



# EarthConnection News

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## “Climate Change Widespread, Rapid, and Intensifying” -IPCC

It is impossible to turn on the news or read a newspaper these days without being confronted with catastrophic natural disasters (wildfires, droughts, floods, etc.) throughout the world. The world's top scientists are telling us that climate change is not something that will happen in the future. It is here now and it will affect all of us, but those who are marginalized and economically poor will suffer disproportionately and yet, they have done little to contribute to the causes of climate change.

According to the August 9, 2021 release of a report from Working Group I *Climate Change 2021: the Physical Science Basis*, of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), “Scientists are observing changes in the Earth’s climate in every region

and across the whole climate system. Many of the changes



*Dixie Fire- California*

observed in the climate are unprecedented in thousands, if not hundreds of thousands of years, and some of the changes already set in motion—such as contin-

ued sea level rise—are irreversible over hundreds to thousands of years.”

“Climate change is already affecting every region on Earth, in multiple ways. The changes we experience will increase with additional warming,” said IPCC Working Group I Co-Chair Pan-mao Zhai. The report projects that in the coming decades climate changes will increase in all regions. For 1.5°C of global warming, there will be increasing heat waves, longer warm seasons and shorter cold seasons. At 2°C of global warming, heat extremes would more often reach critical tolerance thresholds for agriculture and health, the report shows.

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## The Laudato Si' 7-Year Platform

In May of this year the Vatican launched the 7-year Laudato Si' Action Platform. This initiative's aim is to have every Catholic institution, from the family to large organizations, become ecologically sustainable in seven years. Pope Francis' goal is “to

help lead the world's Catholics along a journey of intensified action in caring for creation.” In his video message on May 24<sup>th</sup>, Pope Francis stated that “We need a new ecological approach that can transform our way of dwelling in the world, our styles

of life, our relationship with the resources of the Earth and, in general, our way of looking at humanity and of living life.”

“Our selfishness, our indifference and our irresponsible ways are threatening the future of our

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from redbubble.com

*“The world’s most  
important summit  
on climate  
change.”*



## Climate Change cont’d

The Working Group I report addresses the most updated physical understanding of the climate system and climate change, bringing together the latest advances in climate science, and combining multiple lines of evidence from paleoclimate, observations, process understanding, global and regional climate simulations. It shows how and why climate has changed to date, and the improved understanding of human influence on a wider range of climate characteristics, including extreme events.

For the first time, this contribution to the Sixth Assessment Report provides a more detailed regional assessment of climate change, including a focus on useful information that can inform risk assessment, adaptation, and other decision-making, and a new framework that helps translate physical changes in the climate – heat, cold, rain, drought, snow, wind, coastal flooding and more – into what they mean for society and ecosystems.

“Five takeaways from the report include:

1. Human influence has unequivocally warmed the planet.
2. Climate science is getting better and more precise.
3. We are locked into 30 years of worsening climate impacts no matter what the world does.
4. Climate changes are happening rapidly.
5. There is still a window in which humans can alter the climate path.” (NY Times)

## COP 26

The UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP) is the world’s most important summit on climate change.

This year’s conference – COP26 (the 26th meeting of world leaders on climate issues) is from October 31st to November 12th. It will be hosted by the United Kingdom and its partner Italy in Glasgow, Scotland, and has been

described by climate change experts as “the most significant climate event since the 2015 Paris Agreement”.

Scientists agree that a rise in temperature above 1.5 degrees C (about 2.7 F) would cause more catastrophic weather events and increase global migration due to lands becoming uninhabitable.

Unfortunately, the targets

announced in Paris would result in warming well above 3 degrees C by 2100 compared to pre-industrial levels.

Scientists caution that if we continue as we are, temperatures will continue rising, bringing even more catastrophic flooding, wildfires, extreme weather and destruction of species.

## Season of Creation

In 2016 Pope Francis and Patriarch Bartholomew I kicked off the five-week Season of Creation which is now celebrated each year from September 1st to the feast of St. Francis on October 4th.

Throughout the years, major Orthodox, Catholic,

Protestant, and Anglican organizations have joined to encourage the 2.2 billion Christians worldwide to pray and act on ecological issues.

This year the theme of the Season of Creation is “A Home for All? Renewing the Oikos of God.” Oikos is the

Greek word for the Earth Community.

There is a Season of Creation guide available on line with multiple ideas for prayer and action at:

<https://seasonofcreation.org/>

# What Is Environmental Racism?

Benjamin Chavis, an African American civil rights leader, first coined the term “environmental racism” in 1982. He described it as “racial discrimination in environmental policy-making, the enforcement of regulations and laws, the deliberate targeting of communities of color for toxic waste facilities, the official sanctioning of the life-threatening presence of poisons and pollutants in our communities, and the history of excluding people of color from leadership in ecology movements.”

