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I found no easy way to insert notes with Power Point; and therefore, the bibliography is placed here to indicate the works cited in the sessions to follow.


Bibliography


The neglect and exploitation of the earth and its ecosystems, all being created by God and all being pronounced by Him to be “very good” (Genesis 1:31), is an ethical, religious, and theological issue of great importance. Christian theology seeks to amend these failures and, moreover, foster a nourishing relationship with the earth over which man has been given dominion.
We shall examine most closely (1) the exploitation of His creation; (2) the position as presented by the Biblical tradition and by the Church as well as the historical development of this position; and (3) the application of this position in the contemporary and its implications across religious and national boundaries.
1. THE ROLE OF HUMANITY IN THE ENVIRONMENT
Signs of the Times

• Ten minutes Video clips, an Al Gore’s movie.
  • Titled “AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH”
  • by Paramount Classics and Participant Productions
The environmental issues surround us:

- The smog in our cities;
- Chemicals in our water and on our food;
- Eroded topsoil blowing in the wind;
- The loss of valuable wetlands;
- Radioactive and toxic waste lacking adequate disposal sites;
- Threats to the health of industrial and farm workers.

- Our problems are the world's problems and burdens for generations to come.
- Poisoned water crosses borders freely.
  Acid rain pours on countries that do not create it.
  Greenhouse gases affect the earth's atmosphere for many decades, regardless of where they are produced or used.
Signs of the Times

- We experience the environmental effects in
  - polluted air and water;
  - in oil and wastes on our beaches;
  - in the loss of farmland, wetlands, and forests;
  - and in the decline of rivers and lakes.
Hebrew Scriptures

- Christian responsibility for the environment begins with appreciation of the goodness of all God's creation.
- "God looked at everything he had made, and he found it very good" (Genesis 1:31).
- God's wisdom and power were present in every aspect of the unfolding of creation (see Prv 8:22-31).
Humans, made in the image and likeness of God, are called in a special way to "cultivate and care for it" (Genesis 2:15).
The Gospel Message

– Jesus came proclaiming a jubilee (see Lk 4:16-22) in which humanity, and with us all creation, was to be liberated (see Rom 8:18-25).

– For he is the firstborn of a new creation and gives his Spirit to renew the whole earth (see Col 2:18; Ps 104:30).

– Our Christian way of life, as saints like Benedict, and Francis showed us, is a road to community with all creation.
Gaudium et Spes, the Pastoral Constitution on the Church articulates the responsibility of the Church to closely survey the “signs of the times” and interpret them in accordance with the Gospel.

In this way, the Church, “in a language intelligible to each generation,” can best adapt to and address the perennial issues which face humanity. Therefore, in its responsibility in examining and responding to the contemporary world, the modern Church, in accordance with its task as charged by Gaudium et Spes, must examine and respond to the mounting ecological crisis.
Extending the consideration that humans must actively participate in their community, scholars suggest that as creatures of the earth and as ecological beings, man must also relate himself well to the earth or forfeit his development.
OCTOGESIMA ADVENIENS
A CALL TO ACTION
In 1971, Pope Paul VI, in his apostolic letter, asks Christian to turn to new perceptions of the environmental issue and to warn the consequences of the environmental degradation in order to take on responsibility, together with the rest of the world, for a destiny which from now on is shared by all
SOLLICITUDO REI SOCIALIS ON SOCIAL CONCERN
In 1987, Pope John Paul II addresses his ecological concern in his letter as a sign of respect for an eco-justice and consequently a fair distribution of the results of true development.
PEACE W/ GOD THE CREATOR
PEACE W/ ALL OF CREATION
In 1990, Pope John Paul II states a growing awareness that world peace is threatened not only by conflicts but also by a lack of due respect for nature, by the plundering of natural resources and by a progressive decline in the quality of life. The ecological crisis is a moral problem as the Pope declared.
The most profound and serious indication of the moral implications underlying the ecological problem is the lack of respect for life evident in many of the patterns of environmental pollution (no. 7).

