution schemes need to be perfected. This is a way to return wealth to the commons, not to a new privileged set of possessors, as when the USSR collapsed. Orderly redistribution has the ups and downs of settlers and homesteaders throughout centuries -- messy at first before practical problems are overcome. Rather than redistributing to individuals, a better approach may be turning property over to honest governmental agencies or to local cooperative units controlled and monitored by civic-minded members. After the recent Great Recession, the public finally abandoned the myth that highly paid CEO do better jobs and that Hedge fund operators were good managers of wealth. Most of the financial track records by those blinded by greed were rated failures. Many admitted they were unclear as to whether anyone really understood the System. Those managing the commons through oversight could do a better job and thus, the age of globalized Capitalism is past and ought to be declared an authentic endangered species along with slavery and serfdom. An alert public is far less greedy and dangerous than private looters.

Promote limited private property. Part of the damage inflicted on lower income people during the recent Great Recession consisted of allowing unscrupulously conceived mortgages in the anonymous hands of irresponsible and unregulated money managers. People blinded by greed brought on disaster; big banks were regarded as 'too big to fail' -- a fatal mistake for they have already failed. Small housing properties went into default. A panicked administration said, "Attend to the billionaires; forget the small fries." Skepticism towards the System emerged, though ever so slowly because trust is so misplaced. Are we wiser now, so as to impose controls and limit property holdings at a maximum level? Greed is always insatiable, and uncontrolled global greed is ecocidal. Wise founding father Ben Franklin²⁶ called for limited property holdings. James Madison wanted, besides political equality, to withhold *unnecessary opportunities from a few, to increase the inequality of property, by an immoderate, and especially an unmerited, accumulation of riches.*²⁷

Support small farms, businesses, and worker-owned cooperatives. It is not right that large-scale operations can or should do what smaller ones can do well or better. This is the principle of subsidiarity at work. 'Small is Beautiful' means small farms can handle local needs better than large corporate ones; small fisheries means that factory fishing giants that deplete ocean fishing stock must cease; small businesses can sell materials with the same finesse as can big-box stores and with greater accountability to

local communities; and small banks can look out for the needs of local people. Private banks should not handle massive transfers of funds (from locals and their communities) from one nation to another. Globalized business where needed (communication and transportation) should be at a governmental level and operate on a non-profit basis. Small operations with governmental oversight are far better than megacompanies, bigger than some national governments, and operating by wealthy CEO robber barons. Democratic process demands more than the current System.

New grounds: address private investments. The flow of wealth from one nation to another and from one source to a tax haven is runaway Capitalism, an abomination to a just society. Many ordinary folks want investments to pay well in their so-called retirement years; that is a praiseworthy and responsible outlook for self and family. But is Capitalism and its investments the answer? If the total investment of the region and nation is through the hard work of the people, then they have a right to adequate social security in their own old age -- a good reason why large-scale earnings and investments are unneeded. Local investments mean local prosperity. Using local investments is an extension of our Small is Beautiful philosophy of obtaining basic bulk local food, water, building materials, and fuel from local sources. Private investing in distant places causes extravagances that have hounded colonialism, whether past or modern at the expense of locally-based native peoples. Keep global transportation and communications systems out of private hands, and let all investments be local. Encourage democracy at all levels.

f) Install a Renewable Energy Economy

In the first decade of this century, unequal massive wealth and excessive use of non-renewable resources became twin global issues leading to climate change and Earth-related problems. Wealth ostentation fueled insatiable imitation by a surging mass of people rising from global poverty. Meeting these demands with available non-renewable energy, at lower prices due to failure to pay total environmental costs, exacerbated these troubling conditions. Big Energy and wealthy allies said renewable energy was not yet available and they tried to refute claims by the scientific community of anthropogenic climate change.

Disparity of wealth and climate change are complementary problems. The democratic processes needed to move to an environmentally benign renewable energy (wind, solar, hydropower, geothermal, and tidal) economy have been frustrated by Big Energy and its demands to stay with the status quo of mainly non-renewable fossil fuels and nuclear power. Inequality subsidizes a complacent media to broadcast the myth that renewables are incapable of meeting rising energy needs. Actually, American official energy stats hinted that changes were in the air but not in the immediate future. In

2013, over 37% of new electricity generation was through renewable energy sources. Recent credible studies suggest a 100% U.S. renewable energy economy by 2050²⁸, that could be extended globally. Merchants of doubt hired by Big Energy strived to confirm the status quo; a delay in the climate change battle (even if the planet's vitality is at stake) creates billions of dollars of profits. For them, evident climate changes are from natural causes, and they strengthen this with bogus studies sent to a gullible media. The consumer culture's inequality-based System included heightened conspicuous consumption by the wealthy, thus enticing an emerging middle class to want cars, spacious housing, resource intensive foods, and electronic devices -- all creating an indelible carbon footprint.

Can we stop climate change? Deniers capture a major political party, a consumer economy, a national credit-carded nation, and a fiction-haunted land that cannot face raw reality through its secular spectacles. Never before has the human family been faced with such existential threats and this calling for radical changes. A society addicted to material success and to selfish privileges seeks to avoid the existential question: Will the window of opportunity close before effective remedies are actualized? If renewable energy sources can successfully substitute for non-renewable coal, oil and gas, this will give time to heal our Earth.

Fracking suddenly appeared. Into this tense situation comes the very recent technical innovation of the decade: hydraulic fracturing of shale formations (fracking) in order to release natural gas and petroleum. This innovation is worth billions of dollars in profits to Big Energy, with a fossil fuel regarded as cleaner than coal. Fracturing shale rock formations is being exploited in the U.S. and possibly a large number of other nations -- and the resultant abundance of natural gas means an immediate plentiful supply of cheap non-renewable fuel with GHG emission -- thus delaying the renewable energy economy. Part of this serious situation are the shaken expectations of what might happen to the children's children if predicted climate change, as clearly articulated by James Hansen²⁹ and others, occurs.

Extreme weather and warmest years have been clustered in this new century. Glaciers are melting and receding, the ice shelf in Antarctica is calving and ice caps in the Arctic region are receding and opening on ice-free Northwest Passage for transporting goods from Asia to Europe (a minor plus effect). But melting ice raises ocean levels and this means massive inundation, depending on the size of the projected temperature rises. Some of the most drastic estimates predict the urban seacoast of a third of the world's people flooded by 2100. Like the cigarette scare of mid-twentieth century, this far more serious climate change demands prudential action. Tobacco misuse shortened millions of lives as regulatory action was delayed by merchants of doubt. This current delay shortens Earth's viability and threatens the quality of life of millions if not billions of human inhabitants.

Where is king coal in the energy mix? This is a difficult issue for Appalachian residents, who have depended on coal mining as part of the economy for over a century. Coal mining is a dangerous but well-paying job, but regulations to lower pollution from American coal-fired powerplants is gradually taking its toll. The fracking craze is allowing cheap natural gas to replace coal-fired powerplants. At the start of the fracking craze in the second decade of this century, seven 110-car coal trains a day came into the Ravenna rail yards two blocks away from my residence; four years later numbers dropped to about three coal trains a week. Some 6,000 miners were laid off in Eastern Kentucky. However, other coal fields in the world (and parts of the U.S.) are thriving -- unfortunately. India and Africa are set to take up the slack from U.S. mine losses and, in fact, U.S. coal exports are starting to rise. A BP Oil study³⁰ shows coal consumption continuing to climb to almost twice 2000 levels by 2050 -- a dark prognosis for those seeking to halt climate change.

Note that if coal interests (miners and companies) insisted on strict governmental regulations of fracked natural gas, coal as a current fuel would be more attractive. Furthermore, the myth that natural gas is cleaner depends on unaccounted amounts of natural gas (the major methane is a powerful GHG) that escape. In late 2013, the Canadian Province of Ontario decided to close all its coal-burning powerplants, the first province or state in North America to do this. On the other hand, well into this century primary carbon-emitter China has opened one new coal-fired plant per week. A citizens' public interest outcry shows Chinese becoming aware of pollutants affecting human health. Beijing China suffers from air pollution of equal or greater effect than that of London following the Second World War. Switching to renewables are in the forefront of the Chinese national policy affecting one fifth of the human race, and now wind and solar applications are rising rapidly, but other emerging nations are addicted to fossil fuels.

Renewables are coming but not fast enough. Urgency is growing, as shown by statistics assembled by Ken Bossong at his *Sun Day Campaign*.³¹ In 1973, fossil fuels such as oil (30% imported), coal, and natural gas accounted for over 83% of energy use. Nuclear power with 42 powerplants in 1973 provided 4.5% of U.S. electrical generation and 1% of total energy demand; due to rapid expansion in the following decade to about hundred plants by 2013, nuclear power provided over 19% of U.S. electrical generation and 8.2% of total energy use; however, after the Three Mile Island accident in 1979 nuclear leveled and is now starting to decline as five older plants were closed in 2013 alone. In 1973, renewables were mainly conventional hydropower generating 15% of the nation's electricity and providing 3.8% of total energy; biomass and geothermal adding about 2% of total energy use, with wind, solar and biofuels virtually non-existent. By 2013, renewables are emerging as a major energy supplier, and these account for 12% of domestic

energy production and 14.2% of U.S. net electrical generation. This renewable mix includes hydropower (29.7%), biomass (25.4%), biofuels (20.0%), wind (19.3%), solar (3.2%), and geothermal (2.4%). Speed it up!

Champion a "Manhattan Project"-type (crash) program for renewable development, similar to what U.S. and allies did in the 1940s that brought on the atomic bomb. Resources could be made available, but the political will is lacking. However, in 2004, 2% of American new electricity capacity installments were renewable, and this has risen to 56% in 2012. If the drive to bring on fracked natural gas were truly challenged with effective state and federal regulations, then renewables will have a fighting chance to forge ahead; if natural gas is privileged by lack of strong regulations, then the renewable transition rate will be slowed. As we move further into the century, halting new nuclear facilities (as in Germany and Japan) and removal of old coal-burning powerplants from the grid will brighten the renewable energy picture somewhat, depending also on the commercial lure and low price of natural gas.

