

A Message from the Catholic Episcopal Conferences and Councils of Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean on the Occasion of COP30

A Call for Climate Justice and the Common Home: Ecological Conversion, Transformation and Resistance to False Solutions

This joint appeal is addressed to government leaders and aims to strengthen the Church's public voice in international climate negotiation spaces from a perspective of integral ecological justice. The message is organized into eight sections:

1

Urgent warnings about climate collapse

"It took almost a century (1920–2015) to reach 1°C above the 1850–1900 period. But in just 10 years (2015–2024), we reached 1.55°C, with a spike of 0.4°C in the last two years." (15)

2

Short-term and inadequate solutions

The funds determined at COP29 for adaptation, mitigation and loss and damage remain insufficient to meet the real needs of the most vulnerable countries and communities.

- "The Global North must recognise its historical and current role in driving the climate crisis and take responsibility for creating a more equitable future by acting now: we demand transparency and climate justice as a priority." (17)

3

Global warming denialism

Our critical situation is exacerbated by the 'openly denialist and apathetic stance adopted by super-rich segments of society, the so-called "elites of power" (Laudate Deum, 38).' (18)

4

The need to strengthen commitments as a Church

"We raise a prophetic voice calling for peace through an ecological nature, mining in the name of conversion that transforms the current model of development based on the energy transition, and energy extractivism, technocracy and the commodification of nature." (18)

Paths to ecological conversion and simplicity

5

In *Laudato Si'* we are called to adopt a new lifestyle marked by joyful simplicity by “reducing unnecessary consumption and guaranteeing what is necessary through dignified life,” which when fully embraced, “is not a lesser life or one lived with less intensity. On the contrary, it is a way of living life to the full.” (*Laudato Si'* §223). The bishops propose: simplicity* as resistance to consumption, education for ecological conversion, strengthening local communities, ongoing dialogue with the scientific community, and the promotion of narratives of hope and care.

*Simplicity here is translated from the Spanish “sobriedad,” meaning sobriety from over-doing, over-consuming, or debauchery.

Destroying the Earth and offering false solutions

6

The bishops condemn the “green economy,” which emerges in the political arena as an “attempt to resolve the dilemma between economic growth and environmental care by proposing nature protection and environmental policy as sources of economic growth for the few.” (21) They reject the financialization of nature, mining in the name of the energy transition, and energy monoculture (22).

Essentials for the road to COP30

Each country’s plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions must be developed with broad and meaningful participation. This involves “ensuring participatory processes, protecting local knowledge and cultures, and prioritizing the most vulnerable population.” (23) The following principles and values cannot be sacrificed in the name of so-called climate commitments:

7

- Protection of ancestral territories and sovereignty of indigenous, traditional, peasant, and artisanal fishing communities
- Family farming
- Transparent, fair, and community-based climate finance; countries historically responsible for emissions recognizing and paying their ecological debt
- Transformation of the economic system, abandoning a model of infinite growth on a finite planet
- Particular focus on initiatives led by women
- Centrality of human dignity and the rights of the Earth
- Addressing climate migration
- A North-South coalition for climate, nature, and humanity.

A call for resistance, community strengthening, and hope

8

The bishops proclaim hope for a new society, “founded on justice, universal solidarity with all creatures, and loving care for our common home.” (29) They are launching the Ecclesial Observatory on Climate Justice to “monitor and encourage the fulfillment of the COP agreements, as well as to call out non-compliance which perpetuates the suffering of communities.” (29)

How we can respond?

The bishops urge us to embark on a path of ecological conversion inspired by the spirituality of “buen vivir” (“good living”) (Querida Amazonia, 8) and “sobriedad” or simplicity (Laudato Si’, 223), through fostering ecological awareness and standing in solidarity with victims and climate action networks.

Here are some ways you can live out this message in your daily life, parish or diocese, and community:

Parish or Diocese Level

- Launch a Creation Care Team or green team, work to enroll your parish or diocese in the Laudato Si’ Action Platform
- Host a creation care liturgy or educational event
- Reduce waste, improve energy use, or plant native gardens
- Lead educational initiatives or programs, such as Wholemakers

Local, State, or National Level

- Go to state capitol and meet with legislators about a bill
- Participate in national campaigns like Encounter for Our Common Home
- Participate in letter-writing campaign or sign a petition
- Speak at public hearings or submit comments on key policies

Individual Level

- Take the Laudate Deum pledge
- Calculate your carbon footprint; transition to clean energy use (solar panels, getting energy from a renewable energy facility, less overall use, etc.)
- Drive less; switch to an EV; take public transportation
- Decrease plastic use; buy reusable containers, napkins, water bottles; consume less
- Plant native plants or grass
- Participate in CathCAP to offset your carbon footprint