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**As Summer Ends and Drought Continues  
California Bishops Renew Call for Conservation, Prayers**

On October 4, Catholics around the world celebrate the extraordinary life of St. Francis of Assisi. His love for those who are poor and afflicted, as well as his deep affection for God's creation, is a timely reminder as the Golden State enters the fourth year of a record-setting drought.

We are part of God's creation. The shortage of water illustrates how precious, and sometimes precarious, that connection can be. Tens of thousands of jobs are at risk and the state's economy is straining, especially in the agriculture sector. The images of our neighbors' homes, churches, businesses and communities destroyed by drought-intensified fires are even more heart-breaking.

Californians have responded with support for fire victims, greater water conservation and realistic conversations on future water management. The solidarity and compassion that guide these efforts must become abiding habits of the heart as we discern the best way to ensure a sustainable future for the present and future generations of Californians.

Among the sustaining habits, we urge that all Californians continue to pray as well. Please join us in prayer for those of us who have lost homes and jobs; the first responders who put their lives at risk for us; our leaders and non-profit agencies who organize drought response and disaster recovery; and our children and friends whose respiratory ailments are increased by the dry conditions.

Let us also ask the intercession of St. Francis of Assisi so that we can all be better stewards of God's creation. With him may we promote a deeper reverence for the human person as part of God's given creation, especially those most vulnerable and forgotten. They too are created by God, created to be part of us.

As we work to mitigate the impact of the drought on our sisters and brothers, let us take encouragement from the words of Saint Francis: "Start by doing what's necessary; then do what's possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible."

May the Blessings of God be upon us and upon our State in the coming months,

The Catholic Bishops of California

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Prayer resources are available on [www.cacatholic.org](http://www.cacatholic.org).