



DIOCESE OF STOCKTON

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April 7, 2009

Mr. Dan Misleh
Catholic Coalition on Climate Change
5727 Lockwood Road
Cheverly, MD 20785

Dear Dan:

We are in the midst of one of the most challenging periods in the last seventy years. More and more people in our communities are losing jobs, homes and savings.

Even in the midst of these fearful times, we cannot forget that the earth too is under serious threat. Drought, wildfires, fierce storms, and water shortages are early reminders. With these realities in mind, I sign the *St. Francis Pledge to Care for Creation and the Poor* on behalf of the Stockton Diocese. I am inviting our parishes, families and individuals to pledge to pray, learn and act to protect the earth.

The Stockton Diocese agrees to:

- PRAY and reflect on our responsibility to care for God's creation and protect the poor and vulnerable;
- LEARN about and educate others about climate change;
- ASSESS how we contribute to climate change (in the chancery, our parishes, and families);
- ACT to reduce our climate impact;
- ADVOCATE Catholic principles in climate change discussions and policy work.

We have already begun this work. Attached is a list of prayer and action we have taken to address global warming and its effects on our disadvantaged communities.

Thank you for this opportunity to participate in the Catholic Climate Covenant and St. Francis of Assisi Pledge.

Yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Stephen Blaire
Catholic Bishop of Stockton

Fulfilling the St. Francis of Assisi Pledge to Protect Creation and the Poor
Diocese of Stockton, California

PRAY and reflect on caring for creation:

1. Bishop Blaire established Environmental Justice Sunday during Respect Life Month and issued a pastoral letter on Catholics' responsibility to respect all life on Earth.
2. The Diocese is currently developing an Environmental Justice Toolkit for Clergy.

LEARN and educate others about climate change:

1. The Diocese conducted the All Clergy Day in October 2008 that focused on Care for Creation and global warming issues.
2. The Diocese-wide Environmental Justice Committee conducted a series of air quality workshops to learn about the causes of air pollution in the Central Valley, the public health ramifications, and how people could contribute to cleaner air quality.

ASSESS your participation

1. The Diocese and some of our parishes joined California Interfaith Power and Light. CIPL offers information on how to assess a building's carbon footprint.
2. Some of our parishes have conducted energy audits of their facilities.

ACT to change behavior contributing to climate change:

1. Parishes in the Stockton Diocese distributed 10,000 compact light bulbs.
2. Parishes in the Mother Lode instituted a battery recycling drop-off program to keep batteries out of landfills.
3. Parishes in the Mother Lode have regular bulletin announcements on Care for Creation and becoming better stewards of creation.
4. Over the years, many parishes have distributed bulletin inserts showing parishioners how individuals and families can reduce air pollution.
5. Parishes are using energy efficient designs and building material in new buildings or remodel projects. In Lockeford, the new parish hall exceeds local county requirements for energy efficiency.

ADVOCATE Catholic principles in climate change discussions and decisions:

1. The Stockton Diocese works with environmental justice and public health groups in the Central Valley to successfully advocate for stronger air quality rules to protect the public health and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
2. At Catholic Lobby Day, the Stockton Diocese has lobbied for environmental justice legislation for the past three years. We helped pass AB 32, the "Global Warming Solutions Act," California's landmark legislation to reduce the state's greenhouse gas emissions by 80%.
3. A representative of the Diocese sits on the Environmental Justice Advisory Committee of the California Air Resources Board.