

A changed way of life

FAITH & THE COMMON GOOD LAUNCHES *RENEWING THE SACRED BALANCE*: AN INTERFAITH INITIATIVE

By Rev. Dr. Ted Reeve

Scientists generally agree that our Western way of life is unsustainable. Indeed, we are consuming or destroying the basic elements of life—earth, air, water, and fire (energy)—at a faster rate than the natural world can conceivably handle. We are spending our children's future.

We did not arrive at the current complex of ecological, economic and political challenges overnight, nor will we solve them in short order. There are few quick fixes. Yet we do know we need to act. We need to commit to a changed way of life, to live with a sacred awareness and an ethic of ecological sustainability. It is about renewing the sacred balance, rekindling our relationship with one another and with the entire community of life on Earth.

Faith & the Common Good is an interfaith organization that began several years ago to "seek common ground for the common good." As peoples of differing faiths and cultures, we affirm common values of compassion, justice, peace, human rights, and ecological sustainability as cornerstones of a healthy society.

Recently, Faith & the Common Good launched the *Renewing the Sacred Balance* initiative to encourage people of faith to deepen their awareness of the sacred and make concrete commitments to an ethic of respect, balance and harmony.

To assist in this spiritual journey, Faith & the Common Good has developed educational resources for use in faith and local community groups. (See the list of



Renewing the Sacred Balance poster. Actual size: 12" x 20"

resources on the facing page.)

A short video introduces a few people of different faith/cultural traditions who have begun to renew the sacred balance in their lives. The video shows that small changes add up to exciting new opportunities and ways of life.

David Suzuki's Nature Challenge

As part of the *Renewing the Sacred Balance* campaign, we invite you to take the David Suzuki *Nature Challenge*. It is a straightforward set of actions that contributes to a local-global movement to save the planet.

Join with more than 100,000 others who have already agreed

to such commitments as improving energy efficiency in their homes, eating healthier foods, supporting public transportation and getting involved in community organizing. Together, our small, concrete actions send a powerful message to political and business leaders that Canadians want environmental improvement and our leaders need to do their part.

Becoming engaged in the *Renewing the Sacred Balance* initiative begins the process of creating a sustainable future. If we pause to truly appreciate the beauty, awe and wonder of the world around us, we will see ourselves as an intimate part of the natural world and not somehow above it, having dominion over it, nor viewing it as a commodity for our use. If we place ourselves in the web of life and marvel at this inter-relatedness, we will live differently, our "ecological footprint" will decrease and we will learn to live with more balance.

To find out more or to connect with others involved in these initiatives, visit our website at www.faith-commongood.net, or contact Faith & the Common Good, 47 Queens Park Cres. E., Toronto, ON, M5S 2C3; Tel: 416-978-5306; Fax: 416-978-7821.

Rev. Dr. Ted Reeve is the Coordinator of Faith & the Common Good. He is a religious social ethicist specializing in economic, health and ecological concerns.

Get involved in the *Renewing the Sacred Balance* initiative and take the *Nature Challenge*

Complete and return this form to: Faith & the Common Good, 47 Queens Park Cres. E., Toronto, ON, M5S 2C3; Fax: 416-978-7821. You can also sign up and order resources online at: www.faith-commongood.net

Yes! I want to be involved in *Renewing the Sacred Balance* and take David Suzuki's *Nature Challenge*. I agree to do at least three of the 10 items listed below. I'll receive an email newsletter from the David Suzuki Foundation with tips, information and suggestions to help me fulfill the *Nature Challenge*.

Yes! Keep me involved in Faith & the Common Good's *Renewing the Sacred Balance* initiative. I will receive your electronic newsletter with news, articles and ideas to help me live out the *Nature Challenge* and integrate it with my faith.

I agree to do at least three of the following:

Sign up even if you already do all 10. You'll send a message to our leaders that Canadians care!

- Reduce home energy use by 10%
- Choose Energy Star appliances and R2000 homes
- Eliminate home and garden pesticides
- Eat less meat
- Buy locally grown and produced food
- Drive a fuel-efficient car
- Walk, bus or bike once a week
- Choose a home near work or school
- Support transportation alternatives
- Get involved and tell others

..... Personal Information

First and last name: _____

Email: _____

Number of people in your household: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Province: _____

Postal Code: _____

Faith: _____

ORDER FORM

To order, select the desired quantities and fill in your personal information on the bottom left of this page.

Renewing the Sacred Balance kit folder \$30.00
All Inclusive! Includes all sacred balance resources below plus a study guide

Quantity _____ x \$30.00 = _____

Renewing the Sacred Balance poster \$5.00
A full-colour poster as shown on the cover of this magazine and on facing page. Sold in sets of three. (12" x 20")

Quantity _____ x \$5.00 = _____

Renewing the Sacred Balance sign-up pamphlets \$5.00
Explains *Renewing the Sacred Balance* and invites participation in David Suzuki's *Nature Challenge*. Sold in sets of 50

Quantity _____ x \$5.00 = _____

Renewing the Sacred Balance video \$12.00
Features different faith perspectives

Quantity _____ x \$12.00 = _____

Renewing the Sacred Balance calendar \$15.00
Great for fundraisers! 2004 calendar produced by The Multifaith Action Society of British Columbia featuring the holy days and cultural festivals of 13 religious traditions

Quantity _____ x \$15.00 = _____

Renewing the Sacred Balance CD \$20.00
Great for fundraisers! Over an hour of vocal and instrumental music from artists from a variety of faith traditions focuses on the theme of the sacred balance

Quantity _____ x \$20.00 = _____

Subtotal: _____

Add shipping: \$5.00

TOTAL: _____

Please make cheques payable to "Toronto School of Theology - F-CG". If paying by credit card (VISA only):

Name on card: _____

Expiry date (mm/yy): _____

Signature: _____

Privacy policy: Faith & the Common Good does not trade or sell email addresses. If, however, you sign up for the Nature Challenge, you do consent to us sharing this information with the David Suzuki Foundation.