



STEWARDS OF OUR EARTH All of God's Creation

Social Justice Committee, Holy Cross Parish, Mt. Airy, August 18, 2024

Sustainable Energy Sources for A Sustainable Planet

Energy is needed for our life on earth – for heating, cooling, lighting, driving cars, manufacturing, cooking, computers – to name a few. **How we access this energy plays a significant role in how healthy our environment will be.** Right now, fossil fuels (also known as dirty fuels) are our main source of energy. For years there have been successful efforts in transitioning to cleaner energy sources such as wind and solar, but this critical transition is ever faced with challenges.

Recently, the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee voted to move forward a dirty energy bill (**Energy Permitting Reform Act**) that “**will endanger our climate and public health, and undermine our clean energy future** by: opening up federal lands and waters to further oil and gas leasing; fast-tracking or even eliminating review of proposed gas export projects that harm communities and perpetuate the climate crisis; and locking in new greenhouse gas emissions estimated to be equivalent to the annual emissions from 165 coal-fired power plants.

The United States is already the world's largest exporter of fracked gas. Due to the unchecked burning of fossil fuels, communities nationwide are experiencing catastrophic climate and health impacts.” (*Sierra Club Insider*, 7/30/24)

“We do not have to choose between clean energy and environmental protection, we can do both.

We can rapidly build out the clean energy infrastructure and supply chain we need to combat climate change while requiring strong environmental protections and engagement with impacted communities. **Environmental laws like NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) that require federal agencies to transparently examine a project’s impacts are critical to ensuring that our clean energy transition is grounded in justice and benefits all communities.**” (Raúl García, *Earthjustice Alerts*, 8/1/24)

[Urge your Members of Congress to protect our future by opposing this fossil fuel giveaway.](#)

Let us follow the example of Pope Francis who announced in his papal document *Fratello Sole or Brother Sun* measures to transition Vatican City to using solar energy as its main source of electricity. The agrivoltaic system would use land in an extra-territory of Vatican City situated outside of Rome for farming and solar energy production.

The document states, “We need to make a transition toward a sustainable development model that reduces greenhouse gas emissions into the atmosphere. Humanity has the technological means necessary to face this environmental transformation and its pernicious ethical, social, economic, and political consequences and, among these, solar energy plays a fundamental role. The Holy Father expressed his desire to ‘contribute to efforts of all states’ to abide by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement ... to combat the challenges of climate change on our ‘common home.’” (Kristina Millare, *Catholic News Agency*, Vatican City, 6/26/24)

Comments on this column may be directed to the Social Justice Committee at socialjustice@holycrossphl.org.