

## Great Fast Reflections

### - Human & Environmental Development Program – Dr. Lesya Sabada

#### Part 2: What is the Solution and Conclusion:

**What's the Solution? Ascetic Ethos:** The Church proposes a radical reversal of perceptions and attitudes, especially of practices and lifestyles. The Church offers a spiritual fitness training program for us which creates an ethos, an ascetic ethos. The ecological impasse might be improved or achieved through self-denial and less self-centeredness. Furthermore, a change of heart is a life-long process. It means a radical change in orientation, so that God comes first. And that involves practice, discipline, exercise – in Greek, ascesis. Ascesis is spiritual fitness training for us. During the Great Fast an ascetic ethos is created. That means we try to create a right relationship with God and the world around us.

The ascetic way is a way of liberation. And the ascetic is the person who is free; uncontrolled by the attitudes that abuse the world; characterized by self-control, by self-restraint, and by the ability to say no or enough. Ascetism then aims to refine and sensitize the soul. Its goal is moderation, not repression. Its content is positive, not negative. It looks to service and not to selfishness- to reconciliation. Without ascetism none of us is authentically human. We are taught to authentically become loving human beings.

“No tree can grow to heaven unless its roots reach down to hell – Carl Jung. There is no possibility to go upward towards God without a corresponding move to go down. It is for this reason holiness is so rare. Who is willing to do that? The holiest people are those who can see their own sins and the evil within themselves.

**Conclusion:** Acting personally manifests itself as love in action. Love in action for a household, parish, eparchy or diocese may work on energy efficiency, recycling, or organic gardening. It may mean the way we use whatever influence we may have in society. We have a choice in how we use our influence. Will we choose to serve the well being of other people and other creatures? Again, the answer depends in large part on how seriously we choose to work on ourselves.

We live on a habitable planet in order to play our part in the saving work that is God's, the building of the Kingdom of God. We should know by now that there is no path to the kingdom except through a thousand ordinary, humdrum decisions, whether it is sparing a kind word for somebody or recycling a sheet of paper. Every act of care and responsibility towards God's creation, human and non-human is a practical assent to his plan of salvation.

Imagine a world that functions in beauty and harmony, balance and purpose, in accordance with the overflowing love of God, is to cry out in wonder with the Psalmist, “Oh Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you have made them all.” (Ps. 104:24)



Source: <https://catholicclimatemovement.global/lent-2019/>

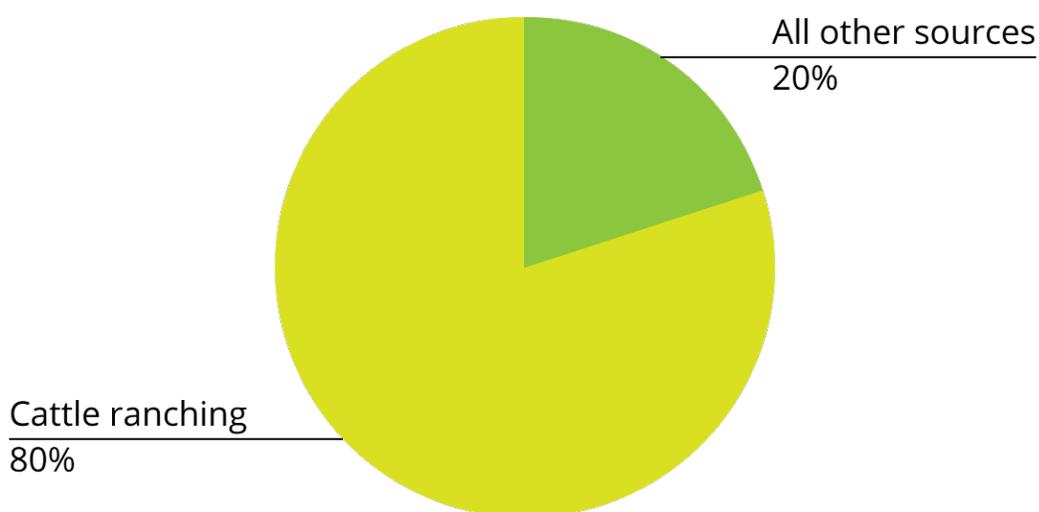
### This Lent, protect creation

*Add a day of plant-based meals to your diet this Lent, or strive to eat only plant-based meals throughout the Lenten season.*

## Why Eating Simply Matters

According to [Yale University](#) and other experts, cattle ranching accounts for approximately 80% of deforestation in Brazil. Cattle ranchers cut down the forest—often illegally, and often by taking it from indigenous people—in order to graze cattle.

Sources of deforestation in Brazil



Scientists [evaluated](#) scores of studies from around the world to estimate the amount of greenhouse gas emissions per serving of food. The average serving of meat represents greenhouse gas emissions more than 60 times bigger than the average serving of fruits, vegetables, and cereals.

