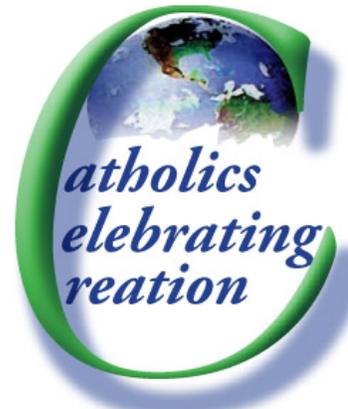


PRAY + LEARN + ASSESS + ACT + ADVOCATE

*Creation is the beginning and the foundation
of all God's works, and its preservation
has now become essential.*



Catholics Celebrating Creation: Earth Day Resource Packet – 2010

This packet was produced by the Office for Catholic Social Justice Ministry to assist parish social ministry committees in the implementation of the St. Francis Pledge. Please contact the office for further assistance.

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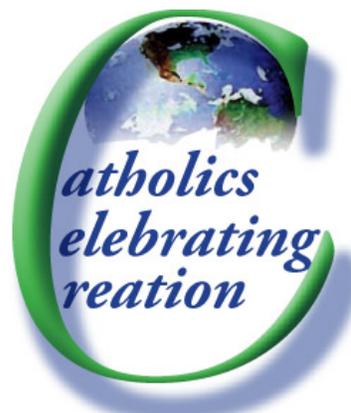
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Introduction

The Environmental Justice Team of the Office for Catholic Social Justice Ministry, Archdiocese of Hartford, **invites your parish to celebrate God's creation on the weekend of April 17-18.** April 22, 2010 will be the 40th observance of Earth Day, continuing its original focus on *peace, justice and care of the Earth*, with activities taking place in many towns.

These themes clearly resonate with our Catholic mission. A rich body of Catholic social and moral teaching, linking care of creation with care of neighbor, exists in the Catechism of the Catholic Church and in statements from our U. S. Bishops and Pope John Paul II, Pope Benedict XVI has continued and expanded on the theme in recent statements.

During this season of rejoicing in the new life of the Resurrection and spring, we are inviting all parishes in the Archdiocese to celebrate and actively protect the environment on which we depend for life.

Our hope is that a focused liturgical theme on Saturday and Sunday, April 17th and 18th, along with other information and resources, will reinforce actions that parishes are already taking to celebrate and care for creation, and will inspire them to do more.

We ask that you share the packet with the leaders and committees in your parish.

It is our hope that all Catholics will rejoice, give thanks and grow in stewardship of God's creation. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Diocesan Environmental Justice Team
Jeanie Graustein, Environmental Justice Ministry Coordinator
Office for Catholic Social Justice Ministry

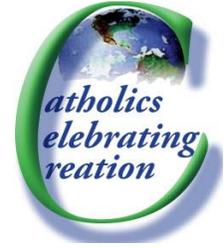
For more information, contact Jeanie at jgraustein@catholic-social-justice.org or call her at (203) 777-7279.

"...creation is the beginning and the foundation of all God's works' and its preservation has now become essential.... It is imperative that mankind renew and strengthen 'that covenant between human beings and the environment, which should mirror the creative love of God, from whom we come and towards whom we are journeying.'"

Pope Benedict XVI, January 2010, *If You Want to Cultivate Peace, Protect Creation*

Suggested Prayers of the Faithful

April 18 – Cycle C



That, as we take the time to enjoy beauty of the earth, we will join all creatures in praising God through prayer and through actions that reduce our impact on our environment, we pray... R/

That, as we receive the body and blood of the Lord in the gifts of the earth and work of human hands, we will give thanks for the fruitfulness of God's creation, we pray... R/

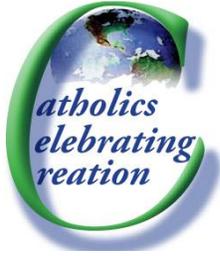
That we will protect poor communities and vulnerable children, born and unborn, from environmental hazards through our own choices, business decisions, and public policies, we pray... R/

That we may be always grateful for the gifts of creation, living more simply, sharing more justly with all in need, and preserving the fruitfulness of creation for future generations, we pray... R/

That we will fulfill God's call to be stewards of creation in a way that respects and protects the integrity of God's creation and provides for the common good of all, we pray... R/

