



UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS

USCCB > Beliefs And Teachings

QUOTES FROM CHURCH DOCUMENTS ABOUT ISSUES OF HUMAN LIFE, JUSTICE AND PEACE

Here's a quick and easy way for parish leaders to find Catholic social justice quotes for bulletins and other parish resources on a range of issues and teachings, including pro-life, faithful citizenship, international trade, aid and debt; global HIV/AIDS concerns, human cloning and climate change.

Pro-life

- But responsibility likewise falls on the legislators who have promoted and approved abortion laws, and, to the extent that they have a say in the matter, on the administrators of the health-care centers where abortions are performed. In this sense abortion goes beyond the responsibility of individuals and beyond the harm done to them, and takes on a distinctly social dimension. It is a most serious *wound* inflicted on society and its culture by the very people who ought to be society's promoters and defenders. Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium vitae* (1995), no. 59.
- When a parliamentary or social majority decrees that it is legal, at least under certain conditions, to kill unborn human life, is it not really making a tyrannical decision with regard to the weakest and most defenseless of human beings?...While public authority can sometimes choose not to put a stop to something which were it prohibited would cause more serious harm, it can never presume to legitimize as a right of individuals even if they are the majority of the members of society an offense against other persons caused by the disregard of so fundamental a right as the right to life. Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium vitae* (1995), no.70, 71.
- Laws which legitimize the direct killing of innocent human beings through abortion or euthanasia are in complete opposition to the inviolable right to life proper to every individual; they thus deny the equality of everyone before the law. Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium vitae* (1995), no. 72.
- The law is not the only means of protecting life, but it plays a key and often decisive role in affecting both human behavior and thinking. Those called to civil leadership, as Pope John Paul II reminds us, "have a duty to make courageous choices in support of life, especially through legislative measures." This is a responsibility that cannot be put aside, "especially when he or she has a legislative or decision-making mandate, which calls that person to answer to God,

to his or her own conscience and to the whole of society for choices which may be contrary to the common good." *The Gospel of Life*, no. 90

- It is impossible to further the common good without acknowledging and defending the right to life, upon which all the other inalienable rights of individuals are founded and from which they develop. A society lacks solid foundations when, on the one hand, it asserts values such as the dignity of the person, justice and peace, but then, on the other hand, radically acts to the contrary by allowing or tolerating a variety of ways in which human life is devalued and violated, especially where it is weak or marginalized. Only respect for life can be the foundation and guarantee of the most precious and essential goods of society, such as democracy and peace. Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium vitae* (1995), no. 101
- The inviolability of the person which is a reflection of the absolute inviolability of God, finds its primary and fundamental expression in the *inviolability of human life*. Above all, the common outcry, which is justly made on behalf of human rights—for example, the right to health, to home, to work, to family, to culture— is false and illusory if *the right to life*, the most basic and fundamental right and the condition for all other personal rights, is not defended with maximum determination. Pope John Paul II, *Christifideles Laici* (1988), no. 38
- *Utilitarianism* is a civilization of production and of use, a civilization of "things" and not of "persons", a civilization in which persons are used in the same way as things are used. In the context of a civilization of use, woman can become an object for man, children a hindrance to parents, the family an institution obstructing the freedom of its members. To be convinced that this is the case, one need only look at *certain sexual education programmes* introduced into the schools, often notwithstanding the disagreement and even the protests of many parents; or *pro-abortion tendencies* which vainly try to hide behind the so-called "right to choose" ("*pro-choice*") on the part of both spouses, and in particular on the part of the woman. Pope John Paul II, Letter to Families, February 2, 1994, no. 13
- We urge those Catholic officials who choose to depart from Church teaching on the inviolability of human life in their public life to consider the consequences for their own spiritual well being, as well as the scandal they risk by leading others into serious sin. We call on them to reflect on the grave contradiction of assuming public roles and presenting themselves as credible Catholics when their actions on fundamental issues of human life are not in agreement with Church teaching. No public official, especially one claiming to be a faithful and serious Catholic, can responsibly advocate for or actively support direct attacks on innocent human life. [N]o appeal to policy, procedure, majority will or pluralism ever excuses a public official from defending life to the greatest extent possible. As is true of leaders in all walks of life, no political leader can evade accountability for his or her exercise of power (*Evangelium Vitae*, 73-4). Those who justify their inaction on the

grounds that abortion is the law of the land need to recognize that there is a higher law, the law of God. No human law can validly contradict the Commandment: "Thou shalt not kill." *Living the Gospel of Life: A Challenge to American Catholics* (1998), no. 32

