

Pope Benedict XVI Urges Action on Climate Change

Over the summer, Pope Benedict has regularly voiced his concern about environmental issues, particularly climate change. Here is an annotated list of some of his recent statements:

July 24, 2007

The Holy Father, in answer to a question about the formation of conscience from a priest in Northern Italy, said:

Today, we all see that man can destroy the foundations of his existence, his earth, hence, that we can no longer simply do what we like or what seems useful and promising at the time with this earth of ours, with the reality entrusted to us. On the contrary, we must respect the inner laws of creation, of this earth, we must learn these laws and obey these laws if we wish to survive. Consequently, this obedience to the voice of the earth, of being, is more important for our future happiness than the voices of the moment, the desires of the moment. In short, this is a first criterion to learn: that being itself, our earth, speaks to us and we must listen if we want to survive and to decipher this message of the earth. And if we must be obedient to the voice of the earth, this is even truer for the voice of human life.

The complete text can be found at: <http://zenit.org/article-20253?l=english>.

September 2, 2007

Addressing hundreds of thousands of young people gathered in the Italian city of Loreto, the Holy Father urged world leaders to make courageous decisions to save the planet. He said that discipleship means:

[T]he continual effort to make one's own contribution to building a more just and solidary society, where all can enjoy the goods of the earth...I know that many of you dedicate yourselves with generosity to bear witness to your own faith in various social ambits, volunteering, working to promote the common good, peace and justice in every community. One of the areas in which work appears to be urgent is without a doubt that of protecting creation...To the new generations the future of the planet is entrusted, in which there are evident signs of a development that has not always known how to safeguard the delicate equilibriums of nature.

Before it is too late, it is necessary to make courageous decisions that reflect knowing how to re-create a strong alliance between man and the earth...A decisive 'yes' to the protection of creation is necessary and a firm commitment to reverse those tendencies that run the risk of bringing about situations of unstoppable degradation.

September 6, 2007

Offering his well-wishes to participants of an international gathering of environmentalists, scientists, journalists and religious leaders (including his representative from the Vatican, retired Archbishop of Washington, DC, Cardinal Theodore McCarrick), Pope Benedict call climate change a “grave concern.” The gathering was entitled, "The Arctic: Mirror of Life" and held in Greenland and begun by Orthodox Patriarch Bartholomew I of Constantinople.

Preservation of the environment, promotion of sustainable development and particular attention to climate change are matters of grave concern for the entire human family. No nation or business sector can ignore the ethical implications present in all economic and social development. With increasing clarity scientific research demonstrates that the impact of human actions in any one place or region can have worldwide effects. The consequences of disregard for the environment cannot be limited to an immediate area or populous because they always harm human coexistence, and thus betray human dignity and violate the rights of citizens who desire to live in a safe environment

Pope Benedicts full statement can be found at: <http://zenit.org/article-20435?l=english>

September 16, 2007

On its 20th anniversary, the Holy Father noted the success of the of the “Montreal Protocol” which outlined international commitments to reduce the use of chemical agents depleting the ozone. He called for a similar international efforts today for the “safeguarding of creation.”

The article can be found at: <http://zenit.org/article-20517?l=english>