

*Global Climate Change:  
A Catholic Response Study Guide*

**Movement Five**  
***Responding in Faith***

*Movement Five: Responding in Faith* is to help you move to a living faith response to global climate change: to help you translate your reflection and learning into a decision for living more faithfully as a Christian. Again, make this application of your learning a free, personal response. You may be changed by the learning experience and motivated to concrete action, or you may need time to ponder its meanings and implications further.

Activity #5

**What will you do?**

The intent of this series of activities has been to help bring you to a faith response to the threat and reality of global climate change. You may not yet be motivated to take concrete action in your life and may need time to reflect upon the meanings and implications of the activities. If that is the case, you may wish to delve more deeply into Scripture and/or Catholic Social Thought and to continue your reflection until you discern what God is truly calling each of us to do.

If you feel that you are being called to act now, then the following **Ideas for Action** will provide a number of examples on various levels. The action may begin on a personal level, but also consider pursuing an action with your family and your faith community. Be encouraged to act in concert with your local school and your town or city. The following ideas may spark new ideas within you: Go with what inspires you!

*Global Climate Change:  
A Catholic Response Study Guide*

## **Ideas for Action**

As noted in Activity #3b, the U.S. Catholic Bishops ask us to directly address the moral issues related to our care of God's sacred creation and impacts on the poor and vulnerable. Listen again to their plea and consider how you might respond:

"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*  
<http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/international/globalclimate.shtml>

## **Personal and Family Action**

**Measure your carbon footprint.** Your carbon footprint is a representation of the effect you have on the climate in terms of the total amount of greenhouse gases you produce (measured in units of carbon dioxide CO<sub>2</sub>). Many of your actions generate carbon emissions, which contribute to global warming and climate change. By measuring your carbon footprint, you get a better sense of what your individual impact is and which parts of your lifestyle deserve the greatest attention. Supplied with such information you can take effective action to shrink and reduce your carbon footprint, thereby minimizing your personal impact and that of your family on the climate.

To begin, select one of these online calculators to measure your carbon footprint:

- **World Resources Institute/Safe Climate:** <http://www.safeclimate.net/calculator/>
- **Cool Congregations:** [www.coolcongregations.com](http://www.coolcongregations.com)

Next, take actions to reduce your carbon footprint. The following list provides a number of ways to do this. These actions will cut your annual emissions of carbon dioxide by thousands of pounds. (The carbon dioxide (or CO<sub>2</sub>) reduction shown for each action is an average savings.) See what it will take to reduce your carbon footprint to the 4,700 pounds (2.35 tons) of CO<sub>2</sub> per person that some scientists believe would really be needed in order to control global warming. Making those changes will help mitigate climate change. Ask your friends to do the same. These choices represent an array of actions that vary on pocketbook expense and in time and effort. In other words, just about everyone can do something!

### **Home Appliances / Gadgets**

1. Unplug/dispose of old refrigerator in basement.  
CO<sub>2</sub> reduction: 2500 pounds a year.
2. Replace old refrigerator (at least 10 years old) with ENERGY STAR refrigerator.  
CO<sub>2</sub> reduction: 2300 pounds a year.

3. Replace *less than* 10 year old refrigerator with an ENERGY STAR refrigerator.  
CO2 reduction: 78 pounds a year.
4. Replace old clothes washer (at least 10 yrs old) with new ENERGY STAR clothes washer. CO2 reduction: 850 pounds a year.
5. Replace *less than* 10 year old clothes washer with ENERGY STAR clothes washer.  
CO2 reduction: 475 pounds a year.
6. Line dry clothes in summer. CO2 reduction: 780 pounds a year. Line dry clothes *all year* (using indoor clothes drying rack adds benefit of additional humidity in the winter.)  
CO2 reduction: 1400 pounds a year.
7. Cut phantom electric loads in half. (Phantom loads account for 6% of electric usage in the US). CO2 reduction: 300 pounds a year.
8. Turn off home office equipment when not in use.  
CO2 reduction: 140 pounds a year.
9. Run your dishwasher only with a full load. Use the energy-saving setting to dry dishes. Don't use heat when drying. CO2 reduction: 200 pounds a year.
10. Replace *less than* 10 year old dishwasher with an ENERGY STAR dishwasher.  
CO2 reduction: 100 pounds a year.
11. Need a new TV? Select an ENERGY STAR model.  
CO2 reduction: 65 pounds a year.
12. Need a new VCR/DVD player? Select an ENERGY STAR model.  
CO2 reduction: 33 pounds a year.