That we may better protect the world's fish from over-fishing, pollution and habitat destruction, so that fish may continue to be an abundant and healthy source of food in a hungry world, we pray... R/

That we will understand that care of neighbor can't be separated from care of creation, and that we will protect poor nations and communities from environmental hazards, we pray... R/



Suggested Music Selections

April 18 – Cycle C

All Creatures of Our God and King

For the Beauty of the Earth

How Great Thou Art

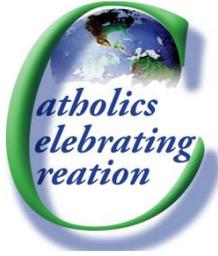
Canticle of the Sun

This Is My Song

America the Beautiful

Morning Has Broken

Or other selections praising and thanking God for the gifts of creation.



Suggested Bulletin Announcements

April 18 – Cycle C

Earth Day

As many communities and groups celebrate the 40th Earth Day this week, may we reflect deeply on our moral and religious responsibility to care for the environment. As we enjoy all the signs of the spring renewal of life around us, let us join all creation in praising God. Then let us live out our gratitude for the gifts of the earth by engaging in actions, habits and public policies that preserve the fruitfulness of the earth, to better protect both human beings and the whole community of life that God loves.

For more Catholic teaching, resources, and ways to take action visit the Office for Catholic Social Justice Ministry of the Archdiocese of Hartford website:
www.catholicsocialjustice.org

Care for God's Creation

"We show our respect for the Creator by our stewardship of creation. Care for the earth is not just an Earth Day slogan; it is a requirement of our faith. We are called to protect people and the planet, living our faith in relationship with all of God's creation. This environmental challenge has fundamental moral and ethical dimensions that cannot be ignored." *U. S. Bishops, Themes from Sharing Catholic Teaching.*

For more Catholic teaching, resources, and ways to take action visit the Office for Catholic Social Justice Ministry of the Archdiocese of Hartford website:
www.catholicsocialjustice.org

Earth Day Reflection (I)

As we celebrate Earth Day this week, let us reflect on **Pope Benedict XVI's** encyclical *Caritas in Veritate*,

"In nature the believer recognizes the wonderful result of God's creative activity...The environment is God's gift to everyone, and in our use of it we have a responsibility toward the poor, toward future generations and toward humanity as a whole."

For more Catholic teaching, resources, and ways to take action visit the Office for Catholic Social Justice Ministry of the Archdiocese of Hartford website:
www.catholicsocialjustice.org

Earth Day Reflection (2)

The reading from Revelation this weekend gives us another reason to look at how we treat the rest of creation. We hear that the “voices of every creature on earth and under the earth and in the sea, everything in the universe” give praise to God and to the Lamb. Does this vision of all creation sharing in the heavenly kingdom surprise us? What does it mean for how we use and affect God’s creatures, or the workings of our garden planet?

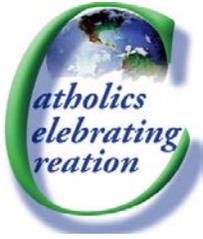
For more Catholic teaching, resources, and ways to take action visit the Office for Catholic Social Justice Ministry of the Archdiocese of Hartford website:
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Preocupación por la Creación de Dios

“Debemos mostrar nuestro respeto por el Creador cuidando bien de la creación. Preocuparse por la tierra no solo es un slogan para el Día de la Tierra, es un requisito de nuestra fe. Estamos llamados a proteger a las personas y al planeta, viviendo nuestra fe en relación con toda la creación de Dios. Los desafíos medioambientales tienen dimensiones morales y éticas fundamentales que no pueden ser ignoradas.”

Reflexiones de los obispos Católicos de Estados Unidos

Para información adicional, vaya a la siguiente página:
<http://catholicclimatecovenant.org/spanish/>



Celebrate God's Creation on Earth Day & Beyond

"Our very contact with nature has a deep restorative power; contemplation of its magnificence imparts peace and serenity. The bible speaks again and again of the goodness and beauty of creation, which is called to glorify God."

Pope John Paul II, *The Ecological Crisis, a Common Responsibility*, 1990

Celebrate & explore creation!

