

MISSION STATEMENT
*of the National Ecology Commission of the
Secular Franciscan Order of the United States of America*
1990 (revised 1997, revised 2003)

The Ecology Commission of the National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States of America has as its mission to witness prophetically that all creation, animate and inanimate, is of God and redeemed by Christ, and that the earth is sacred because it is the Lord's. This evangelical mission testifies to Christ as

"Ruler of everything; the head of the Church; which is his body, the fullness of him who fills the whole creation" (Eph 1:23) while responding to the Secular Franciscan Rule which urges the sisters and brothers to:

"...respect all creatures, animate and inanimate, which 'bear the imprint of the Most High', and ... strive to move from the temptation of exploiting creation to the Franciscan concept of universal kinship (Rule of the SFO - Article 18); and also "seek a proper spirit of detachment from temporal goods by simplifying their own material needs (Article 11)."

The duties of the Commission are to call the sisters and brothers to a fuller Gospel life by helping them form in their daily lives an option for God's creation; to exhort them to a more radical interior conversion that places their individual and fraternal relationships to creation in a moral and providential context; and to encourage them to praise God joyfully for the gift of kinship with God's creatures after the example of their Seraphic Father Francis.

Goals

Goal 1: Inspire and challenge the sisters and brothers to educate themselves and others and also to reflect on their individual impact on the environment and their moral obligations to God's creatures, beginning with their own bodies as physical constituents of the ecology and extending to those social, civic, and political structures of which they are a part.

Goal 2: Promote simple living by reducing material needs and by curbing the thirst for possession and the domineering power that may come from ownership.

Goal 3: Encourage the sisters and brothers to witness by their words and actions to the sanctity of creation and to the need, in the spirit of penance, to nurture and develop our relationship with nature – first individually, then family, church, workplace, and ultimately in the marketplace.

Goal 4: In a manner appropriate to the level of fraternity, serve the community individually and collectively through peaceful action, constructive admonishment and personal witness to thwart the exploitation of creation. In so doing, join in a spiritual and/or physical presence with the Franciscan family, local Church and people of good will.

Goal 5: Create an understanding of kinship with creation in the context of the desire of the brothers and sisters to be instruments of the Lord's peace.

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