

Climate Change

Proposal

Be it resolved that the Loretto Community gathered in Assembly 2009 states unequivocally that climate change is one of the most critical issues of our time. And so, as we recognize the magnificence of creation, we embrace our moral responsibility to protect our planetary home for the future generations of all species, and we commit ourselves to Earth justice. We express our gratitude for the tireless work on behalf of Earth done by many individuals and groups for decades. But much more is needed. We urge strong and immediate action by individuals, communities, corporations, nations and the world community to curb carbon dioxide emissions sharply, so that all beings and the planetary systems on which we all depend may flourish.

Background/Rationale

- Whereas our faith teaches us that Planet Earth with its magnificent and flowering life, is a gift of God, that we are called to cherish and care for this planet, so that life of all kinds might blossom fully, and “Earth justice” might become a reality...
- Whereas, the consensus of the worldwide scientific community warns that our planet is warming at an alarming rate, and that this is largely due to human activity which emits excessive amounts of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases into the atmosphere,
- Whereas this climate change, left unchecked, will devastate planet Earth as we know,
- Whereas this climate change caused largely by the actions of those in the wealthy, developed world will have its most devastating impacts on the poorest least developed areas of the world,
- Whereas this climate change is unjust to the living creatures with whom we share our planet, threatening to destroy the interwoven life cycle we were given as a birthright and have a sacred obligation to pass on to future generations,
- Whereas slowing, stopping and ultimately reversing this climate trend requires that individuals, communities and nations lessen their “carbon footprint” on our planet in substantial ways, and
- Whereas climate action will require not only individual and communal lifestyle changes but also advocacy for strong public policy and international treaties implementing policies to cut CO2 emissions.

Implementation

1. Communally, therefore, we set our face in these directions, moving forward as our resources permit. We will:
 - a. Recommit ourselves to preserving the integrity of the living Earth and its interconnected web of life,
 - b. Do an energy audit of all the buildings owned by LLBI (if not already done), which includes small residences, within the next three years, and then make the necessary changes in insulating, weatherizing, and converting to the use of renewable energy sources as soon as possible,
 - c. Purchase the most fuel-efficient cars available when replacing vehicles currently in use,
 - d. Replace the coal-fired **heating** plant at the Motherhouse with a clean power source as soon as economically feasible, and in the meantime, make modifications that will lessen our carbon footprint as much as possible,
 - e. Evaluate our investment portfolio to include substantial investments in renewable energy technologies.

2. Individually, we pledge to:
 - a. Become, and remain, educated and informed on the scientific and political developments concerning climate change,
 - b. Examine our “energy use conscience” when it comes to the buildings in which we live and the transportation we use, and make the changes necessary to lessen our personal carbon footprint on the earth,
 - c. Travel in energy-efficient or energy-saving ways as often as possible, such as: public transportation, train travel (especially), energy efficient automobiles, and — if we can, and where we can — use the human power of bicycles or walking!
3. Both individually and communally, we pledge to:
 - a. Stay informed about domestic legislation and international treaties dealing with climate change,
 - b. Speak out publicly and advocate public policies – at local, state, national or international levels, which take strong and effective action to limit carbon dioxide emissions and increase the use of renewable energy,
 - c. Join and/or support coalitions of people of faith working for strong action on climate change,
 - d. Encourage our parishes, dioceses, or the agencies for which we work to make the changes necessary to save the planet from the ravages of climate change, and
 - e. Make our statements and commitments on these issues public in the media, on our Web site and through other means.

Submitted by

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