

Students from St. Joseph High School in Brooklyn, New York, participate in the Global Climate Strike in New York City Sept. 20, 2019. (CNS photo/Gregory A. Shemitz)

by Fr. Emmet Farrell

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Editor's note: *In his Lenten "Reflections on the Care of Creation," Fr. Emmet Farrell examines our impact on the planet and our responsibility, as people of faith, for our common home. You can sign up here to receive Fr. Farrell's reflections in your inbox every Monday, Wednesday and Friday from Feb. 17 to April 2, and you can view the entire series here.*

See:

U.S. Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto of Nevada is a co-sponsor of the Clean Energy for America Act. In an article published in America magazine on Nov. 30, 2017, she wrote:

> Environmental stewardship is nothing new to our faith. From the Old Testament to Pope Francis' Laudato Si', our faith has recognized and treasured mankind's intimate relationship with the earth and all the life that calls it home. ...
>
> The reckless contamination of our air, water and soil has reached crisis levels. ... These changes affect the most vulnerable nations worldwide. ... My faith has shown me that we are all part of an interrelated whole through Christ. If our climate breaks down, it will cause additional breakdowns of global supply chains that provide medicine to the sick, and it will create droughts that will lead to even greater outbreaks of famine across the world. As Christians, we are responsible for our fellow brothers and sisters suffering and fighting for the basic resources we all need to survive.
>
> To deny this is to turn a deaf ear to God's teachings. As Pope Francis has expressed, we must focus less on maximizing profits and more on what nourishes the spirit. ... As fellow U.S. citizens, human beings and Catholics, we cannot stand idle as our country contributes to the ecological destruction of our planet.

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Judge:

> Unless citizens control political power — national, regional and municipal — it will not be possible to control damage to the environment. (*Laudato Si'*, 179)
>
> I (Pope Francis) will point to the intimate relationship between the poor and the fragility of the planet, the conviction that everything in the world is connected … and the proposal of a new lifestyle. (*Laudato Si'*, 16)
>
> Some circles maintain that current economics and technology will solve all environmental problems, and argue, in popular and non-technical terms, that the problems of global hunger and poverty will be resolved simply by market growth. … They may not affirm such theories with words, but nonetheless support them with their deeds by showing no interest in more balanced levels of production, a better distribution of wealth, concern for the environment and the rights of future generations. Their behaviour shows that for them maximizing profits is enough. (*Laudato Si'*, 109)

Act:

- Read Genesis 2:15 and consider how you show protection and responsible stewardship.
- Make copies of the St. Francis Pledge and discuss with others actions you can do around the five elements of the pledge.
- Evaluate how you are influencing or pressuring church leaders and elected representatives to accept science and act to reverse climate change.

This story appears in the **Reflections on the Care of Creation** feature series. View the full series.