### **Home Heating and Cooling**

13. Ask your utility company for a home energy audit to find out where your home is poorly insulated or energy-inefficient. CO2 reduction: Potentially, *thousands of pounds* a year.
14. Don't overheat or overcool rooms. Adjust your thermostat (lower in winter, higher in summer) CO2 reduction (for each 2-degree adjustment): 500 pounds a year.
15. Clean or replace air filters as recommended. Cleaning a dirty air conditioner filter can save 5% of the energy used. CO2 reduction: About 175 pounds a year.
16. Replace AC (9.0 to 12.0 SEER)  
CO2 reduction: 185 pounds a year.
17. Install programmable thermostat to automatically adjust temperatures.  
CO2 reduction: 600 pounds a year.
18. Insulate your walls and ceilings; this can save about 25% of home heating bills.  
CO2 reduction: Up to 2000 pounds a year
19. If you need a new furnace, install ENERGY STAR furnace or boiler.  
CO2 reduction: 1500 pounds a year.
20. If you need to replace your windows, install the best energy-saving models  
CO2 reduction: Up to 10,000 pounds a year.
21. Plant trees next to your home. Evergreens to the north & west, deciduous trees to the south & west to shade home. CO2 reduction: about 2000 pounds a year.
22. Seal and insulate heating and cooling ducts.  
CO2 reduction: 670 pounds a year.
23. Add air-gap window films to seal leaky windows in winter.  
CO2 reduction: 400 pounds a year.
24. Add basement insulation.  
CO2 reduction: 750 pounds a year.
25. Caulk and weatherstrip around doors and windows to plug air leaks.  
CO2 reduction: Up to 1350 pounds a year.

## **Lighting**

26. Buy energy-efficient compact fluorescent bulbs for your most-used lights.  
CO2 reduction (by replacing one frequently used bulb): about 100 pounds a year.
27. Turn off unneeded lights.  
CO2 reduction: 380 pounds a year.
28. Light your Christmas tree with LED lights rather than incandescent.  
CO2 reduction: 122 pounds a season.
29. Replace outdoor incandescent Christmas lights with LED.  
CO2 reduction: up to 2300 pounds (10 strings a season).
30. Replace halogen lamp with compact fluorescent lamp.  
CO2 reduction: 475 pounds a year.

## **Water**

31. Take shorter showers. (Showers account for 2/3 water heating costs.)  
CO2 reduction: 350 pounds.
32. Wash clothes in warm or cold water, not hot.  
CO2 reduction (for two loads a week): 500 pounds a year.
33. Turn down your water heater thermostat; 130 degrees to kill bacteria if you have a dishwasher, otherwise 120 degrees usually hot enough.  
CO2 reduction (for each 10 degree adjustment): 500 pounds a year.
34. Install low-flow shower heads to use less hot water.  
CO2 reduction: Up to 300 pounds a year.
35. Install faucet aerators.  
CO2 reduction: 20 pounds a year per faucet.
36. If you need a new hot water heater, buy an efficient hot water heater.  
CO2 reduction: 200 pounds a year
37. Replace standard electric hot water heater with on demand hot water heater.  
CO2 reduction: 3600 pounds a year.
38. Switch from electric/oil hot water heater to gas hot water heater.  
CO2 reduction: 1400 pounds a year.
39. Wrap your water heater in an insulating jacket (only if it is over 5 years old and has no internal insulation)  
CO2 reduction: Up to 1000 pounds a year.
40. Replace water bed with standard bed.  
CO2 reduction: 1300 pounds a year

## **Getting Around**

41. Whenever possible walk, bike, carpool or use mass transit.  
CO2 reduction (for every gallon of gasoline you save): 20 pounds.
42. When you buy a car, choose one that gets good gas mileage.  
CO2 reduction (if your new car gets 10 mpg more than your old one):  
about 10,000 pounds a year. (see <http://www.fueleconomy.gov/>)
43. Buy a hybrid car. Average driver saves \$3750 per year.  
CO2 reduction: 16,000 pounds a year. (see <http://www.fueleconomy.gov/>)
44. Check the inflation in your auto's tires monthly.  
CO2 reduction: 250 pounds a year.
45. Change your auto's air filter according to manufacturer's specifications.  
CO2 reduction: 200 pounds a year

### **Reduce, Reuse, Recycle**

46. Reduce waste by recycling: (if you cut down your garbage by 25%).  
CO2 Reduction: 1000 pounds a year
47. Reduce waste by buying minimally packaged goods; choose reusable products over disposable ones, begin composting, reuse garbage bags, buy food in bulk.  
CO2 reduction (if you cut down your garbage in this way by 10%). 900 pounds/ year
48. Use a manual push mower.  
CO2 reduction: 80 pounds a year
49. Bring cloth bags to the market. Reduces waste.

