PHILOSOPHY OF LAND USE

We, the Benedictine Sisters of the Monastery of St. Gertrude, have been entrusted with the gift of land by our loving God and Creator. Through the years our community and this land have been bonded together. With humility we recognize the earth (humus) as the source from which we (humanity) receive our life and sustenance. Our inner spirits are renewed by the contemplative environment it provides. Listening with the ear of our heart to the wisdom expressed through creation opens us to the deeper reality of God in our lives. As a source of food, water and firewood, the land has nourished and healed our bodies even providing the stone for the building which shelters us and the flowers and trees that decorate our home. This interconnectedness is ultimately realized at the time of death when our bodies return to the earth.

“A spirit of reverence for all creation permeates the Rule, together with a sense of oneness with the land, the days, and the seasons. Such conscious respect for all created goods makes it impossible to pollute land, water or air, to waste resources or to forget about the children who will one day inhabit the earth,” (All Good Gifts). This challenge of the American Benedictine Priresses is a call to inner conversion so we might become leaven for change in our world.

We recognize our sacred responsibility to reverence and care for our land and to make proper use of the resources it provides. In order to live in harmony with the earth and to promote responsible stewardship we commit ourselves:

1. to choosing a lifestyle that will give witness to our love of the earth,
2. to joining with other people who are endeavoring to heal the wounds that have been inflicted upon our planet,
3. to providing ourselves on-going education in ecology so that our decisions regarding the use of the land will respect the balance and interdependence found in nature,
4. to using the land for financial profit in a responsible manner always seeking to maintain the quality of soil, air and water and the healthy balance of animal and plant life, and
5. to keeping in mind that the atmosphere of peace and prayerfulness provided by our surroundings is to be shared with all who come to seek God with us.

Monastery of St. Gertrude
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