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GROUNDBREAKING INTERFAITH CONFERENCE ON THE ENVIRONMENT TO BE HELD AT PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

Focus on practical changes individuals and organizations can make to “go green”.

Newark - NJ Catholic Coalition of Environmental Justice (NJCCEJ) is sponsoring a statewide Interfaith Conference on the campus of Princeton University the weekend of April 25-27. Teaming up with Trenton-based Partners for Environmental Quality, the NJCCEJ conference includes nationally known speakers, panels of interfaith perspectives and workshops.

The three- day conference has something for people of all faiths, business owners, educators, religious leaders, and socially conscious individuals. A roster of distinguished speakers, such as Bradley Campbell, Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection; Carol Dempsey, OP, PhD, a leading environmental education authority and theologian from the University of Portland; Jerry Lawson, Director of the US Environmental Protection Agency’s Energy Star Program, and Hackensack Riverkeeper Captain Bill Sheehan are on the agenda. Participants can enjoy one, two, or all three days.

“Christians, Jews, Muslims and all people of faith are called to be good stewards of God’s creation. Protecting the Earth is a moral responsibility we all share.” Kay Furlani, a founding member of the NJCCEJ.

The New Jersey Catholic Coalition for Environmental Justice (NJCCEJ) formed in 2002 to mobilize people of faith to a deeper respect for God's creation and towards constructive environmental action. *Through a grant from the US Conference of Catholic Bishops and under the auspices of the* Archdiocese of Newark 's Office of *Human Concerns this newly-*founded group has planned the first ever Catholic-sponsored New Jersey Interfaith Conference on the Environment, to be held at Princeton University April 25th-27th.

“While plenty of people would like to “go green”, many aren't quite sure how. This conference will answer a lot of their questions. Engaging workshops will present practical, daily-life changes that can have a powerful positive impact on the environment.” said Furlani.

After months of hard work, NJCCEJ members see this *conference* as a beginning – a call for all New Jerseyans to wake up and renew their commitment to environmental protection and to their faith. Their greatest hope is that as the conference concludes, individuals will leave with a renewed sense of the possibilities we all have for making a positive change.

Each day's agenda of presentations and workshops is exciting and diverse. Friday, April 25th, kicks things off with an introduction to energy efficiency, cost-effectiveness and high performance in building design. Workshops will detail specific steps schools, churches and businesses can take to make their facilities environmentally friendly while keeping costs down. Saturday's talks will focus on individual mobilization, covering environmentally smart shopping, challenging corporate pollution, mobilizing and creating congregational environmental groups and connecting with other ongoing New Jersey campaigns. Interfaith perspectives on the environment will be featured at Sunday's closing ceremonies, with panel discussions offering reflections from Jewish, Muslim, Jain, Protestant and Catholic leaders.

Anyone interested in attending or learning more about NJCCEJ's work is encouraged to visit their Website at www.envirojustnj.org or to call 973-497-4342.