- Abortion and euthanasia have become preeminent threats to human dignity because they directly attack life itself, the most fundamental human good and the condition for all others. *Living the Gospel of Life: A Challenge to American Catholics* (1998), no. 32
- The first right of the human person is his life. He has other goods and some are more precious, but this one is fundamental - the condition of all the others. Hence it must be protected above all others. It does not belong to society, nor does it belong to public authority in any form to recognize this right for some and not for others: all discrimination is evil, whether it be founded on race, sex, color or religion. It is not recognition by another that constitutes this right. This right is antecedent to its recognition; it demands recognition and it is strictly unjust to refuse it. *Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Declaration on Procured Abortion* (1974), no. 11
- At this particular time, abortion has become the fundamental human rights issue for all men and women of good will. . For us abortion is of overriding concern because it negates two of our most fundamental moral imperatives: respect for innocent life, and preferential concern for the weak and defenseless. *Resolution on Abortion* (1989)
- Among important issues involving the dignity of human life with which the Church is concerned, abortion necessarily plays a central role. Abortion, the direct killing of an innocent human being, is *always* gravely immoral (*The Gospel of Life*, no. 57); its victims are the most vulnerable and defenseless members of the human family. It is imperative that those who are called to serve the least among us give urgent attention and priority to this issue of justice. *Pastoral Plan for Pro-Life Activities: A Campaign in Support of Life* (2001), Introduction
- It is true that it is not the task of the law to choose between points of view or to impose one rather than another. But the life of the child takes precedence over all opinions. One cannot invoke freedom of thought to destroy this life The role of law is not to record what is done, but to help in promoting improvement. It is at all times the task of the State to preserve each person's rights and to protect the weakest. In order to do so the State will have to right many wrongs. The law is not obliged to sanction everything, but it cannot act contrary to a law which is deeper and more majestic than any human law: the natural law engraved in men's hearts by the Creator as a norm which reason clarifies and strives to formulate properly, and which one must always struggle to understand better, but which it is always wrong to contradict. Human law can abstain from punishment, but it cannot declare to be right what would be opposed to the natural law, for this opposition

suffices to give the assurance that a law is not a law at all. It must in any case be clearly understood that whatever may be laid down by civil law in this matter, man can never obey a law which is in itself immoral, and such is the case of a law which would admit in principle the liceity of abortion. Nor can he take part in a propaganda campaign in favor of such a law, or vote for it. Moreover, he may not collaborate in its application. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Declaration on Procured Abortion, November 18, 1974, nos. 19-22

- John Paul II, continuing the constant teaching of the Church, has reiterated many times that those who are directly involved in lawmaking bodies have a *grave and clear obligation to oppose* any law that attacks human life. For them, as for every Catholic, it is impossible to promote such laws or to vote for them. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Doctrinal Note on Some Questions Regarding the Participation of Catholics in Political Life, 2002, no. 4
- The social doctrine of the Church is not an intrusion into the government of individual countries. It is a question of the lay Catholics duty to be morally coherent, found within ones conscience, which is one and indivisible. There cannot be two parallel lives in their existence: on the one hand, the so-called spiritual life, with its values and demands; and on the other, the so-called secular life, that is, life in a family, at work, in social responsibilities, in the responsibilities of public life and in culture. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Doctrinal Note on Some Questions Regarding the Participation of Catholics in Political Life 2002, no. 6
- No Catholic can responsibly take a "pro-choice" stand when the "choice" in question involves the taking of innocent human life. Resolution on Abortion (1989)
- Public officials are privileged in a special way to apply their moral convictions to the policy arena. We hold in high esteem those who, through such positions and authority, promote respect for all human life. Catholic civil leaders who reject or ignore the Church's teaching on the sanctity of human life do so at risk to their own spiritual well-being. Pastoral Plan for Pro-Life Activities: A Campaign in Support of Life (2001), Part III

Faithful Citizenship

- Many political issues have important moral dimensions that must be considered. **Protecting human life** begins with our opposition to abortion and euthanasia, which are pre-eminent threats to human life and dignity, and extends to our opposition to cloning, assisted suicide, and the death penalty, and our efforts to pursue peace. . . . This brief description only begins to describe how Catholic teaching has been applied to these issues. We hope Catholics and others will read our complete statement on *Faithful Citizenship*, as well as other documents that

address key issues for the campaign and for the years to come. For more information go to [The Challenge of Faithful Citizenship](#).