Numerous studies have shown that Black and Hispanic communities are exposed to higher proportions of air pollution, toxic waste sites, landfills, lead poisoning, and other industrial complexes compared to white counterparts.

According to the Environmental Law Institute, “In the United States, nearly 100,000 deaths per year are attributed to fine particle pollution. People of color are three times more likely to face exposure to this deadly air pollution, twice as likely

to live near landfills and industrial plants, which may increase the risk of being exposed to air and water pollutants, and more likely to be exposed to unsafe drinking water, as seen most notably in the recent Flint water crisis. These statistics



reveal a repeated and disturbing pattern of environmental racism.”

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released a study in 2018 which stated: “that people of color are much more likely to live near polluters and breathe polluted air. Specifically, the study found that people in poverty are exposed to more fine particulate matter than people living above poverty.

According to the study’s authors, “results at national, state, and county scales all indicate that non-Whites tend to be burdened disproportionately to Whites.”

Indigenous communities have been victimized by environmental racism since the arrival of the first European colonists. From 1872-1873 the US military killed millions of buffalo in order to force indigenous populations to leave their ancestral lands and accept the newly developing reservation system. These reservation lands were often inhospitable environments without easy access to water, food, and other natural resources that made self-sufficiency almost impossible.

According to author Sezen Koehler, “Reservation lands are often used by big businesses for the transportation of and also dumping of toxic wastes, which poison what little ground water there may be and make these areas even less habitable than they already are.”

**“The ecological crisis is a summons to profound interior conversion.”**



## Laudato Si' cont'd

children...I therefore renew my appeal: let us overcome the temptation of selfishness that makes us predators of resources; let us cultivate respect for the gifts of the Earth and creation; let us inaugurate a lifestyle and a society that is finally eco-sustainable,” said Francis in his video address.

In his encyclical *Laudato Si'*, published five years ago, Pope Francis identified the ecological crisis as “a summons to profound interior conversion; a reexamining of our

relationships with the Creator, with creation, and with our sisters and brothers.” He also noted that “Living our vocation to be protectors of God’s handiwork is essential to a life of virtue...and calls for a spiritual and cultural revolution to realize integral ecology.”

The *Laudato Si'* Action Platform will focus on seven sectors: families, parishes, schools, hospitals, businesses, organizations, and religious orders. The action plan also has seven goals: the response to

the cry of the earth, to the cry of the poor, ecological economics, adoption of simple lifestyles, ecological education, ecological spirituality, and community involvement.

Sr. Caroljean is working with the other co-founders of the Charity Earth Network (CEN), Fr. Terry Moran (NJ Peace and Justice Coordinator) and Sr. Carol DeAngelo (NY Peace and Justice Coordinator) to develop a program and resources for the Sisters of Charity Federation.



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Visit our website to sign up for free webinars and other information on how to care for Planet Earth.

## Resources

### Books

Mitchell, Sherri. **Sacred Instructions**. North Atlantic Books, 2018

“A narrative of Indigenous wisdom that provides a road map for the spirit and a compass of compassion for humanity.”

Newell, John Philip. **Sacred Earth, Sacred Soul**. Harper One, 2021.

Celtic wisdom for reawakening to what our souls know and healing the world.

### Website

<https://laudatosimovement.org>

This is the new website of what was formerly the Global Catholic Climate Movement. It provides multiple resources for individual and congregational use as well as information on actions around the world.

## Upcoming Events

### Webinars

#### August 26th

Title: “Celebrating the Season of Creation: A Home for All”  
Presenter: Sr. Caroljean (Cj) Willie, SC, Ph.D.

#### September 23rd

Title: “Plastic Pollution Prevention: From the Ohio River to Your Home”

Presenter: Susan Vogt October 28th

“Sacred Earth Knowledge: What Indigenous People Have to Teach Us”

Presenter: Sr. Caroljean

### Movies

Cost: Free-will donation

#### September 9th – 7:00 PM

**Taking Root: The Vision of Wangari Mathaai**—A story of the courage, resilience and vision of Kenyan Nobel Peace Prize winner Wangari Maathai.

#### October 14th

**Dark Waters**—Inspired by a true story, DARK WATERS centers around a rising Cincinnati lawyer who uncovers the dark secret that lies beneath the surface of a small town. Launching a heroic one-man crusade to take on a powerful corporation, he risks

everything — his future, his family and his own life —to expose the truth.

### Workshops

Cost: \$5.00

September 5th – 3:00 PM (All ages welcome)

“Print-making with Found Objects”

October 17th – 3:00 PM

“Eco-Art for Parents and Teachers”

Register at:

[scearthconnection.org](http://scearthconnection.org)