



Conference of the Parties on Climate Change COP27

A Dominican Response November 6-18, 2022

The 2022 United Nations Climate Change Conference, more commonly referred to as COP27, will be held from November 6 to 18 in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt. Sharm El Sheikh is Egyptian for the city of peace, an apt name for the international gathering to address the increasing urgency for climate crisis action. The city is also tellingly located only 50 miles from Mt. Sinai, a site sacred to three major faith traditions, all of whom recognize the one Creator whose love encompasses the whole of life.

This is a gathering of heads of State, ministers and negotiators, climate activists, mayors, civil society representatives, CEOs, and concerned citizens from many nations who come together to continue the on-going efforts to revitalize international cooperation on climate action. It is essential that they hear from as many voices as possible. We are all of us affected by the growing consequences of climate change.

Our Dominican voice is one of the many that must be heard. There are approximately 20,000 sisters, nuns and a minimum of 5,000 brothers in almost every nation of the globe. We are on the ground, literally, experiencing the crises, living and working with the increasing numbers of people, particularly the poor and marginalized, whose lives and livelihoods are devastated by extreme heat, loss of biodiversity, storms, drought, floods, and fire. It is not only our compassion and desire for justice that moves us to action, however. Our response comes from the very heart of why we were founded.

In the 12th Century, the dualistic Albigensian heresy pitted the material world, created by the evil God, against the spiritual, created by the good God. Dominic de Guzman's response was to found an Order to Preach the Truth of the integrity of the whole of creation, created by the One God.

This was further affirmed by Albert the Great, who shifted academia from Plato's cosmology, which did not see reality in the material world, to that of Aristotle, who did. Thomas Aquinas recognized that the shift in cosmology required a whole new understanding of the Divine, and he spent his life, literally, rewriting theology. Catharine of Siena's theology is deeply rooted in images of creation. Meister Eckhart is our creation mystic par excellence. Martin de Porres, friend to all living creatures, shows us how to live in right relationship with one another and the whole of life.

Veritas. By our very charism as Dominicans we are called to speak Truth to a world that often lives in denial of reality. Our emphasis on study to separate fact from false hype, on prayer and contemplative reflection that open us to our own personal transformation, on the importance of living for the common good lend us credibility to speak this Truth.

Since few of us can travel to Egypt for a physical presence, we offer the following as a way to be connected to the work and the outcome of the Conference.

There are a lot of emails that will be coming by in the next few weeks along with a series of reflections on the readings for each of the days during the Conference, and short videos that highlight some of the work we Dominicans are doing to address climate change. Please take a look at the calendar to see what content will come out on each day this way you do not miss out on anything!

Sister Jane Belanger, OP. Dominican Sister of Peace

Sister Linda Gibler, OP , Dominican Sister of Houston

Friar Neil Mitchel, OP, Dominican in the South Africa Province

Sister Sarudzai Mutero, OP Zimbabwe, South Africa

Sister Corinne Sanders, OP. Dominican Sister of Adrian

Sister Charon Zayac, OP. Dominican Sister of Springfield, IL.