

# POTTSTOWN CITIZENS FOR Enlightened LEADERSHIP

## Pope leads on poverty, climate change

Growing up as a church-going Presbyterian, I never expected to view a pope heroically, but Pope Francis is doing as much or more than any world leader to focus humanity's attention on its two most pressing issues: climate change, and the huge disparity between the rich and poor.

Climate scientists worldwide warn that the earth is warming with disastrous, almost inconceivable changes to come: Coastal cities underwater. Frequent, violent storms. Crop failures. Species extinction.

Only a massive exchange of nuclear weapons has a similar potential to send us all back to the stone age.

The political world is in denial, but



Pope Francis is not. He has embraced scientific reality, and he has challenged us — all of us — to do our part to promote fairness and protect our earth.

### Our role in Pottstown

The pope's 184-page encyclical is not limited to a call for action on a national and international scale. He also talks about individual responsibility.

"There is a nobility in the duty to care for creation through little daily

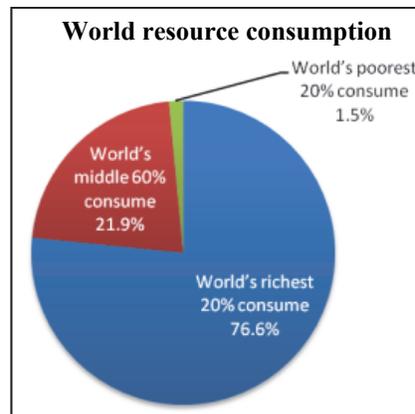
actions, and it is wonderful how education can bring about real changes in lifestyle," the pope wrote, "such as avoiding the use of plastic and paper, reducing water consumption, separating refuse ... using public transport or car pooling, planting trees, turning off unnecessary lights, or any number of other practices."



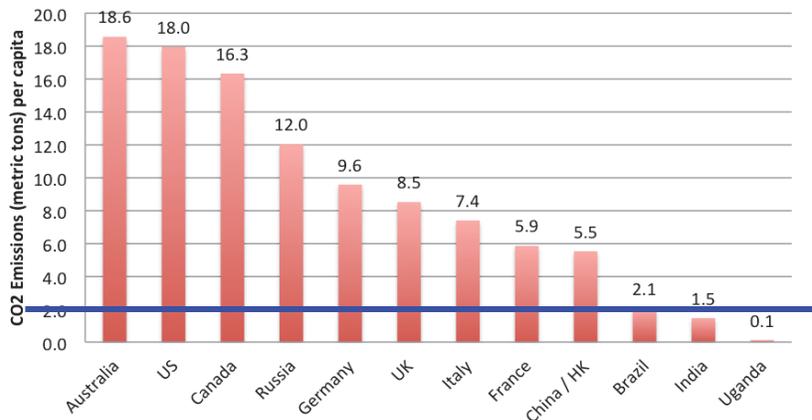
Commentary by Tom Hylton

### Pottstown plan

Earlier this month, the steering committee working on Pottstown's Sustainability Plan held its third meeting of the year. It was mostly generalities, but at the next meeting, scheduled in late July, we should get into specifics. I will report back at that time.



## CO2 Emissions per Capita



**Americans emit about 18 tons of carbon dioxide per person annually. Worldwide, emissions must fall to less than 2 tons per capita (blue line) by 2050 to avoid catastrophic changes in the climate. That will require huge lifestyle changes for all of us during the next three decades.**