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# Care for God's Creation

*News from the Stockton Diocese Environmental Justice Project*

"By means of all created things, the divine assails us, penetrates us, molds us. We imagined it as distant and inaccessible, whereas in fact we live steeped in its burning layers."

- **Father Pierre Teilhard de Chardin**

## ***In this issue:***

- Vatican's Pontifical Academy of Sciences issues major climate report
- Environmental Justice bills advance in State Capitol
- Opportunities to learn about and get involved in caring for Creation
- Road to Clean Air from Lung Association

## Vatican issues major climate change report

In May, a working group of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, one of the oldest scientific institutes in the world, issued a sobering [report](#) on climate change and the global retreat of mountain glaciers. In its report, the working group called "on all people and nations to recognize the serious and potentially irreversible impacts of global warming caused by the anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants, and by changes in forests, wetlands, grasslands, and other land uses."

Veerabhadran Ramanathan of the Scripps Institute of Oceanography at the University of California San Diego and co-chair of the working group, said to *Energy and Environment Daily*, "'I have never participated in any report in 30 years where the word 'God' is mentioned. I think the Vatican brings that moral authority."

The report focuses on the impact of human-caused climate change on mountain glaciers and warns, "failure to mitigate climate change will violate our duty to the vulnerable of the Earth, including those dependent on the water supply of mountain glaciers, and those facing rising sea level and stronger storm surges. Our duty includes the duty to help vulnerable communities adapt to changes that cannot be mitigated."

To read the full report, go to: [www.catholicclimatecovenant.org](http://www.catholicclimatecovenant.org)

## Stockton-supported bills advance

At Catholic Advocacy Day in April, parish leaders from the Stockton Diocese urged California legislators to vote "yes" on bills to improve the lives of disadvantaged and vulnerable people. These included two environmental justice bills – SB 535, the Communities Healthy Air Revitalization Trust, and AB 638, the Human Right to Water Act.

Both bills passed their legislative house of origin and will be taken up by the second house later in June. To find out more about these bills and to help make sure they become law, contact Environmental Justice coordinator Betsy Reifsnider: [betsy@ccstockton.org](mailto:betsy@ccstockton.org) or 209-444-5925.



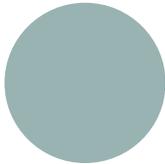
### Environmental Justice Project

1106 N. El Dorado Street  
Stockton, CA 95202

**Phone:**  
209/444-5925

**Fax:**  
209/444-5929

**E-Mail:**  
betsyr@ccstockton.org



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### Catholic Climate Ambassadors

Schedule a nationally trained Catholic ambassador to speak to your organization on the Church's teaching on climate change and how each person can make a difference. Contact Betsy Reifsnider at: 209-444-5925 or [betsyr@ccstockton.org](mailto:betsyr@ccstockton.org)

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## Learning and Caring for Creation

**Learn how to protect clean water in your community.** The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will host a 45-minute call for faith and neighborhood based organizations on Thursday, **June 9, 2011, at 8:00 am** (Pacific Time) to discuss how to determine if the Clean Water Act protects a local water body or wetland. The conference call number is: 877-290-8017. The passcode is: 69583493

**Sierra Nevada Alliance just released its *Sierra Climate Change Toolkit, 3rd Edition*.** The free toolkit will help Sierra resource managers, local governments, planners, non-profits, activists, and concerned citizens reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change to save money, enhance local economies, and protect unique rural communities. Download the toolkit at: [www.sierranevadaalliance.org](http://www.sierranevadaalliance.org)

**Visit your local river and the San Joaquin Delta.** These organizations can get you started. Contact Tuolumne River Trust at: [www.tuolumne.org](http://www.tuolumne.org), Friends of the Lower Calaveras River through Defenders of Wildlife staff at: [jterhune@defenders.org](mailto:jterhune@defenders.org), and Restore the Delta at: [www.restorethedelta.org](http://www.restorethedelta.org)

**Join First Fridays for Food Security.** On the first Friday of each month through April 2012, Catholics can "fast" by limiting meal spending to the amount allotted for a family of their size in the USDA Modified Thrifty Food Plan -- the basis for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (called CalFresh in California). <http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/Fasting-Resource-Intro-May-6.pdf>

## Taking the "Road to Clean Air"

In May, the American Lung Association in California released "The Road to Clean Air," a new study showing that California could avoid \$7.2 billion in health and societal costs and reduce all major air pollution-related health impacts by 70 percent if the state adopts a strong set of new passenger vehicle standards. Strong standards could significantly benefit human health by cutting smog-forming pollutants, particulates, and greenhouse gas emissions, and by implementing a strong zero emission vehicle requirement. Read about it at: <http://www.lungusa.org/associations/states/california/advocacy/fight-for-air-quality/clean-cars-campaign.html>

### *About the Stockton Diocese Environmental Justice Project...*

The Environmental Justice Project works "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." We bring a unique Catholic voice to California's public policy debate.