News
EarthBeat



(Brenna Davis)



by Brenna Davis

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Editor's Note: *Welcome to Simple Advent, Abundant Life. These daily Advent reflections will explore connections between simple living and abundant life on the earth. They are inspired by the Advent Simplicity Challenge at the Ignatian Solidarity Network. Sign up here to receive the reflections each day in your inbox.*

First week of Advent theme—Time

Day 6: Friday, Dec. 4

As part of Simple Advent, Abundant Life, we invited young people to share how they strive to live simply on the earth as a sign of hope that restoration is possible. Today's reflection comes from Jonathan Hesford and Morgan Vogler, two seniors at Xavier University, in Cincinnati:

> "God blessed them and God said ... Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and all the living things that crawl on the Earth" (Gen 1:28).
>
> Pope Francis invites us to rethink the word 'dominion.' Instead of understanding dominion as supreme authority or the ability to do whatever instantly gratifies our appetites of consumption, we can understand dominion as responsibility. We alone have authority because we alone have the responsibility to maintain the health and well-being of the abundant gift that is our common home, especially given the harm we have already caused. Should it be up to the fish or the birds to purify the planet of our infectious habits? Of course not. We have dominion and thus we have responsibility.
>
> Practicing that responsibility is the creative work of stewardship that God calls us to. "As stewards of God’s creation," Pope Francis reminds us, "we are called to make the earth a beautiful garden for the human family. When we destroy our forest, ravage our soil and pollute our seas, we betray that noble calling."

As Christians, we believe God calls us to many things. This includes our sustainable habits. We answer God's calling to care for the earth through our engagement at Xavier University. We take part in advocating for change through our involvement on campus; through pushing our university to divest from fossil fuels and to devote more resources to sustainability projects and staff. In our personal lives, we are both conscious of the food we eat and where our clothes come from, choosing thrifted over fast fashion. In reality, these actions of stewardship are prayerful because they draw us closer to God and they answer the call God has placed before us. Where is God calling you in your sustainable actions?

-Jonathan Hesford and Morgan Vogler, Xavier University

REFLECT

What is a word, phrase or emotion prompted by this reflection that God is inviting me to ponder today?

ACT

Where do you see concrete signs of hope for the healing of the earth? State one sign of hope to yourself out loud and say a prayer of thanksgiving to God for this gift.

View the Advent Simplicity Calendar for a blessing to carry you through your day.

Simple Advent, Abundant Life

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