



Let the Son Shine

An Australian Catholic Response To Climate Change

By Columban Missionary Father Charles Rue, 2009

Foreword by Geraldine Doogue

The words 'climate change' are on many people's lips. What can the churches add?

Christian beliefs can help people to identify the central values they bring to the climate change issue. Faith can be a source of courage to help people urgently confront the changes needed in their individual and community lifestyles.

Catholics need to cooperate with others on the climate challenge at a deep level, but at this time they must strive to get the church's own house in order. Neglect would be a sin of omission.


This paper explores two major ways to address Catholic thinking and acting on climate change in the light of faith:

- prayer at every stage of a Catholic missionary response to climate change
- systematic response, using the see-judge-act model.

Systems matter. Climate change is being caused by a breakdown of Earth's temperature regulation system. So a Catholic response must be equally systematic. Catholics must:


- understand patterns of climate change systems
- expose modern economic systems that push energy-intensive lifestyle choices
- act to address the human causes of climate change.

'I consider this quite a prophetic work. Its apparent simplicity and brevity hides an abundance of virtue.' – Geraldine Doogue




‘No peaceful society can afford to neglect either respect for life or the fact that there is an integrity to creation.’

Pope John Paul II, 1 Jan 1990



‘For faith throws a new light [see] on everything, manifests God’s design [judge] for man’s total vocation, and thus directs the mind to solutions which are fully human [act].’

‘Church in the Modern World’, No. 11



God, Creator and Sustainer,
free us from ignorance about your gift of Earth.
Inspire us to act together in respect for your gift and
change our ways
as we relate to Earth’s rhythms with humility.
May we welcome the truth when scientists speak of climate
change, and
reject false pathways designed to confuse.
Help us to urge our politicians to take moral decisions and
urgent action in negotiating sustainable living.
Ground all our thoughts in your revealing Scriptures
and the wisdom of holy women and men who have gone
before us
to help cultivate a new creation as followers of your
Cosmic Son.
Give us a discerning spirit to work with the ecological and
the human,
the social and the economic realities of this world,
and instil in us a spirit of respect and compassion
able to imagine pathways of harmony.
Amen.

‘To pray is not to step outside history and withdraw to our own private corner of happiness. When we pray properly we undergo a process of inner purification.’

Pope Benedict XVI, 2007
‘Hope’ No. 33



‘We must therefore encourage and support the ‘ecological conversion’

Pope John Paul, 17 Jan 01



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36 pp, A4, full colour. Price: \$15ea including postage (less for multiple copies)