

**‘as stewards unite to
heal, care and
preserve god’s
creation’**

[Environment](#), [Global Warming](#)



' As Stewards unite to heal, care and preserve God's creation' Today there is an urgent need for ' ecological conversion' to protect not only the natural environment but also the human quality of life. Pope John-Paul II, " Life and nature are similar concepts because nature is the study of how life acts and interacts within the circle of existence". When we take the time to examine the beauty of the world around us, we are able to see parallels within our own lives. One who is attuned with nature is attuned with the practice of living. However our beautiful and natural environment has come under threat, there is undeniable evidence of global warming. Hundreds of species become extinct every day because we are cutting down the rain forests. All around the earth, environmentalists are pointing out devastation. There is hardly a day that passes by without alarming news reports about climate change. Hurricanes, typhoons, floods, tsunamis and droughts have become more frequent, more ferocious. It is mankind's responsibility to monitor their behaviour and attitudes towards the environment and to strive towards a greater solidarity with people and the planet. However this is not being practiced mainly because most people are not aware of how far the environment has been affected by our continuous exploitation of it. One way we can exhibit respect for creation and reverence for the Creator is by adopting various ways which will help in preserving natural environments, protecting endangered species, labouring to make human environments compatible with local ecology, employing appropriate technology, and carefully evaluating technological innovations, Reverence for the Creator should serve as ground for environmental responsibility. For the very plants and animals, mountains and oceans, which in their loveliness remind us of

our creator because of their fragility and uniqueness, are slowly but surely getting extinct. God who brings everything into being and sustains all existence is who we are accountable to, for what we do or fail to do to preserve and care for the earth and all its creatures. Dwelling in the presence of the creator, we begin to experience ourselves as part of creation, as stewards within it, not separate from it. As faithful stewards, fullness of life comes from living responsibly within God's creation. Stewardship implies that we must both care for creation according to standards that are not of our own making and at the same time be resourceful in finding ways to make the earth flourish. It is quite a difficult balance, requiring both a sense of limits and a definite spirit of experimentation. Even as we enjoy nature's beauty, stewardship places the responsibility for the well-being of all God's creatures. Respect for nature and respect for human life are inextricably related. " Respect for life, and above all for the dignity of the human person," →Pope John Paul II has written, extends also to us stewards, we must not be engaged in cutting down trees for quick or immediate gains and therefore cause environmental degradation. We should rather see the value of tree planting for various reasons. There is the stewardship of the way trees help to support the earth and maintain the environment. We should be responsive to anti-desertification measures such as over-grazing, tree planting and soil conservation. We must also have concern for the use of chemicals. Most agricultural and household chemicals are harmful to the environment. God has given us to protect and care for the earth, and this can only be done through sustainability, Sustainability of the environment which is a key

aspect of Stewardship. God has endowed us with reason and ingenuity that distinguish humans from other creatures. Ingenuity and creativity have enabled us to make remarkable advances and can help us address the problems of environmental degradation; however, we have not always used these endowments wisely. Past actions have produced good works and harmful ones, as well as unforeseen or unintended consequences. As we use the land, we need to heed God's call to exercise stewardship in a way that respects and protects the integrity of creation and to provide for the common good as well as for economic and social justice. Much of current agricultural development and teaching has been based on selfish motivation that of maximising gain for minimum effort, without consideration for the long term cost to our environment and the world at large. God made the earth in a balanced and integrated way, and yet our actions portray us fighting against the earth rather than protecting it. " That incentive grows even stronger when we appreciate that God has placed these gifts at our disposal because of his Love for us and so that we can better serve and please him. Taking action, to join together on the theme of climate change, to tackle this monumental challenge for the sake of the common good of our common home, now and in the future. As Christians, we are grateful for the gift of creation and we must therefore work towards ensuring that we raise the moral issue of the urgency of the environmental crisis. As individuals, as institutions, as nations we need a change of heart to preserve and protect the planet for our fellow creatures and generations to come. As Stewards, we should see the earth in a different light from others involved in human development. Our perspective shares the concern of many environmentalists

but in a different way. Because we now know that most of the climate change problems result from human activity it is the responsibility of each one of us to monitor our behaviour and attitudes towards the environment and to strive towards a greater solidarity with people and the planet. The pursuit of Peace - lasting peace based on justice - should to be an environmental priority because the earth itself bears the wounds and scars of war. Likewise, our efforts to defend the dignity and rights of the poor and of workers, to use the strength of our market economy to meet basic human needs, and to press for greater national and global economic justice are dearly linked to efforts to preserve and sustain the earth. These are not distinct and separate issues but complimentary challenges. We need to help build bridges among the peace, justice, and environmental agendas and constituencies. - Prepared by Maria Fernandez