

Love Thy Neighbor

Catholic Social Teaching

The Church's social teaching is a rich treasure of wisdom about building a just society and living lives of holiness amidst the challenges of modern society. In "Love Thy Neighbor," we highlight themes that are at the heart of our Catholic social tradition.



Loving God and neighbor in ways that bear fruit in the life of society.



March 2008



The Goodness of Nature

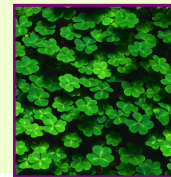
"God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good."

Genesis 1:31

We're blessed to discover beauty every day: in the sunrise and sunset, flowers and fields, in rainbows and evening stars. For all the riches God has entrusted in our care, we are reminded to show our respect for the Lord by our stewardship of His creation.

Our Catholic social teaching of "Care for God's Creation" invites us to protect both people and the planet, and the opportunities for us to "Go Green" present new hope for a better world.

With St. Patrick's Day just around the corner, we invite you to go green (and Irish if you like!). Learn about green communities, decide and commit to



take some personal action to go greener in your home, and suggest practical greening ideas with your parish.

It's easy to get started. Recycle plastic water bottles, change incandescent light bulbs to compact fluorescent lamps, and take reusable grocery bags to the store. Want more green? Plant a tree! God will see that it is good.

For a copy of "Faithful Stewards of God's Creation" on Environmental Justice and Climate change, visit USCCB's website at: www.usccb.org/sdwp/ejp/climate



Volume 3, Issue 1



Inside this Green Issue:

An Irish Blessing	2
Encourage Your Parish to be Good Stewards	2
A Grant for Going Green	3
ORB Water Project	3
Shaping Lives as Citizens	3
Calendar of Events	4

Hey – Is it Hot in Here?

Climate change is not just an environmental issue; it is a development issue and a global justice issue. To take appropriate action, we need to understand the underlying cause and impact.

Naturally occurring gases – such as water vapor, carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide and ozone – help to make our planet habitable for humans. But the same gases, when man-made, can add to the naturally occurring gases in the atmosphere and act much like the glass walls and roof of a greenhouse, trapping heat from the sun.

This "greenhouse" effect can prevent heat from escaping from the earth, result-

ing in an increased average temperature of the atmosphere surrounding the earth and raising sea levels.

Although there is still debate about the extent of this global climate change, the primary cause is thought to be emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂). While it is not the most potent of the greenhouse gases, CO₂ has a relatively long atmospheric lifetime. According to the federal Energy Information Administration, CO₂ emissions represent about 85 percent of total U.S. greenhouse gas emissions when weighted on their global warming potential.

Excessive carbon emissions drive the need for cli-

mate change. And while "wealthy" countries like the U.S. are responsible for almost three quarters of global emissions, poor countries bear the brunt of the impact.

As temperatures increase, sea levels rise. The global impact? Devastating flooding and mudslides that destroy villages and contaminate water supplies, excessive drought which endangers food supplies, and increased infestations which spread disease.

Encourage your parish to become (more) involved in climate justice. Take small steps to get started, or contact us for more resources.





An Irish Blessing by Rob Shelleady

“Beannachtaí na Féile Pádraig oraibh!”

St. Patrick's Day blessing upon you!

Every March 17, Patrick the Leprechaun visits the Shelleady children with a treasure hunt. However, like most things Irish, this joyous time comes with a sense of lament.

In 1849, at the age of 14, my great grandmother, Abbie Harrington, immigrated to the United States from Ireland because her parents died in the Potato Famine. As my mother will tell anyone who mentions the

subject, Ireland was a net exporter of food during the famine. True, but the point is not my mother's nationalistic one. The point of this is that the poor are most often the ones who suffer from any ecological disaster.

As we talk about “going green” it is so very important that we do so in firm solidarity with the poor. As the U.S bishops have stated, “any successful strategy [in response to global climate change] must also reflect the genuine participation and concerns of those most affected and least able to bear the burdens.”

This is such an important aspect that the Bishops call their efforts the “Environmental Justice Program.”

Although not as important as our solidarity with the poor, we also need to remember another thing my mother would tell anyone. “We are people of the resurrection called to live out the Good News of the Gospel.” Our faith allows us to be grateful for God's creation and to join with God in His care for creation. **“Rath Dé ort!”**
The grace of God be with you.



Famine Memorial in Dublin, Ireland

Learn how Ireland is greening the Emerald Isle by reading “The Green Isle” America Magazine, March 3, 2008 issue

“We can learn a lot from trees: they're always grounded, but never stop reaching heavenward.”

