



## **Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange Respond to the Call for Ecological Conversion**

Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange pledge to be instruments of God for the care of the whole of creation, including concern for nature, justice for the poor, and commitment for a just society. We unite with Pope Francis and all people of good will in addressing the environmental degradation of Earth, our Common Home.

Compelled by the Gospel and Sisters of St. Joseph's love for unity and reconciliation, we respond to "the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor." We respond to the lack of care for our shared environment, and the people affected by this mistreatment. We embrace Pope Francis' challenge to protect our Common Home and take to heart the need for an ecological conversion.<sup>1</sup>

### ***What is Ecological Conversion?***

Ecological conversion is a change of heart in relationship with the Earth and all its creatures. It must be admitted that some committed and prayerful Christians, with the excuse of realism or pragmatism, tend to ridicule expressions of concern for the environment. Others are passive or inconsistent in their habits in caring for the Earth. That is why a change of heart – an ecological conversion – is needed, whereby the effects of our encounter with Jesus Christ become evident in our relationship with the world around us. This change of heart includes:

- Gratitude and recognition that the world is God's loving gift,
- A loving awareness that we are connected to all life,
- Inspiration for greater creativity and enthusiasm in resolving the world's problems.

### ***Why We Must Act Together***

We believe that our Earth, which reflects God's glory, is in great peril. We accept scientific evidence that climate change is happening and is caused by human activity. We have a responsibility towards the poor, towards future generations and towards humanity. The impact of climate change around the world, such as floods, droughts, and diseases, disproportionately affect poor and vulnerable communities, especially women who regularly do the work of growing food, collecting water and fuel, and raising children.

Therefore, we connect and relate with people of like-heart through reflection and dialogue, leading to ecological conversion. We wish to listen to the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor and to move forward together in a coordinated response to be instruments of hope in the heart of the world. We do not act in isolation; we join others in addressing both the environmental and social crises.



We challenge ourselves to care for one another through our care for creation with these actions. Links to helpful resources are offered as invitation for all to join us.

**1. Reduce our carbon footprint.**

- Calculate your footprint here: <http://bit.ly/ecojust012>
- Limit car trips and carpool whenever possible; <http://bit.ly/ecojust001>
- Choose plant-based protein over animal meat more often; <http://bit.ly/ecojust002>
- Eat seasonably and sustainably; Seasonal Food Guide: <http://bit.ly/ecojust003>;
- Purchase locally grown produce: Local Farmers' Markets: <http://bit.ly/ecojust004>
- Choose materials that can be recycled or reused; reduce to only what is needed and refuse materials that are not needed; use re-usable straws, cups, to-go containers, and utensils; <http://bit.ly/ecojust005>

**2. Advocate for bold policy advancing renewable energy and preserving natural resources; <http://bit.ly/ecojust011>**

- Conserve water and protect water quality; <http://bit.ly/ecojust006>
- Make efforts to use clean and sustainable energy; <http://bit.ly/ecojust007>

**3. Stand in solidarity with Black, Indigenous and People of Color in addressing environmental injustice and disparities; <http://bit.ly/ecojust008> and <http://bit.ly/ecojust009>**

- Hold elected officials accountable if they fail to protect marginalized communities; <http://bit.ly/ecojust010>

**4. Celebrate, embrace, and respect God's beautiful creation as a way of life.**

- Pray as a global family for a sustainable and just world for future generations.

Join us in continuing to work towards the fullness of life for all who share our Common Home, especially those who are marginalized. Sisters of St. Joseph invite all to unity and reconciliation within ourselves and all creation, and to develop a spirituality of global solidarity.

1 Pope Francis Encyclical Letter, Laudato Si', On Care for Our Common Home (#216-221).

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The Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange were founded in 1912 and share a common mission with Sisters of St. Joseph around the world who trace their heritage back to the founding of the order in 1650, in LePuy, France. Sisters of St. Joseph unite people with God and with each other. To bring about this unity, sisters go into neighborhoods, identify needs and work with others to meet those needs. Undertaking spiritual and corporal works of mercy, the religious order encourages and assists those who wish to follow Christ more closely, and works to alleviate conditions which cause ignorance, poverty, suffering and oppression. To learn more, visit <http://csjorange.org/>.

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