



# The Ontario Provincial Election *and* the Catholic Church

***Election Date: Thursday, June 2, 2022***

## THE ENVIRONMENT

### ***The Issue from a Catholic Perspective***

In Catholic teaching, the issue of what needs to be done to protect the environment both today and for future generations is not merely a political one, but a moral one. After creating the world and calling it good (*Genesis 1:31*), God tasked us with being the caretakers of His creation (*Genesis 2:15*).

It's not a responsibility that can be taken lightly. "Living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience" (Pope Francis, *Laudato Si', On Care for Our Common Home*, 217).

Unfortunately, we have not always been the best stewards of creation. As St. John Paul II wrote, human beings frequently "see no other meaning in their natural environment than what serves for immediate use and consumption" (*Redemptor Hominis*, 15).

So as we approach the upcoming Ontario provincial election, it is important for each of us to understand the various political parties' environmental policies and discern whether and how those policies contribute to the protection of God's creation.

### DID YOU KNOW?

- Ontario generates over 12 million metric tonnes of municipal solid waste per year, even with ongoing waste-reduction efforts (*Ont. Auditor Report, 2019*)
- The average Canadian uses 411 litres of water every day (*Statistics Canada, 2019*)
- Ontario's average annual temperature has increased by 1.3°C since 1948, higher than global average of 0.8°C (*Environment and Climate Change Canada*)



### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION BEFORE YOU VOTE JUNE 2, 2022

- Which candidate do I believe will take their vocation to be stewards of God's creation most seriously?
- How can I hold candidates to account to treat environmental and ecological issues with the importance they deserve?

*Ask your candidate what actions  
their government would take to demonstrate  
a commitment to protect God's creation.*

**CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING ON THE ENVIRONMENT**

***From Pope Paul VI***

People are “suddenly becoming aware that by an ill-considered exploitation of nature (we) risk destroying it. Not only is the material environment becoming a permanent menace – pollution and refuse, new illness and absolute destructive capacity – but the human framework is no longer under man’s control, thus creating an environment for tomorrow which may well be intolerable. The Christian must turn to new perceptions in order to take on responsibility, together with the rest of men, for a destiny which from now on is shared by all.”

*(Octogesima Adveniens, 21)*

***From St. John Paul II***

“Exploitation of the earth not only for industrial but also for military purposes and the uncontrolled development of technology outside the framework of a long-range authentically humanistic plan often bring with them a threat to man’s natural environment, alienate him in his relations with nature and remove him from nature. It was the Creator’s will that man should communicate with nature as an intelligent and noble ‘master’ and ‘guardian,’ and not as a heedless ‘exploiter’ and ‘destroyer.’”

*(Redemptor Hominis, 15)*

***From Pope Benedict XVI***

“The Church has a responsibility towards creation and she must assert this responsibility in the public sphere. In so doing, she must defend not only earth, water and air as gifts of creation that belong to everyone. She must above all protect mankind from self-destruction.”

*(Caritas In Veritate, 51)*

***From Pope Francis***

“Each community can take from the bounty of the earth whatever it needs for subsistence, but it also has the duty to protect the earth and to ensure its fruitfulness for coming generations.”

“Along with the importance of little everyday gestures, social love moves us to devise larger strategies to halt environmental degradation and to encourage a ‘culture of care’ which permeates all of society.”

“True statecraft is manifest when, in difficult times, we uphold high principles and think of the long-term common good.”

*(Laudato Si’, 67, 231, 178)*

We have a duty to be well-informed and to vote.

Learn more about the major political parties’ positions on issues of importance to Catholics.

For more details, visit:  
[www.archtoronto.org/election](http://www.archtoronto.org/election)



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