Recently, a study sponsored by NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center concluded that our global industrial civilization is heading towards collapse. Pretty pessimistic! Overuse of resources by an unequal privileged class and discontent by the majority of commoners is cited. This study is authoritative and legitimate, with tags of cross-disciplinary ("Human and Nature DYnamical or HANDY) model, and peer review;³² it suggests a number of cases of rising and falling civilizations, and cites the Roman Empire and the Han, Gupta, and many Mesopotamian Empires. Some fell slower than others, but the wave is inevitable. The paths of interrelated factors indicating decline include population, climate, water, agriculture, and energy -- and each is discussed in turn. Scary!

Questions for Reflection

* **How does one address the social addiction phenomenon in an effective manner?** Affirmation of trust in God and distrust of the System go hand in hand. Do we need a concerted effort at tackling a social Discernment of Spirits, akin to the exercises used for centuries for individuals in their respective journeys of faith?

* **Should agents of change travel less and spend more time using efficient communications?** My own energy level and extensive travel of previous decades declined considerably, whereas electronic and other forms of communication expanded immensely. While realizing misuse of these forms is possible, still the Internet is a golden opportunity to spread Good News.

* **How can the Anthropogenic climate change issue be made effective when an impending catastrophe is occurring?** Panicking people is not an effective method, especially since global damage will come after their

lifetime and affect their grandchildren. Responsibility for future generations may take an act of courage at this time by all who believe in a future.

*** Is it possible to heal our wounded Earth without the financial resources now held in tax havens and hidden accounts?**

Aren't these resources part of the commons belonging to all the people, not just to the privileged few? How do we go about calling for fair taxes when the public is propagandized to want no new taxes? Disparity of wealth grows at an increasing rate for the upper one percent, who are gaining almost half of accumulating wealth. Tax the rich and save their souls!

*** What about a rapid and concerted effort to develop a renewable energy economy?** Shouldn't there be environmental restrictions on cheap fracked gas and oil, which seem to be waylaying attempts at a renewable energy economy? Uncontrolled and undertaxed affluence exacerbated the insatiable consumerism that demanded more fossil fuel resources with its resulting pollution.

Chapter Five: Healing Earth through Eco-Revolution¹ (2010s)

Your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men see visions. (Joel 2:28)

In the second decade of the 21st century a growing disquiet prevails within the current environmental situation -- and it calls for radical change. Urgency demands more than tweaking the dysfunctional economic System by the elite; the invitation is for all to participate in protecting and enhancing our commons.² Agents of change must be present at the right place and time, acting somewhat like chemical and biological catalysts. This requires eco-revolutionaries willing to fight current violence through non-violent means. Every child who dies from hunger, every adult with cancer and lacking treatment, and every person who suffers from extreme weather conditions caused by climate change is a victim of violence. The vast extinction now occurring as butterflies and bird species struggle to stay alive,³ coral reefs fading, and mammals poached for a hungry animal-parts market is violence that is seldom acknowledged by those blinded by affluence or its quest.

Granted, in times of hunger and unemployment the temptation to violence is greater because of justified grievances on the part of the poor and oppressed. A sudden awakening may cause this counter violent behavior. Thomas Paine, the American Revolutionist said that not thinking a thing wrong gives it a superficial appearance of being right. He speaks of *a long and violent abuse of power* by the ones who perpetrate that violence.⁴ Paine's words as directed against the nobility of his day could be applied with equal force today

against the inequality of our present world. While that 18th century cause was independence, today's focus is equality, interdependence, and planetary vitality -- broader issues.

Radical change is urgent, but must be justified if we are to succeed in halting anthropogenic climate change and to redistribute the accumulated wealth of a privileged few in Big Finance and Big Energy. As stated before, documented studies indicate that a massive surging inequality (partly due to uncontrolled globalization factors) exacerbates social ills such as community breakdown, drug abuse, and high levels of incarceration.⁵ With private wealthy citizens acquiring vast sums of money, their funds are used to subsidize political allies who refuse to sufficiently address the climate change issue. Pope Francis speaks about this widening gap in very forceful language.⁶

The conflict of God versus mammon becomes the titanic battle of this century. One side is the materialistic culture which threatens both our physical and spiritual life. The battle is between good and evil, between the desire for a higher quality of life by all and that of greed, selfishness, and individual enrichment for the privileged few and those enticed to imitate them. In this decade a **social spiritual discernment** must be addressed, not a single once and for all exercise by an international committee, but an ongoing process involving people from various lands and cultural conditions. For the spiritually discerning, this enticement comes from mammon and must be exposed for what it really is.

A technical replacement of non-renewable energy sources by renewable ones will not fully address the problem -- for this change could occur within the System. Nonetheless, to make no radical change allows the current wealthy elite to control many (though not all) renewable sources, and they can thus continue the inequality and the insatiable quest for more consumer goods. Urgency demands hastening remedial actions that involve fairness in taxes and redistribution of resources to those in need. The expanse of this redistribution must be directed beyond the here and now to include future generations as well. This has been well noted by scientific experts such as Jim Hansen.⁷

The basic argument seems irrefutable: wealth in the hands of the privileged few creates situations that many of the rising middle classes seek to imitate -- like lemmings racing to the sea of global catastrophe. In an age of uncontrolled financial accounting these wealthy few press legislators to abide by their bidding, encouraged by financial gifts to help pay for expensive election campaigns. Democratic values are threatened. Thus, even with extensive discussion, our current annual three percent increase in climate change gases (GHG) is not being stopped, much less reduced. The window of opportunity closes if we do not act immediately -- and that is what believers are urged to do. Thus, uncontrolled wealth fuels an economy that moves us

ever closer to disaster, for the wants of those who can afford to use resources are insatiable, and the slippery road to a culture of death ensues.

In order to act and to act quickly to save our wounded Earth we must be able to focus on encouraging agents of change, a core believing group encouraging each other and committed to touching the heart of the issue. If this is to be a democratic process, then all people of good will ought to participate. Current elites will naturally strive to continue status quo practices, and seek little if any change. However, the hungry and unemployed cannot wait. Priorities give way as minimum and maximum wages must be adjusted, the poor people and threatened plants and animals addressed, and the privileged confronted. Attention is given to the poor who are to rise and take what is rightfully theirs. Hopefully, the privileged will concede, and all parties act nonviolently. Will more stringent measures be called for?

The challenge is before us. The disquiet is very deep and the allurement of a *nouveau riche* in many countries increases the social addiction of a consumer culture. When cultures measure growth and success in material terms, addictions go beyond individuals to entire societies. To counter this, agents of change look for people who are balanced; these act in non-violent ways and are at peace with themselves, feel an urgency to act and are willing to work cooperatively with others. The search is for the unique individual who can get to the heart of the crisis and is humble, inspiring, enthusiastic, and compassionate; an individual willing to serve as model for others to follow. Christian believers find a perfect healer in Jesus Christ, a faithful follower in Mary his mother, and a need for faithful eco-revolutionary agents of change. These three (Jesus, Mary, and faithful believers) become the threefold focus of this decade.

a) Jesus, Master Healer⁸

I have come to bring fire to the Earth and how I wish it were blazing already!
(Luke 12:49)

Jesus Christ is an activist who moved a world in his coming. He teaches, heals, and serves an expectant world. The cures lead to the establishment of God's reign in a cooperative effort among those who join in the grand enterprise as eco-revolutionaries confronting the raw reality and willing to undergo a transformation in this troubled world. Through trial, Jesus' disciples discover qualities needed for the task at hand; they can improve efficiency in hastening radical changes needed to confront the materialistic culture which threatens Earth's vitality. Christians approach the awesome task of service knowing limitations and need for empowerment in the Risen Lord. The call is for healing and spreading the Good News and that requires a balanced interior ecology with intellectual, social, emotional, and physical components.

Jesus' interior balance manifests a soft side of mercy and compassion (weeping over Jerusalem and at the death of his friend Lazarus); still, he shows holy anger when denouncing Pharisees or driving moneychangers from the temple. Individuals need healing and so do social structures and misguided cultural practices. Jesus addresses more than individual wants; he drives out those buying and those selling who have taken for private profit a place meant as a commons for the people; he overturns the moneychangers' tables; he prevents anyone from carrying any vessels from the temple precincts; and he teaches through deed.⁹ Jesus' concern is for the poor's access to the temple, "A house for all peoples" (Isaiah 56:7). He becomes more than a prophet announcing Good News to come. He speaks of a profoundly different view of the world and is willing to manifest radical change through an action of cleansing mentioned in all four gospels.

Jesus the activist shows extraordinary dedication, intensive focus, and seeks team cooperation from others; he heals the sick when they approach, and teaches Good News in a compassionate manner to the wayward and suffering; he is intensely centered on his upcoming Calvary for that is his reason for coming. With his rising from the dead, Jesus goes before us and continues his presence in a Body of believers who are commanded to go forth to all the world. Jesus' words and actions are **revolutionary**. He is the premier agent of change, exercising perfect self-control while calling others to take a risk to follow him. Jesus exudes a sense of authority making him initially popular, even to the point of some wanting to make him king. Once the demand for personal perfection becomes clear, the popularity wanes. Jesus' personal balance and control along with his focus on mission prove challenging to us all.

Certainly, the eco-revolutionary spirit is present. In his teaching Jesus likens himself or is compared to various parts of the world around us. Besides calling himself the **way**, the **truth** and the **life** (John 14:6), Jesus identifies himself at numerous times as "**light of the world**," (e.g., John 8:12) and this light illumines the way and directs those on the journey who are also called "light" for fellow travelers. Jesus identifies with plants and animals: he is the **vine** (John 15:5); he is called **lamb of God** and calls himself the **gate** of the sheepfold (John 10:7) and the **good shepherd** (10:11). In balance and in imagery Jesus expresses his humanity and closeness to Earth.

Characteristics of the ideal healer are discovered when reflecting on the life of Jesus. While most individuals are not gifted with more than one of these qualities, we know of one rare agent of change who is. Our hope is that a core of people working together will have a composite of these talents needed for radical change. Jesus possesses all of these:¹⁰

1. Serenity -- *Look at the birds in the sky...Think of the flowers growing in the fields.* (Matthew 6:26-28). Jesus tells us that as believers (eco-

revolutionaries) we need to look out and learn from the creatures around us. We are not to be overly worried about the concerns of tomorrow and focus on the present that has enough troubles in itself. A peace of soul by those trusting in God is most necessary. Calm comes in being ourselves -- a breath of fresh air.

