



Diocese of Orange and Sisters of Saint Joseph Hold First Conference Regarding Papal Encyclical on the Environment

Description

This first-of-its-kind conference seeks to respond to Pope Francis' call for the faithful to take the lead in addressing global climate change and in protecting God's creation. **Garden Grove, Calif., (Aug. 5, 2015)** –The Most Rev. Kevin Vann, Bishop of Orange will join hundreds of concerned citizens, theologians and environmentalist at Christ Cathedral on August 8, 2015 from 2 – 4:30 p.m. for this first-of-its kind conference dedicated to Pope Francis' recent encyclical on the environment entitled *Laudato Si*. This conference, co-sponsored by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange, seeks to help the community understand the clarion call given by Pope Francis to halt the destruction of our cherished environment and the responsibility of the faithful to lead an unequaled effort to change the cultural of consumption that is destroying God's creation and is already resulting in environmental calamity for the developing world. The conference will be offered nationally via a live web stream at www.occatholic.com/stream. "Our Diocese is responding in faith to the Holy Father's call to respond to a seminal social and environmental issue of our time. The recently released encyclical on the environment, *Laudato Si* builds upon the rich reflection of Catholic social teaching on creation, stewardship, ecology and environmental justice – providing renewed energy and focus. We are blessed to invite concerned citizens, environmentalists and the faithful together to build understanding, discuss solutions and unite in our common concern for the natural world," said Bishop Vann. The three hour conference will feature several leading national speakers that will focus on different aspects of the Papal encyclical – theology of the encyclical, science of global climate change, impacts on the poor and vulnerable, and the path forward. Additionally an esteemed panel of experts will address audience questions. Attendees will have the chance to connect with various agencies working on this issue and leave with practical steps for community and parish engagement. This important conference follows decades of work by the Church to combat the objectification of the environment and human life. Twenty-five years ago, Pope Saint John Paul II spoke in his World Day of Peace Message (1990) about the way in which respect for life and the dignity of the human person "extends to the rest of creation, which is called to join man in praising God." He proclaimed that "responsibility within creation and [our] duty toward nature and the Creator are an essential part of [our] faith." Many forget that Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI was nicknamed "The Green Pope" for his many statements on the environment and his transformation of the Vatican itself to become "carbon neutral," with solar panels and greater efficiency and sustainability. Pope Benedict commented during his 2009 Easter message: "Before it is too late, it is necessary to make courageous decisions that can recreate a strong alliance between humankind

and the earth. A decisive 'yes' is needed to protect creation and also a strong commitment to invert those trends which risk leading to irreversibly degrading situations." **Conference Agenda**

- Welcome
 - Most Rev. Kevin Vann, Bishop of Orange
- Theological presentation and reflection on Laudato Si
 - Sister Nadine McGuinness, CSJ, Ph.D., Systematic Theology, St Joseph Center, Orange
- Science behind climate change
- Sustainable development/call to action
 - Tony Strawa, PhD, Catholic Climate Ambassador. Dr. Strawa has spent 20 years as an Atmospheric Scientist with NASA and is currently the Chair of the Diocese of San Jose Climate Change Initiative.
- Impact of climate change on the poor
- Responsibility of developed world
 - Joan Rosenhauer, Catholic Relief Services, Executive Vice President, U.S. Operations
- Panel Discussion
 - Sister Nadine McGuinness, CSJ, Ph.D., Systematic Theology, St Joseph Center, Orange
 - Tony Strawa, PhD, Catholic Climate Ambassador
 - Joan Rosenhauer, Catholic Relief Services, Executive Vice President, U.S.
 - Maria Orroyo, CRS Relationship Manager, Diocese of Orange
- Closing prayer
 - Greg Walgenbach, Director of Respect Life, Justice and Peace

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