LENTEN EATING—From eggplant lasagna to lentil sloppy joes, the Sisters of Mercy have cooked up some of their favorite vegetarian recipes as a way to invite Catholics to join them in eating less meat this Lent — and not just on Fridays.

This year, the religious congregation is extending the Lenten tradition of abstaining from meat on Fridays to add Mondays in what they're calling Mercy Meatless Mondays. Studies have shown that reducing meat consumption is one of the critical steps to curb climate change, and to meet the Paris Agreement goals of limiting global temperature rise as low at 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit). An August report from the U.N.'s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change found that dietary changes, including featuring more plant-based foods, could eliminate annually by 2050 up to 8 gigatons of carbon emissions, or the equivalent emissions from 1.7 billion cars.

The Mercy sisters are encouraging others to share their own meatless recipes on social media with the hashtag #MercyMeatlessMondays. They hope to eventually create a cookbook from all the submissions.—Global Sister's Report

MARCH 8—Today is International Women’s Day. Women everywhere know what it is to live in worlds empty of a sense of respect, empty of public achievement, empty of real fulfillment. They are blocked, mocked, ignored and trivialized. And their daughters face it, too.

Question: What have you done to ensure that the lives of women are fully human, not gender defined? Sometimes we hesitate to take action
on environmental issues because we don’t believe our individual actions, like eating less meat or reducing food waste, will make a big enough impact. However, studies show that individual actions can lead to systemic change, and at this point in history, we need to reduce carbon emissions on the individual and systemic level simultaneously.—Joan Chittister

SURE—Please come to the SURE Nehemiah Action Assembly on Monday, March 23, at 6:30 PM. Doors will open at 5:45 PM. It will be held at the Sarasota Municipal Auditorium (801 N. Tamiami Trail). Please bring as many people with you as you can! There is strength in numbers, and we will have a chance for our appointed and elected leaders to take positive actions in favor of:
* Restorative practices in our county schools as a method of positive behavior support, instead of a reliance on out-of-school suspensions.
* Civil citations instead of arrest records for nonviolent misdemeanors. Between 2009 and 2013, 16,044 people in Sarasota were arrested for nonviolent misdemeanors. Only 2,734 were convicted. This means that 13,310 individuals were found not guilty, but still received an arrest record.
* Affordable housing in Sarasota County and in Sarasota city limits. Further info, contact Maryal.

LET’S TALK—Vote Common Good is an organization dedicated to “inspiring, energizing, and mobilizing people of faith to make the common good their voting criteria.” To facilitate conversations, they developed this toolkit for politicians, faith leaders, and all people of good will to set a positive example by communicating constructively.

Vote Common Good expresses these commitments in terms of values because they believe we will only learn to communicate deeply and honestly if we speak from the heart, not just the head, from level of values, not just opinions or arguments.

The Six Commitments of Common Good Communication:

1. **Example:** I will demonstrate integrity and lead by example in my communication, in public and in private. When I fall short, I’ll admit it, apologize, and reaffirm my commitment to lead by example.
2. **Curiosity:** I will show uncommon curiosity by asking honest questions, staying open to new information, seeking to understand others as I would want to be understood, and listening with empathy.
3. **Clarity:** I won’t hold back, speak half-truths, be intentionally vague, or attempt to deceive. I will self-report my feelings and my underlying values whenever possible.
4. **Decency:** I will strive to show genuine courtesy toward everyone, especially when we disagree. I will not mock, call names, or dehumanize any person or group. I will establish and uphold ground rules for respectful conversation whenever possible.
5. **Fairness:** I won’t compare my side’s best with the other side’s worst. I will not assume the worst motives in my opponents. I will acknowledge the upsides and downsides of all positions. I will praise my counterparts when they deserve it, and challenge my allies when they deserve it. I will notice who isn’t at the table, and I will do my part to be sure they are included and heard.
6. **Persistence:** I expect this work to be hard and I know we will make mistakes. I will stay in the room with difference, be resilient after failure, never giving up and always seeking the common good.—courtesy of NETWORK

[Learn more at: www.votecommongood.com]

FOR LENT—“Stations of the Cross,” with Art Work by Brother Mickey McGrath OSFS—An Inspiring, Provocative Resource for Lent and Good Friday Prayer. Brother Mickey’s contemporary Stations of the Cross provide inspiring prayers and art work for praying the Stations on Good Friday. I highly recommend them for individuals and faith communities. You could write in a prayer journal your personal Stations of the Cross as a spiritual exercise during Lent. Check out websites: https://www.trinitystores.com/mcgrath-collection/stations-cross —Bridget Mary Meehan ARCWP

Love is luring us forward, because love is what we already are at our core, and we are naturally drawn to the fullness of our own being.—Rohr

Send articles/info by Wed to be published on weekend: rjbannerusa@gmail.com