



Dehonians USA

PRIESTS OF THE SACRED HEART

November 1, 2023

Dear Brothers,

The book of Genesis recounts the creation of the world, where God created everything and saw that it was good. God then entrusted human beings with the responsibility of taking care of God's creation. In his encyclical letter *Laudato Si'* and apostolic exhortation *Laudate Deum*, Pope Francis identifies our failures to protect our common home, which have led to catastrophic consequences, e.g., extreme heat waves and heavy snowfalls, severe droughts and floods. These extreme conditions have the greatest impact on the most vulnerable, leading to famine and the displacement of millions of people, contributing to what seems like a never-ending cycle of poverty.

Although not mentioned explicitly in *Laudato Si'* and *Laudate Deum*, weapons proliferation is another alarming concern that threatens our very existence. The cycle of countries acquiring more advanced and sophisticated weapons only increases the risk of military confrontations and wars. The destructive consequences of wars on people and Mother Earth are well-known. As Fr. Dehon put it: "[War] gives us an idea of hell!"



These issues are a global emergency and a human problem that threaten the existence of all beings. We must be committed to the generations that come after us. As Dehonians dedicated to social justice, we have the responsibility to leave the world as a better place for future generations. Addressing these issues requires every single one of us working together. How can we protect our common home?

We, members of the North American Councils, urge all SCJs to familiarize ourselves with these issues, educate our communities and co-workers, reference them in our preaching, partner with organizations, and engage with elected political leaders. To facilitate the action plan at both the individual and institutional levels, we also endorse the following:

1. **Climate change.** We ask that SCJs throughout North America consider using the *Laudato Si'* Action Platform created by the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development. It is a comprehensive plan for promoting integral ecology and sustainable development. Please see link:

<https://laudatosiactionplatform.org/laudato-si-goals/>

2. **Weapons proliferation.** We ask that SCJs in Canada and the United States read the Catholic social teaching on nuclear weapons, review the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, and write to elected officials urging them to pressure our governments to sign and ratify this treaty which will contribute to a safer and more peaceful world. Please see links:

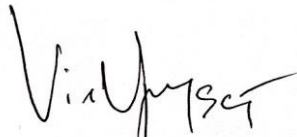
https://www.icanw.org/tpnw_full_text

https://www.cccb.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Statement_on_Nuclear_Weapons_Plenary_Assembly_Sept_25.pdf

<https://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/war-and-peace/nuclear-weapons/upload/nuclear-weapons-and-our-catholic-response-study-guide.pdf>

We propose convening a conference in 2024 to discuss these pressing issues. To assist with organizing this event, a committee consisting of members from both our entities will be appointed.

Representing the North American Councils,



Vien V. Nguyen, SCJ
U.S. Provincial Superior



Gustave Lulendo N'dotony, SCJ
Canadian Regional Superior

