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Following worst-ever European heatwave, 170+ Faith Organisations Representing 33.1 Million Europeans Demand Bold Climate Action at the start of Irish EU Presidency

As France, Germany, Poland, Hungary, Denmark, Slovakia and the Czech Republic record their hottest days ever and fossil fuel profits soar to \$22 billion, a massive faith-based coalition urges the incoming EU Council Presidency to make polluters pay and lead a just transition away from fossil fuels.

BRUSSELS / DUBLIN — At the start of Ireland assuming the rotating Presidency of the Council of the European Union on July 1st, a rapidly growing European coalition has issued a powerful moral call to EU leaders. The "**Europe, Be Faithful for Our Common Home**" campaign has now been [endorsed by over 170 faith-based organizations](#), representing an unprecedented unified front across 20 EU member states.

This coalition represents **more than 33.1 million European citizens**, bringing a profound collective weight that spans from 600,000 members of religious congregations to the voice of 1.5 million women of the *Andante European Alliance of Catholic Women's Organisations*, and the *Central Committee of German Catholics (ZdK)* representing 19.2 million Catholics in Germany, alongside dozens of major national and international networks like Laudato Si' Movement, Caritas Europa, CIDSE, JESC, Justice & Peace Europe, Pax Christi International, the International Catholic Conference of Scouting (ICCS), ACLI, Trocaire and Christian Aid Ireland.

A crucial political juncture: the Irish EU Presidency

The campaign's growing momentum arrives at a pivotal political moment. Ireland's incoming presidency (July–December 2026) centres on three main pillars: **Competitiveness, Values, and Security**. Faith leaders argue that true European security and competitiveness cannot be achieved while the continent remains structurally dependent on volatile, imported fossil fuels.

The **Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference** recently drew attention to the 'Europe be Faithful for Our Common Home' campaign, as Bishops said that *"the upcoming EU Presidency is also an opportunity for Ireland to foster a coherent approach to protecting our common home and reduce dependency on fossil fuels."*

Bishop Martin Hayes, Laudato Si' Coordinator for the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference, said: "As Ireland has recently experienced record hot temperatures in recent weeks, undoubtedly due to our overreliance on fossil fuels to sustain our economies, **I welcome the strong ethical voice of the 'Europe, Be Faithful for our Common Home'** campaign statement issued today (1 July 2026), as the Republic of Ireland takes up the EU Presidency.

"The voice of the 'Europe Be Faithful' campaign is inspired by Laudato Si' (Pope Francis) which clearly outlines that climate change is due to the overuse of fossil fuels (LS 23) and calls us to replace fossil fuels with renewable sources of energy (LS 166).

"In Europe, the focus on the priorities of competitiveness, values and security must be balanced. In advocating for values, in the spirit of Laudato Si' (LS 196), **I discern that the EU may have to accept less growth to ensure that we respond to the cry of the poor in the Global South** affected by climate change. Rather than continuing to extract from the earth to sustain our economies, we must deepen our appreciation of the gift of the earth and its ecology to provide for the common good."

The faith coalition warns EU leaders against allowing the proposed "Omnibus simplification packages" to become a back-door mechanism for deregulation. As discussions begin on the 7-year EU budget, the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), the coalition argues for massively scaled up investment in energy efficiency, electrification and renewable energy, respecting the rights of indigenous people and local communities.

Corporate windfall profits vs. the public good

The campaign's demands are sharpened as millions across Europe are hit by the interconnected climate, cost-of-living and energy crises. Just days ago, on 17 June, climate and financial justice organisations mobilised at the European Council in Brussels to protest skyrocketing excess fossil fuel profits. Europe's six largest oil and gas corporations made a combined **\$22 billion in profits in the first quarter of 2026 alone**—the highest quarterly total since 2022. A recent Global Witness study found that **carbon emissions from EU oil firms' production since the Paris Agreement is set to cause an estimated \$1.5 trillion in global climate damages.**

The moral core: faith, hope, and social love

While technical and economic arguments often dominate Brussels, the *Europe Be Faithful* campaign brings a strong ethical voice to the table, representing millions who view ecological protection as an inescapable moral duty. This message echoes the recent words of **Pope Leo XIV** at the Austrian World Summit, where he underscored that the environmental crisis *"is not an isolated issue, but rather the ecological aspect of the contemporary socio-economic crisis"* (Magnifica Humanitas, 43).

Drawing from Christian virtues, the campaign challenges European leaders to “remember the values and principles of its founders: protecting human rights and preserving peace” and embrace what the Church defines as “**civic and political love**”—devising large-scale strategies to halt environmental degradation and protect the most vulnerable. This moral call is further bolstered by the [Manifesto of the Bishops of the Global South](#), highlighting the immediate loss of lives and livelihoods, and the plight of vulnerable migrants fleeing climate-induced crises.

