

Pope's edict on climate change may anger deniers, U.S. churches

By John Vidal, Observer

He has been called the "superman pope", and it would be hard to deny that Pope Francis has had a good December. Cited by President Obama as a key player in the thawing relations between the US and Cuba, the Argentinian pontiff followed that by lecturing his cardinals on the need to clean up Vatican politics. But can Francis achieve a feat that has so far eluded secular powers and inspire decisive action on climate change?

It looks as if he will give it a go. In 2015, the pope will issue a lengthy message on the subject to the world's 1.2 billion Catholics, give an address to the UN general assembly and call a summit of the world's main religions.

The reason for such frenetic activity, says Bishop Marcelo Sorondo, chancellor of the Vatican's Pontifical Academy of Sciences, is the pope's wish to directly influence next year's crucial UN climate meeting in Paris, when countries will try to conclude 20 years of fraught negotiations with a universal commitment to reduce emissions.

Read the whole story