

Justice and Peace and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC)

“No one can celebrate a genuine Christmas without being truly poor... The self-sufficient, the proud, those who, because they have everything, look down on others, those who have no need even of God – for them there will be no Christmas ... Only the poor, the hungry, those who need someone to come on their behalf, only they will have that someone... That someone is God. Emmanuel. God-with-us ... Without poverty of spirit, there can be no abundance of God.”
(Oscar Romero)

The truth of Archbishop Romero’s words cuts deeply as we reflect on the Climate Change meetings being held in Paris. For 12 days, 50,000 delegates and lobbyists hope to draft a global treaty to dramatically reduce man-made greenhouse gas emissions.

A recent editorial in the November 29th issue of the Catholic Register commends the efforts being made by the international community to responsibly clean up years that ravished our earth. The editor makes the valid point that to fulfill the mandates the root problem of consumerism needs to be addressed.

Simply establishing reduction targets would be a hollow outcome without recognizing the moral crisis behind this climate emergency. The planet is a mess because the developed world has been seduced by a consumer mentality that craves wealth, travel, fashion, technology and all manner of creature comforts. People are addicted to lifestyles that a wheezing planet simply can’t sustain. (*Catholic Register, Nov. 29, 2015*)

The article continues with how the consumerism mentality is sustained at the expense of the poor because to suggest an alternative would be “political suicide” for governments.

A consumer culture sorely in need of a spiritual and ethical enlightenment must share the responsibility. Ultimately, the planet is choking due to rampant human consumption. Until people awaken to a moral imperative to live more simply and in respect for God’s creation, genuine environmental cleanup will remain an unanswered prayer. (*Catholic Register, Nov. 29, 2015*)

Do you agree or disagree? And who gets to celebrate Christmas????

