



Missionary Society of St Columban

聖高隆龐傳教會

General Council

Columban Missionaries Message on COP28: We Cannot Give Up!

HONG KONG, November 30, 2023. On occasion of the United Nations' COP28 on climate change in Dubai, UAE, (30 November – 12 December), Columban missionaries express our solidarity with people who bear the heaviest burden of climate change and with the earth itself. **Columban Vicar General, Fr. Brian Vale**, says, "God has not given up on reminding us of the urgency of respecting creation and so we are urged to do more. Pope Francis' planned attendance at this COP meeting gives us a clear witness that we must persevere like the widow who sought justice." (Luke 18:1-8) Prominent eco-theologian **Columban Fr. Sean McDonagh** speaks clearly when he says, "Humans are putting life on planet earth under siege."

Pope Francis, in his most recent document **Laudate Deum**, reiterated his urgent plea for radical shifts toward economic and technocratic paradigms that favor people and planet over profit and pilfering. He writes, "We must move beyond the mentality of appearing to be concerned but not having the courage needed to produce substantial changes." (Laudate Deum, #56)

Through Columban dialogue with the Holy See and participation in global networks like the Ecclesial Networks of Alliance for Integral Ecology (ENA), the Faiths4Biodiversity International Coalition, and Laudato Si' Movement, we add our voice calling for:

- Adoption of **Fossil Fuel Non-proliferation Treaty** and holding top polluters accountable;
- Establishing the **Loss and Damage Fund** for climate-vulnerable communities;
- Implementation of climate action that upholds the role of **agroecology and culture-based solutions** in addressing food and water vulnerabilities;



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- Funding **USD 100 billion of public and private climate finance annually** by developed countries in support of the Global South, and bridging gaps to meet the goal of USD 4.3trillion by 2030 (OECD & Climate Policy Initiative, 2022);
- A commitment to **adaptation and mitigation** deficiencies to keep COP 21 goals alive.

Around the world Columbans are committed to listening to and working with local communities in their search for healthy lives and a healthy planet. Some of those efforts include:

- Planting trees and wildflower gardens; beekeeping;
- Advocating nationally and globally on climate and biodiversity legislation;
- Personal and collective ecological conversion through lifestyle changes and prayer;
- Ecological education and formation programs especially for young people;
- Monitoring financial investments for Environmental, Social, and Governance compliance.

May the governments gathered in UAE have the courage to act for the common good. May civil society stand united in holding governments and corporations accountable to promises made.

Rev. Tim Mulroy
Society Leader

Vida Amor Flequilan
Columban Lay Missionary International Leader