

PRESS RELEASE

September 17th, Season of Creation

Six Catholic organizations extend their common work in the face of the crisis the planet lives through

- In the *Laudato Si'* year (2020-2021) called by the Pope on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the Encyclical, the double crisis that the world is experiencing - exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic- makes their work more necessary than ever.
- The extension of the Campaign of the six entities that form «Connect yourself for Justice» is going to focus in three topics, which in turn they coincide with several milestones set by the Vatican.
- The action lines are accompanied by the proposal of a series of actions and solidarity gestures.

Madrid, September 17, 2020. - The celebration of the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation on September 1st and the beginning of the Season of Creation on the same day, which will last until October 4th, is the framework for launching a new stage of the campaign "If you take care of the planet, you fight against poverty". The Campaign is being carried out since 2015 by a group of Catholic organizations united under the common name of «Connect yourself for Justice».

The campaign "If you take care of the planet, you fight against poverty" was born taking advantage of the strategic interest of the six organizations that were participating at that time in «Connect yourself for Justice» (Caritas, CEDIS, CONFER, Justice and Peace, Manos Unidas and REDES), on the theme of the care for creation, with the impetus provided by the papal encyclical *Laudato Si'*: "*Contributing to the transformation of the current unjust, unsupportive and unsustainable development model and to the construction of a global and supportive citizenship, aware of the need to take care for the planet and willing to change habits and priorities*" was the initial leitmotif and continues being the driving force behind the work of the participating entities five years later.

Now, without abandoning its initial meaning, and after several stages in the development of the Campaign, these entities have agreed to extend their joint work for a few more months in order to continue raising awareness of the values and principles of *Laudato Si'*, so that the importance of the message contained in the Encyclical continues to permeate society, the Church and their own organisations, integrating in this new stage the direct interrelationship between the Sustainable Development Goals and the Covid-19 pandemic that the world has been suffering since the beginning of the year.

A DOUBLE CRISIS EXACERBATED BY A PANDEMIC

In the *Laudato Si'* year (2020-2021) called by the Pope on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the Encyclical, the situation the world is experiencing with the consequences of the coronavirus makes necessary to deepen *Laudato Si'* messages, more than ever.

As the papal text tells us, we live in a world in crisis, a crisis with two faces: human/social and environmental. And Covid-19 has impacted on our lives by making this crisis more acute.

The way in which we face pandemic consequences is increasing inequality. And even though the social aspect is very serious (unemployment, increasing poverty, widening the digital divide), and we must confront it, we cannot forget its second aspect, the environmental one, which is going to be immediately affected (it is already being affected) by the measures that have been adopted and those which will be adopted in the future to combat the pandemic and its impact on the economy and society.

In the face of more pressing needs, we run the risk that many of the environmental initiatives, that could have been developed or launched at the beginning of the year, will be abandoned in order to save the economy, or they will be considered less necessary and "expensive" in times of economic crisis and recession.

We recognise with optimism the European Union's decision to promote a way out of the economic crisis by building what it has been called a Green Europe (which the Spanish Government is joining) but, because of previous experiences, and because of the voluntary nature of most of the measures, it is important that we renew our commitment to support and propose a way forward that values justice and human rights and that puts life above profit. The coronavirus crisis must be taken as an opportunity to initiate a just transition, as well as to introduce a new economic system to be first and foremost at the service of people and the planet.

In this context, the extension that «Connect yourself for Justice» is going to carry out with its campaign "If you take care of the planet, you fight against poverty" is going to focus in three topics, which in turn they coincide with several milestones set by the Vatican for this year:

1. Season of Creation - Common House
2. Reinventing the Global Educational Alliance - Common Future
3. Economy of Francesco - Common Good.

FIRST ISSUE, SEASON OF CREATION

The worldwide celebration of the Season of Creation began in 1989 with the recognition by the Ecumenical Patriarchate of the World Day of Prayer for Creation. Since then, every year this Day continues growing stronger in the different religious confessions, making it an opportune time to travel along ecumenical paths.

This year, from September 1st to October 4th, we are offered a space in the Season of Creation to reflect on the integral relationship between rest for the earth and ecological, economic, social and political forms of life. This year in particular, the need for just and sustainable systems has been revealed by the far-reaching effects of the global Covid-19 pandemic. The theme chosen for this time is "Jubilee for the Earth: New Rhythms, New Hope".

The people of Israel in ancient times saw the Jubilee as a special time for all creation, the fruit of the wisdom of experience and the connection with all living beings: "And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you [...]" (Leviticus 25:10). They allowed the restoration of the earth's systems and the recovery of a primary balance for a healthy existence.

CELEBRATE THE CREATION

We live in an opportune time for hope and action; both attitudes need to complement each other and to enter into a synergy that makes to look at all life with respect possible, without forgetting the opportune commitment so that all life is possible.

During the Season of Creation we are invited to unite as one family from a bond of faith, from the certainty of a common origin, from the invitation to take care for creation and for the common home, in this year in which a tiny virus has disrupted almost all of our lives and it has placed before our eyes the inescapable reality of the damage we are causing our mother Earth.

The proposal of a Jubilee for the Earth means to begin paying the debt we owe it, because we have exploited it without any kind of qualm, harming all life, especially the most vulnerable lives.

From «Connect yourself for Justice» we propose that this time of reflection, the first of the three included in the extension of our Campaign to be a time of prayer, of going in depth and of concrete actions.

To this end, we have launched a series of actions, from changing personal and community habits to a gesture on social networks, to multiply the message.

- To make a gesture on social networks: upload to social networks a photo or phrases for the liberation, restoration, redemption and cancellation of the debt to the Earth. Use the hashtag #SeasonofCreation
- To measure the contribution to integral ecology with the Laudato Si' Goals (LSG).
- To change life habits, with some concrete proposals to start now.
- To tell the personal advances in the care of Creation.

All of them can be found on the Campaign's website:

www.enlazateporlajusticia.org/jubileotierra

Because from «Connect yourself for Justice» we recognise that it is urgent, in the midst of the pandemic in which we still find ourselves, to set out on the road to a more sustainable and just world. Because the old normality has revealed to us how unviable life is if we don't change our daily habits.

[#SeasonofCreation](#)

[#TakeCareOfTheEarthFightPoverty](#)

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