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# Care for God's Creation

*News from the Stockton Diocese Environmental Justice Project*

*O God, save me from myself, this frivolous self which plays with Your creation, this vain self which is clever about Your creation, this masterful self which manipulates Your creation, this greedy self which exploits Your creation. Teach me to stand out of my own light, and let Your daylight shine.*

**- Rev. Peter Schineller, S.J.,  
Catholic Medical  
Missionary Board of  
Directors**

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## Poverty and race segregation worsen health inequality in Central Valley

**February 29, 2012, Washington, D.C.** A study entitled "Place Matters" found that social, economic, and environmental conditions in low-income and non-white neighborhoods make it more difficult for people in these neighborhoods to live healthy lives. The study by the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies was funded by the National Institute of Health.

The study shows that the rate of premature deaths in the lowest-income zip codes of the San Joaquin Valley is nearly twice that of those in the highest-income zip codes. In addition, the study found that life expectancy varies by as much as 21 years in the San Joaquin Valley depending on zip code. In the zip codes with lowest life expectancy, people can live to be only about 69 years or less, while people can live to be 90 years or more in zip codes with the highest life expectancy.

The report identifies several policy strategies that can reduce the concentration of health risks in vulnerable communities, while at the same time increasing health-enhancing resources. Read more at: <http://www.jointcenter.org/research/place-matters-for-health-in-the-san-joaquin-valley>

## "I am working to end hunger and I have a voice"

Jeremy Terhune, Catholic Charities' Environmental Justice new bilingual outreach coordinator and the executive director of PUENTES, was interviewed in the February 27<sup>th</sup> edition of Stockton's Bilingual Weekly. The Weekly wrote, "PUENTES is a project that attempts to help disadvantaged families by teaching them how to grow and sell their own food while simultaneously offering training and educational opportunities... Terhune envisions a plan that would solve hunger from its roots by teaching people how to be sustainable: not by simply providing food aid a few days." Watch the interview: <http://www.bilingualweekly.com/videos>



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## Catholics in Mexico confront historic drought by caring for creation

**EWTN News, February 7, 2012.** In the face of the crushing drought affecting the Tarahumara Mountains in Mexico, the Archdiocese of Mexico City is calling on citizens and government to exercise greater environmental stewardship.

A study by the Archdiocese said much of the environmental degradation has been “driven by economic greed and immoral selfishness and urge that [t]he response to emergencies should now be turned into a change of mentality in citizens and into new public policies in governments to solve the problems over the long term. The task is enormous, [but] if we want to pass a better world on to the new generations, we need to urgently change in order to recover respect for the environment.”  
<http://www.ewtnnews.com/catholic-news/Americas.php?id=4819>

Special note: The worldwide general prayer intention of Pope Benedict XVI for the month of February was “that all peoples may have access to water and other resources needed for daily life.” [Zenit.org]

### Spring opportunities

**Wednesday, March 14, 7 am to 2 pm:** Eighth annual Recycling Exposition, sponsored by Greater Stockton Chamber of Commerce with guest speakers Assembly Member Kristen Olsen (Modesto) and California EPA Secretary Matthew Rodriquez. Register:  
[www.greenteamsanjoaquin.com](http://www.greenteamsanjoaquin.com)

**Saturday, March 17, 2012, 10:30 a.m.:** San Joaquin Air Pollution Control District offers a Plug-in Electric Vehicles workshop at its main headquarters in Fresno. Learn about \$13,000 incentives for plug-in vehicles & charging equipment, PG&E rates, and more. Free lunch and chance to check out these innovative cars. Go to:  
[www.energycenter.org/cvrp-events](http://www.energycenter.org/cvrp-events)

**Wednesday, March 21:** San Joaquin Air District holds its annual Air Quality Conference at Radisson Hotel in Fresno -- “Lawn Care, Landscaping, and Air Quality.” The conference will provide strategies for reducing health risks while growing your business.” Free admission. Register at: [www.valleyair.org](http://www.valleyair.org)

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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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#### *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.