

# Catholic Coalition on Climate Change

Putting Catholic faith into action on climate change

## Coalition Weekly Update

March 3, 2009

Happy Lent! In this time of preparation for the Easter season, we ask you to join with the staff and partners of the Catholic Coalition on Climate Change to connect in solidarity with those who suffer because of some of our own lifestyle choices.

John Carr, chairman of the Coalition's Steering Committee and Executive Director of US Conference of Catholic Bishops' Department of Justice, Peace and Human Development, once said of a Catholic approach to climate change, "What we need is a really long Lent." We can start a really long Lenten journey this year and [vow to change](#) some of our consumption habits that contribute to climate change, especially energy use. Consider contributing what you save to the disaster relief efforts of [Catholic Relief Services](#) or [Catholic Charities USA](#).

## A Catholic Climate Covenant: the St. Francis Pledge to Care for Creation and the Poor

We are less than two months away from the launch of this ambitious [new project](#). It is a demonstration of a common Catholic commitment to care for God's creation and to stand with the poor and vulnerable in our nation and around the world.

**How you can help:** Right now, the only way to stay abreast of fast moving developments with this campaign is to be part of the Coalition's growing network of concerned Catholics. So please forward this e-mail to your friends and family and encourage them to [sign-up](#) for updates from the Coalition and announcements about the Covenant. Spread the word by using this [flyer](#) about the Covenant. Go to our [tell-a-friend](#) page and ask others to sign up too!

The official launch will be Wednesday, April 22 (Earth Day) and will continue to be promoted throughout 2009 and into 2010.

We continue to seek endorsements and we now have over 25 national Catholic organizations that will take the Pledge, promote the Covenant through their networks, place an article in their publications or provide display space at their conventions and meetings.

Three dioceses have also become "early adopters" of the Covenant: the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, the Diocese of Stockton, and the Diocese of Houma Thibodaux, (click [here](#) for Bishop Jacobs's letter of endorsement). Each of these dioceses will commit to taking the St. Francis Pledge in ways that best fit their circumstances. We will keep you posted as these Pledges unfold!

The new Covenant website will include a variety of ways that any Catholic individual, parish, school or other institution can fulfill the St. Francis Pledge. We are also developing a short, inspirational video, and the promotional mailer that your pastor should receive (in both English and Spanish) in the early part of April).

## **Hundreds of Catholic Leaders Urge Action on Climate Change Legislation**

We were fortunate to be among the 500 Catholic leaders to visit U.S. Senators and Representatives on Tuesday, February 24th to advocate on behalf of people in poverty as they face impacts from a changing climate. Each year, the Catholic Social Ministry Gathering asks social ministry professionals from around the country to come to Washington to advocate on two domestic and two international policy priorities of the U.S. bishops.

For the first time, one of the domestic policy priorities was climate change! Catholic leaders urged their elected officials to endorse legislative action to curtail greenhouse gas pollution and provide resources to offset rising energy costs at home and new resources to help the least developed countries around the world adapt to climate challenges. Click [here](#) to see the "Hill Notes" and the "Backgrounder" on climate change.

## **Public Policy Update**

The US Conference of Catholic Bishops' recent "Backgrounder" on climate change summarizes both why they see climate change policy as a priority and what we can do to ensure that poor people are not left out of the coming legislative debate.

Well crafted public policies can shield poor families in our own country from the anticipated increases in energy-related costs, provide for job transition for workers in impacted industries and provide new and valuable resources to the poorest people around the globe (for example, those who are facing more frequent and dramatic flooding, droughts, and the expanding range of malaria-carrying mosquitoes).

### **What You Can Do:**

You can have a tremendous impact as climate change legislation takes shape. Contact your Members of Congress and urge greater U.S. leadership to address climate change and its disproportionate impact on poor and vulnerable people here and abroad.

SUPPORT adequate funding to:

1. Ensure that low-income individuals and working families are protected from energy-related price increases.
2. Create new climate-friendly jobs targeted especially to those most in need and assist workers who lose their jobs as a result of new climate regulations and other

policies.

3. Assist the most vulnerable countries and communities in the U.S. in adapting to climate change impacts and developing sustainable low-carbon economies. International funding must be in addition to other overseas relief and development commitments.

For further information: contact [Cecilia Calvo](#), USCCB, 202-541-3188.

Thank you for your continuing efforts to care for God's gift of creation in this time of ecological uncertainty.

Go to [tell-a-friend](#) page.

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