
PRESS RELEASE
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**ARCHBISHOP PRENDERGAST COMMENTS ON THE ENCYCLICAL OF
POPE FRANCIS ON THE ENVIRONMENT**

*The Papal Encyclical, **Laudato Si'** ("Praise be to you, my Lord") has been released by the Vatican today. The Most Reverend Terrence Prendergast, SJ, Archbishop of Ottawa, made the following statement in response to this encyclical on the environment:*

"We have been waiting with great anticipation for Pope Francis' encyclical concerning care for God's creation. Saint John Paul II and Pope Emeritus Benedict set the stage for this encyclical through their writings that recognized the urgent need for each of us to take responsibility in the care of all creation through building a culture of life and our duty to bequeath a healthy planet to future generations.

Pope Francis provides us with a clearly defined moral framework to address the impact of climate change and environmental degradation on humanity, especially the poor and on all life on earth. Taking the words of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, Pope Francis reminds us: 'For human beings... to destroy the biological diversity ... by causing changes in its climate ...; to contaminate the earth's waters, its land, its air, and its life – these are sins' (LS #8).

The Pope adds some words of encouragement: 'Here I want to recognize, encourage and thank all those striving in countless ways to guarantee the protecting of the home which we share. Particular appreciation is owed to those who tirelessly seek to resolve the tragic effects of environmental degradation on the lives of the world's poorest' (LS #13). As Archbishop of Ottawa, I encourage everyone to absorb his words, helping ensure that Gospel values serve as the basis of our daily lives."

No further comment will be made by Archbishop Prendergast. John Dorner, PhD, Liaison for Environmental Stewardship of the Archdiocese of Ottawa is available for interviews on current and upcoming diocesan initiatives in response to the encyclical.

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