

Spring 2013

## Canadian Catholic Bishops: Human beings and our environment

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### Recommended Citation

(2013). Canadian Catholic Bishops: Human beings and our environment. *Spiritan Magazine*, 37 (2). Retrieved from <https://dsc.duq.edu/spiritan-tc/vol37/iss2/8>

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# Human beings and our environment

“The document invites human beings to a stance of wonder before the created world. This profound wonder is what can motivate us to care properly for the environment, and it also points us to God’s presence in creation.”

**Bishop Donald Bolen, Saskatoon**

More attention will be given to the natural environment — appreciating it as God’s gift. We are determined to protect the environment by a more respectful relationship with the whole of nature, keeping in mind that natural resources are limited and that we need to recycle all that can be recycled.

**Spiritan General Chapter, Bagamoyo, Tanzania 2013**



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### **Humans are creatures made in God's image**

Human beings are creatures — we are not God. We recognize that creation comes to us as a gift from God. Unique among creatures, we are created in God's image, and therefore bear an inestimable dignity.

### **Creation has an Intrinsic Order**

Because of their privileged position in creation, human beings must recognize their responsibility to be guardians of this creation, and to ensure the proper balance of the ecosystems they depend on.

### **The Dignity of the Human Person, the Common Good and Nature**

Human beings recognize that the environment does not belong to them, but is a gift entrusted to them which demands responsibility in action. They discern the role granted to them from God by exercising their intelligence and ethical judgment.

### **Humanity's place in Creation**

Human beings have received the task of giving thanks for nature and caring for it. As stewards, human beings recognize that the environment does not belong to them, but is a gift entrusted to them which demands responsibility in action.

### **Care for the environment is a moral issue**

Because of the place of human beings in nature, care for the environment is never only an economic or technological issue; it is above all a moral one. The destruction of the environment ... is ultimately caused by a lack of Gospel values.

### **Solidarity**

Solidarity with respect to the environment is based on the requirements of justice and the common good, which is understood to extend not only between those living, but forward, to those not yet born.

### **Creation and Spirituality**

The wondrous beauty of creation ought to lead us to recognize within it the artistry of our Creator and to give him praise. The created world ... can lift our minds to God.

### **Conclusion**

It is our duty to encourage and support all efforts made to protect God's creation, and to bequeath to future generations a world in which they will be able to live.

May the Lord grant to Catholics and to all people of good will the virtue of hope, so that we will not lose heart as we strive to safeguard our environment.