### **Renewables**

50. Add solar hot water heating system.  
CO2 reduction: 1500 pounds a year.
51. Install solar electric system to replace 10% of your annual electric needs.  
CO2 reduction: 1430 pounds a year.
52. Buy 100% post consumer recycled paper for your printer.  
CO2 reduction: 5 pounds per ream of paper (Available as of this printing at Staples.)

## **Ideas for Community Action**

1. Explore the use of wind and solar energy sources as alternative energy sources for your local government.
2. Encourage your local government to model energy efficiency for the rest of the community.
3. Encourage your local government to incorporate passive-solar techniques in new community construction and renovations.
4. Start a community garden to encourage support of local foods to reduce transportation costs.
5. Contact transportation companies whose vehicles spew black smoke and suggest that they tune up their vehicles and consider alternative sources of energy. The more gasoline burned, the more carbon dioxide (CO2) is put into the air.
6. Encourage the purchase of fuel-efficient vehicles when retiring fleet vehicles.
7. Encourage your local government to support mass transit and other alternatives to single-passenger gasoline-powered cars for commuting; including bicycle lanes and bike racks at all public facilities.
8. Encourage your local government to conduct an energy audit of government buildings and identify ways to reduce energy use.
9. Work to improve local zoning ordinances and building codes that involve energy use.
10. Encourage your municipal or cooperative electric utilities to promote energy efficiency and the use of clean, renewable energy sources.
11. Encourage your local government to Reduce! Reuse! Recycle! And to buy recycled products!

## **Ideas for Advocacy and Political Action**

1. Ask policy-makers what they are prepared to do to address climate change issues.
2. Stay up-to-date with related public policy at the websites of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Department of Justice, Peace and Human Development, (<http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/>) and Catholic Coalition on Climate Change (<http://www.catholicsandclimatechange.org/>).
3. Ask policy-makers and public officials to focus more directly on the ethical dimensions of climate change and on its relation to development, to seek the common good, and to resist short-term pressures in order to meet our long-term responsibility to poor and vulnerable people around the world and to future generations.
4. Find out candidates' views on climate change and make them known to people old enough to vote. Encourage voters to take into consideration the candidates views when they decide for whom to vote.
5. Learn how to lobby local, state, and federal officials.
6. Urge your local government to reduce its energy consumption.
7. Urge your local government to consider solar and wind as alternative energy sources.
8. Write letters to the editor expressing your concern about climate change issues, especially right after a story runs that dismisses global warming or human responsibility for it.
9. Encourage the U.S. government to support international efforts to address climate change.
10. Register your St. Francis Pledge to Protect Creation and the Poor at <http://catholicclimatecovenant.org/>.
11. Protect forests from unsustainable management.
12. Encourage the U.S. government to domestically address climate change issues.
13. Support government policies that promote energy efficiency and renewable energy.
14. Urge government leaders to increase mileage standards for all vehicles.
15. Encourage national leaders to support the principles of "Reduce! Reuse! Recycle!"

## **Ideas for Church or School Action**

1. Green your church facilities and congregations. For ideas, visit Web of Creation at <http://www.webofcreation.org/> and the Catholic Coalition on Climate Change at [www.catholicsandclimatechange.org](http://www.catholicsandclimatechange.org)
2. Ask celebrants and liturgy committees to incorporate themes into prayer and worship that emphasize our responsibility to protect all God's creation.
3. Organize prayerful celebrations of creation on feast days honoring St. Maria, September 14; St. Francis of Assisi, October 4 and St. Isidore, May 15; and on other special days such as World Day of Peace, January 1; Thanksgiving; Rogations Days; Ember Days, Earth Day, April 22; and World Environment Day, June 5.
4. Suggest and help organize a climate change awareness day at your congregation.
5. Start a congregational garden to encourage local foods and reduce transportation costs.
6. Explore the use of wind and solar energy sources as alternative energy sources for your congregation and facilities.
7. Conduct an energy audit of your church buildings and identify ways to reduce energy use and/or improve energy use efficiency.
8. Encourage your church to Reduce! Reuse! Recycle! And to buy recycled products!