2. Assertiveness -- *Zeal for your house will devour me* (John 2:17). Citizens step forward and say openly what they hold dear. Jesus says we cannot hide a lamp under a bushel basket, but must allow it to give light to the room. Opportunities avail themselves and need creative response from eco-revolutionaries. Times are too pressing to remain silent or to withdraw from the battle, for it takes the fortitude of the Holy Spirit to make us break silence and speak up for the oppressed and overlooked. The zeal of Jesus shows itself in cleansing the temple.

3. Loyalty -- *This is my commandment: love one another as I have loved you.* (John 15:12). Eco-revolutionaries have a loyalty that extends beyond the human family to all God's creatures, near and far away. A loyal heart discovers freedom to act and be focused and steady in pursuit of one goal -- a viable planet on which to live and flourish. We are reminded of the hungry, the homeless, and the threatened plants and animals. Loyalty avoids self-centeredness and looks out for the needs of others in the manner that Jesus is of service to us all.

4. Joviality -- *Fill the jugs with water, and they filled them to the brim...* (John 2:7). Balance is an important aspect of the life of an eco-revolutionary. We are expected to be light-hearted and at the same time sensitive to the needs of others, especially those seeking to enjoy a celebration. Jesus' mother triggers the need for continuing the marriage feast's entertainment, and Jesus realizes that need for celebration by his first public service for others. Through joviality we bring out the best in others who are to aspire to a higher quality of life and accept that life can be light-hearted in serious times because God is in command.

5. Solicitude -- *No, anyone who wants to be great among you must be your servant* (Matthew 20:26). Eco-revolutionaries serve others and are willing to sacrifice in order to reach those in need. This requires a concern for the physical and spiritual health of others. Caregivers of individuals learn this characteristic through experience; so must healers of Earth. These are called to solicitude for the hungry and destitute, and for care of the plants and animals that are threatened or endangered.

6. Discipline -- *I have come not to abolish but to complete them* (the Law or the Prophets) (Matthew 5:17). This requires an exacting person who does each thing just right. A person must be attuned to details and have a handle on them, or be willing to find those who can execute detailed work.

Discipline allows the eco-revolutionary to muster intellectual resources for the difficult work ahead, for spreading the Good News and continuing the harvest work. The ultimate in discipline is living simply in a world of excessive waste, all the while confronting wasters for their lack of conservation.

7. Sensitivity -- *As he drew near and came in sight of the city he shed tears over it* (Luke 19:41). Eco-revolutionaries are moved by the merciful Jesus to help all who are in need -- and Earth herself is in need of mercy. Jesus the healer shows deep sensitivity to the sick, the daughter of Jairus, the city of Jerusalem, and on and on. Again, he teaches through healing as in the many instances during his public life. The ill approach in need and Jesus responds by drawing further acts of faith from those healed.

8. Ambition -- *Repent, and believe the Good News* (Mark 1:15). Jesus completes the initial steps taken by John the Baptist by calling forth a group of followers, most of whom succeed in the conversion process and remain faithful. Eco-revolutionaries see the goals clearly and the need for association with like-minded persons, some of whom must be drawn to deeper levels of commitment. Jesus challenges the habits of those who are holding back; he launches a body of believers growing in confidence for the work of healing the wounded and teaching the Good News.

9. Wisdom -- *His teaching made a great impression on the people because he taught them with authority...* (Matthew 7:28-29). Eco-revolution is the fruit of wisdom and prudence, not of an uncontrolled emotional person. The wise know that one's time is short (Psalm 90:12), and thus through growth in experience hone their efforts on important issues and realize the precious resource of doing the right thing at the right moment. The wise are more willing to set priorities and avoid foolish waste of precious resources. Wisdom deserves respect, and those with self-control and prayerfulness stand out with an authority the world lacks.

Agents of change who are effective individuals and cooperating in a group hopefully embody these characteristics listed for Jesus. These agents are the ones who must catalyze the reclaiming process while lacking in plentiful resources. They must manifest a hidden power to attract those who hunger for justice. Jesus speaks of yeast (a biological catalyst and agent of change), and expects his chosen followers to be immersed in the world but not belong to it (John 17:14). They are to effect change while standing apart from the material world being changed (a catalytic quality). Jesus carefully selects and trains followers, and chooses them for special tasks. He sends them two-by-two without added resources to touch the lives of others. They come from ordinary ranks of people, yet are capable of greatness.

Jesus shows universal love and a special divine option for the poor. The blessed souls that Jesus mentions at the Sermon on the Mount are the happy

ones with whom Jesus is close. In turn, Jesus expects that they strive to extend blessedness in their hearts to others. The poor in spirit are those who are subjects for the kingdom of God, the true candidates for the revolution ahead. The same is said of those who are the persecuted. Truly, to be poor and profess faith brings on inevitable opposition, for the potential power of the poor reveals insecurities and aggression in the consciences of the highly placed.

In the divine reversal of order, the poor are the spiritual haves and materialists the have-nots. The spiritual haves find happiness in suffering with Christ. They are consoled, for throughout Scripture God gives special favor to the poor and weak. God is offended when the *anawim* (little people) are oppressed or the privileged act excessively (Isaiah 4:8-). Throughout salvation history the lowly are given favorable roles: Abraham the herder of flocks, David the shepherd, prophets who were common laborers, carpenters who spend life hidden in dignified work, apostles who were fishers. Israel itself is a small nation and yet an agent of change as chosen people.

Jesus tells the rich man that in order to be perfect he must sell what he has and become a consecrated agent of change (somewhat devoid of material resources). As Peter says (*Acts 3:6*), "I have neither silver or gold, but I will give you what I have: in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, walk!" Healing comes through a spiritual power and goes beyond acts of material charity. Down through the centuries healing through God's grace and favor has occurred, whether as special miraculous events or curing through a period of concern and care. Overall, this is a revolution with its moments of drama and long periods of ordinary life.

At the start of Christ's ministry, the change that John the Baptist, the messianic precursor, preached is one of turning from evil ways -- a reform and healing of individuals, and a conversion to the ways of the Lord. And John actually named specific examples for the way soldiers and others are to act. Conversion involves the option of spiritual life or spiritual death-- and Jesus in his public life enhances the healing theme and life option. Interestingly, the way we treat our world also involves the option of enhancing or sapping Earth's vitality. This planet can be better for our sojourn, or worse through misdeeds with mortal consequences.

Revolution comes in degrees: some aspects demand immediate change (e.g., tearing down the Berlin Wall) and some occur over long periods of time (e.g., the Industrial Revolution). Some positive changes are needed **NOW** in bold letters, because a delicate living planet can become a lifeless one. When we reflect on Jesus' words we find the stamp of ASAP (as soon as possible) directed to service as followers. This is not pushing rocks uphill, to allow them to roll down and then starting again. Christians are to be involved in mortal matters, and the urgency goes beyond individuals to include an

entire social order. Brakes are needed now, not only on private misdeeds, but also on those of greedy corporations, governmental agencies, and hedge funds that smash the bars of justice and erode the social capital needed for healing. When Jesus speaks on Calvary to forgive them for "they know not what they do," the "they" includes a social disorder pledged to an addicted consumer culture. Forgiveness is an ASAP exercise but for most human beings it takes time and effort.

Emergency caregivers are first responders. Within the range of individual healing the ill or wounded need immediate diagnosis; this is followed by emergency treatments to curb bleeding and life-threatening conditions; beyond this is the longer-term nursing, which demands compassion as a remedy to help healing. Patients must accept the challenge to participate in the healing process through confidence in advice and treatment by physicians and attending therapists. All these regularly accepted procedures are superseded by miraculous cure, but ordinary healing is routine. Through **gratitude**, the ill appreciate the cooperative role in healing; in **compassion**, the immediate step of determining benefits and putting these into effect begins the process; in **justice**, the best possible procedure for longer term treatment is proposed and initiated; and in **courage** we launch out on a renewal journey directed towards eventual healing and wellness.

1. Gratitude and the Mystery of Creation

*I look up at your heavens, made by your fingers,
at the moon and stars you set in place. (Psalm 8:3)*

Devout Christians discover the Christ image shining forth. It is not enough for believers to be mere spectators. At restful moments each of us justify our peace of soul by sitting and staring into space -- and the image comes, and comes. Jesus! It may be youthful Yuletide, or on an ordination card, "Faith is seeing the brilliant countenance of Christ looking up at us from every creature;" this may occur at a subway stop, a chapel decorated with fresh summer flowers, or when an accident is narrowly avoided. It is like emerging from blindness, the figure is like a shadow that grows more distinct with time. It is macrocosmos and microcosmos, a litany of divine glory that magnifies our praise of both a star-lit cosmos and the micro world of ants and bees. Praise and gratitude burst forth: the joy in sunsets and waterfalls, in spring flowers and autumn leaves, the smile and the hug. God gives us good gifts for which, upon reflection, deserve a simple thanks. In an atmosphere of freedom one can choose to say a definitive "yes" or "no."

While reflecting on the mystery of creation comes an almost simultaneous discovery that natural beauty has been marred by our misdeeds. Divine mystery is shaken by our experience of endangered and threatened species of plants and animals. The pain strikes us that human beings so

meant for giving thanks has really replaced gratitude by wrongful misdeeds. A catastrophic crash occurs, perhaps more severe than the end of the dinosaurs of 65 billion years ago. Writer Elizabeth Kolbert refuses to end her book on impending extinction on an optimistic note. "Life is extremely resilient but not infinitely so."¹¹ Lovers of nature find something terribly disturbing; human wrongdoing threatens the very vitality of Earth. Interestingly, previous Christian generations understood the need for human salvation and experienced the impact of personal sin; however, they did not see how much social harm by human individuals or groups could threaten planetary life through careless use of resources and resulting air, water and land pollution. WE now are starting to experience social sin -- and are asked to respond.

2. Compassion and the Mystery of Redemption

This is why the country is in mourning, and all who live in it pine away, even the wild animals and the birds of heaven; the fish of the sea themselves are perishing. (Hosea 4:3)

Certainly, many Christians place greater emphasis on Jesus' redemptive act than on a general far-reaching, creation-centered approach to spirituality just discussed. In fact, both creation- and redemption-centered approaches have validity if not considered in opposition, but rather part of the fullness of God's revelation. The eco-revolutionary needs to be more than a creation-oriented person who minimizes confronting and conquering misdeeds, and thus lacks a full social dimension. Inherent evil that fuels the materialistic culture must be met and challenged. This is something far deeper than a vague oneness among creatures, for this exploitation of nature is part of the human condition that should have been one of responsibility. These two approaches require more than mere philosophical debates and neither accepted singly address the broader environmental issue of the current dysfunctional economic System. Too often, the creation-approach bears a libertarian flavor and the redemption-centered people find compatibility with status-quo free marketeers who overlook threats to the vitality of our planet and focus on individual sin alone.

