

...we are all brothers and sisters

Fratelli tutti 279



LIVING THE REALITIES OF CLIMATE CHANGE

In the photo above, Tuvalu's Foreign Minister Simon Kofe gave his address to COP26 from place that until 80 years ago was dry land. Like many other leaders from Oceania, Simon Kofe could not come to Glasgow because of COVID travel restrictions. They held great hopes for a positive outcome from COP26. In his address to COP26, Simon Kofe said:

'Our land is literally sinking. We must take action now. In the first two days of the world leaders' summit, we heard passion, commitment and pledges. That was encouraging. However, since that time and through the corridors of this marvellous facility, we are not seeing that level of optimism being translated.'

CLIMATE REFUGEES

The experience in Tuvalu, Kiribati and other Pacific Islands is echoed in the Torres Strait. *Laudato si'* names climate change as a global problem with serious social, environmental, economic and political implications. The Gudamalugal traditional owners

of low-lying islands in the Torres Strait are also experiencing the rise of sea levels that are washing away their cultural sites and ruining the soil with salt, so that crops can no longer be grown. They face becoming Australia's first climate refugees. Community leaders say:

'Becoming climate refugees means losing everything: our homes, our culture, our stories and our identity. If you take away our homelands we don't know who we are. We have cultural responsibility to make sure that doesn't happen and to protect our country and our communities, culture and spirituality from climate change.'

FROM LAUDATO SI'

Many of those who possess more resources and economic or political power seem mostly to be concerned with masking the problems or concealing their symptoms, simply making efforts to reduce some of the negative impacts of climate change. ... There is an urgent need to develop policies so that, in the next few years, the emission of carbon dioxide ... can be drastically reduced (26)

OUR BROTHERS & SISTERS IN OCEANIA



<https://laudatosiactionplatform.org/>

The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference committed to the Laudato Si' Action Platform (LSAP) earlier this year. This is a Vatican led initiative in which the Australian Bishop's Office for Justice, Ecology and Peace played a key role in the development of the platform, as a member of the international parishes and dioceses working group.

The LSAP was fully launched on 14 November, the fifth World Day of the Poor. The LSAP is now open for worldwide enrolments from all sectors of the church.

Bishop Vincent Long, chair of the Bishops Commission for Social Justice, Mission and Service said that the LSAP sends a powerful Gospel message that the transformation of the world and of societies will be led by ordinary people.

'The COP26 climate conference in Glasgow has demonstrated that we cannot simply wait for governments to take urgent action to substantially reduce carbon emissions by 2030. Pope Francis is calling all Catholics to take action

in the next seven years to ensure that the planet remains habitable for future generations. Families, parishes and dioceses, religious institutes, educational organisations, health care bodies, the economic sector and other Catholic groups have a role to play.

***We must not give up hope.
Together we can bring about change.'***

PLANNING SUPPORT ON THE LSAP

The new phase of the LSAP includes the launch of a suite of practical resources to assist everyone to plan for a journey towards integral ecology.

The first enrolment period runs from 14 November 2021 to Earth Day on 22 April 2022. Future enrolment periods will follow each year.

Fr Josh Kureethadam, coordinator of the Vatican's ecology and creation sector, said: **'The LSAP's launch following on from COP26 sends a symbolic message that the global church is ready to take action on climate change.'**

More than 4,000 church organisations and bodies worldwide have committed to the initiative to put integral ecology into practice in their lives and work.

Our Lady of Dolours Parish has enrolled on the LSAP. Plans are underway to begin work with the LSAP from March 2022.