



**SISTERS**  
OF THE PRESENTATION  
*of the Blessed Virgin Mary*



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*Stand Together*  
*and spend yourselves for the poor*

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JUSTICE UPDATE – MAY 2007

## How do my actions make environmental refugees of my sisters and brothers?

The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed May 22, the ***International Day for Biological Diversity*** (IBD). The goal is to increase understanding and awareness of biodiversity issues. This year the theme integrates climate change and biological diversity. Biodiversity includes the variety of life on Earth found in the many ecosystems of our planet. Through the ecosystems, the products of many living beings sustain human life. In integrating these two aspects, citizens of Earth are called to ensure the adaptation of biodiversity to a changing climate with the goal of ensuring the livelihoods of individuals who are the poorest of the poor.

Al Gore's movie, *An Inconvenient Truth* brought climate change to the forefront of America's news. In understanding climate change, we may do well to examine the summaries of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) that assesses scientific, technical and socio-economic information relevant for the understanding of climate change. This year a fourth report is being written on the "state of the climate." On February 2, IPCC released its first part describing both human and natural drivers in the change of our climate. On April 6, IPCC released a second part examining the observations of climate change including damage to biological diversity. On May 4, the third part of the report including recommendations for action in regard to climate change was released.

How many of us in our, ***care for the Earth***, have been alert to these reports or have at least skimmed their summaries to know what is contained within them? How vigilant are we to what is shared with us in our media or in international media? Whether we believe climate change to be natural or human made, the change in climate is one of the principal threats to biological diversity on our planet.

### CONNECTIONS

We believe that all life is sacred and interdependent. We commit ourselves to promote policies that protect and enhance the environment. ([http://www.dubuquepresentations.org/New\\_Site/ourvalues.cfm](http://www.dubuquepresentations.org/New_Site/ourvalues.cfm))  
Respect Earth and life in all its diversity. (Earth Charter part 1, #1)

### REFLECTION

What can I/we do to reduce the risks of climate change individually/communally? "***Reduce, reuse, and recycle***" is a slogan still relevant today. What would happen if we really sat with these words and actions and asked consistently in our lives how we can reduce and reduce and keep reducing?

## **ACTIONS:**

1. For more information on the IPCC reports, visit <http://www.ipcc.ch/> (scroll down on the right) Be alert to articles with emphasis on “**care of the earth**” and share these with others. Sit with “reduce, reuse, and recycle” and ask how I can live more simply so that others may simply live. You are urged to send a note to your legislators sharing with them your commitment to care for the earth while urging them to take real action toward climate change.

2. The G8 Summit will take place on June 6-8 in Heiligendamm, Germany. The IPA urges religious leaders and groups to call upon the heads of states to fulfill their stated goals of supporting a global response to **HIV and AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria that achieves Universal Access to comprehensive prevention programs, treatment, care and support by 2010.**

To read the letter, visit [http://www.e-alliance.ch/g8\\_summit.jsp](http://www.e-alliance.ch/g8_summit.jsp) with organizational endorsement at the bottom.

3. Senators, along with the Bush administration, are currently negotiating **compromise immigration reform legislation**, which could be considered by the full Senate **the week of May 14**. It is important that Senators continue hearing from us, even if we have called before. Justice for Immigrants (JFI) urges messages that focus on the USCCB key points:

- a) A legalization program which includes family unity and a path to citizenship.
- b) A new worker program with worker protections and a path to citizenship.
- c) Preservation of family reunification and elimination of family backlogs and waiting times.

Senators can be contacted at: 202-224-3121. For talking points and a sample letter, visit the following: [www.justiceforimmigrants.org](http://www.justiceforimmigrants.org).

4. Throughout May, members of Congress will introduce legislation related to various sections of the **Farm Bill**. These various bills, or at least parts of them, will eventually be pulled into the comprehensive, omnibus 2007 Farm Bill. Contact your legislators (202.224.3121) as they formulate policy and urge them to reauthorize and reform the 2007 Farm Bill with the primary goals of protecting God’s creation and feeding the global hungry while maintaining the dignity of the farmer and farm worker.