



# A message to our Bishops on behalf of the poor and vulnerable across Indiana


We are faithful Catholics from across the dioceses in Indiana who are concerned about God's creation. We concur with the US Conference of Catholic Bishops who state that


**“The Catholic Church brings a distinct perspective to the discussion of environmental questions by lifting up the moral dimensions of this issue and the needs of the most vulnerable among us.”**


We know that things can change. We have HOPE.

**A Global Urgency** The time is now “... for a new dialogue about how we are shaping the future of our planet. We need a conversation which includes everyone, since the environmental challenge we are undergoing, and its human roots, concern and affect us all.” (*Laudato Si' 14*).

**In Indiana** We are concerned particularly for the sacred elements of air, water, and land in our home state and their impact on all forms of life. We need to work on behalf of the most vulnerable who do not have the resources to mobilize or move to a safer, healthier place and for our future generations.

 **Air** Toxic waste products from coal-fired plants are contaminating the air, affecting the people who live nearby, mainly in low income areas. *Indiana ranks 44 out of 50 states in air quality in terms of average exposure to fine particulate matter (United Health Foundation, 2018).*

 **Water** Long-term drinking water resources in our state are threatened by chemical releases from current and historical industrial use, urban sprawl, improperly designed and constructed coal ash ponds and leaking landfills. *Indiana continues to have thousands of contaminated sites and wellhead protection areas where aquifer water quality has degraded.*

 **Land** The ground we live on in Indiana has been impacted by industrial and commercial development without concern for the long-term impacts. Let us continue to be vigilant with regard to the use of our natural landscapes, forests and wetlands to ensure a liveable future for all. *Only 4% of Indiana's land area is protected for its ecological value or for outdoor recreation (HEC).*

**Our Request** During this 5th Anniversary Year of *Laudato Si'*, let's make our collective voice heard.

**Support efforts by the Indiana Catholic Conference** to care for our common home by:

- Protecting Hoosier drinking water from coal ash contamination
- Making it easier for homeowners, churches, and schools to install rooftop solar
- Opposing bills which slow the transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy
- Supporting bills that decrease carbon emissions

**Encourage Catholics** in your respective dioceses to be in solidarity with Catholics across the state to safeguard creation according to each one's talents.

**Pray** for the poor, the marginalized, all those affected by the climate crisis and for future generations, that all of humanity can live out our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork.

Your brothers and sisters in Christ,

*Indiana Catholics for Creation*

[www.OurCommonHome.org/IC4C](http://www.OurCommonHome.org/IC4C)