

# origins

CNS documentary service

## The Eucharist and Care for Creation

### Cardinal Turkson

*At the 51st International Eucharistic Congress in Cebu, Philippines, the president of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace spoke about the Eucharist and care for creation. Ghanaian Cardinal Peter Turkson, head of the office that was the lead drafter of "Laudato Si" — Pope Francis' encyclical on the environment — said the Eucharist "is integral to the very essence of Christianity" and "also integrates all the facets of our life of faith." He said that "while we experience salvation and redemption in a number of ways, we do so especially in the Eucharist," and that in the Eucharist "we humans offer back to God what God has freely offered to us — his own Son's death and resurrection." Cardinal Turkson noted that the two species*

*"The Eucharist is heaven on earth and invites us to share even now in the fullness of God's glory in heaven forever."*

*of the Eucharist are made by humans utilizing natural elements, so the worship people offer to God in the Eucharist "commences in the liturgy of human life as blessed by God, with humans planting, harvesting, baking and winemaking, and delivering these gifts to the church for the Eucharist." He said, "All sacramental liturgy makes sense in the first place because the use of goods from the earth reminds us of our place in this world," which includes the need for a recognition of the interdependence between humans and creation. Cardinal Turkson was unable to attend the congress; his speech was delivered Jan. 27 by Archbishop Antonio Ledesma of Cagayan de Oro, Philippines. The speech follows.*

■ have been assigned a topic that invites us to delve into the depths of what it means to be truly Catholic. I say this because, as you well know, in the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church the fathers at the Second Vatican Council called the Eucharist the "summit and source" of the Christian life.<sup>1</sup>

The Eucharist is a multifaceted jewel set in the very crown of Catholicism. A jewel can be viewed from many angles, seen with the aid of light shining on it from various directions and therefore can be appreciated in any number of ways. But as the "summit and source" of the Christian life specifically, the Eucharist is the center and pulsating heart of all our worship and prayer; the sacred action that derives from and returns us to daily life

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Feb. 18, 2016  
Volume 45  
Number 37