9. **Pray** and reflect as a congregation on the duty to care for God's creation and protect poor and vulnerable people who will suffer as a result of global climate change.
- For World Environment Day (June 5<sup>th</sup>), a Carmelite NGO created *A Day of Prayer - A Faith Reflection to Climate Change* [http://catholicclimatecovenant.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/04/worlddayofprayer6\\_5\\_09.pdf](http://catholicclimatecovenant.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/04/worlddayofprayer6_5_09.pdf) (This resource contains prayers, reflections, and scripture readings to inspire action on climate change.)
  - Become familiar with the following Psalms that portray the richness of God's creation:
    - Psalms 8 The Majesty of God
    - Psalms 65 Thanksgiving for God's Blessings
    - Psalms 104 Praise of God the Creator
    - Psalms 146 Trust in God Alone
    - Psalms 147 Zion's Grateful Praise to Her Bountiful Lord
    - Psalms 148 Hymn of All Creation to the Almighty Creator
  - Devote time to sit with God and start a journal, reflecting on God's presence in creation and God's call to care for creation and poor and vulnerable people.
  - Read and reflect on the following sets of prayers:

## **Selection of Prayers**

*To inspire and encourage you as you carry forth in actions and deeds.*

### **The Earth is the Lord's**

"The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof."  
Creation reminds us, O God, of your love.  
By grace we are learning, as year leads to year,  
We're called to be stewards, your caretakers here.

Your rainforests nurture the world that we share.  
Your wetlands give animals shelter and care.  
Your coral reefs cradle the life of the sea.  
You've shown us, in love, what your good world can be.

Too often, O God, we abuse your good earth.  
We fail to remember its beauty and worth.  
We take from creation much more than we need,  
We threaten your world through indifference and greed.

May we be good stewards of all that you give,  
Protecting creation wherever we live.  
May we be a church that renews and restores  
And lovingly cares for this earth that is yours.

Used with permission: <http://www.eco-justice.org/Hymn-001.asp>

## **Prayer for Creation Action**

Creator, this is such a beautiful world,  
both fragile and resilient.  
Forgive us when we act as if this world belongs to us,  
rather than to You.  
May our desire to love all of life grow;  
may our ability to act lovingly toward all of life grow.

Bless our time together this day.  
Help us to continue to support one another in our journeys with You;  
use us to bring about a world more compassionate and just,  
where all people and all creation  
enjoy and share in life's bounty. Amen.

## **Prayer for World Environment Day**

*Adapted from a prayer service prepared by  
the International Union of Superiors General  
for their June 5<sup>th</sup> observance, 2009.*

### **Opening Prayer**

Gracious God, we gather today with people everywhere  
to observe World Environment Day.

You call us to be in solidarity – through our prayer and actions – with people adversely affected  
by climate change.

We recognize that Earth will only be our home as long as we learn to respect and care for the  
whole community of life and learn humility about our place in it, that we take action to protect  
and restore the integrity of life systems, and that we work for sustainable development for all  
people.

Change our hearts. Fill our hearts with a burning desire for your kingdom where you live and  
reign forever and ever, Amen!

### **Scripture Reading:** Ezekiel 34:17-18

As for you, my flock, thus says the Lord God:  
I shall judge between sheep and sheep, between rams and goats.  
Is it not enough for you to feed on the good pasture,  
but you must tread down with your feet the rest of your pasture?  
When you drink of clear water, must you foul the rest with your feet?



## Lamentation

Adapted from *Our World*, Jeff Shrowder

We have increased our dependence on and use of non-renewable energy.  
Many of us prefer cars to public transportation.  
We increase rather than decrease our carbon footprint.  
R. Lord have mercy.

We continue to use water as a commodity  
while 2/3 of the world population lives with water scarcity or stress.  
R. Lord have mercy.

We destroy many of our forests and mismanage others.  
R. Lord have mercy.

Our tropical forests and coral reefs are under threat from human activity,  
and yet both could be sources for life, food and health care.  
R. Lord have mercy.

We contribute to global warming such that our glaciers retreat and environments change,  
putting many life forms at risk. Flooding and droughts put the food security  
of hundreds of millions at risk.  
R. Lord have mercy.

