

# Christian responsibility regarding climate change:

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*"God designated man as Lord of nature, but man has converted himself into an exploiter of nature."*

*Monseñor Romero (June 1975)*

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Climatic justice, the correct phrase for discussing the subject of climate change, is a theological subject, because the kingdom of God is justice, peace, and the entire chain of values for doing God's will.

The church of the world is concerned and includes in its pastoral and diaconal plan, as it should, the worldwide problem that is attacking God's creation.

To that end, the worldwide organism of churches works intensely responding to the mission to which God has entrusted us. Thus we count on ACT (Joint Action of Churches) to illuminate, educate, empower, and raise awareness regarding Mother Nature's cries of pain.

The Roman Catholic Church in their 43<sup>rd</sup> Mission of Peace (January 2010) selected the theme, "If you want to promote peace, protect creation."

The worldwide church, in their joint warning of the dangers and threat of death caused by wars, conflicts, terrorist attacks and violations of human rights, are no less worrisome and danger-filled, for the dangers caused by negligence of God's creation, specifically relating to nature and our planet: devastation and global warming.

Climate change is humanity's greatest challenge at this time. It is not necessary to be a prophet to predict more famines, sickness, and migrations.

## JUSTICIA CLIMÁTICA:

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*"God placed man in the garden to cultivate and care for it."*

*(Genesis 2:8)*

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The garden is our home, our planet, part of the cosmos and of all creation. The Bible describes our responsibility clearly. We are the gardeners, the care-givers and watchmen of the house; we are the ecologists.

As regards the truth of our ecological mission, we must take into account that the earth is filled with the love of God (Psalms 33:5). "The Lord loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of his unfailing love." All of creation, by way of the heavens and the earth, proclaim the glory of the presence of God. (Psalms 148).

To praise God is to be united with the entire cosmos, in communion with nature and with our ecological responsibilities; to know that as far as the fulfillment of our human responsibilities goes, the creator promises us His help, to be motivated agents and motivators to do what we must do. And we are unworthy servants if we only fulfill our duty.

The Biblical recommendation demands, through the word of God, to attend to the poor, to the most vulnerable. Thus it is described in the story of the Final Judgment (Matthew 25:31-46).





Here we find a strong call to solidarity and justice for the poor. "That which you have done to the least of my brothers, you have done to me."

Stewardship should be oriented toward the spirit of solidarity, and climatic justice must respond in this way. In the responsibility of each nation for the protection of the climate system that future generations will inherit, there must be terms of security with a basis in fairness, in accordance with the abilities of each region or country.

The rich possess the means and the conditions to protect, adapt, and mitigate the harmful effects of climate change.

The poor confront the damages done by a problem they have not created. This is the ecological injustice.

The rich must participate and contribute with their investments and technology transfer so that the poor can have sustainable development, conducive to conditions of sustainability and security.

Social injustice and climatic injustice go together. Climatic tragedies bring to light the social tragedy living among needy communities, declaring in this way that the biggest tragedy is the vulnerability that lives within the poor.

The only way to address this is to mitigate the negative effects, with preventative measures, measures that must be oriented to change development models and lifestyles; that is, an improvement in living conditions that doesn't harm the planet or the environment, one that promises better living conditions in the future.

It will be necessary to turn to technology transfer, for example utilizing solar or wind energy. Emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> produced by developing and industrialized nations constitute the largest contamination of the planet.

Therefore, regarding Christian responsibility, all children of God are responsible for creation, and responsibility must be treated like a fiscal tax law. Whoever does

the damage must pay for it, to ensure justice for the planet, creation, and for the poor of the world. On the other hand, the responsibility must be to eradicate the cultural mentality, it must change the way of thinking, it must enable us to be conscious of effecting urgent changes in lifestyles, ways and customs. We must restore our mission and our ecological being. We are caretakers of creation, not the owners. We are just one more species, the only ones who can assume responsibility.

Finally, poor countries must call on rich countries to commit to reducing the emission of gases by a significant percent. Rich countries invest barely 1% of what is needed. Measures must be implemented, along with a strategic plan, and an account must be requested of that for which we hope.

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