

The letter can be signed here : Change.org : <https://chng.it/wmHLSxkm2C>

**LETTER TO POPE LEO XIV FROM CHRISTIAN FAITH BASED ORGANISATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS  
WITH A CONCERN FOR ANIMAL ADVOCACY AND PROTECTION  
WITH A REQUEST TO UPDATE THE UNIVERSAL TEACHING  
ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HUMANS AND ANIMALS**

01.09. 2025

**His Holiness  
Pope Leo XIV  
Vatican City**

*Summary of the letter*

*Your Holiness! We, leaders and members of Christian organizations dedicated to animal advocacy, and undersigned individuals congratulate Your Holiness on your election as Supreme Pontiff of The Catholic Church and express gratitude for your commitment to integral ecology. We humbly ask you to renew apostolic guidance on humanity's moral responsibilities towards animals. We believe that a compassionate teaching on human–animal relationships, rooted in Scripture and Tradition, and updated according to present scientific knowledge, is urgently needed to address widespread cruelty, environmental degradation, and the climate crisis. We humbly request that you establish a commission of theologians, ethicists, scientists, and other experts to develop such a teaching, affirming the intrinsic value of all animals as God's creatures and calling the faithful to eliminate cruelty, exploitation, and indifference to their suffering. We are ready to support the Church with data, expertise, and experience in this vital theological and moral endeavour.*

**Your Holiness,**

We offer our heartfelt congratulations on Your Holiness's election as Supreme Pontiff of the Catholic Church. We are especially encouraged by your commitment to the principles of integral ecology, and we welcome the continuation of this key work for the future of the world.

**As members and leaders of organisations that advocate for animals, we write to humbly draw Your Holiness's attention to the deep longing in many of the faithful for the renewing of apostolic guidance on the moral responsibilities humans hold towards animals. We believe that an updated and compassionate teaching in this area is an essential element of the Church's care for all of creation.**

With St. Francis of Assisi and other saints as our guides, we respectfully urge Your Holiness to initiate in the Church a process of reflection—one that clearly specifies the moral and spiritual duties of Christians towards animals—and to call people all over the world to eliminate cruelty, exploitation, and indifference in human–animal relationships. Such a teaching will serve the good of all life on Earth.

It has now been ten years since the publication of the encyclical *Laudato si'*, in which Pope Francis reminded us that animals possess an intrinsic and inalienable value given to them by God, and that humanity must reject a despotic domination in favour of respect for their nature. Scripture, Tradition, and Church teachings call us to treat animals with compassion and reverence. Yet despite these teachings, human indifference to harm towards animals remains widespread. People look away, unaware or unwilling to accept the truth hidden behind the walls of factory farms, slaughterhouses, and laboratories. And industry does everything to

conceal the suffering and dire consequences of “animal production” on the environment, health, and social justice.

We assume that Your Holiness is aware of the immense suffering inflicted upon sentient animals in industrial agriculture, and transport, entertainment, scientific experimentation, and other human undertakings. These animals also are, together with people, victims of climate change and environmental destruction — being burned in forest fires, drowned in rising waters, or forced to escape from polluted habitats.

We know that the objectification of animals and the relentless growth of animal–product consumption are devastating for both humanity and the planet. According to the 2023 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Report, food systems account for over one-third of all greenhouse gas emissions and are the leading driver of biodiversity loss. Intensive animal agriculture, largely producing to fulfil the needs of affluent societies, fuels hunger, food waste, pollution, and public health crises.

Leading climate experts warn that the global food system, as it stands, is the principal reason we have already crossed six of the nine planetary boundaries. It jeopardises vital systems that support all life, from freshwater and soil health to air quality and pollinator populations. Many scientists agree that transitioning away from animal agriculture and towards plant-based food systems offers one of the most effective and immediate opportunities to mitigate the climate and ecological crises.

