NATIONAL CATHOLIC REPORTER
Published on *National Catholic Reporter* (https://www.ncronline.org)

# G8 country bishops urge protection of poor

Jerry Filteau | Jun. 24, 2009 NCR Today

In a letter to leaders participating in the G8 Summit in Italy, July 8-10, the presidents of the Catholic bishops? conferences of the G8 nations urged Summit leaders to ?take concerted actions to protect poor persons and assist developing countries.?

The bishops observed that poor persons and nations have contributed the least to creating the economic crisis and to the human cause of global climate change, but in both cases are likely to suffer tragic consequences.

The conference presidents wrote: ?Our moral tradition commits the Church to protecting human life and dignity, especially of the poorest, most vulnerable members of the human family. In the faces of poor persons the Catholic Church sees the face of Christ whom we serve in countries throughout the world.?

The G8 leaders include President Obama and the heads of state of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Russian Federation and the United Kingdom. Cardinal Francis George, president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), signed the letter, dated June 22.

The bishops reiterated Pope Benedict XVI?s call that foreign assistance to developing countries not become a casualty of the financial crisis. They wrote: ?Ironically poor people have contributed the least to the economic crisis facing our world, but their lives and livelihoods are likely to suffer the greatest devastation because they struggle at the margins in crushing poverty.? The bishops called for ?deepening partnerships with developing countries so that their peoples can be active agents in their own development, participating in political, governmental, economic and social reforms that serve the common good of all.?

Moving to the issue of global climate change, the bishops noted that ?poor countries and peoples who have contributed the least to the human factors driving global climate change are most at risk of its harmful consequences.? They wrote: ?Concrete commitments should be agreed upon and mechanisms should be created to mitigate additional global climate change and to help poor persons and developing nations adapt to its effects as well as to adopt appropriate technologies for sustainable development.?

The bishops concluded, ?The G8 Summit takes place in the shadow of a global economic crisis, but its actions can help bring a light of hope to our world. By asking first how a given policy will affect the poor and the vulnerable, you can help assure that the common good of all is served. As a human family we are only as healthy as our weakest members.?

The full text of the letter can be found on the USCCB Web Site. [1]

**Source URL (retrieved on *07/28/2016 - 21:54*):** https://www.ncronline.org/blogs/ncr-today/g8-country-bishops-urge-protection-poor

**Links:**
[1] http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/international/2009-g8-ltr.pdf