- **Visit** a local or state park, land trust, beach, river, or nature center—give thanks and enjoy!
- **Get away** from city lights and experience the beauty of the night sky, or attend a planetarium show at Yale's Leitner Family Observatory; West Hartford's Gengras Planetarium; Hartford's CT Science Center; Copernican Observatory at CCSU; Discovery Museum, Bridgeport.
- **Shop** at local farmers' market or farm stand—give thanks for the food, soil, water and air we depend on; for those who grow and harvest our food; for farm animals.

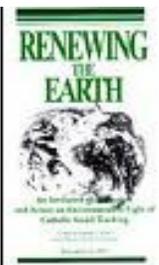
"Christian love draws us to serve the weak and vulnerable among us. We are called to feed the hungry, to give drink to the thirsty.... We are also summoned to restore the land; to provide clean, safe water to drink and unpolluted air to breathe; to preserve endangered species; to protect wild places; and to help the poor help themselves. Christian love forbids choosing between people and the planet."

Renewing the Earth, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1991
www.usccb.org/sdwp/ejp/bishopsstatement.shtml

Protect creation!

Reduce energy use, air and water pollution; restore creation in your community:

- **Participate** in a local park, beach or river clean up or restoration event.
- **Publicize** your town's Household Hazardous Waste and Electronics collection/recycling days. Keep wastes out of trash incinerators, streams and groundwater.
- **Reduce** your use of lawn fertilizer and garden pesticides to protect health and water supplies.
- **Reduce** use of bottled water: Watch "Think Outside the Bottle", <http://www.stopcorporateabuse.org/> & "Take Back the Tap", www.foodandwaterwatch.org/water/bottled/real-story/ You'll be surprised by what you see.



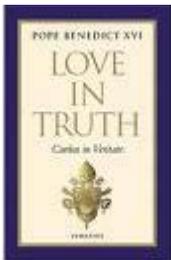
- **Take the St. Francis Pledge**, a project of the *Catholic Coalition on Climate Change*, formed by major Catholic organizations to engage Catholics in reflection, learning and action. [English and Spanish] www.catholicclimatecovenant.org and see www.catholicsocialjustice for Parish Resource Packet.

• **Sell CFL bulbs** through your parish or youth group as a fund raiser/energy saver. Sell energy-efficient bulbs at a reduced price and keep 50% of the profits! For more information visit <http://www.shingsolutionsfundrasier.com>, or contact greg@techniart.com.

** Be sure to provide information that CFLs must be recycled through store collections

[Ikea, Home Depot] or Household Hazwaste collections. Do not put in trash.
www.ct.gov/edp.cwp/view.asp?a=2780&q=378846

- **ENERGY STAR for Congregations** - Cut energy costs up to 30% by investing in efficient equipment, facility upgrades and maintenance. With free, unbiased information and technical support from ENERGY STAR, your congregation can improve stewardship of your budget's energy dollars and of the earth by reducing energy waste and costs, while protecting the environment. Visit http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=small_business.sb_congregations
- **Plant a Tree** – with your family, your youth group, religious education class, or as a parish activity. For a sample parish tree planting and blessing visit: <http://www.fmmusa.org/eng/tree06.html> or <http://www.webofcreation.org/Worship/services/tree.htm>
- **Activities and Resources for Youth and Adults** can be found at the Franciscan Action Network and the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry <http://www.franciscanaction.org/earthday2010#prophetic> and <http://climate.nfcym.org/act.htm>



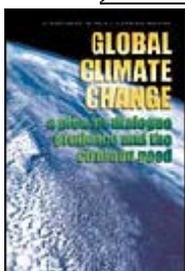
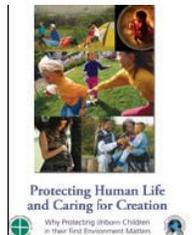
“The environment is God’s gift to everyone, and in our use of it we have a responsibility toward the poor, toward future generations and toward humanity as a whole. Questions linked to the care and preservation of the environment need to give due consideration to **the energy problem**. The technologically advanced societies can and must lower their domestic energy consumption.... [It] is possible to achieve improved energy efficiency while ...encouraging research into alternative forms of energy.”

Pope Benedict XVI, *Charity in Truth* [Caritas in Veritate], June 2009: www.vatican.va

Learn more!

