CMSM Passes Resolution on “Cherish All of Creation”

With Pope Francis, the leaders of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM) asserted how clearly they hear both the “cry of the earth and the cry of the poor” (Laudato Si’, 49). Representing the leaders of all the Catholic men’s religious orders in the U.S., which have a long history of walking with those in most need, CMSM deeply feels the suffering of our “common home” and all the creatures, each of whom “have a value of their own in God’s eyes” (Laudato Si’, 69, 221).

“This is a positive and concrete way to accept and advance, in a proactive way, the challenge that Pope Francis has placed before all people in Laudato Si’,” Very Rev. James Greenfield, OSFS, CMSM president, said.

With great enthusiasm and commitment, CMSM overwhelmingly passed a resolution, “Cherish All of Creation,” at its national assembly on Friday, August 7, in Charlotte, NC. With this act, CMSM commits to a deeper engagement on this issue and transforming practices in communities where they and their members live and minister. “The biblical vision with Christ in the center of our lives and communities, along with our vows and our mission as religious, calls us to see the urgency of this issue, not simply as a justice and peace concern but as embedded in who we are,” the document asserts.

Furthermore, legislation impels the more than 17,000 priests, brothers, and seminarians whom the CMSM delegates represent to:

- pray regularly the St. Francis Pledge “To Protect and Heal God’s Creation.”
- change our lifestyle and personal habits, such as consuming less, creating community gardens, and eating less or no meat as we cultivate the virtues of an “ecological citizenship.”
- create dialogues, preach and teach to address these issues.
- include the most affected community in our own deliberations toward improving our care for creation.
- increase significantly our reliance on green energy in our ministries and buildings, as we also significantly decrease and ultimately “replace without delay” (Laudato Si’, 165) our reliance on fossil fuels in each; and to support these same commitments in any investment portfolios.
- advocate for significant policy changes at all levels of government to address this issue, including a more equitable economic system.
The assembly also recognized that increasing wars over natural resources and war itself are serious threats to a healthy climate. Here, members identified the need for the nation to spend less on preparing for war and more to prevent and defuse ongoing war.

“CMSM remains excited to move as one body with the Body of Christ and with the Spirit who moves and sustains us in this most urgent endeavor to cherish all of creation. We invite people of good will to join us in this liberating and holy practice,” Fr. Greenfield said.

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The Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM) supports and offers resources for U.S. leaders of Catholic men’s religious institutes. CMSM promotes dialogue and collaboration on issues of religious life as well as peace and justice issues with major groups in church and society. There are more than 17,000 religious priests and brothers in the United States.