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EARTH HOUR – Saturday March 29

Climate change is the most significant threat to life on Earth. One way to slow the current rate of global warming is to get each individual to make small adjustments to the way they live. To achieve individual change we need to demonstrate how simple and easy the changes are.

At 8pm on Saturday 29 March, cities around the world will turn off their lights for one hour to show it's possible to take action on global warming. All households, communities and businesses are invited to turn their lights off for one hour at 8pm on this day.

Last year the focus was on Sydney, with more than 2 million Sydney residences joining Earth Hour. This year Earth Hour will take place in over 20 cities around the world. Together, people have shown how small actions can make a difference to global warming.

Why do we need to act?

Global warming is threatening the world today. Our continued reliance on electricity sourced from coal-fired power stations is causing a dramatic increase in the Earth's temperature, resulting in rising sea-levels, an increase in drought and severe storms, and massive changes to the environment we all rely on to survive. For example, if all Australian households turned off unused lights and appliances on standby at the power point, Australia's emission would be reduced by at least 5 million tonnes per annum.

You are encouraged within your communities, parishes and ministries to participate in this event on Saturday 29 March. Your actions will make a difference.

For further information visit the Earth Hour website www.earthhour.org

Please contact Sarah Menassa at the Provincial Office for Earth Hour A3 sized posters for your community or parish.

Reading: *From the UN Declaration on Human Rights and the Environment, 1994*

Environmental rights are the rights of everyone to a secure, healthy and ecologically sound environment. Basic human rights such as the right to life, health and culture can only be enjoyed in a healthy and ecologically sound environment.

Everyone has:

The Right to be consulted and included in any decisions affecting their environment.

The Right to accurate information concerning their environment.

The Right to express opinions and distribute Information on environmental issues.

The Right to education on the environment and human rights.

The Right to active and free participation in planning and decision making on the impact of any development that affects their environment.

The Right to associate freely and peacefully with others to protect the environment.

The Right to effective remedies and redress in administrative or judicial proceedings related to environmental harm or the threat of such harm.

REFLECTION:

The earth is ultimately a common heritage, the fruits of which are for the benefit of all. Today, the dramatic threat of ecological breakdown is teaching us the extent to which greed and selfishness-both individual and collective-are contrary to the order of creation, an order which is characterized by mutual interdependence.

Pope John Paul 11, The Ecological Crisis: A Common Responsibility, 1990

God wills the interdependence of creatures. The sun and the moon, the cedar and the little flower, the eagle and the sparrow: no part of creation is self-sufficient. Creatures exist only in dependence on each other, to complete each other, in the service of each other.

Catechism of the Catholic Church, #340.