- **Participate** in the *JustFaith* 8-week Climate Change module, www.justfaith.org
- **Protect life** by reducing exposure of pregnant women and children to environmental toxins and hazards: see www.usccb.org/sdwp/case/mission.shtml

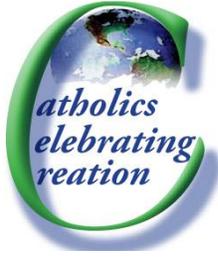
Join the Connecticut Coalition for Environmental Justice, www.environmental-justice.org



- **Join** the Interreligious Eco-Justice Network, a grassroots environmental organization for people of faith based in Connecticut: <http://irejn.org>
- *Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence, and the Common Good*, A Statement of the U.S. Catholic Bishops, 2001 www.usccb.org/sdwp/international/globalclimate.shtml
- Catholics Confront Global Poverty: climate and environmental issues, www.crs.org/globalpoverty
- *If You Want to Cultivate Peace, Protect Creation: Message for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace, January 1, 2010* www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/messages/peace/index_en.htm

For more Church teaching and resources, go to www.catholicsocialjustice.org

What’s happening near you? Go to www.ct.gov/dep/earthday or <http://ctclimatechange.com/>
For more information, contact Jeanie Graustein, OCSJM Environmental Justice Coordinator, at jgraustein@catholicsocialjustice.org or Lynn Campbell, Parish Social Ministry/Justice Education Coordinator lcampbell@catholicsocialjustice.org (203) 777-7279



Homily Ideas

April 18 – Cycle C

Dear Pastors and Deacons,

As we have worked with parishes to help educate Catholics as to the Church's rich and expanding body of Catholic social teaching about care of God's creation, we have frequently heard, "We never hear about any of this in a homily." We offer the suggestions below as a way to incorporate some of this teaching into the liturgy on the **3rd Sunday of Easter, April 18 (Cycle C)**, the Sunday before Earth Day.

In their 1991 statement, *Renewing the Earth*, our bishops said, "We urge celebrants and liturgy committees to incorporate themes into prayer and worship that emphasize our responsibility to protect all of God's creation...." This is obvious for the Feast of St. Francis, but what is Catholic about Earth Day? Many parishioners are already active in addressing environmental issues and will be involved in local events, so it is an excellent opportunity to make the connections to our Catholic moral, spiritual and sacramental framework.

Included are 2 possible approaches to a homily, based on the 2nd reading and the Gospel. Brief quotations from papal and USCCB statements may be helpful background or may spark your ideas and other connections.

Please include your own experiences, stories and reflections. Mention environmental stewardship activities accomplished or planned by your youth group, social ministry committee, or other group. See the insert/handout for a variety of action suggestions.

Eucharistic Prayer 3 is especially appropriate for this Sunday. If possible, the celebrant could speak aloud the prayers over the bread and wine, "fruit of the earth and work of human hands," to emphasize our sacramental connection to the gifts of creation.

We hope that these suggestions and resources are helpful. Please contact us for more information.

Environmental Justice TEAM

Links to statements:

If You Want to Cultivate Peace, Protect Creation, Pope Benedict XVI, January 2010
www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/messages/peace/index_en.htm and

www.vatican.va, click on Holy Father image for many topics/titles

Renewing the Earth: A Invitation to Reflection and Action on Environment in Light of Catholic

Social Teaching; U.S. Catholic Bishops, 1991

www.usccb.org/sdwp/ejp/bishopsstatement.shtml

www.usccb.org/sdwp/ejp/case/mission.shtml Environmental Justice and Children's Environmental Health Coalition [Pro-life Office, Catholic Health Association, NCCW, etc.]

Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence, and the Common Good

U.S. Catholic Bishops, 2001 www.usccb.org/sdwp/international/globalclimate.shtml

www.catholicsandclimatechange.org/church_teaching/index.html many statements

Catholic Relief Service www.crs.org/globalpoverty ; connections of climate change and poverty.

Homily Themes/Suggestions for April 18, Sunday before Earth Day

3rd Sunday of Easter [Year C],

1) “Celebrate Creation,” Based on Second Reading: Revelation 5:11-14

“I heard every creature on earth and under the earth and in the sea, everything in the universe cry out... ‘blessing and honor, glory and might, forever and ever’.”

