

CATHOLIC CAMPAIGN FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT WORKING ON THE MARGINS

"Poverty demands that we sow hope. . . . Poverty is the flesh of the poor Jesus in this hungry child, in the sick person, in these unjust social structures."

—Pope Francis, Address to the Students of the Jesuit Schools, June 7, 2013

Dear Diocesan Director,

Pope Francis urges us to care for our natural resources. "Let us be 'protectors' of creation . . . protectors of one another and of the environment" (Homily, March 19, 2013). CCHD's environmental justice programs answer this call for responsible stewardship of the earth.

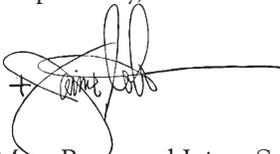
Since 1996, Tohono O'odham Community Action (TOCA) has been dedicated to creating a healthy and sustainable community on the Tohono O'odham Nation, located in the Sonoran Desert of Arizona. TOCA's projects encourage community self-sufficiency and strengthen the roots of O'odham culture. After 1930, O'odham farming began to decline, and the federal government introduced commodity foods into O'odham. This led to a rapid rise of type 2 diabetes in the community.

In an effort to recapture traditional agricultural practices and return to a healthier lifestyle, TOCA established the New Generation of O'odham Farmers program in 2009. Dedicated to training and empowering community members to pursue careers in sustainable agriculture, the program emerged from experiences on TOCA's two farms and from local young adults who wanted to learn how to create a livelihood for themselves within their communities. Training new farmers and gardeners is a key part of TOCA's larger efforts to rebuild a sustainable local food system and a healthy way of life.

Through caring for natural resources and building human relationships, TOCA carries on Jesus' work of the renewing the face of the earth, "For creation awaits with eager expectation the revelation of the children of God." (Rom 8:19).

Be the hands of Christ reaching out to your brothers and sisters on the margins. Encourage your parishes to use the bulletin announcements, parish appeal, and bulletin insert. Additional resources are available at www.usccb.org (search keywords "CCHD Collection Resources"). Remember that 25 percent of the collection stays in your (arch)diocese for local anti-poverty projects. Please contact Bevin Kennedy at 202-541-3365 or bkennedy@usccb.org if you need additional materials or have questions. Thank you for your support.

Respectfully,



Most Reverend Jaime Soto
Bishop of Sacramento, CA
Chairman, Subcommittee on the
Catholic Campaign for Human Development