- Many political issues have important moral dimensions that must be considered. **Promoting family life** focuses on support of marriage, parental choice in education, responsible communications, and moral and economic supports for families. This brief description only begins to describe how Catholic teaching has been applied to these issues. We hope Catholics and others will read our complete statement on *Faithful Citizenship*, as well as other documents that address key issues for the campaign and for the years to come. For more information go to [The Challenge of Faithful Citizenship](#).
- Many political issues have important moral dimensions that must be considered. **Pursuing social justice** requires working for a more just economic life with decent jobs and just wages, providing adequate assistance to poor families, overcoming a culture of violence, combating discrimination, and defending the right to quality health care, housing, and food. This brief description only begins to describe how Catholic teaching has been applied to these issues. We hope Catholics and others will read our complete statement on *Faithful Citizenship*, as well as other documents that address key issues for the campaign and for the years to come. For more information go to [The Challenge of Faithful Citizenship](#).
- Many political issues have important moral dimensions that must be considered. **Practicing global solidarity** addresses overcoming hunger and global poverty, reducing debt and promoting development, responding to the needs of immigrants and refugees, pursuing peace, and reducing regional conflicts in the Middle East, Africa and other parts of the world. This brief description only begins to describe how Catholic teaching has been applied to these issues. We hope Catholics and others will read our complete statement on *Faithful Citizenship*, as well as other documents that address key issues for the campaign and for the years to come. For more information see [The Challenge of Faithful Citizenship](#).

Trade, Aid and Debt

Global Poverty

- Poverty is a plague against which humanity must fight without cease. Pope Benedict XVI, *Public Audience*, October 16, 2005
- "The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the people of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these too are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ. Indeed, nothing genuinely human fails to raise an echo in their hearts." Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, *Gaudium et Spes, The Church and the Modern World*

On Just Trade

- A just trading system in addition to breaking down barriers to promote growth should enhance the life and dignity of everyone, lessen economic injustice, and help eradicate poverty. The moral measure of the U.S. trade relationship with Africa is whether it helps reduce poverty among Africa's poorest peoples. *A Call to Solidarity with Africa, A Statement of the U.S. Catholic Bishops*, November 14, 2001
- If trade agreements are shaped by a proper moral perspective, they can promote human development while respecting the environment by fostering closer economic cooperation among and within countries and by raising standards of living, especially for the poorest and most abandoned. Human solidarity must accompany economic integration so as to preserve community life, protect families and livelihoods, and defend local cultures. Joint Statement on CAFTA by the Bishops Secretariat of Central America (SEDAC) and the Chairmen of the Domestic and International Policy Committees of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) 2005

On Effective Aid

- Official Development Aid must be increased, not just spent better; and above all, policies to eradicate poverty must continue to concentrate not only on "what" or "how," but firstly on "who." A clear idea of who the poor are, followed by practical, direct, personal assistance to them through people-centered policies must always be borne in mind. Only such a focus will promote the poor as real people, because it is a focus based upon the dignity of every man, woman and child, rather than upon policies that risk overlooking their worth as persons. *Holy See's Address at U.N. on Development*, 2005
- The only really effective means of enabling States to deal with the grave problem of poverty is to provide them with the necessary resources through foreign financial aid -- public and private -- granted under reasonable conditions, within the framework of international commercial relations regulated with fairness. Pope John Paul II, *Message for 2005 World Day of Peace*

On Debt Reduction

- People from the world's richest countries should be prepared to accept the burden of debt reduction for heavily indebted poor countries, and should urge their leaders to fulfill the pledges made to reduce world poverty, especially in Africa, by the year 2015. *Pope Benedict XVI, Message to the Make Poverty History March*, July 2, 2005

- Our analysis of the debt problem begins with the presumption that when countries, like individuals, contract a loan, they have an obligation to repay it. But this presumption may be overridden in certain circumstances. One such instance is when a country cannot repay its debt without critical reductions in spending for health, education, food, housing, and other basic needs, and when debt has become a serious obstacle to development. *A Jubilee Call for Debt Forgiveness, A Statement by the Administrative Board of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops*, April 1999

