# Religious climate mobilisation accelerates with renewed focus on ecological and social justice action



On 4 September 2025, over 50 representatives from more than 30 religious congregations gathered at the London Jesuit Centre for a pivotal event titled "Ecology and Church: Our Vocation for Prophetic Action and Investment for Our Common Home." This day of reflection, dialogue, and committed action was convened by the Conference of Religious (CoR) in partnership with the Laudato Si Movement, Operation Noah, Just Money Movement, and the Association of Provincial Bursars. The gathering highlighted the growing urgency within faith communities to integrate ecological care with social justice, inspired by the imperative of Pope Francis's encyclical Laudato Si’.

The event commenced with Sr Jane Maltby Rscj, Chair of CoR's Collaboration Team, offering a welcome, followed by reflections from facilitators Sr MaryAnne Francalanza fcJ of the FCJ Centre for Spirituality and EcoJustice and Bokani Tshidzu, Campaign Officer of Operation Noah. Opening prayers drew on Psalm 18, underscoring the sacredness of creation, while Pope Leo’s message for the 2025 World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation poignantly depicted human-induced ecological harms ranging from deforestation and pollution to the long-term impacts of armed conflicts. These intertwined issues of environmental degradation and human suffering framed the day’s discussions.

Key voices during the event illustrated both the challenges and emerging opportunities. Dr Lorna Gold, Executive Director of the Laudato Si Movement, cautioned about climate and biodiversity "tipping points" but also celebrated the growth of Laudato Si Animators and faith-aligned investment movements as signs of spiritual and practical mobilisation. Meanwhile, Mark Campanale, Executive Director of Carbon Tracker, painted a stark picture of the climate crisis, noting that fossil fuel burning accounts for 75% of global greenhouse gases. He highlighted the disconnect between continuing fossil fuel exports, particularly from the US, and the urgent need to transition to clean energy. Yet, Campanale pointed to a "renewable energy revolution" unfolding across nations such as Namibia, Chile, Jordan, and Kenya, driven by solar and wind power, heralding what he called a "decisive decade" for climate action.

Speakers emphasised that ecological care cannot be separated from social justice, aligning with Catholic Social Teaching. Fr Martin Poulsom, Salesian theologian and musician, noted Pope Francis’s teaching that true ecology must "hear both the Cry of the Earth and the Cry of the Poor." He urged religious communities to move beyond rhetoric into practical steps such as climate-related impact investments, sharing examples like his own Salesian community’s switch to hybrid vehicles. Similarly, Fr Seamus O’Neill of St Patrick's Missionary Society described his society’s transition to biomass energy, solar, and wind power in Ireland, alongside investments in African climate-smart agriculture and solar lighting to support education in disadvantaged communities.

From the United States, Sr Susan Francois CSJP shared that her congregation has long committed to aligning investments with their mission of justice, life, and peace, demonstrating a willingness to withstand financial fluctuations in pursuit of ethical stewardship. Rosie Venner of the Just Money Movement spoke candidly about the systemic role of financial institutions in perpetuating climate harm, revealing that since the Paris Agreement seven years ago, the world’s largest private banks have poured $6.9 trillion into fossil fuels. Venner urged individuals and faith communities alike to shift banking choices toward institutions prioritising people and the planet, building on religious activism to demand accountability.

An afternoon panel, chaired by James Trewby of the Columban Justice, Peace, and Ecology Team, reflected on the necessity of radical action and local leadership, with Sister Kate Midgley advocating for ecological conversion through varied means such as rewilding projects, heat pump installations, and engagement with the Laudato Si Action Platform. Bokani Tshidzu encouraged participation in the upcoming Global Divestment Announcement to shun fossil fuel investments, while also investing proactively in climate solutions and responsible stewardship of land.

This day of faith-inspired ecological reflection underscored the wealth of experience religious congregations hold in responding to the intertwined cries of Earth and poor communities, especially in the Global South. Participants left with renewed commitments to dialogue with financial stewards about impact investing, to deepen their understanding of ecology within their faith vocations, and "to care for creation in small ways" as a profound witness. The concluding Mass celebrated by Fr Dominic Robinson SJ invoked the Spirit’s guidance in lovingly caring for the works of creation, reinforcing the sacred duty embraced by these diverse religious communities.

The event aligns with broader momentum within faith-based ecological justice efforts, including the forthcoming Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) conferences announced by the CoR for 2025 and 2026, which aim to sustain and deepen these commitments. It also connects with ongoing theological and scientific dialogues, such as the Laudato Si’ Research Institute's recent conference honouring Pope Francis’s ecological legacy and promoting integral approaches to planetary crises.

