



Religious Coalition of the Great Lakes

Preserving Our Great Lakes As A Gift From God



Background

The Great Lakes water system – consisting of Lakes Huron, Ontario, Michigan, Erie and Superior – is one of the largest in the world, spanning more than 94,000 square miles and providing one-fifth of the world's and nine-tenths of the U.S. fresh surface water supply.

In recent years, the fragile -- and essential -- ecosystem supported by the Great Lakes has come under attack by industrial interests seeking to harvest the many natural resources the Lakes provide such as natural gas, valuable metals, minerals and more.

The problem is that many of the mining/harvesting practices use chemicals and/or produce by-products that contaminate local ground and surface water supplies and harm wildlife.

Reflection

“...for the land is Mine; for you are but aliens and sojourners with Me. Thus for every piece of your property, you are to provide for the redemption of the land.” Leviticus 25: 23-24

The Earth was created as an inheritance from God to all of humankind – a gift the Creator entrusted to us to care for and use wisely. Every inhabitant of this planet is called to be a steward of Earth's bounty, beauty and resources.

The Catechism clearly states that all of humanity bears the responsibility for cherishing and preserving the endowment of creation:

In God's plan man and woman have the vocation of "subduing" the earth as stewards of God. This sovereignty is not to be an arbitrary and destructive domination. God calls man and woman, made in the image of the Creator "who loves everything that exists", to share in his providence toward other creatures; hence their responsibility for the world God has entrusted to them. (373)

A key element of this stewardship of Earth is the responsibility to protect God's gift from those who – either knowingly, or through ignorance – seek to destroy the precious endowment that is nature. As we see the pristine splendor of our Great Lakes threatened, let us take steps to defend and safeguard this unique ecosystem for current and future generations.

Action

We can – we must – take action to preserve the Great Lakes and halt destructive industrial practices that harm their fragile ecosystems. Proactive steps include:

- ✓ **Prayer:**
- ✓ **Education:** Inform Great Lakes residents and visitors about industrial practices that harm the region.
- ✓ **Corporate Commitment:** Encourage corporations to meet or exceed environmentally-friendly resource harvesting practices.
- ✓ **Advocacy:** Support legislation ensuring that residents are informed of nearby industrial practices; as well as regulations that place limits on industrial practices that harm the environment.
- ✓ **Collaboration:** Form alliances with other organizations dedicated to Great Lakes preservation, such as...

