



Feel free to incorporate these scripture passages and religious quotes into your sermon/talk, writings, or prayers.

These biblical readings are also a good basis to contextualise your sermons and speeches

Biblical Readings on the Environment

[Genesis 1: 11-23. First creation story

Genesis 2:4b - Genesis 2:25. Second creation story

Deuteronomy 26:1-12. For the People of God, the Promised Land was the fulfillment of the process of salvation that began with the exodus from Egypt. Whilst in the wilderness they were given guidance as to how they should treat the land that they had been promised.

Leviticus 25:1-5 & 8-15. In Genesis 1 we read how God values the Sabbath as a time to rest. In these verses from Leviticus we understand that the land is ordained a time of rest too, a common practice in many traditional societies.

Deuteronomy 26:5-10 reads as a creed recited by the people of God in worship.

Psalms 104. This Psalm appears to interweave the creation story from Genesis 1 with the contemporary surroundings of the people of Israel. In doing so the psalm gives a dynamic quality to creation as bearing witness to God's continuing activity rather than a one-off act.

Matthew: 6:19-21, 24-31, 7:4-27, 8:20, 10:29-31, 21:15-16.

John 15:1-5.

Paul's letter to the Romans 8: 1-25.

The mighty deeds of the Creator are sung in psalm 65:6-13 and creation is described in Psalm 104:1-32. This psalm is a hymn of praise to God.

Psalms 103 and 104 are twin peaks among the poems in praise of God, first as Redeemer (Psalm 103) and then as Creator (Psalm 104)

Read Psalm 19:1-11.

Rev 8:7-11

The Earth has a future, even after Jesus' return. It will be renewed (Rom 8:19-22), and will be our eternal home (2 Pet 3:13).

As individual believers, and as churches, we need to repent of our environmental carelessness, and of our sometimes willful ignorance. Although we may have to live with some of the consequences of our past environmental failings, if we humbly acknowledge these to God, the healing of the land will begin. (2 Chr 7:14)

We should care about the kind of world our children will inherit (Pro 13:22a, Ezr 9:12b).

Environmental Quotes from Scripture

Colossians 1:16-17. All things were created by Him and for Him. He is before all things and in Him all things hold together.

Lev. 25:23-24. The land is mine and you are but aliens and my tenants. Throughout the country that you hold as a possession, you must provide for the redemption of the land.

Ezekiel 34:2-4. Woe to the shepherds of Israel who only take care of themselves! Should not the shepherds take care of the flock? You eat the curds, clothe yourselves with the wool and slaughter the choice animals, but you did not take care of the flock! You have not strengthened the weak or healed the sick or bound up the injured. You have not brought back the strays or searched for the lost. You have ruled them harshly and brutally.

Ezekiel 34:17-18. As for you, my flock... Is it not enough for you to feed on good pasture? Must you also trample the rest of your pasture with your feet? Is it not enough for you to drink clear water? Must you also muddy the rest with your feet?

Jer. 2:7. I brought you into a fertile land to eat its fruit and rich produce. But you came and defiled my land and you made my inheritance detestable.

James 5:5. You have lived luxuriously on the earth and led a life of wanton pleasure; you have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter.

Mark 4:19. ...and the worries of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word and it becomes unfruitful.

Luke 12:15,23,34. And He said to them, "Beware and be on your guard against every form of greed; for not even when one has an abundance does life consist of his possessions. For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Quotes from other Catholic Figures and Writings

Environmental pollution is making particularly unsustainable the lives of the poor of the world. In dialogue with Christians of various confessions, we must pledge ourselves to take care of creation and to share its resources in solidarity. - *Pope Benedict XVI during his Angelus address on Sunday, Aug. 27, 2006.*

Do not be fooled by those who see you as just another consumer in a market of undifferentiated possibilities, where choice itself becomes the good, novelty usurps beauty, and subjective experience displaces truth...
—*Pope Benedict XVI at World Youth Day, June 2008*

Christians, in particular, realize that their responsibility within creation and their duty

towards nature and the Creator are an essential part of their faith. - *John Paul II, 1990 World Day of Peace Message, no. 15.*

If the protection of the environment involves costs, they should be justly distributed, taking due account of the different levels of development of various countries and the need for solidarity with future generations.
—*Pope Benedict XVI, World Day of Peace Message, December 2007*

We cannot interfere in one area of the ecosystem without paying due attention to both the consequences of such interference in other areas and to the well-being of future generations. - *John Paul II, 1990 World Day of Peace Message, no. 6.*
It is manifestly unjust that a privileged few should continue to accumulate excess goods, squandering available resources, while masses of people are living in conditions of misery at the very lowest level of subsistence. - *John Paul II, 1990 World Day of Peace Message, no. 8.*

Created things belong not to the few, but to the entire human family. – *US Catholic Bishops, Renewing the Earth, 1991, p. 8.*

At its core, global climate change is not about economic theory or political platforms, nor about partisan advantage or interest group pressures. It is about the future of God's creation and the one human family. – *US Catholic Bishops, Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence and the Common Good, 2001*

Man's dominion over inanimate and other living beings granted by the Creator is not absolute; it is limited by concern for the quality of life of his neighbor, including generations to come; it requires a religious respect for the integrity of creation. - *Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 2415*

“We are called to reflect on our individual roles and purposes in life and ask ourselves what we need to develop our human qualities, to grow in love of God and neighbour. In a context of environmental justice, this reflection will allow us to make serious choices- including the choice not to consume what we do not need, and above all, what is likely to harm others.” --*The Call of Creation, God's Invitation and the Human Response, Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales*

“The natural world is made up of many different delicate and intricately interconnected cycles that have nurtured and sustained life for millions of years, giving fertile soil, clean water, and a pure atmosphere. Now these life-sustaining mechanisms are breaking down through pollution and abuse.” -- *The Call of Creation, God's Invitation and the Human Response, Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales*

“Human beings are created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27), and have the special gift and challenge of sharing in God's own love for creation. We ourselves are part of creation, formed out of the earth, and dependent upon the rest of creation for our continued existence.” – *The*

Call of Creation, God's Invitation and the Human Response, Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales

"The plight of the earth demonstrates that an individualistic materialism cannot be allowed to drive out responsibility and love, and that care for those in need, and respect for the rights of future generations, are necessary to sustain a proper life for all." -- *The Call of Creation, God's Invitation and the Human Response, Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales*

God intended the earth and everything in it for the use of all human beings and people. Thus, under the leadership of justice and in the company of charity, created goods should flow fairly to all. – *Populorum Progressio* #20

The environment is God's gift to everyone, and in our use of it we have a responsibility towards the poor, towards future generations and towards humanity as a whole. - *Caritas in Veritate* 48

The whole human race suffers as a result of environmental blight, and generations yet unborn will bear the price for our failure to act today. - *Renewing the Earth, U.S.Catholic Bishops, 1991, p. 2.*

***Other useful websites:

<http://www.christianecology.org/Stewardship.html>

www.ecocongregationireland.org

<http://bibletools.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Library.sr/CT/PW/k/191/The-Bible-and-Environment.htm>

<http://www.thesocialagenda.org/article9.htm#1>