



AIDE: "GREEN POPE" SEES CREATION AS A GIFT

Father Lombardi Comments on Pontiff's Ecological Openness

VATICAN CITY, SEPT. 20, 2009 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- The environmental concern of Benedict XVI, often tagged the "Green Pope" in the media, is anchored in a religious and ethical vision of the world, according to a Vatican spokesman.

"Indeed, the pronouncements on the protection of the environment, on the safeguarding of creation, are more frequent and -- we can say -- almost continuous," commented Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, director of the Holy See's press office.

In his weekly editorial on the Vatican Television program "Octava Dies," the Jesuit priest observed that "humanity is becoming more and more aware and preoccupied with the effects of its activities on the planet's fragile equilibrium."

The Vatican spokesman's remarks anticipate one-day climate summit at U.N. headquarters in New York on Tuesday that will seek to revitalize negotiations on a U.N. climate pact that would be proposed at a U.N. climate change to be held in Copenhagen this December.

"In this context the Pope offers a framework of solid religious, rational and moral references for programs of effective action and for new behaviors and lifestyles adapted to a responsible development," Father Lombardi noted.

He said the Pope's latest encyclical, "Caritas in Veritate," amply treated the theme, commenting on "the exploitation of non-renewable resources and justice toward poor populations, the questions of energy consumption, responsibility toward future generations, the relationship between ecology and respect for life."

However, the spokesman added, "one must first of all, the Pope tells us, learn 'to see in creation something more than a mere source of wealth and exploitation in human hands,' to

see it truly as it really is, that is, as 'expression of a project of love and truth that speaks to us of the Creator and his love for humanity.'"

He noted that this is where "the 'Green Pope' and the Church" can be of service.