

Archbishop Applauds Pope's Encyclical, Echoes Please for Better Environmental Stewardship

In response to the official release earlier today by the Vatican of Pope Francis' encyclical on ecology, *Laudato Si*, or "Praised Be," Archbishop William E. Lori, Archbishop of Baltimore, applauded the Holy Father for calling attention to the need for responsible environmental stewardship.

"On this issue, the Pope has done what he has done since his election: he has illuminated and made new an age-old teaching of the Church and in doing so, begun a new conversation in hopes of advancing the common good," Archbishop Lori said.

"His message is simple and echoes that of the Book of Genesis: 'God gave us this world, and He asks us to take care of it.' By caring for the world around us, the Holy Father says, we are caring for each other.

"Whether one agrees or not with the scientific consensus on the link between human activity and recent climate change, the Holy Father rightly makes the moral case that the need remains for us to act to protect the our environment. We must resist the 'throwaway culture,' the Pope warns against, and seek ways in our daily lives to practice environmentally-friendly behavior."

The Archdiocese has taken such steps through efforts such as its recent agreement to create a 4-megawatt solar array in the Sykesville area and the use of the latest energy reduction technologies in new building projects. Area parishes and schools have taken similar steps, including the creation of wetland outflow projects and other practices that reduce storm water run-off. Several Archdiocesan Catholic schools have been named a Maryland Green School in recognition of their efforts to teach students ways to reduce ecological impact at home, school and in their communities.