

CREATION: GOD'S GIFT TO US



Do we understand and appreciate that creation is a gift from God that we are responsible to protect? Or are we blind to God's handiwork in *all* of creation—the snow-capped mountains, the fluffy white cloud floating across the horizon, the first star in the evening sky, the unborn child, the middle-aged man suffering from schizophrenia?

St. Paul reminds us that when we live a life without purpose or walk in paths other than the Lord's path, we must change our lives. None of us know when Judgment Day will come—Paul says that “time is running out”; Jesus says “[t]he kingdom of God is at hand”—but before that day arrives we have time to awaken and amend our

ways. To be disciples of the Lord we must change.

Does someone choose to end a life through abortion because he or she hasn't stopped to think of the fetus as an actual person? Sure, he or she doesn't have a name yet, doesn't have his father's eyes and his mother's smile, yet. Still, he or she is an actual person.

Does someone, instead, oppose abortion but endorse a woman's right to choose because of a belief that our government should not legislate morality; a free society does not encroach upon individual rights. But most of us accept, even enthusiastically endorse, government's right to mandate seatbelts while driving, to prohibit texting and driving, drinking and driving, to set the legal age to drink, to drive, to vote, to enlist, to attend school, to work.

Does someone choose to exterminate the species of snail darter because, while we must balance human ecology with creation, we place greater importance on one dam than on one of God's creatures?

Press the pause button on the busyness that fills our lives; take a moment to see, to really see God's handiwork in *all* of creation. Creation is a gift from God, the Creator. We can show respect for the Creator by caring for all of his creation. “As stewards called by God to share the responsibility for the future of the earth, we should work for a world in which people respect and protect all of creation and seek to live simply in harmony with it for the sake of future generations.”

Creation does not stop with the maple tree or the hummingbird; it includes all life in health, in sickness, in utero. Creation does not stop with the unborn or the elderly woman in a grocery store; it includes all of creation.

Last month [Pope Benedict XVI urged international leaders to reach a credible agreement on climate change, keeping in mind the needs of the poor and of future generations](#). Last month, Bishop Stephen Blaire, the chairman of the US bishops' Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, addressing an interfaith conference on air pollution, [linked respect for the life of the unborn with concern for the environment](#).

“It is hard to imagine a situation that so clearly illustrates this link between the environment and life issues as the impact of mercury and other toxic air pollution on children's health,” said Bishop Stephen Blaire of Stockton. “Children, inside and outside the womb, are uniquely vulnerable to environmental hazards and exposure to toxic pollutants in the environment.”

Catholics are called to protect human life *and* care for creation. Catholics are called to care for creation *and* protect human life.

Nearly one billion people lack access to safe water supplies; approximately one in eight people. Three and a half million people die each year from water-related disease. Today one child dies from a water-related disease every 20 seconds.

Today marks the 39th anniversary of Roe v Wade. Nearly 55 million children have died by abortion since it passed. Each abortion was legal; each child was innocent. May we wear the sackcloth of remorse for not protecting human life and all of God's creation. There is still time to repent, but time is running out.



Office of Life, Justice, and Peace