

Newsletter No.14

January 2010

Happy New Year!

What an amazing few months it has been for Catholicism and the environment. First that extraordinary Papal Encyclical on the Environment in July, placing care for the natural world at the heart of Catholic teaching and action. Then at Windsor Castle in November no fewer than seven Catholic organizations – the Jesuits, the US Catholic Bishops' Conference, the Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales, the Catholic Coalition on Climate Change, Catholic Earthcare Australia, the Franciscans and CAFOD launched their long term commitments to protect the environment, in the presence of the Secretary-General of the United Nations HE Mr Ban Ki-moon pledging to spend the next seven years planning a strategy that will last for generations.

And now, just over a week ago, the Pope mentioned the vital importance of environment in education in his first homily of the year at St Peter's for the Feast of Mary. He renewed his call to "invest in education, establishing the objective - beyond the necessary transmission of technical-scientific notions - of a broader and deeper 'ecological responsibility', based in respect for the person and his fundamental rights and duties."

This, I think could be our motif for the year... In our next newsletter we'd love to hear from you about how your school is going to follow that through – what innovations and ideas do you have? What do you think will work?

Many of the recipients of this list have been receiving this newsletter from the beginning; some are new to it. To the former, I'd like to say thank you again for sending all your ideas and participation in the past year, so that others can be inspired by it. To the latter, I'd like to introduce this newsletter which started with Catholic schools in the southwest wanting to learn what other schools are doing for the environment "not just because we're schools but because we're Catholic".

You can learn more about the Alliance of Religions and Conservation (ARC) from our website www.arcworld.org, and more about our Windsor Event at www.windsor2009.org. The links page for previous Catholic Schools eco-newsletters is <http://tinyurl.com/y8taxtp>. Oh, and if you go to the www.windsor2009.org site, take a look at the jukebox and go to the Sunday Service at the 33.40 mark you'll hear the St Francis Canticle of Creation in a gospel version that – as you'll see by the end – had even the guards at Windsor Castle tapping their toes. We'll try and make a separate version of this – and of course if you'd like to use it in any way you'd be welcome.

Do be in touch with us at info@arcworld.org

All best wishes,
ARC
www.arcworld.org