In conclusion, the Pope declares the urgency for an education in ecological responsibility: responsibility for oneself, for others, and for the earth.
In Centesimus Annus, Pope John Paul II referred to “the ecological question” in terms of the impacts of consumerism, the resources of the earth, and the destruction of the natural environment:

Equally worrying is the ecological question which accompanies the problem of consumerism and which is closely connected to it. In their desire to have and to enjoy rather than to be and to grow, people consume the resources of the earth and their own lives in an excessive and disordered way. (no. 37).
THE ECONOMIC JUSTICE FOR ALL, NCCB
In the National Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Pastoral Letter the Economic Justice for All, the "signs of the times" among many challenges to U.S. economy is the depletion of natural resources. Concerns for environment and sustainability are addressed:

- Depletion of soil, water and other natural resources endangers the future.
- Pollution of air and water threatens the delicate balance of the biosphere on which future generations will depend. The resources of the earth have been created by God for the benefit of all, and we who are alive today hold them in trust. This is a challenge to develop a new ecological ethic that will help shape a future that is both just and sustainable (no. 12).
RENEWING THE EARTH
USCCB
In 1991, the U.S. Bishops issued a pastoral statement to highlight the ethical dimensions of the environmental crisis, to link questions of ecology and poverty, environment and development. It is also to explore the links between concern for the person and for the earth, between natural ecology and social ecology. The U.S. Bishops stress the moral and ethical dimension of ecological crisis:
As moral teachers, we intend to lift up the moral and ethical dimensions of these issues. We find much to affirm in and learn from the environmental movement: its devotion to nature, its recognition of limits and connections, and its urgent appeal for sustainable and ecologically sound policies....
THE COLUMBIA RIVER WATERSHED
The bishops of the Northwest and Nelsen, Canada issued on January 8, 2001 a pastoral statement, The Columbia River Watershed: Caring for Creation and the Common Good.
The bishops address the Columbia watershed letter to Catholic community and to all people of good will with the hope to develop and implement an integrated spiritual, social and ecological vision for the Columbia watershed, a vision that promotes justice for people and stewardship of creation.
This letter links the common good with habitat, community and ecological region emphasizing the integration and interrelatedness of these domains of human and non-human habitation. This unique international endeavor among bishops and Catholics in the region has helped raise an ethical concern for the future use of the river.
3. ECOLOGICAL APPLICATION OF CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY IN TODAY WORLD
Following the leadership of the Church, it is appropriate that Christians take interest in and responsibility for the modern ecological problems.

In regards to global equity, public authorities hold a particular responsibility to the common good. In accordance with Catholic tradition, the promotion and defense of the common good is to be the fundamental task of all public officials.

Developing nations are experiencing the most severe and considering their relatively low outputs of pollution and resource consumption, disproportionate consequences of climate change to a far greater degree than developed nations who consume the most resources and produce the most pollution.
ADVOCATING RESPONSIBLE ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE POLICIES

- The Bush administration, however, has rejected the Kyoto Convention.

- Morality itself demands that countries such as the United States make conscious efforts for the sake of and in the promotion of the planetary common good.

- The Industrialized countries must construct a policy of responsibility, beginning with efforts at compliance with the existing international agreements such as the Kyoto Treaty.

- In short, it is the duty of all to be careful stewards of the environment. Whether it is public authorities legislating responsible practices or the student choosing to ride his or her bike, as opposed to...
- The major faith traditions of the world all recognize the restoration of the Earth as a fundamental set of ethics. In a companion document for the UN Agenda 21 adopted at the Earth Summit, Bahai, Buddhist, Christian, Islamic, Jewish, and native writers, all share their perspective on ethics to care for and restore the Earth.

- A precedent was set in faith-based responsibility when the Orthodox ecumenical patriarch Bartholomew declared pollution a sin against God.
This movement was extended when Pope John Paul II and Patriarch Bartholomew I of Constantinople signed the Declaration on the Environment, "We Are Still Betraying the Mandate God Has Given Us."

Buddhist tradition, the fourteenth Dalai Lama, addresses environmental issues: “The problems of the environment cross all national boundaries in a way that no nation can afford to ignore, thus bringing about an opportunity for international cooperation.” These actions set a model for ecumenical movement, whose members began to actively seek and advocate both environmentally and socially responsible policies.
“The right to a safe environment is evermore insistently presented today as a right that must be included in an updated Charter of Human Rights.” Pope John Paul II, *The Ecological Crisis, a Common Responsibility*, 1990.
- Global Climate Change demands changes in lifestyle as the U.S. Bishops stated.

- No matter the changes made by corporations and public authorities, without the effort of each individual, the movement to be responsible shepherds of the Earth is futile. This ideal is not met without challenges.

- If we are to deal realistically and responsibly with our global situation, we need both spiritual deepening and a renewed sense of hope. This hope must not be retained within races or borders, but must spread to all people as we all are responsible.
One interpretation of the vision of hope includes long-term sustainable development to reduce and eventually solve the global climate change. This requires a vast pursuit of alternate technology and methods to develop efficient and clean power.

The rhetorical questions are, at this juncture, are we ready even provisionally to begin to describe for ourselves the shape of a hopeful future toward which our efforts may be rightly directed? If so, at what points does it support the fragmented concerns for ecological justice, and the environment that guide most of our actions? At what points does it redirect our