

# ***Our Common Home: Catholic Social Teaching And Environmental Justice***



"Pope Francis among the people at St. Peter's Square - 12 May 2013" by Edgar Jiménez from Porto, Portugal - Papa rock star.  
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Presented by:  
The Environmental Justice Project  
Catholic Charities, Diocese of Stockton



**Hello and Welcome!**

Before we start, please have a look at the questions below, and fill them out accordingly. Adapted from National Catholic Reporter (NCR), CatholicMom.com, and Catholic Climate Covenant (CCC)

**Questions to Consider:**

What is your understanding of Catholic social teachings (CST)?

What is your understanding of Environmental Justice (EJ)?

What is your understanding of the Common Good?

How might CST, EJ, and the Common Good all be related?

**Opening Prayer**

**Blessing for the Products of Nature**

Blessed are you, O God, Creator of the universe, who have made all things good and given the earth for us to cultivate.

Grant that we may always use created things gratefully, and share your gift with those in need, out of the love of Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you for ever and ever. *Amen*

**Why We Are Here** We are here to refresh on the nine themes of Pope Francis' encyclical, *Laudato Si'* and how environmental justice is integrated with Catholic social teaching. We will also go over what actions we can take part in and what resources are available.

**Pope Francis' Laudato Si'**

**Recall Key Message:** Climate change is a moral issue for all Catholics and people of goodwill. Despite contributing the least to climate change, the poor and vulnerable suffer most from the consequences of improper care of the earth, and we need to take responsibility for our consumer-driven culture.

**Remember,** the pope is asking that we have honest and open dialogue so that we can take corrective action to slow down climate change and ensure the wellbeing of all creation, especially humankind.



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## Catholic Social Teaching INCLUDES Environmental Justice

Catholic Social Teaching	Environmental Justice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Life &amp; Dignity of the Human Person               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ All life is sacred                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Abortion/euthanasia</li> <li>■ Cloning, embryonic stem cells, death penalty</li> <li>■ Intentional targeting of civilians and terrorist attacks</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Call to Family, Community, &amp; Participation               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ We are a social people                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Organization of society</li> <li>■ Marriage and the family</li> <li>■ Participation in society to seek the common good</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Rights &amp; Responsibilities               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Human dignity &amp; healthy community                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Right to life</li> <li>■ Right to things required for human decency</li> <li>■ Duties and responsibilities to one another, family, &amp; larger society</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Option for the Poor &amp; Vulnerable               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Basic moral test: How are our poor faring?                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Deepening divisions between rich &amp; poor</li> <li>■ Needs of poor need to be addressed</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ The Dignity of Work &amp; the Rights of Workers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Economy must serve people, not other way around <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Work not just to make a living but also form of continuing participation in God's creation</li> <li>■ Right to productive work</li> <li>■ Right to decent and fair wages</li> <li>■ Right to organization and joining of unions</li> <li>■ Right to private property</li> <li>■ Right to economic initiative</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Solidarity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ We're one family no matter our differences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Global dimensions in a shrinking world</li> <li>■ Pursuit of justice &amp; peace <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Pope Paul VI: if you want peace, work for justice</li> <li>● Gospel: be a peacemaker</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Care for God's Creation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Showing our respect for God by our stewardship of creation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Not just an Earth Day slogan</li> <li>■ Called to protect people &amp; planet--relationship w/creation</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

Adapted from USCCB and VIS.

### Questions to Consider

What is the goal of our work and our efforts?

How should progress be defined?

How does the environment of our homes, workplace, and neighborhoods affect our quality of life?  
How has pollution affected you or your family personally?

Why is simply reducing birth rates of the poor not a just or adequate response to the problem of poverty or environmental



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degradation?

Adapted from VIS and NCR.

## Green Action

**Directions:** After having seen examples provided by the presenter, brainstorm with your group suggestions for being green in the three main areas of our life. When you're finished, continue on to Questions to Consider.

Personal

Work/School

Community & Beyond

## Closing

### Remember our goals:

- To bring people together for honest and open dialogue regarding the state of our environment and our relationship to it and to each other. integrate environmental justice with social justice.
- Develop a formed and responsible conscience.
- Work together for the Common Good on all levels of society. Adapted from VIS.

## Prayer

### Prayer of St. Francis

Dear mother earth, who day by day unfolds rich blessings on our way,  
O praise God! Alleluia!

The fruits and flowers that verdant grow, let them his praise abundant show.  
O praise God, O praise God, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

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**Further Resources: We can provide Advocacy Training, do book clubs, presentations, give resources, and more!**

Catholic Climate Covenant  
<http://www.catholicclimatecovenant.org/>

Catholic Rural Life  
<https://catholicrurallife.org/>

Global Catholic Climate Movement  
<https://catholicclimatemovement.global/>

CA Interfaith Power and Light  
<http://interfaithpower.org/>

Catholic Ecology  
<http://catholicecology.net/>

Green Faith  
<http://www.greenfaith.org/>



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