Everett Mámor

Encourage Your Parish to be Good Stewards

As evidence of global warming has mounted, congregations across the US are examining their habits and asking what their faith demands of them in response. Here are a few ideas for parishes to help your parish be a good steward.

- ◆ Include an “Eco-Tip of the Week” section in your bulletin. Concentrate on a certain topic each month such as water, heating, or travel. Provide additional educational resources on green energy when possible. If your parish has an active website, consider posting the information there to reduce paper.
- ◆ Host a forum on “Environmental Stewardship.” This could include planting a tree in celebration of Earth, Arbor, or World Environment Day. Or consider showing the movie “An Inconvenient Truth” followed by a question and answer session. Be creative!
- ◆ Coordinate a “Bag It” event after Mass to clean up litter around the parish neighborhood. Encourage kids to help coordinate the effort!
- ◆ Provide an opportunity for parishioners to sign up to become active in a legislative advocacy effort specifically related to climate issues.
- ◆ Network with parishes who have been successful in their sustainability efforts.
- ◆ Replace incandescent light bulbs with Compact Fluorescent Lamps (CFLs) where possible; dust all the other lights, and install automatic shut-off switches in rest rooms.
- ◆ Start composting! Add coffee grounds and filters, leaves and grass clippings.
- ◆ Caulk or repair places where outside air leaks into buildings; weather strip all doors.
- ◆ Place trash and recycling receptacles outside the school/parish/gymnasium doors to reduce litter.
- ◆ Generously add or increase building insulation, especially in the roof.



- ◆ Cover stained-glass windows with UV-filtering storm windows for insulation and damage-protection, and to protect the lead from being destroyed by ultra-violet sunlight rays.
- ◆ Tune-up and service all heating and cooling units for optimal efficiency.
- ◆ Convert all thermostats to time-controlled setback units to reduce heating and cooling expenses.
- ◆ Plant trees for natural shade and to improve air quality. Use captured rain water for outdoor gardens and cemeteries.
- ◆ Is your parish or school renovating old or building new facilities? Consider sustainable energy sources. Look into rebate programs to save money and reduce use of therms and energy.

Girl Scouts kicked off 2007 with a tree planting ceremony, launching nationwide events celebrating Girl Scouts' tradition of building leadership through action that makes the world a better place.





A Grant for Going Green?

Blessed Trinity Parish in Milwaukee truly has reasons to celebrate. Following discussion with the Parish Council over two years ago, the parish agreed to develop a new Stewardship Committee – for the Stewardship of God’s Creation, that is.

With the full support of their pastor, Fr. Michael Barrett, the parish teamed up with the High Wind Foundation and received a \$30,000 grant to help their parish go green by saving energy and therms. The parish also developed on-going sustainability efforts which they are very proud of.

Carol Waskovich explained, “Blessed Trinity included educational articles in the bulletin, then described and justified the physical changes being made within the parish. We took advantage of rebates to convert to efficient boilers and lighting,” but Carol noted their stewardship plan was much more comprehensive.

“We created a vision that went beyond the concept of sustainability,” clarifying the goal was more than saving on gas and oil. “Our program has to do with community and the dignity of life.

We have an all encompassing concept here that reaches not only our parishioners, but the community as a whole.”

Carol continues to write articles for the bulletin with helpful hints for saving energy and living simply. The parish has sponsored field trips to Grow Power, a sustainable farm, and to High Wind in Plymouth, learning more strategies for saving energy. The people of the parish are fine stewards of God’s creation. Attend their Earth Care Resource Fair on April 26 to learn more, or contact Carol at waskovichc@archmil.org.

Blessed Trinity hosts its first Earth Care Resource Fair, April 26, 2008, Noon to 3pm 4717 N. 38th Street, Milwaukee
The community event will feature exhibits and demonstrations, rain barrels and rain gardens, solar and house energy audits, a CFL light bulb give away, an electric car, and bucket rides!

Water Projects bring Clean Water to Communities

Much like the burden of Jesus’ cross, every day millions of people carry the weight of water pots on their heads and backs. Like the villages in Guatemala damaged by Hurricane Stan, without access to water in their villages, they travel great distances to obtain this life-giving resource.

Through Operation Rice Bowl donations and help from Catholic Relief Services (CRS), the community of Chanjule was able to construct a new water supply system after the hurricane. Disease abated as new sanitation made their

village a healthier place to live. CRS strives to be a responsible steward of creation while pursuing sustainable development.

