

The effective struggle against global warming will only be possible with a responsible collective answer, that goes beyond particular interests and behavior and is developed free of political and economic pressures . . . On climate change, there is a clear, definitive and ineluctable ethical imperative to act.

Pope Francis

Most Holy Father,

We write to you as young people, as constituents of Jesuit institutions, other Christian, Catholic, and religious institutions, and non-religious institutions as people of goodwill, on behalf of an entire generation. We are standing on the precipice of climate catastrophe. It is during this generation's lifetime that we may reach, or even surpass a 2°C global temperature increase and begin to experience the most severe impacts of climate change. Even at the edge of this precipice however, we find ourselves united in a sweeping global movement for environmental justice. Despite differences in cultural, national, and religious backgrounds, we recognize each other as brothers and sisters in a global community; we appreciate World Youth Day as a critical opportunity to learn from each other about our roles as environmental stewards, and we look up to you as a leader in this movement.

Since the release of your encyclical "Laudato Si'" last June, we have been inspired by your call for climate justice and the awakening of the Catholic and global community to the systemic causes of the climate crisis. We have resonated with your criticism of the lack of response from our politicians and leaders in addressing climate change. St. Ignatius of Loyola urged us to see God in all things. Regrettably, many of our leaders are overlooking this important lesson. It is remarkable how weak international political responses have been. The message that we are getting out to the world through our fossil fuel divestment work echoes your observation that "The failure of global summits on the environment make it plain that our politics are subject to technology and finance. There are too many special interests, and economic interests easily end up trumping the common good and manipulating information so that their own plans will not be affected." We wholeheartedly agree with your analysis, Holy Father, and we see divestment as a means to strip fossil fuel special interests of their political power, which thus far has helped in blocking meaningful climate legislation to come to fruition. As you have taught, highly polluting fossil fuels must be replaced without delay, and that cannot happen while these interests have control of our political processes.

Additionally, fossil fuel divestment proclaims, as you did at the Second World Meeting of Popular Movements, that "there is an invisible thread joining every one of [the many forms of exclusion and injustice]." You asked: "Can we recognize it? These are not isolated issues. I wonder whether we can see that these destructive realities are part of a system which has become global. Do we realize that that system has imposed the mentality of profit at any price, with no concern for social exclusion or the destruction of nature?"

We answer yes. All around us, we see the frightening consequences of an extractive capitalist economy, colonialism, systemic racism, and other forms of injustice. Divestment as a tactic is pivotal to the climate justice movement in that it forces us to think of issues with intersectionality on a global scale. One cannot truly address the climate crisis and environmental injustice issues without dismantling the larger system which allows these injustices to continue. By calling on our institutions to divest their endowments from fossil fuel

companies and reinvest those funds into renewable technology and a new economy, we force dialogue on climate change in terms of a global system that we urgently need.

Despite the colossal challenges that face our young generation, we have hope in the future and are fighting to secure a world for ourselves in which a just and stable future is possible. We have been inspired and invigorated by your witness to the Gospel, and your calls for real, structural change. We ask that you call on our organizations, along with other institutions, to divest from fossil fuels. Some of the world's largest Catholic organizations still have millions of dollars invested in heavily polluting fossil fuel companies. Within a few years, this remarkably fast-growing movement has reached some incredible milestones, but unfortunately many of our own institutions, even as they cite Christian values, are ignoring your call for climate justice by refusing to divest. Additionally, we ask that you divest your own "campus," as the Vatican has an equal responsibility as our universities and institutions to cut ties with the fossil fuel industry. We wholeheartedly believe in the Catholic values of stewardship for the Earth and for oppressed people, and we are offering our institutions the chance to live out these values as well. We are doing all that we can, but we need your help so that together we can take part in the "globalization of hope."

We thank you again for your love and your leadership, Holy Father.
As young people for a just world,

Climate Justice at Boston College
Boston College Alumni for Divestment
Fossil Free LMU, Loyola Marymount University
ECO Students, Loyola Marymount University
Jesuit Divestment Network, USA
Tufts Climate Action, Tufts University
Saint Mary's College Sustainability Committee
Swarthmore Mountain Justice
Bowdoin Climate Action
Maine Students for Climate Justice
University of New Hampshire's Student Environmental Action Coalition
Divest Central Michigan University
Student Environmental Alliance at Central Michigan University
Take Back the Tap at Central Michigan University
Divest Chico State
Fossil Free Caltech (Teachers for a Sustainable Future)
Fossil Free UCLA at University of California, Los Angeles
Fossil Free University of Tasmania, Australia
Fossil Free Monash University, Australia
Fossil Free Murdoch, Australia
Fossil Free RMIT, Melbourne, Australia
Boston University Students for a Just and Stable Future
Fossil Free San Francisco State University
Fossil Free MIT, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
DivestNOW! Cornell, Cornell University
Fossil Free NAU, Northern Arizona University
Fossil Free Lesley, Lesley University
Divest Carleton, Carleton College

