

God will not fix the environmental mess

Carol Meyer | Jan. 17, 2011 Eco Catholic

It's funny how our faith is so selective. When it asks us to do something like love our enemies, it's weak to non-existent. But when we can employ it to our advantage, it soars. Take the issue of the environment. People that aren't normally that trusting in God suddenly have unshakable faith that God is going to fix the problem. Well now, isn't that convenient? We can just keep on with business as usual, with nary a care about the consequences to the Earth, because God is going to take care of everything. Now why didn't I think of that? No change or sacrifice required. Great!

My first reaction is to say the burden of proof lies with those who think God will solve everything. Since when? I didn't see God jump in and save the Jews from the holocaust, stop the oil spill, or miraculously eliminate the AIDS epidemic. God has never stopped great evils and tragedies from happening in human history, and we have no reason to believe that God ever will.

In a nutshell, here's how things seem to work. God gives us complete freedom and when we make mistakes, we live with the consequences, which hopefully teaches us to change our ways. We humans have and are making some horrible mistakes (dare I call them sins?), whether out of ignorance or culpability, that are rapidly undermining the ability of the Earth to rejuvenate itself and sustain life. Our proper response should be, like our forebears of old, to put on sackcloth and ashes and beg God, the Earth, and its community of life for forgiveness and to work tirelessly to amend our arrogant, destructive ways. Maybe it's because we can't face the magnitude of transformation required to set things right, that we toss the problem in God's lap and say, "Here. You fix it."

In a way, God is the only one who can fix it, but not like we expect. God has to work through us, so we're not off the hook. We have to pray and work like never before, unleashing every drop of creativity, courage, and determination we possess, letting God's Spirit move in us to solve the Earth crisis. As Catholics and other people of faith, we should be the first to renounce the violence, greed, selfishness, pride, separation, and other vices that are at the root of the human devastation of Earth. I have to believe that if we wake up and repent before it is too late, every manner of divine aid will come to our assistance, and we can fix the mess.

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