

ZE09083004 - 2009-08-30

Permalink: <http://www.zenit.org/article-26722?l=english>

Pontiff: Italy's Green Day "Significant"

CASTEL GANDOLFO, Italy, AUG. 30, 2009 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- Ahead of Italy's Day for the Protection of Creation, Benedict XVI is urging people to commit themselves to safeguarding the environment.

The Pope said this today to the crowds gathered at the papal summer residence in Castel Gandolfo to pray the midday Angelus.

Italy will observe the day to protect the environment on Tuesday.

"It is a significant event, even of ecumenical importance," the Pontiff said, "that has as its theme this year 'air,' an indispensable element for life."

"I call everyone to a greater commitment to the safeguarding of creation, gift of God," the Holy Father added, repeating his message from last Wednesday's general audience.

"In particular," he concluded, "I encourage the industrialized countries to cooperate responsibly for the future of the planet, and that the poorest populations not pay the greatest price for climactic changes."

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