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Care for God's Creation

News from the Stockton Diocese Environmental Justice Project

U.S. Bishops: EPA mercury rule is pro-life

The care of the Earth is our most ancient and worthy, and after all, our most pleasing responsibility. To cherish what remains of it and to foster its renewal is our only hope.

- **Wendell Berry**

In this issue:

- Bishop Blaire writes to US EPA
- Climate campaign activities
- GreenFaith certification
- Gospel living and climate change

Catholic Climate Covenant, June 20, 2011: Bishop Stephen Blaire of the Diocese of Stockton, in his role as Chairman of the Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, sent a letter to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. He welcomed the recently proposed -- and first-ever -- national standards to reduce mercury and other toxics from power plants.

Bishop Blaire wrote, "Children, inside and outside the womb, are uniquely vulnerable to environmental hazards and exposure to toxic pollutants in the environment." Bishop Blaire urged US EPA to take steps not to impact the poor and vulnerable disproportionately in the implementation of this rule. He noted, "[W]hile there are short-term costs involved in implementing this standard, the health benefits of such a rule outweigh these costs."

To read the press release, go to:

<http://www.usccb.org/comm/archives/2011/11-130.shtml>

To submit your own comments before the August 2 deadline, go to:

<http://www.regulations.gov/#!documentDetail;D=EPA-HQ-OAR-2002-0017-0140>

Get involved

- Healthy Air Living is a toolbox of ideas from the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District to "help each of us take voluntary, high-impact measures in our personal lives and workplace to reduce [air] emissions." Go to: www.healthyairliving.org
- Check out the Cool Harvest campaign by Interfaith Power and Light. The campaign makes the "food, faith, and climate connection." Order your free Cool Harvest Kit at www.coolharvest.org
- Catholic Climate Covenant now offers resources in Spanish. Go to: <http://catholicclimatecovenant.org/spanish>



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Catholic parish wins GreenFaith certification

By Rich Heffern, Eco Catholic, June 27, 2011. "We are called to care for Creation," said Father Bob Stagg of the *Church of the Presentation* in Upper Saddle River, New Jersey. Presentation is the first Catholic parish nationwide to be accepted into the GreenFaith Certification Program, the country's only interfaith environmental certification program for houses of worship.

GreenFaith helps churches, synagogues, mosques and temples earn recognition as environmental leaders by carrying out more than two-dozen environmental activities over two years. "We are very enthusiastic about joining the GreenFaith Certification Program because it gives us the tools to become strong environmental leaders," said Father Stagg. "We want to live out these 'green values' in everything we do – from our preaching and education to the operation of our building," he added.

The Church of the Presentation recently installed solar panels on its one-acre roof. In addition to reducing its greenhouse gas emissions, the church expects to reduce its electricity bills by about 30 percent.

GreenFaith supports participating institutions through a special web site that houses more than 200 resources, six free webinars, and an on-line community where participants share strategies and successes.

For information on the Certification Program, contact Program Director Stacey Kennealy at skennealy@greenfaith.org or 732-565-7740, x. 303

Websites to Care for
Creation:

**National Catholic Rural Life
Conference:** www.ncrlc.com

CatholicClimateCovenant
Catholicclimatecovenant.org

"Living the Gospel in a climate disrupted world"

That is the title of an article published by the Franciscan Sisters of the Poor, based in Brooklyn, New York. Brother Keith Warner, OFM, wrote the article. He also co-authored "Care for Creation: A Franciscan Spirituality of the Earth" with Ilia Delio, OSF, and Pamela Wood. It is a must read for anyone who wants to learn about Franciscan tradition, Catholic Social Teaching, and the science of climate change. Go to:

<http://www.franciscansisters.org/english/publications/conversations/issues/2011/conversations-apr-english.pdf>

About the Stockton Diocese Environmental Justice Project...

Since 2005, the Environmental Justice Project has worked "to educate and motivate Catholics to a deeper reverence and respect for God's creation, and to engage local parishes in activities aimed at dealing with environmental problems, particularly as they affect the poor." The Project brings a unique Catholic voice to the public policy debate in the Central Valley and Sierra Nevada.