

Climate Sunday. A Diocesan response to the Climate Crisis.

There have been many encouraging responses to Laudato Si. In this way we can pray and work together to build a better future. It is a time to listen to the Cry of the Earth, which has so disturbingly been spelt out for us in the latest expert report from the IPCC.

One of these responses is the Climate Sunday initiative; a real opportunity for us to come together as a Diocese to pray and take action in preparation for the COP26 meeting in November. The Climate Sunday initiative is calling on the priests and people of all local churches across Great Britain and Ireland to hold a climate-focused service on any Sunday before COP26. The vision of the initiative is to leave a lasting legacy of thousands of churches better equipped to address this fundamental issue as part of their mission and to raise their voices in support of the effort to secure adequate national and international action at this critical time.

At the heart of this is prayer and within our parishes, the need for individual and collective ecological conversion. Pope Francis calls us to acknowledge that all people are linked by an integral ecology so that we are required to act and make decisions to protect our global family. Climate Sunday is a part of that.

The initiative has three elements: Worship, Commitment, and Speaking Up. It is a really helpful way of setting out the path that we can follow within parishes which can hopefully lead to more congregations signing up for the 'Live Simply' programme or forming 'Care for our Common Home' groups.

At this Mass, we are encouraged as congregations to make a commitment to greater action to address climate change in our own place of worship and community and to use our voices to tell politicians we want a cleaner, greener, fairer future at the heart of plans agreed during COP26.

As a Diocese, the focus is on the weekend of Sunday 3rd October to celebrate a Climate Sunday Mass. It is hoped that every parish will have its own Climate Mass at this time. This date appropriately leads into the conclusion of the Season of Creation on the feast of St. Francis – October 4th. The Climate Sunday website holds many worship resources. There is a very useful and encouraging CAFOD template to help plan the Mass. www.climatesunday.org/service-resources

October 4th also sees the official Vatican launch of the Laudato Si Platform described as 'a space for institutions, communities and families to learn and grow together' – and full of resources and guidance on ways to take action. This can help with the next steps. www.laudatosiplatform.org

By focusing on one specific weekend, we can be part of a Diocesan response united together in prayer and commitment.

Yours in blessed hope,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, starting with a cross symbol and the name 'Jerry'.