

Land Ethic – Care of the Earth

We, the Benedictine Sisters of Benet Hill Monastery, listening with the ear of our heart, hear from Holy Scripture, we are One with all Creation. Grounded in our Judeo-Christian Heritage and rooted in our 1500 year Benedictine Tradition we are entrusted by the Creator with care of the sacred gift of the land. The guiding principles that arise from our contemplative awareness inspire this land ethic which recognizes our moral obligation to respect and protect every particle that vibrates with One Life in the entire universe.

Our charism, notable for simplicity, humility, stability, hospitality, and frugality is well suited to sustainable partnership with the natural environment. Our guiding Benedictine document, *Of All Good Gifts*, summons us to “Monastic Stewardship: that we use what we are and what we have for the transformation of culture because Creation is the Lord’s and we are its keepers; we hold it in trust.” We experience interconnectedness with the land and honor our sacred responsibility to reverent loving care for the beauty and natural resources it provides

We believe Mother Earth is a manifestation of The Divine. Therefore, we commit ourselves to promote responsible stewardship by choosing a life-style that gives witness to our love of the earth and taking from her only what we need. We endeavor to heal and to join with others who are committed to rehabilitation of the wounds that have been inflicted upon our planet. We keep ourselves abreast of new scientific evidence and contemporary theological insights so our decisions regarding the use of the land will respect the balance and interdependence found in nature. We pledge to use the land in an economically responsible and moderate manner, seeking to maintain and improve the quality of soil, air, and water and a healthy balance of human, animal and plant life where possible.

We hold as sacred the healing contemplative presence of peace and prayerfulness this land has provided over hundreds of years as home to indigenous peoples and now to ourselves. We vow to preserve this place to be shared by future generations who will come to seek The Divine and co-create Wholeness of all Creation.

Accepting the invitation from Pope Francis, to be in reciprocal relationship with the earth in the Encyclical, *Laudato Si; Care of our Common Home*, we value and are committed to environmental sustainability, green friendly, ecologically wise and practical use of alternative and renewable energy sources to the full extent of our prudent means. All energy production on any of our properties will be limited to clean, renewable and cost-effective sources. We recognize that water is a scarce and valuable resource that we must conserve and protect to assure its availability for future generations.

We, the community, stand on the rich legacies of our ancestors. We profess in our Vision Statement our call for “Reverencing all creation, we will be radical signs of God’s love and compassion and use our resources in service of all God’s people.” We commit to this Land Ethic.

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