



Selected Quotations On Climate Change and Environmental Protection

(a larger selection can be found at: www.usccb.org/sdwp/ejp/climate/bulletinclipart.shtml)

Pope Benedict XVI

Angelus: Sunday, August 27, 2006

This coming Friday, 1 September, the Church in Italy will celebrate the first 'Day for the Protection of Creation', but today the great gift of God is exposed to serious dangers and lifestyles which can degrade it. Environmental pollution is making particularly unsustainable the lives of the poor of the world. In dialogue with Christians of various confessions, we must pledge ourselves to take care of creation and to share its resources in solidarity.

Letter to his Holiness Bartholomew I, Ecumenical Patriarch, on the Occasion of the Sixth Symposium on "Religion, Science and the Environment" Focusing on the Amazon River.

Common points must be found on which converge the commitments of each one to safeguard the habitat that the Creator has made available to the human being, in whom he has impressed his own image.

Homily during Inaugural Mass, April 2005

The external deserts in the world are growing, because the internal deserts have become so vast. Therefore the earth's treasures no longer serve to build God's garden for all to live in, but they have been made to serve the powers of exploitation and destruction.

Pope John Paul II

World Day of Peace Message, January 1990

When man turns his back on the Creator's plan, he provokes a disorder which has inevitable repercussions on the rest of created order. If man is not at peace with God, then earth itself cannot be at peace...

We cannot interfere in one area of the ecosystem without paying due attention to both the consequences of such interference in other areas and to the well-being of future generations.

The most profound and serious indication of the moral implications underlying the ecological problem is the lack of respect for life evident in many of the patterns of environmental pollution.

It is manifestly unjust that a privileged few should continue to accumulate excess goods, squandering available resources, while masses of people are living in conditions of misery at the very lowest level of subsistence.

Our very contract with nature has a deep restorative power; contemplation of its magnificence imparts peace and serenity.

International Solidarity Needed to Safeguard Environment, June 1996.

We face a fundamental question which can be described as both ethical and ecological. How can accelerated development be prevented from turning against man? How can one prevent disaster that destroy the environment and threaten all forms of life, and how can the negative consequences that have already occurred be remedied?

On Human Work

The most profound motive for our work is this knowing that we share in creation. Learning the meaning of creation in our daily lives will help us to live holier lives. It will fill the world with the spirit of Christ, the spirit of justice, charity, and peace.

Quotations from the U.S. Bishops' Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence and the Common Good

November 2001

At its core, global climate change is not about economic theory or political platforms, nor about partisan advantage or interest group pressures. It is about the future of God's creation and the one human family.

Because of the blessings God has bestowed on our nation and the power it possesses, the United States bears a special responsibility in its stewardship of God's creation to shape responses that serve the entire human family. As pastors, teachers, and citizens, we bishops seek to contribute to our national dialogue by examining the ethical implications of climate change. We offer some themes from catholic social teachings that could help to shape this dialogue, and we suggest some directions for the debate and public policy decisions that face us. We do so with great respect for the work of the scientists, diplomats, business and union representatives, developers of new technologies, environmental leaders, and policy makers who have been struggling with the difficult questions of climate change for many years.

True stewardship requires changes in human actions - both moral behavior and technical advancement. Our religious tradition has always urged restraint and moderation in the use of material goods, so we must not allow our desire to possess more material things to overtake our concern for the basic needs of people and the environment. Pope John Paul II has linked protecting the environment to "authentic human ecology," which can overcome "structures of sin" and which promotes both human dignity and respect for creation.

Changes in lifestyle based on traditional moral virtues can ease the way to a sustainable and equitable world economy in which sacrifice will no longer be an unpopular concept. For many of us, a life less focused on material gain many remind us that we are more than what we have. Rejecting the false promises of excessive or conspicuous consumption can even allow more time for family, friends, and civic responsibilities. A renewed sense of sacrifice and restraint could make an essential contribution to addressing global climate change.

As people of religious faith, we bishops believe that the atmosphere that supports life on earth is a God-given gift, one we must respect and protect. It unites us as one human family. If we harm the atmosphere, we dishonor our Creator and the gift of creation. The value of our faith calls us to humility, sacrifice, and a respect for life and the natural gifts God has provided.