Responding to Global HIV/AIDS

- Throughout the world the Catholic Church is the largest single provider of care for people affected by HIV and AIDS, serving 25 percent of those who suffer from the disease. Catholic Relief Services current AIDS projects serve approximately four million people affected by HIV/AIDS in 30 countries. Activities are concentrated in Africa, but the agency also has HIV/AIDS programming in Asia and Latin America. Catholic Relief Services
- "The Catholic community, with many others, has long worked for this new commitment on global health and debt relief (President George W. Bush proposed \$15 billion Global AIDS initiative). I hope that Congress will now appropriate the money needed to make this legislation a reality, and that the U.S. government will press for strengthening the debt relief program along the lines proposed by this legislation." Bishop John H. Ricard, S.S.J., Chairman, International Policy Committee, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Press Statement*, September 16, 2003.
- "We must walk in solidarity with those who are living with HIV/AIDS and with those at risk. As witnesses of Christ, we are called to respect the dignity of each person and to promote healthy living - physically, spiritually, morally and psychologically - through prevention and treatment." Washington Archbishop, Theodore Cardinal McCarrick, *The Fullness of Life*, 2003.
- The drama of AIDS threatens not just some nations or societies, but the whole of humanity. It knows no frontiers of geography, race, age or social condition(calling) for a supreme effort of international cooperation on the part of government, the world medical and scientific community and all those who exercise influence in developing a sense of more responsibility in society. Pope John Paul II, *Visit to Tanzania*, 1990
- As far as HIV is concerned social responsibility has an important international dimension. The problem is not confined to the United States and cannot be solved only here. We are deeply conscious of the devastation this terrible disease is

bringing to many other parts of the world. The United States must play a significant role in responding to the worldwide dimension of the disease. USCCB, *Called to Compassion and Responsibility: A Response to the HIV/AIDS Crisis*, 1989.

- Our response to persons with AIDS must be such that we discover Christ in them and they in turn are able to encounter Christ in us. Although this response undoubtedly arises in the context of religious faith, even those without faith can and must look beyond suffering to see the human dignity and goodness of those who suffer. USCCB, *Called to Compassion and Responsibility: A Response to the HIV/AIDS Crisis*, 1989.
- Global HIV/AIDS Statistics: Source: *UN AIDS, the joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS*
 - At the end of 2003, an estimated 40 million people around the world were living with HIV/AIDS, including the five million people who acquired HIV in 2003. The epidemic claimed an estimated 3 million lives in 2003.
 - Current projections suggest that an additional 45 million people in 126 low- and middle-income countries will become infected between 2002 and 2010, unless the world succeeds in mounting a drastically expanded global prevention effort.
 - Worldwide 14 million children have been orphaned by HIV/AIDS. That number is roughly equal to all U.S. children under the age of 5.
 - Sub-Saharan Africa is the most affected region with 70 percent of the world's AIDS cases. Currently 26.6 million people have HIV/AIDS in the region including approximately 3.2 million people newly infected in 2003.
 - In seven African countries, it is estimated that 20 percent or more of people over age 15 are infected. In these countries, AIDS will claim the lives of around a third of today's 15 year-olds unless actions are taken to slow the epidemic.
- HIV/AIDS In Countries Beyond Africa:
 - Outside of Sub-Saharan Africa, India has the largest number of people living with AIDS, an estimated 3.97 million people at the end of 2001. *Catholic Relief Services*

- By percentage, the Latin America and Caribbean region is the hardest hit outside of Africa. In Haiti, for example, more than five percent of the population is infected, reaching 10 percent in some places. *Catholic Relief Services*
- About 11 million people in Asia could become HIV-infected in the next five years (2003-2007) unless the HIV/AIDS response is dramatically stepped up. *Catholic Relief Services*
- AIDS is spreading quickly in the Russian Federation where the total number of reported HIV infections climbed to over 200,000 by mid-2002 from 10,993 reported at the end of 1998. *Catholic Relief Services*
- There are signs of hope that increased global HIV/AIDS awareness and efforts to halt the diseases spread are bearing fruit. Uganda for example has seen marked declines in HIV/AIDS prevalence rates down from more than 20 percent to around 5 percent in recent years the most dramatic prevalence decline world-wide. A nation-wide effort to reduce AIDS infections has ranged from community-based programs on the need for behavior change, to interventions that empower women and girls, target youths and fight stigma, to confidential voluntary counseling and testing. Religious leaders and faith-based organizations, including the Catholic Church, are noted for being on the front lines of the response to the epidemic. *Catholic Relief Services*

