

**From:** JPHD-USCCB [mailto:JPHD-USCCB@usccb.org]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 16, 2009 2:23 PM  
**To:** JPHDmail  
**Subject:** Resource for World Day of Peace (Jan. 1) on "To CultivatePeace, Care for Creation"

Dear Colleagues:

Yesterday Pope Benedict XVI released the text of his annual message for the World Day of Peace on January 1, 2010. The Holy Father's theme was at once simple and profound, "If You Want to Cultivate Peace, Protect Creation." In this moving message, Pope Benedict seamlessly weaves together concerns for peace, poverty and care for creation.

Pope Benedict teaches that "integral human development is closely linked to the obligations which flow from *man's relationship with the natural environment*. The environment must be seen as God's gift to all people, and the use we make of it entails a shared responsibility for all humanity, especially the poor and future generations."

Attached you will find a resource to help local parishes, schools and campus ministries to explore the Holy Father's teaching. It includes a bulletin insert, a primer on Catholic social teaching and the environment, a prayer, and stories from Catholic Relief Services that gives a face to the issues explored by the Pope Benedict in his message. A series of bulletin quotes will be available soon on JPHD's World Day of Peace Web page at [www.usccb.org/sdwp/international/worlddayofpeacewebsite.shtml](http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/international/worlddayofpeacewebsite.shtml).

Please use these resources to explore the poignant questions posed by our Holy Father:

Can we remain indifferent before the problems associated with such realities as climate change, desertification, the deterioration and loss of productivity in vast agricultural areas, the pollution of rivers and aquifers, the loss of biodiversity, the increase of natural catastrophes and the deforestation of equatorial and tropical regions? Can we disregard the growing phenomenon of "environmental refugees", people who are forced by the degradation of their natural habitat to forsake it – and often their possessions as well – in order to face the dangers and uncertainties of forced displacement? Can we remain impassive in the face of actual and potential conflicts involving access to natural resources?

In Christ's Peace during this Advent Season,

John Carr, Executive Director, Department of Justice, Peace and Human Development  
Steve Colecchi, Director, Office of International Justice and Peace