This collective movement within the Church signals a significant push to not only advocate for environmental sustainability but to implement just financial practices that reflect Gospel values, recognising the interconnectedness of ecological health and social equity in our common home.

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* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/53195), [[4]](https://laudatosimovement.org/)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/53195), [[4]](https://laudatosimovement.org/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/53195), [[4]](https://laudatosimovement.org/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/53195), [[6]](https://www.operationnoah.org/catholic-investors-encouraged-to-fund-climate-solutions/)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/53195), [[4]](https://laudatosimovement.org/), [[5]](https://www.operationnoah.org/integrating-catholic-social-teaching-into-climate-investing-a-roundtable-event/)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/53195), [[6]](https://www.operationnoah.org/catholic-investors-encouraged-to-fund-climate-solutions/)
* Paragraph 7 – [[1]](https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/53195), [[4]](https://laudatosimovement.org/)
* Paragraph 8 – [[1]](https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/53195), [[2]](https://www.corew.org/news-events-blog/2025/9/4/upcoming-jpic-conferences-2025-amp-2026), [[7]](https://www.jesuit.org.uk/news/laudato-si-research-institute-conference-honours-pope-franciss-ecological-legacy)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/53195> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.corew.org/news-events-blog/2025/9/4/upcoming-jpic-conferences-2025-amp-2026> - The Conference of Religious (CoR) has announced upcoming Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) conferences for 2025 and 2026. These events aim to deepen the commitment of religious congregations to ecological justice and sustainable investment, building upon previous initiatives like the 'Ecology and Church' day held on 4 September 2025 at the London Jesuit Centre. The conferences will feature speakers from various faith-based organisations and focus on integrating Catholic Social Teaching into climate action and investment strategies.
3. <https://www.facebook.com/FCJSpiritualityCentreLondon/?locale=en_GB> - The FCJ Centre for Spirituality and EcoJustice in London offers resources and events focused on ecological spirituality and justice. Their Facebook page provides updates on workshops, retreats, and community initiatives aimed at fostering a deeper connection with creation and promoting sustainable living. The centre collaborates with various organisations, including the Conference of Religious, to support faith-based responses to the climate crisis.
4. <https://laudatosimovement.org/> - The Laudato Si' Movement is a global network of over 900 Catholic organisations and more than 10,000 trained grassroots leaders, known as Laudato Si' Animators. Inspired by Pope Francis's encyclical 'Laudato Si', the movement's mission is to inspire and mobilise the Catholic community to care for our common home and achieve climate and ecological justice. They provide resources, organise events, and advocate for sustainable practices within the Church.
5. <https://www.operationnoah.org/integrating-catholic-social-teaching-into-climate-investing-a-roundtable-event/> - Operation Noah hosted a roundtable event in London on 18 February 2025, focusing on integrating Catholic Social Teaching into climate investing. The event featured speakers such as John O'Shaughnessy, CFO of the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement, Rev Dr Martin Poulsom SDB, and Bokani Tshidzu, Campaign Officer at Operation Noah. Discussions centred on aligning investment strategies with CST principles, including care for creation and the preferential option for the poor, and introduced the 'see, judge, act' framework for evaluating investment choices.
6. <https://www.operationnoah.org/catholic-investors-encouraged-to-fund-climate-solutions/> - Operation Noah's Catholic Green Investment Roundtable, held in London, encouraged Catholic financial decision-makers to invest in climate solutions. The event highlighted the significant influence and financial power of Churches and Christian institutions in addressing the climate crisis. It introduced a new toolkit for Catholic investors to align their investments with the values of 'Mensuram Bonum', published by the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, and discussed the role of faith-based investors in funding a greener future.
7. <https://www.jesuit.org.uk/news/laudato-si-research-institute-conference-honours-pope-franciss-ecological-legacy> - The Laudato Si' Research Institute (LSRI), an initiative of the Jesuits in Britain, hosted a significant conference at the Oxford Martin School on 24–25 April 2025. The event marked the tenth anniversary of Pope Francis's encyclical 'Laudato Si' and honoured his ecological legacy. Themed 'Theology & Integral Ecology: New Approaches to Our Planetary Crisis', the conference brought together over 100 theologians, scientists, and activists to discuss the intersection of theology and integral ecology in addressing global ecological and social crises.