Dr. Lorna Gold, Executive Director of the Laudato Si’ Movement, said: “Global heating caused principally by fossil fuel emissions is unleashing lethal heatwaves across Europe, which will only get worse if we fail to act. Yet there are solutions if political leaders are prepared to choose the path of courage, peace and the common good. As Ireland takes on the EU Presidency, it is vital that public funding is massively scaled up for energy efficiency, electrification and renewable energy in the next EU budget. Big polluters must be held accountable for the climate damages they cause, including through a permanent tax on colossal fossil fuel profits. We call on Ireland to lead by example in phasing out fossil fuels and ensure that the EU remains faithful to its founding values by taking action for our Common Home.”

Sean Farrell, CEO of Trócaire, said: “Vulnerable communities around the world are already facing the devastating impacts of the climate crisis, despite having done the least to cause it. As a historically high carbon emitter, Europe must ensure they urgently phase out fossil fuels and pay their fair share of climate finance to those on the frontlines of the crisis. Ignoring this reality would be not only a moral failing, but also incredibly reckless at a time of such global instability.”

This faith-led call aligns directly with demands from wider civil society. In a recent open letter to EU leaders, a powerful alliance of trade unions (including *industriAll Europe*) and climate think-tanks (like *E3G*) argued that Europe’s future prosperity depends on making this “**Europe’s final fossil fuel crisis**” by investing public funds with strict social conditionalities to ensure fair wages and green jobs.

Four immediate actions demanded of EU leadership:

1. **A Fast and Fair Fossil Fuel Phase-Out:** Establish a legally binding strategy to exit coal by 2030, gas by 2035, and oil by 2040, together with an immediate ban on new fossil fuel exploration.
2. **A Permanent Windfall Profit Tax:** Introduce a permanent tax on the massive profits of fossil fuel companies to finance the energy transition and shield vulnerable households from the cost-of-living crisis.
3. **Massive Clean Energy & Sufficiency Investment:** Scale up investment in energy efficiency, renewable energy, electrification and the circular economy while promoting resource sufficiency.
4. **Climate Finance in the EU Budget:** Prioritise human dignity and social justice over corporate interests in the upcoming 7-year EU budget (MFF).

As the historic birthplace of the fossil-fuel-powered economy, Europe holds an unprecedented duty to lead the global transition beyond fossil fuels. As the Irish Presidency begins, just months before the fossil fuel phase-out conference to be co-hosted by Ireland and Tuvalu in early 2027, millions of faithful European citizens are asking their leaders a defining ethical question, echoing the words of Pope Leo XIV: *"God will ask us if we have cultivated and cared for the world that he created... What will be our answer?"*

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Notes to the Editor:

- Campaigners staged a stunt outside the European Council calling for a permanent tax on fossil fuel profits - [photos available here](#)
- **About the Campaign:** "Europe, Be Faithful for Our Common Home" is a pan-European campaign coordinated by the Laudato Si' Movement and backed by over 170 Catholic and Christian organizations, representing over 33.1 million citizens across 20 EU countries. [Here is the text of the joint call.](#)
- **Data Sources:** Corporate earnings data referenced from Q1 2026 financial declarations. Citizen representation metrics compiled via internal signatory declarations as of June 2026. Quote references from Pope Leo XIV's recent Encyclical *Magnifica Humanitas* and his address to the 2026 Austrian World Summit.
- Reference article: <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2026/jun/26/europe-heatwave-impossible-without-climate-crisis-scientists>
- Statement of the Summer 2026 General Meeting of the Irish Bishops' Conference: <https://www.catholicbishops.ie/2026/06/10/statement-of-the-summer-2026-general-meeting-of-the-irish-bishops-conference/>
- Global Witness: Emissions from EU oil firms' fossil fuel production since the Paris Agreement is set to cause an estimated \$1.5 trillion in climate damages: <https://globalwitness.org/en/press-releases/totalenergies-and-eni-amongst-eu-oil-giants-linked-to-15-trillion-climate-damages-bill/>
- A survey of 1,002 Irish adults (conducted by IrelandThinks in June 2026) on views related to the Irish EU Presidency found that 76% said that the introduction of a new, EU-wide windfall tax on the excess profits of energy companies should be a priority, and 70% think reducing dependence on fossil fuel energy should be a priority: <https://www.environmentalpillar.ie/public-want-irelands-eu-presidency-to-protect-nature-and-tax-fossil-fuel-companies/>