

Take a truly global view about global climate

Tony Magliano's "Perspective" (CR, Nov. 15) recites the usual list of global-warming-alarmist slogans, but adds a Catholic twist by quoting Cardinal Renato Martino (head of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace), and implies that Cardinal Martino agrees with the IPCC report, the Al Gore movie, etc. In reality, Cardinal Martino would be categorized among the skeptics of Anthropomorphic Global Warming (AGW).

The globe is warming, as it has been for 10,000 years; nearly everyone agrees on that. What is NOT agreed at all is the notion that it's the fault of mankind (anthropomorphic). Cardinal Martino has counseled the Vatican to forebear from jumping on the bandwagon.

In the text of Magliano's opinion-piece, he quotes Cardinal Martino warning about knowing "the price of everything and the value of nothing." Already nations have figured out that the price of enforcing the Kyoto treaty (to reduce CO2 emissions) would have been extremely high, with virtually zero value; that's why it has been abandoned. The Vatican had good enough scientific advice to skip Kyoto the first time around, and will not carelessly agree to the next idea either. Preventing diseases like malaria from needlessly killing millions in Africa is much higher on the Vatican's priority list than swooning over computer-models predicting a rise in sea level during the next century (best guess equals 6 to 17 inches, not 20 feet as per the Al Gore movie). It is precisely because the church does care about "the poor, the vulnerable and generations yet unborn" that it does not buy into ineffective and economically harmful responses to scary hypothetical scenarios.

Moreover, Cardinal Martino and others at the Vatican hear almost daily from other Cardinals and Bishops in South America, where the coldest winter since 1917 continues to linger into November (their equivalent of May). A truly global view about global climate is a lot more rational and calmer than the Hollywood hype being bandied about in the American media.