Compassion or suffering with others is at the heart of the Mystery of Redemption. As a community of believers the followers of Christ see that all are to be devoted to love and service of those in need.¹² Co-suffers call out in pain and deserve to be addressed ASAP. Christians are aware with St. Paul of the need "to make up all that has still to be undergone by Christ for the sake of his body, the Church" (Colossians 1:24). This sharing does not enhance the value of the redemption (which cannot be increased), but it makes us co-sharers and thus more compassionate people who experience the awesome price that Christ has endured for us. Through compassion each of us resolves to continue the healing process while serving as the hands and feet of God in this world today. Urgency in this healing moment makes us hear once more:

Now is the acceptable time (1 Corinthians 6:1-4).

Both respectful observation and profound listening are part of our expanding mission. Listening attentively allows one to hear a cry to heaven coming from those who are hurt -- and from Earth herself. That cry becomes global anguish when military coupled with financial powers continue to ensure the vast chasm between wealth and poverty, haves and have-nots. Must our paralysis of inaction and avoidance of responsibility continue? What about a secular world that has no fear of God? Our very fears, which move us to anticipate facing the judgment seat of God, cause us to see urgency and resolve to act rather than to remain silent. Must the inaction include a social addiction to consumer products and a failure to address the GHGs which endanger our planet's vitality?

3. Justice and the Mystery of Earth Renewal

The kingdom of heaven is like the yeast a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour till it was leavened all through. (Luke 13:21)

The resurrection event invites us to participate in the glory of Jesus *who was proclaimed Son of God in all his power through his resurrection from the dead* (Romans 1:4). Even in the moment of our impoverishment Christians are called to be Easter people, to express faith in the renewing power God gives us by sharing in the divine family. Such a realization touches on a Resurrection-Centered Approach to earthhealing.¹³ The mystery of new life first in Christ and then permeating believers incorporates the mystery of creation with that of redemption, a new creation for those renewed at Baptism/Confirmation. Looked at as serving others, Christians enter into the awesome task of reclaiming our fragile Earth harmed by the mishaps done in the name of "progress." This entry into the Easter mystery demands an eco-revolution or treating the planet kindly, and a new way of seeing things -- a Resurrection way incorporating our new-found Easter faith.

Renewing Earth becomes our special mission, but this includes our developing our talents and overcoming our defects, so as to be more perfect instruments of change. Our wounded Earth is fragile and not totally resilient; our sincere actions often have unforeseen consequences. While lack of respect for creation and for people brings on exploitation and destruction of the planet, so deepening respect brings on renewal. Furthermore, social harm is done through our inaction and social good through our cooperative efforts; these must extend beyond the human community and include service to and learning from nature and creatures around us.

*If you would learn more, ask the cattle,
seek information from the birds of the air.
The creeping things of Earth will give you lessons,*

and the fishes of the sea will tell you. (Job 12:7-8)

The work of renewal is massive and that leads us to seek help from all people of good will, who are believers in the future. We hear Christ say to his agitated disciples, *Anyone who is not against us is for us* (Mark 9:40). The grand enterprise of healing takes a community of caregivers. The Spirit inspires all to justice, and part of the Good News is a willingness to be cooperative and work with others in halting an impending disaster and initiate a renewal process including radical change of the socio-economic System. This faithful service to the Lord is ennobling, not in a sense of blood or entitlement, but through the action of people graced with the privilege of cooperative service. Jesus serves us, suffers and dies for us, and invites us into being people of service. In his agony and death he becomes the suffering servant as foretold by Isaiah the Prophet; in his Resurrection/ Ascension he opens the door for the Spirit to inspire us for the needed work ahead following as servants of others.

Earth renewal is all the more imperative due to the closing of the climate change window.¹⁴ We must both understand the situation, experience the urgency, and move forward in a community of believers to renewing action. That includes confronting the deniers. To heal our wounded Earth involves all people willing to have a change of heart, to reject the addictive enticement of our material culture, and be willing to become eco-revolutionaries. The call goes out to all the poor: the sick and prisoners, laborers and students, young and old, scientists and community organizers -- and to all of us who desire to be poor in spirit. The call is universal and inclusive to all of good will. In reality, the mysteries just discussed have a feminine side of healing, and Jesus' mother Mary is a model. Renewal of Earth in all its wholeness needs both masculine and feminine -- a bringing back to life of a forgiving father for a Prodigal son and a tender motherly healing embrace as well.

b) Mary, Our Model

Eco-revolutionaries, who imitate the characteristics found in Jesus in his ministry, need a gentle feminine way to healing, one that is transparent through purity, experienced through deep suffering, and thoroughly compassionate. Activists need someone who composed a revolutionary "manifesto" that becomes our battle hymn. Our model should be someone who is party to a radical transformative action, the greatest in human history. Mary announces the coming of a universal savior through a simple "fiat" (let it be so), undertaken in total freedom.

Mary's song of praise, the *Magnificat* (Luke 1:46-54), proclaims a new creation and a coming of God, and is called by Rene Coste *The Revolution of God*.¹⁵ This proclamation is described by Blessed John Paul II as *the prophetic announcement of the mystery of the total salvation of humanity*. Mary's

message is radical because it gets to the root of our calling to participate in salvation history; it is radical change because it goes beyond past levels of human awareness and has a godly character to it. Mary's song contains the following components of radical change: thanksgiving, joy and blessings; compassionate non-violence; and grass-rooted participation and service to others:

- * Change cries out because a time of deliverance is at hand: the gap between the rich and poor continues to widen; demand for resources grows as tens of millions of Asians and others enter into the highly-consuming middle class); experts predict an impending planetary catastrophe;¹⁶

- * The world's lowly majority respects Mary: many of the over two billion Christians, along with large numbers of the two billion Moslems, respect Mary;

- * Mary's song, the *Magnificat*, is regarded as a liberation hymn that addresses the poor and lowly of the world;

- * Mary's whole being is one of giving service to and for others in humble ways -- and God's ongoing favor is upon her;

- * Mary is aware of urgent times, or major changes in her world and reflects on these unfolding events deeply; and

- * Closeness to Mary has been experienced in spiritual events with particular attention by her to the lowly.¹⁷

*To her who is Mary,
because she is full of grace.
To her who is full of grace,
because she is with us.
To her who is with us,
because the Lord is with her.*¹⁸

1. Creation: Blessings through Motherhood

*My soul proclaims your greatness, O God,
and my spirit rejoices in you, my Savior.*¹⁹

Mary is joyously thankful. She proclaims the greatness of God in her whole being through praise, exaltation and glorification. Her very existence is the primary privilege in which all creation participates, and in which she shows exaltation in a way that grateful human beings can do in thanking God for all life around us. In her joy, Mary establishes a happy environment of prevailing gratitude, a sense of profound respect for what God has done for her. Through her purity and transparency, Mary manifests openness within that act of freedom, an act that allows her to make great or "magnify" the Creator of all. And she does this in pure joy of her magnificent femininity.

God gives to Mary a special privilege to participate in the monumental moment of salvation history, for through obedience she is a new Eve. She is to

be the Messiah's mother, to be the flesh and blood wherein the divine and human meet and kiss. The entire being of Mary manifests God's majesty, power, and mercy in the creative act that now reaches an apogee in the conception and birth of the Lord. *Rejoice, so highly favored!* (Luke 1:28) Mary, full of grace, is a pure crystal through which Divine Light within now shines forth. Christ within allows her whole being to magnify God's love, and thus she becomes a living jewel of divine light. Mary exalts with the joyful words, "Let it be," an act of surrender to God's will, an enthusiastic moment of "the God within."

Mary magnifies God's gift of her immaculate condition, and so her joy and love exceed those of other human beings in glorifying God's presence. Mary shares this presence with her cousin Elizabeth and through this sharing the magnification increases. Mary has within her womb the Lord and thus, during this gestation, she magnifies the Lord both physically and spiritually. Incarnation occurs, and Mary is instrumental in bring this to completion. Mary's motherhood, a uniquely feminine gift, enhances the divine gift and stands ahead of us all in glorifying and enhancing all of creation. Mary is model of all that is pro-life, from human generation to proper enhancement of our Earth.

*For you have looked with favor upon your lowly servant,
and from this day forward all generations will call me blessed.*

Mary recognizes her own unique station as a humble handmaid (servant); she experiences her utter unworthiness in earning a part of the mystery of salvation. *I am the handmaid of the Lord; let what you have said be done to me* (Luke 1:38). Divine greatness shines through Mary's lowliness because she realizes her station is not from her own or any human source; God works through her.

Mary blesses God in the Magnificat; she will be blessed by all generations for the privilege of mothering the Incarnate One. Mary sees her call to be the Lord's handmaid as blessing, and her immediate response is itself a blessing. The first blessing is from God before any human effort (an original blessing); the second is through God's grace as her accepting words extend blessing back to God. Mary acknowledges God as origin of all blessings; God is the divine source of her being able to recognize gifts as such -- thus, this double blessing is humbling, but also a Marian feature in which WE learn the gift and art of blessing. Mary receives the public proclamation of blessing through her cousin Elizabeth's words, and then from all who through future generations will proclaim her "Blessed Mary." Jesus, her gestating blessing, is through birth to a waiting world a blessed unfolding act of salvation history -- and Mary has a key role.

For you, the Almighty, have done great things for me,

and holy is your name.

Mary's profound humility is manifested by her proclaiming that these "great things" are pure gifts from God. The birth of a savior is God's greatest gift to us all, and activists have a role through Mary's participation in this gift-giving event, which extends in space and expands in time. "Great things" include the greatest, namely, a person: God-man; but bearing this gift is great enough indeed. The Word is spoken and Mary is first in the chorus; she starts to reflect on the greatness of Incarnation, which becomes more than a moment; it is a process. More "great things" will follow for her and for us, including the privilege of being compassionate and co-suffering with the Messiah. Mary's privilege to be one with the Lord follows from her free "yes" to being the Christ-bearer, *Theotokos*.