Human Cloning

- No one can fail to see the dramatic and distressing consequences of this pragmatism that conceives of truth and justice as malleable qualities that human beings themselves can shape. One relevant example among others is man's attempt to control the sources of life through experiments in human cloning. Here, we can see for ourselves the theme the Meeting [for Friendship Among Peoples] refers to: the violence with which people seek to appropriate the true and the just, reducing them to values which can arbitrarily be disposed of without recognizing any kind of limit, apart from those fixed and continuously surpassed by their technological operability... Christ taught another way: it is that of respect for human beings; the priority of every method of research must be to know the truth about human beings, in order to serve them and not to manipulate them according to a project sometimes arrogantly seen as better even than the plan of the Creator. Pope John Paul II, Message for the 25th Meeting for Friendship Among Peoples (August 2004), nos. 2, 3

- I am speaking of a tragic spiral of death which includes murder, suicide, abortion, euthanasia. To this list we must add irresponsible practices of genetic engineering, such as the cloning and use of human embryos for research, which are justified by an illegitimate appeal to freedom, to cultural progress, to the advancement of mankind. When the weakest and most vulnerable members of society are subjected to such atrocities, the very idea of the human family, built on the value of the person, on trust, respect and mutual support, is dangerously eroded. A civilization based on love and peace must oppose these experiments, which are unworthy of man. Pope John Paul II, Message for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace (2001), no. 19

- In any event, methods that fail to respect the dignity and value of the person must always be avoided. I am thinking in particular of attempts at human cloning with a view to obtaining organs for transplants: these techniques, insofar as they involve the manipulation and destruction of human embryos, are not morally acceptable, even when their proposed goal is good in itself. Science itself points to other forms of *therapeutic intervention* which would not involve cloning or the use of embryonic cells, but rather would make use of stem cells taken from adults. This is the direction that research must follow if it wishes to respect the dignity of each and every human being, even at the embryonic stage. Pope John Paul II, Address to the 18th International Congress of the Transplantation Society (2000), no. 8

- The act of cloning is a predetermined act which forces the image and likeness of the donor and is actually a form of imposing dominion over another human being which denies the human dignity of the child and makes him or her a slave to the will of others. The child would be seen as an object and a product of ones fancy rather than as a unique human being, equal in dignity to those who created him or her. The practice of cloning would usurp the role of creator and would thus be seen as an offence before God. Pontifical Academy for Life, Reflections on Cloning (1997), no. 3

- In the cloning process the basic relationships of the human person are perverted: filiation, consanguinity, kinship, parenthood. In vitro fertilization has already led to the confusion of parentage, but cloning will mean the radical rupture of these bonds.... Pontifical Academy for Life, Reflections on Cloning (1997), no. 3

- The human cloning project represents the terrible aberration to which value-free science is driven and is a sign of the profound malaise of our civilization, which looks to science, technology and the quality of life as surrogates for the meaning of life and its salvation. Pontifical Academy for Life, Reflections on Cloning (1997), no. 3

- Halting the human cloning project is a moral duty which must also be translated into cultural, social and legislative terms. Pontifical Academy for Life, Reflections on Cloning (1997), no. 3

- [A]ttempts or hypotheses for obtaining a human being without any connection with sexuality through twin fission, cloning or parthenogenesis are to be considered contrary to the moral law, since they are in opposition to the dignity both of human procreation and of the conjugal union. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Instruction on Respect for Human Life in its Origin and on the Dignity of Procreation (*Donum vitae*) (1987), I
- Revising the name given to the killing *reduces its perceived gravity*. This is the ecology of law, moral reasoning and language in action. Bad law and defective moral reasoning produce the evasive language to justify evil.... The same sanitized marketing is now deployed on behalf of...fetal experimentation and human cloning. Each reduces the human person to a problem or an object. United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Living the Gospel of Life: A Challenge to American Catholics* (1998), II, 11

Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence, and the Common Good

- As people of faith, we are convinced that "the earth is the Lord's and all it holds" (Ps 24:1). Our Creator has given us the gift of creation: the air we breathe, the water that sustains life, the fruits of the land that nourish us, and the entire web of life without which human life cannot flourish. All of this God created and found "very good." We believe our response to global climate change should be a sign of our respect for God's creation. *Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence, and the Common Good*
- Climate change poses the question "What does our generation owe to generations yet unborn?" As Pope John Paul II has written, "there is an order in the universe which must be respected, and . . . the human person, endowed with the capability of choosing freely, has a grave responsibility to preserve this order for the well-being of future generations." *Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence, and the Common Good*
- Passing along the problem of global climate change to future generations as a result of our delay, indecision, or self-interest would be easy. But we simply cannot leave this problem for the children of tomorrow. As stewards of their heritage, we have an obligation to respect their dignity and to pass on their natural inheritance, so that their lives are protected and, if possible, made better than our own. *Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence, and the Common Good*
- At its core, global climate change is not about economic theory or political platforms, nor about partisan advantage or interest group pressures. It is about the future of God's creation and the one human family. It is about protecting both "the human environment" and the natural environment. It is about our human stewardship of God's creation and our responsibility to those who come after us. *Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence, and the Common Good*

- John Paul II insists, "We face a fundamental question which can be described as both ethical and ecological. *Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence, and the Common Good*
- Because of the blessings God has bestowed on our nation and the power it possesses, the United States bears a special responsibility in its stewardship of God's creation to shape responses that serve the entire human family. *Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence, and the Common Good*
- In facing climate change, what we already know requires a response; it cannot be easily dismissed. Significant levels of scientific consensus even in a situation with less than full certainty, where the consequences of not acting are serious justifies, indeed can obligate, our taking action intended to avert potential dangers This responsibility weighs more heavily upon those with the power to act because the threats are often greatest for those who lack similar power, namely, vulnerable poor populations, as well as future generations. *Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence, and the Common Good*
- Global climate is by its very nature a part of the planetary commons. The earth's atmosphere encompasses all people, creatures, and habitats. The melting of ice sheets and glaciers, the destruction of rain forests, and the pollution of water in one place can have environmental impacts elsewhere. As Pope John Paul II has said, "We cannot interfere in one area of the ecosystem without paying due attention both to the consequences of such interference in other areas and to the well being of future generations." Responses to global climate change should reflect our interdependence and common responsibility for the future of our planet. *Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence, and the Common Good*
- In a special way, the common good requires solidarity with the poor who are often without the resources to face many problems, including the potential impacts of climate change. Our obligations to the one human family stretch across space and time. They tie us to the poor in our midst and across the globe, as well as to future generations. The commandment to love our neighbor invites us to consider the poor and marginalized of other nations as true brothers and sisters who share with us the one table of life intended by God for the enjoyment of all. *Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence, and the Common Good*
- "Interdependence," as Pope John Paul II has written, "must be transformed into solidarity. . . . Surmounting every type of imperialism and determination to preserve their own hegemony, the stronger and richer nations must have a sense of moral responsibility for the other nations, so that a real international system may be established which will rest on the foundation of the equality of all peoples and on the necessary respect for their legitimate differences." *Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence, and the Common Good*
- Grateful for the gift of creation . . . we invite Catholics and men and women of good will in every walk of life to consider with us the moral issues raised by the

environmental crisis. . . . These are matters of powerful urgency and major consequence. They constitute an exceptional call to conversion. As individuals, as institutions, as a people, we need a change of heart to preserve and protect the planet for our children and for generations yet unborn. *Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence, and the Common Good*

- Each of us should carefully consider our choices and lifestyles. We live in a culture that prizes the consumption of material goods. While the poor often have too little, many of us can be easily caught up in a frenzy of wanting more and more a bigger home, a larger car, etc. Even though energy resources literally fuel our economy and provide a good quality of life, we need to ask about ways we can conserve energy, prevent pollution, and live more simply. *Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence, and the Common Good*
- As people of religious faith, we bishops believe that the atmosphere that supports life on earth is a God-given gift, one we must respect and protect. It unites us as one human family. If we harm the atmosphere, we dishonor our Creator and the gift of creation. *Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence, and the Common Good*
- The values of our faith call us to humility, sacrifice, and a respect for life and the natural gifts God has provided. *Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence, and the Common Good*
- Pope John Paul II reminds us in his statement *The Ecological Crisis: A Common Responsibility* that "respect for life and for the dignity of the human person extends also to the rest of creation, which is called to join man in praising God." *Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence, and the Common Good*

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