



Instead of a self-interested paradigm that puts short-sighted, egocentric material excess ahead of common environmental stewardship and care for the poor, Pope Benedict invites us to reflect on how our choices affect the environment and other people, both around the world and in future generations. As he reminds us, we must be especially mindful that “environmental degradation makes the life of the poor especially unbearable.”

Ultimately, he asserts that "Our present crises ... require us to rethink the path which we are travelling together" (2010 World Day of Peace Message). Towards that end, the Holy Father asserts that “economic activity needs to consider the fact that ‘every economic decision has a moral consequence’ and thus show increased respect for the environment. When making use of natural resources, we should be concerned for their protection and consider the cost entailed – environmentally and socially – as an essential part of the overall expenses incurred” (2010 World Day of Peace Message).

In preparation for Easter, the Catholic Coalition on Climate Change offers this reflection on the choices that each of us makes as individuals in light of our faith. As well, each of us is invited to consider more fully the implications that these choices have on other people and the environment, and to follow more faithfully the model of Christ crucified by putting the common good ahead of our own immediate pleasures and preferences. As Pope Benedict points out, “This obedience to the voice of the Earth is more important for our future happiness ... than the desires of the moment. Our Earth is talking to us and we must listen to it and decipher its message if we want to survive.”

By Dan DiLeo