Just as the reflection of Mary to these events, so our own reflection shows us the gifts as well. Her magnifying envelops all who reflect as well, and becomes an invitation to participate in an environment that each of us helps to enhance. Great things done include the call to move beyond Annunciation to the mission of her son. Through reflection, awareness grows in Mary of just how great this event is. In a gentle way Mary beckons us to reflect and to grow through the grace of becoming magnifiers, seeking to enter into an eternal journey of praise. Together with Mary our own magnifying acts becomes ever greater.

Your mercy reaches from age to age for those who fear You.

Mary sees God's mercy and simultaneously fears God. Mary is not a fearful person, but rather she has the deepest respect for the God of mercy -- and in that the virtue of fear of God resides. In such an arena of love, Mary seeks with her whole being to please her loving parent. Fear of not pleasing another is utterly natural, and Mary is one of us. *Mary, do not be afraid; you have won God's favor* (Luke 1:30). Awe for the greatness of God elicits the deepest emotions from faithful people. Fear of God, a gift of the Holy Spirit, involves Mary's deep respect for her Creator. Mary asks Jesus when finding him in the temple, *My child, why have you done this to us? See how worried your father and I have been, looking for you* (Luke 2:48). Mary experiences concern when raising and educating Jesus just as does any sincere parent; her concern extends throughout his public ministry, and well into the public ministry that followers will endure through the ages. Mary's maternal concern extends to a world in need.

Mary's visit to Elizabeth is the happy sharing of two expectant mothers with all the joy that this entails -- and far more. Mary bears Christ to the world, a privileged service; through Baptism/Confirmation and our active working with God, Christians are privileged to bear Christ to others. Mary's exaltation involves her whole being freely given to God; in turn, Mary is invited

to accompany her son in his sufferings and death. The "great things" include addressing the vast social ills afflicting so many people and Earth herself. Mary leads the way so that believers will follow with ease and enthusiasm. As Pope Francis says, *Whenever we look to Mary, we come to believe once again in the revolutionary nature of love and tenderness.*²⁰

2. Redemption: Compassion

Mary reflects deeply on the saving work of her son; she takes pains to act as a mother raising and educating her offspring, but she does more. Mary is the first to truly suffer with the Lord as Simeon foretold: *And a sword will pierce your own soul too -- so that the secret thoughts of many may be laid bare* (Luke 2:35). Secret thoughts include the aspirations of a lowly people, which are articulated in the primer of sufferings. The sword (lance) involves her co-suffering with her son and with co-sufferers in Christ down through the ages. Jesus suffers the wrongdoing of this human race for he takes our burdens to himself, and Mary helps to lay those burdens bare through her transparency.

Mary is compassionate in her suffering with others. In her reflection she sees evil and the burden that weighs us down. Countless believers pray that she may intercede -- "Pray for us sinners." She sees what these sinners do to her son and throughout the growing clouds of his ministry and his suffering and death she becomes all the more aware. Our misdeeds cause suffering and a disturbance of the social order, and Mary is acutely aware of this. With time even the eco-misdeeds (air, water, and land pollution and waste of resources) pierce her heart.

*You have shown strength with your arm,
you have scattered the proud in their conceit,*

Amid the problems of our world Mary recognizes the power of God, a spiritual phenomenon, not a physical or military power, though power all the same. God's power exposes the proud of heart and their weaknesses -- and Mary begins to perceive this power in all its depths. God works wonderful signs for the people of the Exodus; God guides the chosen people to the Promised Land; God reproves Israel through the prophets; God routs and scatters the conceited but does not mercilessly destroy them. The divine victory is founded in hope that ultimate salvation descends gently and mercifully from above. Kingdoms come and go; humble people remain. Mary stands on the side of humble folks who are closer to God through suffering and patient endurance.

You have deposed the mighty from their thrones and raised the lowly to high places.

Revolution revealed! The humble and lowly are exalted while the materially prosperous are pulled down -- and Mary enters the arena of compassion, though the true dynamics become clearer with years in her journey of faith. Mary's words prove a monumental embarrassment to status-quo seekers; she utters words of spiritual liberation, a continuation of Israel's trek to freedom from Egypt. Through the birth of the Lord in lowly circumstances (within a remote Roman province, by a humble people, in a stable for a birthing place, to escapees from the wrath of the ruler), one finds Mary and Joseph amid their hidden greatness. Theirs is a humble spiritual mission, an unfolding of salvation history.

Worldly princes of every age appear fearsome to the secular mind lacking a spiritual sense. However, princely reigns are short-lived; their roles are tiny in comparison to that of Mary's. The lowly ultimately win; Mary repeats Hanna's words --

Yhwh makes poor and rich, humbles and exalts, raises up the poor from the dust, lifts the needy from a dunghill, gives them a place with princes, and assigns them a seat of honor. (1 Samuel 2: 7-8)

Mary's starting point is not the grief of being barren, as was Hanna's, but the far deeper spiritual insight that God has done great things for her -- and for a fallen world now being saved. And Mary is steeped in the Old Testament traditions and wording.

You have filled the hungry with good things, while you have sent the rich away empty.

Mary realizes the differences between the haves and the have-nots -- the rich and the poor, for class differences do exist in virtually every age and certainly in the time of the Roman Empire. Mary's sensitivity extends to all the hungry of the ages, those hungering for divine favor and those who lack the physical essentials of life. The good things given to the poor include both a sense that victory will ultimately come and that the poor will be victors. To divorce spiritual from material hunger would be a mistake, for such a division fails to see our spiritual needs even when our bellies are full. Human beings hunger for God, though some of us do not recognize and act upon the pangs.

However, Mary begins to perceive that all good things include the mighty power of God at work among the lowly and poor. God's power is more than offering patience to those in low places. God loves these folks with an intense love wherein they can become the subject of mighty deeds -- if they truly believe. A hidden and emerging sense of power comes at a moment of powerlessness, when the world offers little and yet the Spirit offers everything. The contrast is overwhelming and yet it is there all the same. Take what is rightfully ours for the sake of our needy brothers and sisters. But there is not

a taking of mine apart from the community. WE are not bystanders, but party to the march to freedom which must always have a social ring.

Mary is the first to be acquainted with Jesus, Savior and Liberator. *His mother stored up all these things in her heart* (Luke 2:52). The person within her womb, who plays around the house and who leaves on mission is divine and human. Of all human beings, Mary is foremost in reflecting on the divine and the human, on the spiritual aspirations and the physical needs of people. If and when the hungry seek and place their trust in God, they perceive good things that have an emerging spiritual power; when the rich or poor trust in material things alone and crowd out the spiritual, they journey on a sure road to ruin.

Mary's compassion allows her to come close to the saving work of Jesus in a way no one else does. *Near the cross stood his mother* (John 19:25). While disciples scattered and hid from the worldly powers that seemed so triumphant, Mary stands with a mostly a womanly cluster as public witnesses of compassion. To Mary, Jesus addresses his legacy: *Woman, this is your son*, (John 19:26); for now, John (and all believers to follow) are to be part of her mothering care, her own sons and daughters. She receives Calvary's gift to the world in all its rawness and tenderness. Jesus makes the legacy complete as a total act of self-giving, for Mary is his most precious gift to give. To John (and to all believers) he says, *This is your mother* (John 19:27).

Here in this supreme act of compassionate sharing, Mary becomes mother of us all; this is a mission she continues to carry in an ongoing Calvary that occurs amid today's sufferings. Mary is a co-sufferer supreme; she takes the lead in a compassion in which all believers are all invited to participate. Jesus gives up his mother so that her compassion might reach to our hearts. Our response along with that of the Apostle John is to gather close, for Mary and Church are mother to us all.

Eco-compassion, or suffering with Earth, emerges. When I touched the rock of Calvary, I heard Jesus saying, "See what they have done to my Earth." This modern lamentation involves the shuttering of Earth herself and all who are willing to suffer accordingly through a universal love. Jesus Christ redeems us all -- a universe of all creatures and all people. In this sweeping redemptive act our neighborhood expands. Those closest to Jesus on Calvary join in compassion for Earth. WE suffer as united hearts, and Mary as *Mother of Earth* enters into its environmental travail. "From the beginning till now the entire creation, as we know, is groaning in one great act of giving birth" (Romans 8:22). Creation is undergoing a transformation and Mary and all of us become party to what is occurring, all through joining in Jesus' sufferings.

Eco-compassion glues us to the Lord through the invitation he extends us to be one with him. Yes, while sensing our imperfections and what has

been done to our fragile Earth, let's take courage seeing Mary standing throughout the Calvary event. Our mission is to be more than mere indifferent or insensitive onlookers at the stage of the redemptive act. Eco-revolutionaries join Mary at this moment of sorrow and accept a divinely-given responsibility.

Our journey of faith pauses when marked by this compassion. Our damage haunts us; our silence when others do this before our eyes is equally haunting. Through Baptism/Confirmation believers are invited into the Divine Family. God's forgiveness confronts us, for the human record is one of overuse of resources and the pollution of air, water and land. Through divine nourishment, revolutionaries can become compassionate healers in a broken world. Here, unlike Mary, our human awareness of failure burdens us down and demands contrition. Then, with Mary motherly help we rediscover God's mercy and the power to make a fresh start. Now the past becomes a lived experience but not a hindrance to future action.

Mary does not have our personal experience of sin as such, but she knows the effects of misdeeds done to a loving God. She stands beneath the cross at Calvary, a public witness when others fled. Reluctantly, through a deepening faith, each of us stumbles to Calvary. Each asks soul-searching questions: Will salvation await the end of our journey of faith? Will our planet be saved from our misdeeds? Ought our individual faults to be first addressed? Can any of us remain humble people while also challenging the privileged who deny others the essentials of life? Our confrontation must not have the air of self-righteousness.

Eco-revolutionaries have a noble mandate to co-suffer with the Lord, and that includes overcoming our weaknesses. This cannot occur in isolation. Mary sees our need and becomes our advocate in seeking companionship, for she is touched by God's mercy. Mary is confident that Jesus will act as at Cana. Her confidence is triggered by her compassion for people in need, especially in these troubled times. It is not enough to realize the urgency of acting; simultaneously, let us balance a sense of our lowliness and limitations with that of the surging power of God within. Only through such a balance can the "eco" part of action be realized.