Southwest Divestment Network, Divestment Student Network
DivestNU, Northeastern University
Fossil Free App State, Appalachian State University
Fossil Free Reed College Alumni
People and Planet, Fossil Free UK, United Kingdom
Go Fossil Free Washington State University
Colorado College Student Divestment Committee
Go Fossil Free Ball State
Divest Barnard from Fossil Fuels
Divest Dartmouth, Dartmouth College
Fossil Free Lakehead, Lakehead University
Divest University of Washington
Fossil Free ND, University of Notre Dame
Fossil Free Warwick University, UK
Pacific University: Go Fossil Free
Fossil Free Cal, UC Berkeley
Fossil Free UC, University of California
DivestPburgh, State University of New York at Plattsburgh
Go Fossil Free SBCC, Santa Barbara City College, California
Divest DU, University of Denver, Colorado
Green Jays at Creighton University
Fossil Free NU, Northwestern University
Columbia Divest for Climate Justice, Columbia University
Sierra Student Coalition, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Fossil Free UCSC, University of California Santa Cruz
Divest Stonehill, Stonehill College
Stonehill College, Students for Environmental Action
University of Southern Maine: Go Fossil Free!
Fossil Free Yale
Divest JC, Juniata College
Go Fossil Free, Penn State
Fossil Free University of Queensland
Divest James Cook University
Divest WNEU, Western New England University
Oxford University Fossil Free, UK
Brandeis Climate Justice
Hamilton Divests, Hamilton College
Fossil Free MU, University of Melbourne
Fossil Free WashU, Washington University in St. Louis
Fossil Free Griffith University
Divest Tulane
Fossil Free ANU, Australian National University
Climate Action 350-UW (University of Wisconsin-Madison)
University of Iowa: Go Fossil Free
Oberlin Students for Divestment
Fossil Free Queensland University of Technology
Clarkson University Sustainable Synergy
Students United for Socioeconomic Justice, University of Texas at San Antonio
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Beyond Coal

Climate Action Society at the University of Virginia
Student Environmental Alliance at Loyola University Chicago
Divest JMU, James Madison University
Sierra Student Coalition
Fossil Free Santa Clara University
Saint Michael's College, SMC Sustainable Investments
Divest DePauw, DePauw University
Rutgers Fossil Fuel Divestment Campaign
Divest Grinnell, Grinnell College
Fossil Free GU, Georgetown University
Reinvest Montana, University of Montana
Student Environmental Action, School of the Art Institute of Chicago
SAIC for the Future, School of the Art Institute of Chicago
Chicago Youth Climate Coalition
Artists Known As, School of the Art Institute of Chicago
Divest Duke, Duke University
Fossil Free Vassar College, Vassar College
St Hilda's College Divestment Campaign, University of Oxford
Divest Pomona, Pomona College
Divest University of Redlands, University of Redlands
Divest University of Hawaii (DivestUH.org)
Fossil Free Prescott College
Fossil Free Loyola University New Orleans
Climate Youth Japan
GEYK (Green Environment Youth Korea)
Refuel Our Future, Johns Hopkins University
CDS Antwerpen, University of Antwerp, Belgium
Center of Hands-on Actions and Networking for Growth and Environment (CHANGE)
Sustainable Student Action, Seattle University
Divest University of Scranton, University of Scranton
Catholic Youth, Parramatta, Australia
Mar de Niebla, Gijón, Spain
Fossil Free Trinity College Dublin
Institute for Environmental Policy, Albania
Ethical Exeter (Ethical investment campaign at the University of Exeter, UK)
Aberdeen University Fossil Free
Fossil Free Sussex, University of Sussex
People & Planet, University of Sheffield
St. Ignatius' College, Riverview, Environment Committee
TEAR Australia
DivestUW, University of Winnipeg
University of Leeds People and Planet
Rathgar Parish Care for our Common Home Group
Young Power in Social Action, Bangladesh
Fossil Free University of Newcastle, Australia
Young Christian Workers Ireland
Participatory Research Action Network- PRAN, Bangladesh
Bangladesh Youth Forum
Fossil Free Malmö, Sweden

NGO Center for Assistance and Information of Young Economists "CERTITUDE", Republic of Moldova

Australian Catholic University National Students Association

350 Tuvalu

Swiss Youth for Climate

World Changers Academy, South Africa

Fossil Free Utrecht University (the Netherlands)

CDS Gent, Ghent University

SPEAK Network, UK

Girls For Climate - Uganda

Fossil Free Göttingen, Germany

Bright Doves of St. Francis, Uganda

Italian Climate Network – Youth Section