- We continue celebration of the new life of Easter, as the new life of spring grows around us. Reading echoes what we proclaim at every Mass: “Holy, holy, holy...heaven and earth are full of your glory.” How does creation praise and delight God, reflect God’s glory?
- How does God's creation give us delight, rejoice our souls, renew our spirits? *Speak personally* of your own delight in nature, what most rejoices your spirit: [mountains, rivers, ocean, springtime, animals, fishing, babies, gardening, etc.]
- Invite parishioners to reflect a moment on what most delights them in nature and which of God’s gifts they most appreciate. [if possible invite to share briefly with person next to them, or encourage to share during coffee hour, or at home]
- How is God present in or praised by this/these aspects of creation?[beauty, providential care, awe, new life, intricacy, vast variety, etc]
- Jesus was vividly aware of the landscape of desert, mountains and the sea of Tiberius. He withdrew into the natural world to pray, and he continually used natural images in his teaching.
Is there a special place or moment outdoors where you find communion with God, or signs of God’s goodness and power?
- Do we appreciate our total dependence on the rest of creation? Forests that hold and filter water; plants and animals for food; bees that pollinate plants to produce fruits and flowers, etc.
- We receive God’s grace through the gifts of creation in our sacraments: water, bread, wine, and olive oil “which earth has given,” “fruit of the Earth and work of human hands.”
- Creation is not all benign—diseases, earthquakes, hurricanes, etc. cause suffering and death. All the more important that we work to protect the poor and vulnerable.
- May we give special thanks for creation in prayer this week, for what we depend on, for the beauty and life we see around us.
- We also thank God for his gifts by sharing them justly with others and by preserving God's creation, so that future generations may also live and enjoy.

- As many communities and groups celebrate the 40th Earth Day this week, may we reflect deeply on our moral and religious responsibility to care for the environment.
*Cite a quotation from Church teaching below.
- Let us join all creation in praising God, and engage in Christian stewardship, to better protect both human beings and the whole community of life that God created.

Quotations from Church Teaching:

“Each creature possesses its own particular goodness and perfection. [#339] “God willed the diversity of creatures....Man, and through him all creation, is destined for the glory of God.” [#353]

Catechism of the Catholic Church

“Our very contact with nature has a deep restorative power; contemplation of its magnificence imparts peace and serenity. The bible speaks again and again of the goodness and beauty of creation, which is called to glorify God.”

Pope John Paul II, *The Ecological Crisis, a Common Responsibility*, 1990

“Christian love draws us to serve the weak and vulnerable among us. We are called to feed the hungry, to give drink to the thirsty.... We are also summoned to restore the land; to provide clean, safe water to drink and unpolluted air to breathe; to preserve endangered species; to protect wild places; and to help the poor help themselves. Christian love forbids choosing between people and the planet.”

***Renewing the Earth, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops*, 1991**

“Christian people, in giving thanks to God through the Eucharist, should be conscious that they do so in the name of all creation.... The Eucharist itself powerfully illuminates human history and the whole cosmos...when, during the presentation of the gifts, the priest raises to God a prayer of blessing and petition over the bread and wine, “fruit of the earth, “fruit of the vine” and “work of human hands.” With these words, the rite not only includes in our offering to God all human efforts and activity, but also leads us to see the world as God’s creation, which brings forth everything we need for our sustenance. ...The justified concern about threats to the environment present in so many parts of the world is reinforced by Christian hope, which commits us to working responsibly for the protection of creation. The relationship between the Eucharist and the cosmos helps us to see the unity of God’s plan and to grasp the profound relationship between creation and the “new creation” inaugurated in the resurrection of Christ, the new Adam.” (92)

Pope Benedict XVI, *The Sacrament of Charity*

“In recent decades the doctrine of Creation had almost disappeared from theology.... We are now aware of the damage this has caused. The Redeemer is the Creator and if we do not proclaim God in his full grandeur—as Creator and Redeemer—we also diminish the value of the Redemption. And it is he, the Creator himself, who did and can enter into history and operate in it precisely because he is the God of the whole and not only of a part. ...Redemption also means responsibility always and everywhere with regard to the creation.....As long as the earth was seen as God’s creation, the task of “subduing” it was

never intended as an order to enslave it, but rather as the task of being guardians of creation and developing its gifts; of actively collaborating in God's work ourselves, in the evolution that he ordered in the world so that the gifts of creation might be appreciated rather than trampled upon and destroyed.

