

WEEKLY UPDATE



Catholic Climate Covenant

Care for Creation. Care for the Poor.

A project of the Catholic Coalition on Climate Change



FROM THE VATICAN

Pope Benedict XVI: Human Development Requires Fighting Climate Change & Poverty

In his [2012 message to the Vatican's diplomatic corps](#), the Holy Father said that *Environmental protection and the connection between fighting poverty and fighting climate change are important areas for the promotion of integral human development.*

He noted that *[E]ducation, correctly understood, cannot fail to foster respect for creation. We cannot disregard the grave natural calamities which in 2011 affected various regions of South-East Asia, or ecological disasters like that of the Fukushima nuclear plant in Japan.* Pope Benedict concluded: *I hope that, pursuant to the... recently concluded [climate change negotiations] in Durban, the international community will prepare for the UN Conference on Sustainable Development ("Rio + 20") as an authentic "family of nations" and thus with a great sense of solidarity and responsibility towards present and future generations.*

Read more at [Catholic News Service](#).

MORE FROM THE VATICAN

Sainthood Cause of Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha, Patroness of Ecology and the Environment

[Catholic News Service reports](#) that on December 19, 2011, Pope Benedict XVI moved Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha one step closer to sainthood by formally recognizing the miracle attributed to her. In [Rhode Island Catholic](#) columnist Bill Patenaude's blog [Catholic Ecology](#), he reflects on the woman who is known as the Lily of the Mohawks and recognized by the Church as patroness of ecology and the environment:

July 14 is the Memorial for Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha (1656-1680), the Native American daughter of a Christian Algonquin woman... and a non-Christian Mohawk warrior-chief. . . you'll see the intimacy with which Kateri found God in the natural world. She was this "child of nature" in her birthplace—what is now upstate New York—and in her later home of refuge, near what is now Montreal. For this intimacy, the Church declared her the patroness of ecological and environmental causes.



INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Catholic Bishops of Japan: No Nuclear Power, Greater Self-Sacrifice

On November 8, 2011, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Japan (CBCJ), reflecting on the disaster at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Plant, *call[ed] for the immediate abolishment of all the power plants in Japan in order to protect all life and nature as God's creation, and to pass on a safer and more secure environment to future generations.*

The bishops recognize that with this call, some will *voice concerns about energy shortage. There are also various challenges such as the reduction of carbon dioxide. In light of this, the bishops urge that the national policies be changed to place top priority on development and implementation of natural energy, which will also contribute to reducing carbon dioxide.*

Additionally, the bishops advocate for energy efficiency inspired by authentic Christian living: *Christians have an obligation to bear genuine witness to the Gospel especially through the ways of life expected by God; 'simplicity of life, the spirit of prayer, charity towards all, especially towards the lowly and the poor, obedience and humility, detachment and self-sacrifice'. We should choose anew a simple and plain lifestyle based on the spirit of the Gospel, in cases like saving electricity.*

Read the CBCJ's entire statement, [Abolish Nuclear Plants Immediately: Facing the Tragedy of the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Plant Disaster.](#)

