

CCSJ urges citizens to mark Earth Hour on Sat 27 March

The Catholic Commission for Social Justice urges TT citizens to mark Earth Hour on Saturday 27 March, 2010 by turning off your non-essential lights and other electrical appliances for 1 hour from **8:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.**, local time, “to raise awareness towards the need to take action on climate change. Earth Hour is a global event organised by the World Wide Fund for Nature, also known as World Wildlife Fund.” (Wikipedia).

As the Earth Hour website (www.earthhour.org) states: “Earth Hour 2010 will continue to be a global call to action to every individual, every business and every community; a call to stand up, to show leadership and be responsible for our future.

“On Earth Hour hundreds of millions of people, schools, organizations, corporations and governments around the world will come together to make a bold statement about their concern for climate change by doing something quite simple—turning off their lights for one hour...show the world you’re taking action on climate change... Your leadership might even inspire others to do the same”

“Since its inception three years ago, Earth Hour’s non-partisan approach has captured the world’s imagination and became a global phenomenon. **Nearly one billion people** turned out for Earth Hour 2009 – involving 4,100 cities in 87 countries on seven continents.

On Saturday, about “812 icons and landmarks worldwide will turn off their lights for Earth Hour”, including the Empire State Building, Las Vegas Strip, UN Headquarters, Great Pyramids of Giza, Acropolis and Parthenon in Athens, St Peter’s Basilica in Vatican City, Big Ben and Houses of Parliament in London, Elysee Palace and Eiffel Tower in Paris, Beijing’s Birds Nest and Water Cube, Symphony of Lights in Hong Kong, Sydney’s Opera House.

Pope Benedict XVI says: “*Our earth speaks to us, and we must listen if we want to survive.*” (2007). The Pope reminds us in his 2010 Peace Message that human ecology and natural ecology are inextricably linked. Climate change affects us all. On 23 February, 2010, CCSJ launched a Draft Framework towards an Environmental Policy for the Archdiocese of Port of Spain. See: www.rcsocialjusticett for ways in which you can reduce your carbon footprint.

Recently our Government in TT launched, for consultation, a Draft Climate Change Policy, a Draft Forest Policy and Draft Protected Areas Policies. The challenge for us is to move from policy to practice; to ensure that we promote the integrity of God’s creation. Catholics believe that the goods of the earth are a gift from God, for all to share in – including those generations that will come after us. The Bible (Genesis) tells us that man and woman are to cultivate and care for creation. Let’s respect creation and enjoy the beauty and splendour of nature.

The effects of climate change are already being felt around the world. Saturday 27 gives us an opportunity to stand in solidarity with each other to demonstrate our concern to promote a sustainable future for all. Show that you are willing to promote environmental justice: TURN

OFF YOUR LIGHTS FROM 8:30 PM – 9:30 PM ON SATURDAY.

Contact Leela Ramdeen, Chair, CCSJ on 299 8945 for further information.