We contribute to global warming such that increased sea and air temperatures result in rising sea  
levels, putting whole islands and their inhabitants at risk.  
R. Lord have mercy.

We do not alter our ways and sufficiently care for or welcome those migrants and refugees  
displaced by drought, flood, or lack of food.  
R. Lord have mercy.

*[add your own]*

R. Lord have mercy.

*[PAUSE for silence and prayer]*

Enduring God, hear our prayers as we bring these,  
our hurts and hopes, our fears and our faults, before You.

Bind our hurts, encourage our hopes,  
comfort our fears, forgive us our faults.

Through the presence of your Holy Spirit dwelling in us,  
empower us to remain steadfast in the hope and light and promise of the Gospel  
revealed to us in your Son, Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

## **God of All Creation**

by Douglas Grace, former National Director,  
Interfaith Climate and Energy Campaign  
Web site: [www.ProtectingCreation.org](http://www.ProtectingCreation.org)

We unite as Your Children  
as faithful partners who are called to reveal Your Will for Creation.  
National and international actions have been made  
that impact the Earth's Climate, our Partner-family,  
and all of Your good Creation.

We have prayed and we continue to pray for guidance.  
And we pray for Stewardship,  
Stewardship over our internal spirit  
Responsibility for our moral voice to society and  
new imagination for a World that strives for the  
righteousness of justice and peace.

We also pray for righteous energy:  
The energy of Your spirit that enlivens each one of us.  
And for physical energy  
that can bring responsible value to utility, economy and productivity.

Collectively, we are your children.  
Please, God, be our Parent!  
Calm our fears, End our fighting,  
Nurture our heart, Teach us wisdom.  
Believing this, move us to act. Amen!

## **Prayer for Ecological Conversion**

God of the sun and the moon  
Of the mountains, deserts and plains  
God of the mighty oceans, of rivers, lakes and streams  
God of all creatures that live in the seas and fly in the air  
Of every living thing that grows and moves  
on this sacred Earth.

We are formed by Christ into Your People  
Called to Bring the world into Your marvelous light  
As the Body of Christ, we are messengers of ecological vocation  
We are entrusted with caring for this Earth  
which You have created.

Help us to love and respect it  
To repair what we have damaged  
To care for what You have made good and holy

Give us the wisdom and the passion  
to change our minds, our hearts and our ways.

Let us be mustard seeds in our world  
Bringing about ecological conversion which grows and  
spreads to every corner of the Earth  
for our sake now and for every generation which is to come.  
We ask this through Christ, Our lord, Amen.

Catholic Earthcare Australia, 2002.  
<http://www.catholicearthcareoz.net/index.html>

### **Prayer of Petition**

Dear God in all creation:

That we may see you revealed in the strength and  
protection of the mountains, we praise you and say:  
Show us your goodness, O God

That we may see you revealed in the rising sun of  
hope, the midday heat and the setting sun of rest, we  
bless you and say:  
Show us your goodness, O God

That we may see you revealed in life-giving rain and  
the majestic arch of the rainbow, we hope in you and say:  
Show us your goodness, O God

That we may see you revealed in rolling waves and  
crashing ocean, we glorify you and say:  
Show us your goodness, O God

That we may see you revealed in rising moon and  
star-filled nights, we trust in you and say:  
Show us your goodness, O God

That we may see you revealed in unfolding buds and  
vivid rainforest colors, we thank you and say:  
Show us your goodness, O God

That we may see you revealed in the myriad colors of  
our Reef, its gracious life forms and diverse seascapes,  
we rejoice in you and say:  
Show us your goodness, O God

*Cairns-Townsville A.P.R.E. Conference – June 2004*

## **Pledge of Commitment to Protect and Heal God's Creation**

We have come to renew our covenant with God and with one another in Christ Jesus, our Lord. We have come to help protect God's creation.

We have come as followers of Jesus to commit ourselves anew to one another and to heal injustice and poverty.

We have come to stand together against all threats to life.

We have come to discover some new beauty everyday in God's creation; the sunrise and sunset, birds, flowers and trees, rainbows in the sky, the stars, the many forms of life in the forest.

We have come to listen to the "music of the universe" – water flowing over rocks, the wind, trees bending in the wind, rain drops pattering on the roof.

We will remember always that God speaks to us through the beauty of his creation, and we will try our best to answer God's call to reverence all that he has created.

*From Faithful Stewards of God's Creation: A Catholic Response  
for Environmental Justice and Climate Change, USCCB 2007*