Most of us have clean water whenever we want it. As a matter of fact, the average Milwaukee resident uses 55 gallons of water a day.* The average person in a developing country uses only 2.65 gallons of water a day. In solidarity with our brothers and sisters featured in this year’s Operation Rice Bowl program, consider what you can do to conserve or use water more efficiently.

Fix leaks and install low-flow faucets and showerheads. Run laundry and kitchen appliances for full loads only. Keep a pitcher of cold water in the refrigerator so you don’t have to run the tap for cold water. Collect running water from faucets for reuse (such as watering indoor plants or outdoor garden) and consider the use of rain barrels.

Every drop of water counts!



“Thought is the blossom; Language the bud; Action the fruit behind it.”
 Ralph Waldo Emerson

* From “Every Drop Counts, Simple Solutions to Water Pollution,” Milwaukee Water Works and Wisconsin Coastal Management Program



Racial and ethnic minorities have voter participation rates significantly below the national average. Encourage everyone to vote!

Shaping Lives as Citizens of the World

“Love and faithfulness meet together; righteousness and peace kiss each other.”

Psalm 85:10

The connection between liturgy and life is learned through participation in worship experiences that enlighten our spirits and move our hearts to action. That’s one reason we promote active citizenship. Through our opportunities as citizens, we can help shape a world more committed to pro-

tecting human life and dignity, and promoting justice and peace. **How can your parish get started?**

- ◆ Our office is eager to assist! Invite parishioners to learn about the principles of Catholic social teaching and faithful citizenship, and how these can be applied to form conscience. We’ll provide the speaker and create a flyer, you provide the venue and coffee!

- ◆ Did you know that over 50 million eligible Americans are not registered to vote? Talk with your parish leaders about hosting a voter registration drive.
- ◆ In 2006, only 24% of voters age 18-24 voted. Urge all eligible parishioners to exercise their right and responsibility to vote.



Loving God and neighbor in ways that bear fruit in the life of society.

Catholic Social Action



Office Location:

St. Joseph Center
1501 South Layton Blvd., Suite 221
Milwaukee, WI 53215
Southwest Corner of Layton Blvd.
(27th St.) and Greenfield Ave.

Contact Us:

Rob Shelledy, 414-758-2286
shelledyr@archmil.org
Kathy Shine, 414-758-2285
shinek@archmil.org
General Office
catholicsocialaction@archmil.org

Mailing Address:

Catholic Social Action
P.O. Box 3087
Milwaukee, WI 53203-3087

For more information about upcoming events or to learn about various volunteer opportunities, contact:

Robert Shelledy

Director of Catholic Social Action

Archdiocese of Milwaukee

(414) 758-2286

catholicsocialaction@archmil.org

CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR 2008

For Event Details, Visit: www.archmil.org/aboutus/dept.asp?ID=472&which=Events

- March 15** Farmers' Market & Brunch, 10:30 am – 2:00 pm
St. Matthew Parish, 9329 S. Chicago Rd., Oak Creek
- March 23** Easter Sunday
- April 1** Spring General Election
- April 5, 12 & 19** Prison Ministry – Basic VIP Facilitator's Training
8:30 am – 12:30 pm, 3 Locations throughout Archdiocese
Contact our office for flyers and location details
- April 12** Young Adults Day, Basilica @ Holy Hill, 9 am – 4:30 pm
1525 Carmel Road, Hubertus
- April 22** Earth Day
- April 25** Arbor Day – Celebrate by planting a tree!
- April 26** Earth Care Resource Fair, Noon – 3:00 pm
Blessed Trinity, 4717 N. 38th Street
4th Annual Midwest Regional Bioethics Conference
3577 High Point Road, Madison
- May 16** Peace Building Dialogue, Contact our Office for Details!
- June 5** World Environment Day
- July 20-25** Social Action Summer Institute, Atlanta, Georgia
- July 31** Send 2008 ORB alms to Catholic Social Action office



I thank you God for this most amazing day, for the leaping greenly spirits of trees, and for the blue dream of sky and for everything which is natural.
e.e. Cummings

*May we treat
Your gift of the
earth, our home, with
the love it deserves.*

INTERFAITH EARTH NETWORK CONFERENCES

Each conference is held at the Urban Ecology Center
1500 E. Park Place, Milwaukee, 53211
For more information on any of the conferences, contact:
Rev. John Strassburger at 414-964-3411
or visit: www.interfaithconference.org

- April 13-14** Spring Conference, Theme: Water
- July 27-28** Summer Conference, Theme: Land/Shelter
- October 19-20** Fall Conference, Theme: Air/Energy