3. Resurrection: Loving and Merciful Service

*You have come to the aid of Israel your servant, mindful of your mercy -
the promise you made to our ancestors -
to Sarah and Abraham and their descendants forever.*

The sacred mission of Israel is to bring the world's people to worship the one true God. A majority of the world's people believe at least vaguely in divine promises made to Abraham. All three of the Abrahamic religions (Jewish, Christian and Moslem) focus on the **exclusive** worship of God alone --

no false gods. To some degree, we seek to discover that our service is to be **inclusive** of all the world's needs -- those of people and all creation. Furthermore, this call to Abraham is a perpetual calling that has never been rescinded. Christian service, founded in belief in Jesus Christ as Messiah, is part of this universal call, a call found in Mary's life and in her whole being. Mary is a model for us to fulfill our service to our brothers and sisters, human and beyond.

Mary is an Israelite, a person who is mindful of God's mercy and a believer in the divine promise -- the covenant with Abraham, the father of the faith. She knows the three divine promises to Abraham: to form a great nation; to possess the land of Canaan; and ultimately through him to recognize all nations as blessed. Mary, as mother of the Savior, witnesses to the fulfillment of that ultimate promise. Fulfillment is a single saving event that flowers before our eyes as an ongoing process of which we are part. Thus, this ultimate promise is a cooperative venture involving commitment to work together in serving God.

Mary is committed to service. Upon hearing that Elizabeth is with child in her old age, Mary responds immediately. *Mary set out at that time as quickly as she could to a town in the hill country of Judah* (Luke 1:39). She serves through the birth of John the Baptist. *Mary stayed with Elizabeth about three months and then went back home* (Luke 1:56). Service comes to Mary in an instant and involves awareness of those in need. At the marriage feast of Cana, Mary is sensitive to the embarrassing condition of hosts who run out of wine, and she moves with confidence to draw Jesus' attention. Though his hour had not yet come, Mary furnishes the NOW to that coming. Mary knows Jesus, her son, shares her sensitivity for others, and so she tells the servers at the feast, *Do whatever he tells you* (John 2:5). Through her confidence she opens the way to Jesus' first public miracle. At the cross she stands in place of all the fearful who hid themselves from view, and she stands together with all believers who now act through public service.

Mary hears God's Word and her reflection on it leads to a growing understanding of her Son's mission and her part in it. What went through Mary's mind at the crucifixion and its aftermath? Amid it all it must have been the comfort of absolute trust in God. Jesus gives a sweeping gesture that *My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and put it into practice* (Luke 8:21). We must act on that word to be included in his company. Rene Coste says this is not a devaluation of Mary, but rather it indicates that "her biological motherhood was assumed in complete faith and total obedience to the Word of God."²¹

Mary's reflection throughout the rearing of Jesus, her sensitivity at the Cana marriage feast, and her compassion at the cross are templates for our eco-healing. Mary's service is empowering, because she trusts solely in the

Lord, the Provider of all good gifts. At the core of our empowerment through Easter faith and the Spirit's inspiration, we discover our weakness and need to trust in a Higher Power to save our wounded Earth. We are socially addicted people attracted to the allurements of consumer goods. Being touched by God's tender love we discover we can only rise through a Higher Power, God in whom we trust.

At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit comes to the assembled followers of Jesus. A radical transformation occurs in the consciousness of all present, including Mary. A mission to go out to all the world begins at this moment, but that mission does not follow a rote recipe of action but rather a pattern of growing consciousness initiated at the Incarnation. Jesus increased *in wisdom, in stature, and in favor* and *Mary stored these things in her heart*, (Luke 2:52). So too, Christ's body, the Church (Acts 2:1-13) increases in age and wisdom. The travel narrative of Jesus in Luke's Gospel demonstrates that initial unfolding of mission; the travel narrative of the Church in Acts confirms a parallel development. And Mary's mission also grows in wisdom and stature in this age of environmental crisis, for in her all find healing.

Mary, as part of this faithful group at Pentecost, affirms by her presence the unfolding of the divine promise, a growth in mission. *Blessed is she who believed that the promise made to her by the Lord would be fulfilled* (Luke 1:45). Mary's faith is growing through her presence; she is a key part of an individualized community that is open to the rushing Spirit; she is present at the Church's birth and is at service "as individualizing, fruitful and creatively co-responsible for the transformation of creation in the image of Jesus."²² At Pentecost, all are *joined in continuous prayer, together with several women including Mary the mother of Jesus* (Acts 1:14); all grow in faith. Pentecost is the definitive beginning of a transforming revolution.

Mary, as bearer of God, has the privilege of great ones to go before us -- and so through her assumption. Her successful passing is a prelude to ours some day when the New Heaven and New Earth comes to be. But now the eco-revolutionary has more work to do in renewing this Earth in preparation for our collective destiny. Mary was first to receive Christ; all believes are blessed by also sharing in the fruits of the Resurrection, the power of the risen Lord. By this power, renewal of Earth is possible.

*I say that we are wound with mercy round and round as
if with air:
the same is Mary, more by name,
She, wild web, wondrous robe, mantles the guilty globe,
since God has let dispense, her prayers his providence...*

Gerard Manley Hopkins²³

c) WE As Eco-Revolutionaries

The dragon's tail dragged a third of the stars from the heavens and dropped them to the Earth. (Revelation 12:4)

The titanic battle of good and evil plays out in the ongoing drama before our eyes whether of angels or humans. Yes, Christ saves this world and Mary models our role in salvation history, but as players on the scene WE are engaged in battle through healers. WE are to save our opportunity to heal -- an ennobling exercise and a **work-in-progress**. Time is of the essence, and an ever-shortening span of opportune time weighs upon us. Agents of change become all the more aware that as instruments within salvation history WE are not saviors, but humble healers. The task is countercultural and involves questioning and dethroning the current unsustainable System. Sustainability was a term I avoided for decades because corporations and System advocates talked about "sustaining" their status and "corporate health."

An eco-economy must be sustainable in the long term, but what does this mean? Lester Brown speaks of five ecological principles that govern eco-economics:²⁴

- * Sustainable yields to eco-systems (curbing overfishing or over-harvesting forests or mistreating croplands);
- * Reliance by nature on balances to restore sustainability (reforestation or soil enrichment);
- * Sustainable natural recycling processes (recycling of nutrients);
- * Protection of the natural photosynthetic processes (halting desertification and paving of cropland, and curbing acidification of lakes that diminish Earth's productivity); and
- * Recognition that ecosystem services are of greater value than resources extracted as goods (trees in a forest render immense ecological value beyond mere wood products, from scenic beauty to retention of soil and habitat for wildlife).

The history of the unsustainable System not only shows elements of ecological unsustainability in misdeeds, but also the paralysis of regulators to handle lack of adherence to the ecological principles. Yes, the profiteers influence permissive and pliable governmental agencies, which in turn seek good will and possible revolving position tenure. Material profits and human greed are such an immense incentive that the easy way out for governmental workers and politicians is to accede to demands of wealthy lobby agencies. Incentives to curb exploitative fishing and whaling, forest harvesting, resource recycling, or ecological restorative measures are generally absent, and when Green Capitalists talk about insert controls for profit-makers it proves to be a sham (see Chapter Three). Unfortunately, in the GNP rat race of modern nations (rich or poor) there is a paucity of efforts to insert broader ecological value considerations for defending this troubled Earth.

Eco-revolutionaries steer to an eco-economy demanding long-term sustainability. Like Jesus, revolutionaries must confront legalistic Pharisees who pretend to be in favor of long-term sustainability and yet are the handmaidens of greed, waste, and selfishness. Jesus faced a similar confrontation in his day and yet continued to bring the promise of salvation to the poor and to hear the words of Matthew 25 "For I was hungry and you gave me food." Our personal salvation is tied to our willingness to assist all neighbors who are destitute and threatened, human and beyond. Eco-revolution consists in bringing down those in high places and raising the lowly. It cannot be merely charitable giving by the rich as a veiled exercise of power and lip service to change. Rather **WE** must act **HERE** and **NOW**, avoiding violence as a reaction to often hidden Systematic violence.

We are God's arms, hands, legs and feet. Those impaired by age or illness are God's vocal cords, through prayers begging the energetic do their civic duty. All, including the public witnesses and the shut-ins, become one voice calling for radical change. Some petition and write letters, others encourage legislators and enforcers of laws, and still others take their message to the streets through peaceful demonstrations and even, if necessary, civil disobedience. All listen to and are moved by the Spirit to take part as best as possible at various levels of human activity: individual, local, regional, national, and global. WE can take part in social transformation.

Empires rise and fall, sometimes slowly (the Roman Empire) and sometimes quite rapidly (e.g., the Soviet Union). WE as agents of change trust that proper conditions can trigger the fall of that which is oppressive. Will the present economic order fall rapidly and excessive Capitalism be replaced? Most likely, but the System does not last forever. Simply put, Capitalism is inherently anti-sharing and champions a class system of haves and have-nots - - and that stimulates excessive resource extraction and pollution. In God's mercy, those in high places have opportunities to step down gracefully, for their act of surrender could have beneficial results. However, materialists are subtly violent people and cling to their privileges at all costs, even through damage to fragile Earth herself. In reality, lack of critique especially by private recipients of wealth, makes religious, charitable and other institutions beholden to wealth and silent to its existence. If wealth is not given up, it must be taken down -- mercifully.

All, including WE the poor, are called to respond and to act in a positive, non-violent manner. Yes, the world is too small for billionaires and destitute. Let's save souls by going part way and give all a simple quality of life. The current System's violence cries to heaven, and the poor must act not as enlightened autocrats but as a gentle cooperative people firmly convinced that a merciful God is with us. Action includes radical redistribution of resources, including the opportunity for local cooperatives and new forms of economic

expressions to flourish. Mega-systems (except in communication and transportation under global governmental controls) ought to be localized or regionalized, not subject to top-down planning and implementation of mega-corporations, whether public or private. Exactly how federated groups of cooperative enterprises with grassroots worker controls can flourish will be the fruit of social discernment, not by me or any other individual. Solutions are forthcoming through democratic involvement.

