

**FATHER ANTON'S WORDS OF WISDOM: Here's a little light reading that helped to brighten my day, I published it last year and I think it's worth publishing again:**

God and St. Francis are having a conversation. "Francis" asks God, "You know all about gardens and nature. What in the world is going on down there on earth? What happened to the dandelions, violets, milkweeds and stuff I started eons ago? I had a perfect no-maintenance garden plan. Those plants grow in any type of soil, withstand drought and multiply with ease. The nectar from the long-lasting blossoms attracts butterflies, honey bees and flocks of birds. I expected to see a vast garden of colours now, but all I see are these green rectangles from up here. "It's the tribes" St. Francis tries to explain, "Their called Suburbanites. They started calling your flowers 'weeds' and went to great lengths to kill them and replace them with grass. "Grass!" replied God, "but that's so boring. It's not colorful. It doesn't attract butterflies, birds and bees; only grubs and sod-worms. It's sensitive to temperatures. Do



these Suburbanites really want all that grass growing there?" "Apparently so," replied St. Francis, "They go to great pains to grow it and keep it green. They begin each spring by fertilizing grass and poisoning any other plant that crops up on their lawn." "The Spring rains and warm weather probably makes the grass grow really fast. That must make the Suburbanites happy." said God. "Apparently not", said St. Francis, "As soon as it grows a little, they cut it – sometimes twice a week." "They cut it!" exclaimed God, "do they bale it like hay?" "Not exactly," said St. Francis, "Most of them rake it up and put it in bags." "Why? Is it a cash crop?" asked God. "Do they sell it?" "No, Lord," replied St. Francis, "just the opposite. They pay to throw it away." "Now let me get this straight," said God looking somewhat confused, "They fertilize it so it will grow; and when it does, they cut it and pay to throw it away." "That's right," replied St. Francis. "Boy, these Suburbanites must be relieved in summer when we cut back on the rain and turn up the heat. That surely saves them a lot of work," said God. "You won't believe this, Lord," St. Francis replied,

"When the grass stops growing so fast, they drag out hoses and pay more money to water it, so they can continue to cut it and pay to get rid of it." "I can't believe this nonsense," said God, "At least they keep some of the trees.

That was a sheer stroke of genius, if I do say so myself. The trees grow leaves in the spring to provide beauty and shade in the summer. In the autumn they change to beautiful colours and then fall in the winter to provide a blanket to keep moisture in the soil and protect the trees and bushes. It's a natural cycle of life." "Sit down, Lord," said St. Francis, "The Suburbanites have drawn a circle. As soon as the leaves fall, they rake them into piles, and pay to have them hauled away." "You've got to be kidding" said God looking more confused than ever, "What do they do to protect the shrub and tree roots, and to keep the soil moist and loose?" "After throwing the leaves away, they go out and buy something which they call mulch. They haul it home and spread it around in place of the leaves," replied St. Francis. "And where to they get this mulch?" asked God. "They cut down trees and grind them up to make the mulch" replied St. Francis. "Enough, enough!" said God, "I don't want to think about this anymore. St. Catherine, you're in charge of the Arts, what's tonight's movie? "Dumb and Dumber" replied St. Catherine, "it's a story about..." "Never mind" said God, "I think I just heard the whole story from St. Francis."