



July 2012  
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# Care for God's Creation

*News from the Stockton Diocese Environmental Justice Project*

## What climate change looks like

*Our present ecological crisis, the biggest single practical threat to our human existence in the middle to long term, has, religious people would say, a great deal to do with our failure to think of the world as existing in relation to the mystery of God, not just as a huge warehouse of stuff to be used for our convenience.*

**Archbishop Rowan Williams**

**Associated Press, Washington, D.C., July 3, 2012.** If you want a glimpse of some of the worst of global warming, scientists suggest taking a look at U.S. weather in recent weeks. Horrendous wildfires. Oppressive heat waves. Devastating droughts. Flooding from giant deluges. And a powerful freak wind storm called a derecho.

These are the kinds of extremes climate scientists have predicted will come with climate change, although it's far too early to say that is the cause. Nor will they say global warming is the reason 3,215 daily high temperature records were set in the month of June.

Scientifically linking individual weather events to climate change takes intensive study, complicated mathematics, computer models and lots of time. Sometimes [these events are not] caused by global warming. Weather is always variable; freak things happen.

And this weather has been local. Europe, Asia and Africa aren't having similar disasters now, although they've had their own extreme events in recent years.

But since at least 1988, climate scientists have warned that climate change would bring, in general, increased heat waves, more droughts, more sudden downpours, more widespread wildfires and worsening storms. In the United States, those extremes are happening here and now. Read more at: [http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-205\\_162-57465669/summer-2012-glimpse-of-climate-change-effects/](http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-205_162-57465669/summer-2012-glimpse-of-climate-change-effects/)

### **In this issue:**

- Climate change has arrived
- St. Joseph Medical Center honored
- Free air quality phone app from Lung Association
- Learn how to become a plug-in vehicle owner

## And what Catholics can do

1. Take the *St. Francis of Assisi Pledge to Protect Creation and the Poor* at [www.catholicclimatecovenant.org](http://www.catholicclimatecovenant.org)
2. Cut your parish energy costs by 30% and lower greenhouse gas emissions through U.S. EPA's Energy Star program for congregations: [http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=small\\_business.sb\\_congregations](http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=small_business.sb_congregations)
3. Ask a Stockton Diocese Catholic Climate Ambassador to speak at your parish or school function. Contact Betsy Reifsnider at: (209) 444-5925 or [betsyr@ccstockton.org](mailto:betsyr@ccstockton.org)



## St. Joseph Medical Center certified green

St. Joseph's Medical Center in Stockton just became San Joaquin County's first "green certified" hospital. The certification was awarded on June 13 by Green Team San Joaquin, a program of the Greater Stockton Chamber of Commerce.

### Environmental Justice Project

1106 N. El Dorado Street  
Stockton, CA 95202

#### Phone:

209/444-5925

#### Fax:

209/444-5929

#### E-Mail:

[betsyr@ccstockton.org](mailto:betsyr@ccstockton.org)

#### Website:

[www.ccstockton.org](http://www.ccstockton.org)

To be certified, businesses must meet strict conservation, pollution, and recycling requirements as well as have "green" company policies and practices in place. Receiving the award on behalf of St. Joseph's Medical Center were John Kendle, Director of Operations, Support and Services, and Sister Abby Newton, Vice President for Mission Services.

St. Joseph's Medical Center receives numerous awards for its pioneering environmental ethic. Practice Greenhealth, a national membership organization for health care facilities committed to environmentally responsible operations, annually names St. Joseph's Medical Center to its prestigious Environmental Leadership Circle.

St. Joseph's recycling programs include green waste, batteries, cans, bottles, wood pallets, hospital products such as blue wrap and shrink wrap, and baby bottles. The hospital also uses energy efficient laundry washers. This year the Medical Center opened a community garden.

## Free clean air offerings

**American Lung Association** developed a free State of the Air® smartphone application to help people monitor whether their air is safe to breathe. This tool, available for Apple and Android, can help people living with asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, heart disease or diabetes, as well as older adults and children. It is also useful for planning outdoor activities – hiking, biking or running. Find the app at: [www.lung.org/stateoftheairapp](http://www.lung.org/stateoftheairapp).

**San Joaquin Air District** will host a free workshop and lunch on Saturday, July 21<sup>st</sup> from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm at the District's Modesto office. Learn all about life as a plug-in electric vehicle owner, including how to obtain a \$13,000 incentive. Register at:

[https://energycenter.org/index.php?option=com\\_civcrm&task=civcrm/event/info&reset=1&id=898](https://energycenter.org/index.php?option=com_civcrm&task=civcrm/event/info&reset=1&id=898)

### *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.

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Websites to Care for Creation:

**Catholic Charities, Stockton Diocese:** [www.ccstockton.org](http://www.ccstockton.org)

**National Catholic Rural Life Conference:** [www.ncrlc.com](http://www.ncrlc.com)

**Catholic Climate Covenant:** [www.catholicclimatecovenant.org](http://www.catholicclimatecovenant.org)

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