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Care for God's Creation

News from the Stockton Diocese Environmental Justice Project

Holy Land clerics launch environmental campaign

But ask the animals, and they will teach you; the birds of the air, and they will tell you; ask the plants of the earth, and they will teach you; and the fish of the sea will declare to you. In God's hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of every human being.

- Job 12: 7-8, 10

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Christian, Jewish and Muslim leaders in the Holy Land joined forces July 25th to launch a multi-faith environmental campaign, citing religious injunctions to protect the Earth across their three faiths.

Among their plans are the convening of an international conference of religious leaders in New York ahead of the 2012 United Nations General Assembly, creating a North America public relations campaign, and training future clerics on the importance of environmental issues.

According to AFP [Agence France-Presse] news agency, the religious leaders called on "all people of faith to reduce their personal emissions of greenhouse gases and to urge their political leaders to adopt strong, binding, science-based targets for the reduction of greenhouse gases to avert the worst dangers of climate crisis."

Auxiliary Bishop to the Latin Patriarch Msgr. William Shomali said, "We are tourists on this land, and will leave it one day. But we must leave it clean for the next generations, we must be accountable for how we use this common home."

Read more at: <http://news.yahoo.com/holy-land-clerics-launch-interfaith-earth-forum-113212070.html>

Save the Dates

- **Saturday, August 6:** Friends of the Lower Calaveras River monthly river walk. For time and location, contact Jeremy Terhune at: 209-922-8215 or jterhune@riverofskulls.org
- **Saturday, September 17: Coastal Clean-up Day.** Find out more at REI in Stockton at www.rei.com or Tuolumne River Trust in Modesto: www.tuolumne.org
- **Saturday, October 29 and Sunday, October 30:** Environmental Justice Sunday in the Stockton Diocese. For more information, contact Betsy at betsyr@ccstockton.org
- **Saturday, November 19, San Joaquin Agricultural Center, Stockton:** "Faith, Food, and Agriculture," sponsored by Catholic Charities, Stockton Diocese and National Catholic Rural Life Conference. Contact betsyr@ccstockton.org



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Pope encourages contemplation, protection of nature

Castel Gandolfo, Italy, July 10, 2011.

Benedict XVI is encouraging parents to teach their children to value nature. The Pope made this invitation today after praying the midday Angelus with pilgrims gathered at the summer papal residence at Castel Gandolfo.

In his words to the French-speaking faithful, he said, "I would like to recommend that during this time of vacation, you revivify your spirits by contemplating the splendors of Creation."

"Parents," he said, "teach your children to see nature, respect and protect it as a magnificent gift that presents to us the grandeur of the Creator!"

Alluding to today's Gospel, in which Jesus proclaims the parable of the sower, the Holy Father added that with parables, "Jesus used the language of nature to explain to his disciples the mysteries of the Kingdom."

"May the images he uses become familiar to us," he said. "Let us remember that the divine reality is hidden in our daily lives like the seed in the soil. May it bear fruit in us! I wish you all a good Sunday!" <http://www.zenit.org/article-33039?l=english>

Take the Cool Congregations Challenge

Websites to Care for
Creation:

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

CatholicClimateCovenant
Catholicclimatecovenant.org

What's more exciting than a contest? Summer is a great time for congregations to prepare an entry for the Cool Congregations Challenge. It's a contest with prizes to recognize congregations who care about Creation and the climate.

Top cash prizes of \$1,000 will go to winning contestants in four categories: energy efficiency, renewable energy, grounds and water conservation, and inspiring congregants to lower energy use at home.

Cool Congregations Challenge is sponsored by Interfaith Power & Light. Sign up for the challenge at:
<http://interfaithpowerandlight.org/cool-congregations-challenge/>

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.