

# **An introduction to Catholic social teaching on the environment since Vatican II**

***Social Justice Week 2006***

***Renew the face of the earth:  
Environmental justice***





**God intended  
the earth  
with everything  
contained in it  
for the use of all  
human beings.**

*Gaudium et Spes,*

**Vatican II, 1965**



**Man is suddenly becoming aware that by an ill-considered exploitation of nature he risks destroying it.**

**Pope Paul VI, *Octogesima Adveniens*, 1971**



**Our generation must energetically  
accept the challenge...to prepare a  
hospitable earth for future generations.**

**Pope Paul VI,  
*Address to the  
conference on human  
environment, 1972***





**Pope John Paul II,  
*Redemptor Hominis*,  
1979**

**It was the Creator's  
will that man should  
communicate with  
nature as an  
intelligent and noble  
“master” and  
“guardian” and not as  
a heedless “exploiter”  
or “destroyer”.**



**A true concept of development  
cannot ignore the use  
of the elements of nature.**

**Pope John  
Paul II,  
*Sollicitudo  
Rei Socialis*,  
1987**





**Pope John Paul II,  
*Message for the  
World Day of  
Peace, 1990***

**Faced with the  
widespread destruction  
of the environment,  
people everywhere are  
coming to understand  
that we cannot continue  
to use the goods of the  
earth as we have in the  
past.**



**We have been making decisions,  
taking actions and assigning  
values that are leading us away  
from the world as it should be,  
away from the design of God for  
creation.**

**Joint declaration of Pope  
John Paul II and the  
Ecumenical Patriarch  
Bartholomew I, 2002**





**Pope Benedict XVI,  
*Homily at Inaugural  
Mass, 2005***

**The earth's  
treasures no longer  
serve to build God's  
garden for all to live  
in, but they have  
been made to serve  
the powers of  
exploitation and  
destruction.**





**United States  
Catholic Bishops  
Conference,  
2001**

**In facing climate change,  
what we already know  
requires a response.**





**Catholic Bishops  
of Papua New  
Guinea and the  
Solomon Islands**

**We cannot go on being  
indifferent to the preservation  
and improvement of the  
environment in which we live.**



**The web of life on Earth is under threat from accelerated climate change...**

**Life is one and human well-being is at its base interwoven with all life on Earth.**



**Australian Catholic Bishops  
Committee for Justice,  
Development, Ecology and Peace,  
2005**



**The existence of extreme poverty and environmental destruction in our world are not natural forces, nor acts of God, but result from human behaviour.**



**New Zealand  
Catholic Bishops  
Conference, 2006**



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of the earth***

