

The Saint Francis Pledge

to Care for Creation and the Poor

Pope Benedict XVI: "The protection of the environment, and the safeguarding of resources and of the climate, oblige all ... to act jointly, ...promoting solidarity with the weakest regions of the world" (Caritas in Veritate, no. 50)

All across our country, Catholics are taking the St. Francis Pledge to Care for Creation and the Poor and joining the Catholic Climate Covenant. The St. Francis Pledge is a promise and a commitment by Catholic individuals, families, parishes, organizations and institutions to live our faith by protecting God's Creation and advocating on behalf of people in poverty who face the harshest impacts of global climate change. To join the Covenant, you commit to act on each of the five elements of the St. Francis Pledge and **register your Pledge at www.CatholicClimateCovenant.org**.

I/We Pledge to:

- PRAY** and reflect on the duty to care for God's Creation and protect the poor and vulnerable.
- LEARN** about and educate others on the causes and moral dimensions of climate change.
- ASSESS** how we—as individuals and in our families, parishes and other affiliations—contribute to climate change by our own energy use, consumption, waste, etc.
- ACT** to change our choices and behaviors to reduce the ways we contribute to climate change.
- ADVOCATE** for Catholic principles and priorities in climate change discussions and decisions, especially as they impact those who are poor and vulnerable.

Take this home with you and take the St. Francis Pledge at www.CatholicClimateCovenant.org.

Here are some specific ways to act on your St. Francis Pledge. Many more ideas can be found on the Catholic Climate Covenant website: www.CatholicClimateCovenant.org.

PRAY

- Be mindful and pray about those most impacted by climate change and for the grace to recognize our own contributions to the problem.
- See the prayers found on the Covenant website including the Canticle of the Creatures by St. Francis and others.
- Become familiar with and recite the many Psalms that portray the richness of Creation.

LEARN

- Review the principles of Catholic Social Teaching and how they relate to climate change at <http://catholicclimatecovenant.org/catholic-teachings/>.
- Read and discuss the U.S. Bishops' Statement: Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence, and the Common Good found at <http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/ejp/climate/>.
- Host a discussion group using a curriculum like "God's Creation Cries for Justice, Climate Change: Impact and Response" available from JustFaith Ministries at http://www.justfaith.org/programsjustmatters-m_godscreation.html.

ASSESS

- Conduct an energy audit of your home, church, school or institution to discover where energy can be conserved.
- Consider and examine your carbon footprint to assess how your choices and behaviors contribute to or help reduce carbon emissions.

ACT

- Reduce your consumption of energy (act on your energy audit) by updating appliances, adjusting your thermostat, insulating, etc.
- Ask other Catholics and get your parish, school or other organization to take the St. Francis Pledge.
- Drive less and walk more, combine errands, or use public transportation.
- Reduce, Reuse and Recycle.

ADVOCATE

- Write or call your members of Congress and urge that the needs of people in poverty be a central priority in strong and necessary climate legislation and other policies that address environmental stewardship.
- Check the websites of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Department of Justice, Peace and Human Development and the Catholic Coalition on Climate Change to stay up-to-date with public policy efforts in this area.

Go to the Catholic Climate Covenant website to register your St. Francis Pledge, to find ways to fulfill your pledge and to link up with other Catholics who have taken the pledge and explore other resources:

- A short video about the covenant
- News and stories about what Catholics (*individuals, parishes, schools, institutions*) are doing
- Quotes for bulletin inserts, church newsletters
- Liturgical resources and ideas
- Lesson plans and other helps for schools and adult religious education programs

Take the St. Francis Pledge and go to www.CatholicClimateCovenant.org