

Marin pastor named to new environment committee

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Father Kenneth Weare, longtime pastor of St. Rita Parish in Fairfax, has been appointed by the California Catholic Conference of Bishops to serve on the newly formed Ad Hoc Committee on Environmental Stewardship.



Father Kenneth Weare

The committee, which met for the first time May 22, was formed by the California bishops earlier this year to advance the moral principles of environmental stewardship set forth by Pope Francis in his 2015 encyclical, "Laudato si'," subtitled, "On Care for our Common Home."

In addition to his pastoral responsibilities at St. Rita, Father Weare is an adjunct professor of social ethics at the University of San Francisco and an international lecturer on "Laudato si'." He is also an advisor to the European bishops on climate change issues.

Retired Stockton Bishop Stephen E. Blaire, chairman, invited Father Weare to join the committee

which also includes Bishop Joseph Brennan of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, Bishop Myron Cotta of the Diocese of Stockton and others with expertise in environmental issues.

According to Raymond Burnell, director of Education and Environmental Stewardship for the California Catholic Conference, the committee's primary responsibilities will be to advise the bishops on current principles and priorities of environmental stewardship utilized to assess positions on legislative proposals.

The Ad Hoc Committee will advise on the preparation of a draft pastoral statement to animate and energize the implementation of "the callings of 'Laudato si'" specific to California," Burnell told Catholic San Francisco June 8.

Father Weare said the committee's "immediate goal" is to help shape the pastoral statement to be released by California bishops next year on the fourth anniversary of "Laudato si'" in June 2019.

"I am honored to serve on the committee in our efforts to encourage and support legislation in California influenced by the insights of Pope Francis' encyclical 'Laudato si'," said Father Weare.