I think, therefore, that true and effective initiatives to prevent the waste and destruction of creation can be implemented and developed, understood and lived only where creation is considered as beginning with God; where life is considered as beginning with God and has greater dimensions – in responsibility before God—and one day will be given to us by God in fullness and never taken away from us....

Thus I believe we must strive, with all the means we have, to present faith in public. Yet, none of this will suffice unless we ourselves find a new way of living, a discipline of making sacrifices. I also think it is our task to intervene clearly and with determination on public opinion. And let us ask the Lord to help us all live out the faith and the responsibility of faith in such a way that our lifestyle becomes a testimony...."

Pope Benedict XVI, at seminary of Bressanone, Italy, August 20, 2008

2) "By the Sea", Based on Gospel: John 21: 1-19

- Many who have visited the Holy Land go to the Sea of Tiberius or Galilee, in the Jordan Valley. At seaside restaurants, one can order "St. Peter's Fish", a species of the tilapia that is increasingly common in our stores and restaurants.
- Today's Gospel finds the disciples fishing once again on the Sea, the setting of so much of their time with Jesus. Why are they here, now? Perhaps, after the terrible and wonderful events they have just lived through, they don't quite know where else to go, or what to do without Jesus among them. Fishing is what they know, and the Sea is where they are most at home.
- Now they encounter the risen Lord, who gives them an abundant catch and then feeds them tenderly with broiled fish and bread. It is only after meeting their bodily needs that Jesus engages Peter in a 3-fold affirmation of his love, transforming his earlier denials.
- But Jesus links this with a command or commission to "feed my lambs, feed my sheep." Surely, this feeding refers to the spiritual food of the Gospel and the Eucharist. But can also extend to the literal, physical sense of Mt. 25, that we must feed our sisters and brothers who are hungry.
- Feeding the hungry is a challenge in our world today, and abundant catches of fish are becoming less common around the world. In many places poor fishermen, who still fish with small nets as the disciples did, can no longer catch the only source of animal protein for their children.
- Growing demand and high-tech fishing equipment have led to over-harvesting of many fish stocks. Coastal pollution, habitat destruction, and warmer waters make it difficult for fish to reproduce. In many places, including Connecticut, some fish are unsafe for

pregnant women and small children to eat, due to contamination from toxic wastes and air-born mercury from coal burning.

- What does this say about how we are caring for our environment and protecting life? It has become clear that care of neighbor, especially the poor and vulnerable, can't be separated from responsible care of God's creation. In his 1990 World Day of Peace message, "The Ecological Crisis, a Common Responsibility", **Pope John Paul II** said:

"Many recent discoveries have brought undeniable benefits to humanity. Indeed, they demonstrate the nobility of the human vocation to participate *responsibly* in God's creative action in the world. Unfortunately, it is now clear that the application of these discoveries... produced harmful long-term effects. This has led to the painful realization that *we cannot interfere in one area of the ecosystem without paying attention both to 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 patterns of environmental pollution."

OR/

Last January, **Pope Benedict XVI** issued his World Day of Peace message, "If You Want to Cultivate Peace, Protect Creation," saying:

"Can we remain indifferent before the problems associated with such realities as climate change, desertification, ...the loss of productivity in vast agricultural areas, the pollution of rivers and aquifers, the loss of biodiversity, ...and the deforestation of equatorial and tropical regions? Can we disregard the growing phenomenon of 'environmental refugees'? Can we remain impassive in the face of actual and potential conflicts involving access to natural resources? All these are issues with a profound impact on the exercise of human rights, such as the right to life, food, health and development."

- Clearly, our Church is calling us to reflection and action to better protect life and God's good creation. [there are links in the bulletin for more Catholic teaching]
- In today's reading from the Book of Revelation, we hear that the "voices of every creature on earth and under the earth and in the sea, everything in the universe" give praise to God and to the Lamb. How might this vision of all creation sharing in the heavenly kingdom inform our understanding of our relationship to the rest of God's creation?
- As many communities and groups celebrate the 40th Earth Day this week, may we reflect deeply on our moral and religious responsibility to care for the environment. Then let us live out our gratitude for the gifts of the earth by engaging in actions and seeking public policies that preserve the fruitfulness of the earth, to better protect both human beings and the whole community of life that gives God praise and glory.

www.montereybayaquarium.org/cr/cr_seafoodwatch/issues/ For more fisheries information