

## **Words of Wisdom for Lent**

### ***livesimply...***

We know we are beginning to live simply when we glimpse that we are content with less; when we discover we don't have to compete with other people in relation to what they have or what they have achieved.

We know we are beginning to live simply when we find ourselves delighting in little things; when we can affirm the achievements of other people of any age and background; when we appreciate the gifts of others; when we find ourselves valuing the present moment and worrying less about tomorrow and its mysteries.

### ***...sustainably...***

We know we are beginning to live sustainably when we acknowledge, mention and delight in the love of those who sustain us; when we commit ourselves long term to others or another; when we give ourselves to our fundamental purpose in life.

We live sustainably when we value what we have and need, not what others want to sell us. We recycle what is not needed, we do not recycle the relationships and commitments that underpin our very existence.

We know we live sustainably when we find ourselves increasingly sad about the destruction of the created world that has been given to us as a gift by God.

### ***...and in solidarity...***

We know we are deepening our commitment to live in solidarity when we are increasingly hurt by the sheer lack of respect for our sisters and brothers throughout the world; when we weep more easily as we appreciate the plight of others on whatever margin they live.

We know we are deepening our commitment to live in solidarity when we don't just observe, don't just complain about or analyse problems, but find ourselves ready to commit to changing the circumstances and removing the obstacles to the fullness of life of our sisters and brothers – then we are beginning to glimpse 'living in solidarity'.

*livesimply* is not primarily about changing anyone else or anything 'outside' ourselves. It is to discover that I am indeed made in the image of God, I am sustained by God, I need nothing else.

This awareness will mean that I make different choices about what I need, what matters, who I care about, what I commit myself to. I will become more committed to relationships that contribute to the fullness of life – for me and others. I will delight more in the beauty of creation, music and art. It will lead me to new poets, mystics, prophets, Scripture passages and conversations...

This is a huge insight and a huge risk. But it is a wonderful idea!

*Jim O'Keefe, 25 February 2009*