

Prayer and Action Network—June 2011

News of local flooding, devastating tornados nationally, and global crop destruction due to weather serve as a reminder of God's call for us to care for His creation. With the celebration of World Environment Day on June 5th, we chose this month to pray that the floods here at home and the very real threat to health and human life abroad will move humanity to address global climate change in meaningful ways.

Pope Benedict XVI explained the Catholic basis for action in his Holy Saturday Homily: "The Church is not some kind of association that concerns itself with man's religious needs but is limited to that objective. No, she brings man into contact with God and thus with the source of all things. Therefore we relate to God as Creator, and so we have a responsibility for creation."

The imperative to care for creation is reiterated in a May 2011 Working Group Commissioned by the Pontifical Academy of Sciences report addressing global climate change. This group of scientists (including climate scientists, glaciologists, physicists, chemists, meteorologists, and hydrologists) and lawyers is unequivocal in its view that human action is having an increasingly negative effect on our planet and a disproportionately negative impact on poor countries. According to the Report, human-caused changes threaten water and food security, "especially among those 'bottom 3 billion' people who are too poor to avail of protections made possible by fossil fuel use and industrialization."

The Report offers three measures to combat life threatening climate change: 1) reduce worldwide carbon dioxide emissions using all measures possible, including rapid transition to renewable energy sources; 2) reduce the concentrations of warming air pollutants by as much as 50%; and 3) prepare to adapt to climate changes that we will be unable to mitigate.

The Working Group based its report firmly in Catholic Social Teaching, noting that, "by acting now, in the spirit of common but differentiated responsibility, we accept our duty to one another and to the stewardship of a planet blessed with the gift of life. We are committed to ensuring that all inhabitants of this planet receive their daily bread, fresh air to breathe and clean water to drink, as we are aware that, if we want justice and peace, we must protect the habitat that sustains us."

PRAYER: Each leaf, each petal, each grain, each person,
sings your praises, Creator God.

Each creature on the earth, all the mountains and great seas
show your glory, Spirit of love.

And yet the hand of greed has patented and plundered
your splendour, has taken and not shared your gift,
has lived as owner of the earth, not guest.

And so the ice is cracked, the rivers dry, the valleys flooded
and the snowcaps melt.

God our Father, show us how to step gently,
how to live simply, how to walk lightly with respect and love
for all that you have made.

Amen

Linda Jones/CAFOD

ACTION: Read the full [Working Group Report](#).

Take the St. Francis Pledge at <http://catholicclimatecovenant.org/>. The Pledge includes a promise to pray and reflect on our duty to care for God's creation, learn about the moral dimensions of climate change, assess how we as individuals and families can reduce our impact, act to change behaviors that contribute to climate change and advocate for Catholic principles in climate change discussions.

The Carmelite NGO has published a prayer resource to help the faithful celebrate World Environment Day this Sunday, June 5. The resource, *God Saw That It Was Good*, contains a wealth of Scripture passages and papal quotes. Download the [free resource here](#), and learn more about the work of [Carmelite NGO here](#)

Thank you for your continued commitment.

The Peace and Justice Commission, Diocese of Salt Lake City