Radical change with the firmness of Jesus and gentleness of Mary must be open to free decisions by democratic citizens, not autocratic power of dictators or the privileged wealth elites who control the global financial System. The philosophy of so-called "Free Market Capitalism" was advanced by the originator of the shock or crisis concept, Milton Friedman, from the 1970s to well into the 21st century. This economic philosophy involves manipulating existing or created crises (Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Bolivia, China, Poland, Russia, South Africa and U.S.) to draw attention away from people who propose alternative strategies.²⁵

Instituting an eco-revolution in this second decade of the 21st century must incorporate elements coming from previous experience and reflection and include:

* Discovering ill effects of over-consumption (individual health and environmental pollution and resource depletion) demands **temperance** in our use of material things;

* Addressing urgent issues such as climate change now, and especially instituting resource conservation and substituting renewable energy in place of fossil fuels through **prudent** action;

* Changing an economy at the global level by reclaiming the commons with recommendations to bring forth **justice**, such as universal fair taxation and wealth limitation controls, along with redistribution of accumulated wealth; and

* Mustering the **courage** to call on a Higher Power in whom we trust as people breaking from social addiction. It takes courage to insist on prayer to overcome the powers of darkness, and faith to see this through to completion.

1) Temperance and Conservation

The marvels of all creation envelop us in an atmosphere of praise for what God has given us. In this arena of gratitude we see that we must respond and that first level response is respect for all creation and our inherent global community. Jesus shares with us from the Sermon on the Mount the beatitudes or blessing for those who must act. Mary shares in cousin

Elizabeth's words by being "blessed." We too are blessed by divine favor, especially to all who are baptized into the divine family and now charged to bring Good News. Christ is the **HERE**, a focus before us who is the Incarnate Word, who has made holy the universe by his redemptive act, and who calls through the Spirit for us to help renew the face of Earth damaged by our misdeeds. The invitation is to live a simple life, conserve resources, and confront the wasteful.

First moment: Our beautiful and fragile Earth is wounded before our eyes. Splendid Earth, product of billions of years of evolution, is endangered in this ultimate moment of geological time by actions of the greedy and privileged few, who are permitted to indulge their extravagances by means of reckless silence. Resource depletion, waste, and pollution cries to heaven to be exposed and halted by all legitimate means, even to the point of civil disobedience. Through a down-to-Earth approach, we stewards of all creation must see clearly, then do more than observe. At this most basic level, the faults of commission and omission are confronted and this becomes a civic duty demanding radical change.

A first kind of eco-humility²⁶ is meant for the saving of our Earth from destruction. Impoverishment is a human condition but not always by culprits who distance themselves from the poor and regard them as the cause of class division. Jesus has strong words at this moment and individual salvation is at stake (Matthew 25). Thus, the call to give up allurements and offer almsgiving as part of our conversion in an imperfect but budding direction. The first moment is when allurements and luxuries are seen as deadening and resulting insensitivity blinds the affluent into the quest to fill insatiable appetites. Culpability rests in our own deeds and our failure to stop others, and thus all of us are participants in a social addiction that is at the heart of the environmental crisis. The poor suffer from gross and growing inequality.

The litany of misdeeds past and current haunts us. One vivid example of harm occurring today is in Tanzania, where 30 elephants a day (10,000 a year) are being poached for valuable ivory for flourishing Asian markets of luxury items for the increasing multitude of the *nouveau riche*. That nation's elephant population has declined from six times the existing number a half century ago to about 60,000 today, and if left unpoliced the entire elephant population will be wiped out by 2020. A second example is pressure by coal-burning powerplant operators to continue current production levels because cleanup techniques, though somewhat effective, are too costly for current profit-making operations.

Actions:

* **Expose pollution problems** and need for enforcement of environmental regulations and protection of endangered air, water, and land resources. Some of these actions involve local and regional issues (stop

poaching), and some national and international ones (stop marketing of illegal animal parts).

* **Support governmental promotion and protection agencies** to halt all forms of air, water, and land pollution and mismanagement, along with legal proceedings to ensure that these actions are undertaken; they must not allow escape industries to go to lax environmental areas. Furthermore, we must promote renewable energy development ASAP as replacement for fossil fuel consumption.

2. Prudence and Tranquil Eco-Revolution

We are sensitive to our shortness of time (Psalm 90:12) and the enormity of the catastrophe that appears to be coming. Urgency makes us turn to Mary at the Incarnational event, for she is the **NOW** of life. As activist, she is uncomfortable on the pedestal of passive obedience.²⁷ Temptations call for reaction in kind to the violence being done to Earth today. Prudence is a determinant in what we must do to know the situation and act upon it. Risks and sacrifices surface when acting in a prophetic manner and threaten the status quo and those who profit from it.

Edward Everett, an early American statesman, said of founding father Samuel Adams that amid explosive times he was "of the few who never lost their balance." He attributed this to a "religious tranquility." Ira Stoll, an authority on the life of Samuel Adams, comments *how paradoxical-- a tranquil revolutionary*.²⁸ In honesty, Adams was highly focused on the revolutionary cause and kept up the drum beat through writings and public vocal commentary, along with recruiting others to the cause. However, at times he needed more foresight, especially in the failure to bring Canada into the independence struggle, partly through bias against Catholic Quebec.

Second Moment: Change is urgently necessary. Time is of the essence, for the window of opportunity for meaningful actions to heal our wounded Earth shortens by the day. Looming catastrophic events caused by continued increased GHG emissions are at hand. One must address larger issues. Appropriate technologies are good, but need further refinement, and efficient implementation takes precious time. An unchallenged consumer economy is a root cause of the crisis and must be confronted forthrightly, even at risk of being labeled "unpatriotic." The call is for radical sharing.

A second kind of eco-humility is realizing our imperfections in curbing the severe damage being done to Earth. We hope to undertake actions with the poor leading to improved remedies for current polluting activity -- but that is time consuming and often imperfect. At this level, seekers with some level of supposed superiority share at their own discretion with those who are needy. Still at this level the poor are a "they," and solidarity is limited by a

certain distance from assumed comfortable living. Thus, being poor is not fully realized at this level with a toleration for allurements and comfortable living. Those of means still, know best and ought to be the ones to dictate conditions for any degree of change that might prove feasible.

Actions:

* **Demand income maximization limits.** This ought to occur simultaneous with the need for minimal limits on wages, so as to ensure a just standard of living. Also, tax benefits for major corporations must be removed and the wealthy's investment income be taxed at the same rate as earned income -- an American problem.

* **Civil disobedience** may be a matter of last resort when actions to halt environmental destruction are not effective. Curbing fossil fuel use that causes climate change acceleration is needed, and may require recourse to more drastic measures.

3. Justice and Healing Earth

Ask advice of every wise person. (Tobit 4:18a)

Injustice to people and Earth's creatures calls for a new economy that needs to be grassroots-based and not top-down. An ultimate eco-economy may possibly be a series of interlocking cooperatives or other sub-entities founded on new or tested appropriate technology models: community controlled at the local level, people friendly, and environmentally benign.²⁹ As mentioned before, the **Mondragon Cooperative Corporation** started in the Basque region of Spain is one success story.³⁰ Wealth ought to be distributed among a multitude of stake holders who control the local economy through democratic voting procedures including the process of electing managers who are from among the local people.

Third moment: WE are called to act in solidarity. At this level of eco-awareness we cannot waste time expecting the affluent to surrender privileges. The Good News is the poor can act through pooling resources, for these have God's favor. Revolutionaries hear the movement of the rise of the lowly initiated at the Incarnation and now becoming more pronounced. Hastening this rise demands a solidarity of participants. All the while, the very poor are subject to an all pervasive social addiction to consumer products and are in need of both individual and community conversion and thus radical change on several levels. In this moment of deepest need one must turn to God.

A third and deepest type of eco-humility is to become poor with the poor, to be honestly able to say "WE the poor." This becoming poor does not imply a sham where we pretend poverty. Distance is now surmounted and one

can say "WE" and identify with all who previously were regarded as different or distant. The act of admission of impoverishment and need could precipitate scorn from those who pride themselves in worldly success. This level of humility requires that elitism be abandoned through the simple admission that WE ARE poor. Failure to accept this condition could delay or detour the eco-revolution.

Actions:

* **Proclaim the right to life and livelihood:** this includes the right to the beginning and ending of human life, the right to a livelihood and sharing in the resources of this world, the right to human health, the flourishing of plants and animals, and the right to the very vitality of life on this Earth. Renewing our Earth takes environmental work as well as building housing and infrastructure for all peoples. Work to be done is overwhelming; laborers are plentiful; however, financial resources are tied up by the privileged few. Justice involves liberating the tied-up resources (often in hidden tax havens), so workers can engage in essential employment.

* **Stand for health for all.** Global resources develop medicines and health treatments and ought to be available to all, not just to the privileged. This sharing involves a community of caregiving that is universal in scope. When supplies and treatments are limited, especially in early research and development, some rationing may be necessary -- but not based on an individual ability to pay. The World Health Organization must be central to global decision-making; WHO should promote inoculation of all infants and youth from the scourges of Polio and Smallpox, but also Hepatitis A and B, MMR (Measles, Mumps, and Rubella), DTaP/Tdap (Diphtheria, Tetanus, and Whooping cough), Influenza, Pneumococcal, Rotavirus, Chicken pox, and Hemophilus influenzae b. These are recommended pediatric immunizations in the U.S. and others are soon to be added.

4. Courage and Spiritual Privileges

The world is undergoing a transformation in this age of instant communication, and it takes courage to be in the forefront. Goals include going beyond merely choosing simple lifestyles and conserving resources; they include taking necessary steps to halt pollution, committing ourselves to action, working together with others, and relying on Spiritual means of assistance. Economic competition is subject to severe critique, and this will involve proposing a network of non-profit and cooperative enterprises. Through fundamental cooperation encouraged by instant global communication, ventures can be compared and popularized to be subject to positive critique. Limited property holdings within the bounds for decent living is honored, provided it is not too extensive, but rather shared by those who have little or none.

Service through love. The two great commandments stand together; we love God with everything we have; we manifest this love through service to our needy neighbor. This service is one of sharing and thus serving people must be party to redistribution, for that certainly cannot be left to materially-based power elites. Confronting the arrogance of entrenched wealth is not easy, and some so-called conservatives will blame the confronting agents as seeking the same greedy position now held by the wealthy. Unfortunately, in many instances this has been the record of former revolutionaries. Thus, all the more civil vigilance is key to democratic success when vast amounts of wealth are at stake. A responsive government must be operative when bringing down the financial princes. A social need must replace individual wants, and this is always at the forefront of a loving radical change. Without a deep compassion for the needy, material liberation devolves into new oligarchs and autocrats.

