



September 1, 2019

Statement by Canada's Catholic Sisters Regarding the Climate Emergency

Cette déclaration est également disponible en français.

On this World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, leaders of Canada's 64 Congregations of Catholic Sisters are calling on the country's politicians to respond to the climate emergency declared by Parliament by taking concrete steps to avert it.

As Women Religious, caring for all of God's Creation is an essential part of our faith. The drastic changes to our climate brought on by the release of greenhouse gases pose the greatest threat to all living beings. Yet, not enough is being done to address it. In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis points out that "reducing greenhouse gases requires honesty, courage and responsibility, above all on the part of those countries which are more powerful and pollute the most." (169)

For our part, we have taken robust action to combat the destruction of our planet and to care for our common home. Many of our Congregations have taken steps to:

- Divest from fossil fuel portfolios to clean and renewable energy projects.
- Eliminate single-use plastics.
- Retrofit residential buildings, including solar, bio-thermal and renewable natural gas installations.
- Commit to the [Blue Communities](#) project which entails treating water as a sacred resource and shared commons.
- Plant trees in Canada and in the countries where our Missions exist.
- Compost, reduce and recycle.
- Partner and provide support to community groups and movements committed to address the climate emergency.

We urge all politicians running in the upcoming federal election to acknowledge the climate emergency and to implement an immediate multilevel policy strategy for a just transition to ecologically sustainable living.

The actions to address the climate emergency should be concrete, justice-based and stripped of partisan politics. We invite political leaders to join us in caring for our common home by:

- Keeping fossil fuels in the ground and ending subsidies to fossil fuel and plastic producers.
- Redirecting investments and rapidly expanding the renewable energy economy, including investment in retraining for workers affected by job loss in fossil fuel production.
- Continuing to hold companies to account by putting a cost against the greenhouse gas pollution they produce.
- Coordinating an intensive and sustained public awareness effort to change attitudes and behaviours.
- Implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and developing climate emergency policies in line with the Indigenous knowledge and teachings.

We are facing an urgent and potentially irreversible threat to Earth. With so many others on the planet, we hope that politicians will show commitment, leadership and collective wisdom in the movement to protect our planet from destruction. This is the only way forward together.

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UISG (*International Union of Superiors General*) is a worldwide organization of Superiors General of Institutes of Catholic Women Religious. It encourages dialogue and collaboration among Religious Congregations within the Church and larger society. This statement is a collaboration of all 64 Canadian members of the UISG.

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Sisters of Saint Joseph of Sault Ste Marie	North Bay, Ontario
Sisters of Saint Joseph of Toronto	Toronto, Ontario
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