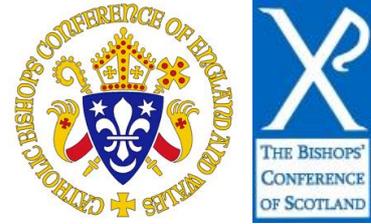




The Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP
The Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA



Monday 7th June 2021

Dear Prime Minister,

As you prepare for the meeting of leaders of the G7, we write to you on behalf of the Catholic community of England, Wales and Scotland to offer our support in ensuring a sustainable future for our global community.

The urgency of the global ecological crisis, and the teachings of our Catholic faith implore us to speak out, take action, and make decisions that benefit our planet and the most vulnerable in society. As Pope Francis writes in *Laudato Si'* “We are faced not with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather with one complex crisis that is both social and environmental. Strategies for a solution demand an integrated approach to combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded and at the same time protecting nature.”¹

The social, economic, and environmental crises we face are inextricably linked. The biodiversity of our planet is decreasing at a shocking rate, and we must all act to counter this. We wish to emphasise that the emergency of the ecological crisis has a human face, recently highlighted by the Vatican’s guidance on climate displaced people.² In our race towards our own technological and economic advances, we have caused the exploitation of people and the degradation of our planet. Energy and infrastructure are vital in supporting the poorest in our societies out of the pandemic and out of the ecological crisis, but we must look towards a future whereby we radically reduce our use of fossil fuels – something which the countries which you represent have a shared responsibility for, in ensuring fair outcomes for the benefit of all.

We acknowledge that in discussing these issues and trying to work towards a solution, you will face many difficulties. Across England, Scotland and Wales, Catholic organisations and communities are already working hard to help respond to the environmental crisis; through transition to use of green energy, a major project to provide a template for how we can decarbonise our dioceses,³ working towards CAFOD’s ‘Livesimply’ award in our parishes, and through education in our 2,600 schools. Church organisations and volunteers have also been an essential part of the response to Covid-19 – providing support at food banks, for the homeless, at vaccination centres, and providing vital outreach to the elderly and isolated. The past year has shown us what we can achieve when we work together towards common goals, but we must do more, and we need you to act now in cooperation to develop strategies and policies that will protect our common home.

¹ Pope Francis, Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'* (24 May 2015), 39

² Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, Pastoral Orientations on Climate Displaced People (30 March 2021)

³ Diocese of Salford, Guardians of Creation www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk/diocese/environment/guardiansofcreation/

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This is the responsibility of every one of us, not just of government. You have the power to make choices and policies which will allow us to build back a fairer, greener, global economy. We also ask you to reflect on what this means for the whole of society and ensure that we work together towards a sustainable future, which includes at its heart, the most vulnerable communities. “Concern for the environment thus needs to be joined to a sincere love for our fellow human beings and an unwavering commitment to resolving the problems of society.”⁴

Covid-19 has shown us how different countries are able to respond economically to the crisis. We now have a responsibility - especially as more wealthy nations - to respond quickly to financially support actions for the benefit of our whole human family and the planet, whether this be our own communities, or those separated from us by distance but intimately connected to us by our dependence on the biodiversity of our common home. As Christians, we believe that all of us make up the body of Christ, and “if one part suffers, every part suffers with it, if one part is honoured, every part rejoices with it” (1 Corinthians 12:26)

With all of this in mind, we call upon you to:

- Provide economic support towards a sustainable recovery from the pandemic, and to move quickly to halt the biodiversity loss the planet is facing.
- Act to support developing nations, ensuring that they are not left behind in decision making, and have fair access to vaccines.
- Ensure sustained action and accountability, to meet targets set out in the Paris Agreement and move as quickly as possible towards a zero-carbon economy, so that we do not exceed the 1.5C temperature rise, beyond which life on our planet will face dire consequences.

We ask for cooperation across state boundaries, and action in support of our poorest neighbours. We ask you to recognise the interlinked nature of these problems, and work towards common solutions. Our future must be sustainable, and it must also be just.

With assurance of our prayers for you and the other G7 heads of states and governments,

The Rt Rev Richard Moth
Bishop of Arundel and Brighton,
Lead bishop for Social Justice
Catholic Bishops' Conference of
England and Wales

The Rt Rev John Arnold
Bishop of Salford,
Lead bishop for the Environment
Catholic Bishops' Conference of
England and Wales

The Rt Rev William Nolan
Bishop of Galloway,
Lead bishop for Justice & Peace
Catholic Bishops' Conference of
Scotland

Cc: The Rt Hon Alok Sharma MP, COP26 President

⁴ Pope Francis, Encyclical Letter Laudato Si' (24 May 2015), 91

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