*** Fourth moment: ANOTHER is at the heart of eco-empowerment.**

A change directed for and by the poor challenges elitism and initial material profit motivation, and finds success in the rise of us all together as one Body. Change agents are not to be the new privileged in material things, but privileged in being the first to serve. Rather, we must be moved to be one, as poor folks who work together and are humble enough to take mutual correction. Realizing our impoverishment opens us through the humility of the addict to seek God's assistance; through humble presence a healing starts to occur within that spreads outward to all with whom the agent comes in contact. Power springing up in the soul turned to God spreads as contagion among kindred agents through mutual encouragement and assistance. The ultimate end of our collective endeavors is for all to be all in Christ (Ephesians 1:12).

Democratic process is always fragile; it requires this degree of mutual humility that is not abandoned once empowered to act, but rather must be deepened with articulated awareness of the limits of what can be done at a given time. **The fragility of democracy is humbling in the deepest degree.** Personal ambitions and some ideas have to be sacrificed at the altar of mutual and socialized success. WE and not I are the focal agents. There can be no overlordship within the ranks of eco-revolutionaries, for God is overlord. The privileged few have so weakened democratic process that it may be on the verge of collapse. In fact, the recent financial crisis has starkly exposed the unsustainability of debt-financed democracy -- and the autocratic/capitalistic path of China looks enticing to many. Some say that democracy was the most successful idea of the 20th century, but then ask "Why has it run into trouble and what can be done to revive it?"³¹ Christ, Servant Messiah, is king with a crown of thorns and cross for throne -- a model for all who champion the democratic process.

Today's challenge results from the weakening through social addiction

of the traditional seats of democracy, namely North America and Europe. A spiritual bankruptcy is setting in and a faithless people are the least able to perform radical change. It is necessary to go into the byways of a global poor community to find the resources needed for the revolution. Go out to all the world and tell the Good News. All are invited to help save the opportunity, for Christ has saved the world but WE must save the precious time left for healing. Like Mary we magnify the Lord by confronting misdeeds and making correctives through renewal projects. Like Mary, we are doubly blessed through being able to serve meaningfully. Our own ancestors were called to do many "great things," but with hardly the stakes as before us. We must help heal an endangered planet damaged by our human misdeeds.

Believers are catalysts who are expected to hasten the day for God to come with the new Heaven and new Earth where righteousness will be at home (2 Peter 3: 12-13). This drama does not unfold in some miraculous manner where we act as patient spectators. Rather, we are called to be participants, for the preparation includes our contributions, an incarnated growth in spirit and development of the quality of our physical Earth. Radical change comes scripturally not as destructive, but as ore transformed by fire into precious metal. Agents of change are to be transformative in this sense as charged with radical change. This can only be done if these agents are living lives without spot or stain, and that means being opened to be purified by healing a broken world. Our ministry of healing will grow through social discernment, a purifying endeavor. This is an activity in its infancy. It takes more than thinkers, for while action requires thought, so ideas demand implementation and a working team of doers and thinkers.

Actions:

* **Organize individuals** in small groups to bring about revolutionary conditions that are non-violent. Deliberately create distrust of the current economic System so that more cooperative alternatives may be developed and tried in everyday circumstances.

* **Remove all forms of tax havens** and institute international sanctions on tax-dodging practices, along with transparent reporting of accounts to the original source nation of economic activity. Why should billionaires be allowed to dictate their tax rates and pretend fairness exists in a world of vast and growing inequality?

* **Promote spiritual profit-motivation** by challenging material profit-motivation. Support a non-profit economy through dedicated groups showing thriving organizations, including worker-owned factories and businesses as well as charitable and educational institutions, along with promoting and investing in small farms and services. The effort is to reduce the unhealthy friction for some to get ahead of others in an age of scarce resources. Promote issues that balance globalizing and localizing simultaneously.

* **Establish freedom of communications.** Media neutrality demands openness and access to all people, balanced with respect to all views and

without favoritism. Being *media neutral* means balancing all views by giving equal access to ordinary people and not speedy access to the moneyed interests.

* **Petition for removal of subsidies** going to fossil fuel energy companies, currently at an annual rate of \$10 billion in the U.S. alone.

* **Enhance the democratic process: voting** access and a citizen's duty to vote (this includes all parties male and female, of whatever race or creed); ongoing participation through **petitions** to understand what is inspiring people here and now; a free **communications system** so that the critical Internet is not taken over by a privileged elite (public controlled, not private elite communications, works for the betterment of the people). **Lobbying** should be limited and transparent, and opposing points given time.

* **A world federated government** is needed on issues of control of global financial transactions, prosecuting genocide and crimes against humanity, international trade and communication regulations, international environmental controls, and resource preservation. Ideally, North Americans are the first to champion a world federation, because historic experience has shown its success on a continental basis with its U.S. and Canadian success stories. Thirteen disparate colonies came together with common grievances and goals to form a United States, and ultimately ten provinces made neighboring Canada. The dream of the founding parents became a reality after struggle. Together we could focus on mutual defense of our planet and conservation of resources.

d) Calm the Frightened

*No problem can be solved from the same consciousness that created it.
We must learn to see the world anew.* Albert Einstein

It takes courage to confront the System and some are fearful. This work here is not meant to be apocalyptic (as popularly thought to mean frightening), but in the positive Scriptural sense of enabling believers to find hope during hard times. WE the poor can rise from a prevailing social addiction within our consumer culture and with God's help renew our damaged world. WE can overcome the temptation to deny, excuse, or escape the current situation; we can refrain from violence and engage in effective eco-revolution, even when specifics are being worked through.

* **Deniers** include those calling themselves faithful Christians, but who deny climate change and regard the positions held by most in the scientific community as false. Generally, they take the word of those from special interest groups bent on profits, which deliberately cast doubt on environmental damage findings -- and take the plunge to put faith in such special interests.

* **Excusers** are those who realize the need to tackle the environmental crisis but say they are not capable of answering the questions themselves.

Generally, through a false sense of humility they believe others are wiser, more energetic or clever, and wipe their hands from the issues that demand citizen participation.

* **Escapists** realize the urgency of addressing a troubled Earth and simply find it too hard to handle, given all their own problems. However, withdrawing from civic responsibilities they prefer to put matters off and take a break from citizen engagement for the temporary recreation of distracting allurements.

* **Violent responders** to environmental problems choose to act, but through disturbed emotions causing them to lash out at groups or individuals who they perceive to be troublemakers.

* **Tweakers** likewise believe in engagement and stress moderation as a solution to Earth's problems. They prefer to focus on a host of minor changes, being fooled by the lack of courage to tackle the big ones. They accept the "moderation trap," thinking that a little good on the part of many, or the espousal of Green Capitalistic ventures³² will cure our environmental ills. However, token recycling is no answer to addressing society's needs.

* **Eco-revolutionaries** dream of checking the damage being done and are committed to renewing our wounded Earth. Revolutionaries need not be violent, even while the injustice they perceive does violence to the poor and marginalized. These must not be discouraged by reality in all its rawness, but be clever as down-to-earth people, exercising their humble civic duties and realizing their work has immense potential.

Eco-revolution involves three levels of action: to save Earth from destruction; to replace harmful practices with environmentally benign and eco-sustainable ones; and to direct resource use to essential needs (e.g., housing, roads, and other infrastructure). By redistributing resources for those in need we are God's hands providing all good things "fairly and justly." As spiritually-motivated change agents, we fulfill authentic needs and curb excessive wants. Furthermore, sensitivity by being poor adds to our sense of urgency; one feels the terror in a parent who cannot feed a child today or depression of the unemployed. Selfishness must be confronted, for selfish civilizations misused resources and crashed (e.g., Rome in the fifth century A.D, China's Ming Dynasty in the 17th century, the Bourbon monarchy in the 1790s, the Soviet Union in the 1990s).³³ Aboriginal people have been oppressed and experienced enslavement brought on by "advanced" exploiters' greed.

On the other hand, selfless aboriginal civilizations have flourished as revealed through anthropological and archeological research. For instance, the Northwest American native tribes are known to have the *potlatch*, or the redistributing of abundance and therein became successful people.³⁴ A

Kwakiutl chief was known to be of service by redistributing 18,000 Hudson Bay blankets, a dozen canoes, bracelets, sewing machines, outboard motors, pots, pans, clothing and much food. For that tribe **service** was and is a mark of distinction and gratification; the result is in giving and not in receiving. WE must search the stories of aboriginal tribes to discover God's marvels, and in welcoming these become authentic bearers of Good News, which involves conversation among peoples.

Current Questions for Reflection

Is Healing Earth a moral duty in this dysfunctional world?

Practicality calls for change, not tolerating any longer the excuses of the status quo. WE the poor realize that limited resources become a challenge but one capable of winning if WE have faith. Let's hear the Spirit say: heal our wounded Earth from ravages of exploitation. Jesus the healer leads us and Mary's Magnificat is our manifesto.

* **How may one prepare for radical change?** A restless wind is blowing over this planet. Change, big change, is coming and quite soon, and perhaps even in our lifetime. Believers look forward to a New Heaven and New Earth. This calling to bring on and welcome change is first a whisper when hidden in caves of fear, but it can become a public roar through encouragement. Agents of change, neither discard the past nor be tied down by it; the gaze is up ahead.

* **Must one dream of a future healed Earth?** Dreaming comes naturally because many of our ancestors kissed their snug Old World traditional ways goodbye and crossed the Atlantic to realize their American dreams. However, today's dreams broaden to a classless society of all people of modest means sharing resources with those present and to come. Let's dream of a world of equality.

Does the coming storm demand specific focus on target groups?

The call to heal Earth is to all believers in the future. However, special attention is given to so-called "conservative" Christians who have been highly captivated by free market Capitalism -- a threat to faith and democratic process. For them, the **HERE** of our lives is when Jesus undertakes his public ministry by teaching through healing and by suffering and dying for us. Christians discover Mary's manifesto, the **NOW** announcing the presence of God in our midst; all believers in the future discover the awesome task to be **WE** who are called to heal our wounded Earth.

#

Appendix

99 Ways to a Simple Lifestyle

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#

Dedication

This book is dedicated to Pope Francis in appreciation for his call to profound change and revolution. Through him I am vowed to that cause.

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Chapter Five: Healing Earth

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