As followers of Christ, we are convinced that failing to act in the context of this knowledge and failing to react to what is being done to animals is a moral failure and our sin. We cannot keep animals any longer outside the circle of Christian compassion and real concern. If we want to strive for the ideal of being good stewards of God's creation, full of peace, as described in Genesis 1:26-30, live ethically and be responsible for the future of life on Earth, if we sincerely strive for salvation, we must urgently reconsider our relationship with animals. We also trust that it is the Holy Spirit Who is guiding us towards this realisation, through the development of science, our growing understanding of animal nature, and the technological solutions allowing us to be independent of using them for our needs.

**Just as we advocate for every human life from conception to natural death, and we wholeheartedly want to respond to the cry of the poor of this world, we also are called to respond to the cry of sentient animals.**

In your message for the 10th World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation (2025), Your Holiness spoke of the need for "God's tenderness" to become visible in the world. We believe this divine tenderness extends also to all animals — and not only sparrows (Luke 12:6), but also those pigs, cows, chickens, fish, and countless others, who suffer in silence.

But ethical development requires education and spiritual renewal — one that helps the faithful see animals as fellow creatures of our Heavenly Father.

**We respectfully request that Your Holiness establish a commission of theologians, ethicists, scientists, and other relevant experts to explore this issue in depth and to develop updated Catholic teaching on human–animal relationships that reflects contemporary scientific knowledge and will help shape people into the image of a loving and compassionate God.**

Without a moral awakening — one that recognises the inherent value of animal life, and is guided by mercy, empathy, and justice also for them — we will be unable to halt environmental destruction, overcome violence, or alleviate human poverty. More importantly, we will also fall short of imitating God's love on our journey to the harmony of the Kingdom of God. We deeply believe that Christ, were he to walk among us today, would stand with the defenceless animals.

**We therefore earnestly appeal once again to Your Holiness to open in the Church a new chapter of moral reflection and teaching that will include animals within the circle of compassion and justice. Just as the Church has played an important role in advancing environmental protection, now it has a chance to lead in**

**healing our relationship with animals. "The whole of creation waits with eager longing for the children of God to be revealed" (Romans 8:19).**

Our organisations stand ready to offer the data, knowledge, and experience to support the Church in this important theological, moral, and civilisational endeavour.

With deep respect and hope,

Leaders and members of the organizations and individuals listed below:

\*\*\*\*\*

**All Creatures.org (USA)** - Tams Nicholson, Executive Director <https://www.all-creatures.org/>

**AnimaTerra -Prendre soin de la Terre et du Vivant** - Christine Kristof [www.animaterra.fr](http://www.animaterra.fr)

**Catholic Action for Animals and St. Barnabas Laudato Si' Group (UK)** - Virginia Bell ; Virginia Bell [vrbell18@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:vrbell18@yahoo.co.uk) ; <https://catholicactionforanimals.wordpress.com/>

**Catholic Vegetarians (Italy)** - Marilena Bogazzi, President [cattolici.vegetariani@gmail.com](mailto:cattolici.vegetariani@gmail.com) ; [www.cattolicevegetariani.it](http://www.cattolicevegetariani.it)

**Christian Animal Rights Association (USA)** - Matthew A. King, President [info@christiananimalrights.com](mailto:info@christiananimalrights.com) <https://christiananimalrights.com/>

**Christian Vegetarian Association (USA)** - Stephen R. Kaufman, MD, Chair <https://www.christianveg.org/>

**Christians for Animals (Poland)** – Barbara Niedźwiedzka, PhD [chrzescijaniedlazwierzat@gmail.com](mailto:chrzescijaniedlazwierzat@gmail.com) [www.opowiedzwierze.pl](http://www.opowiedzwierze.pl) f. <https://www.facebook.com/ChrzescijanieZwierzeta>

**ChristInnen für Tiere (Germany)** - Gabriella Perotto, [gabriperotto@hotmail.com](mailto:gabriperotto@hotmail.com)

**Fraternité pour le Respect Animal (France)** – Estela Torres [estelatorres@fra-respect-animal.org](mailto:estelatorres@fra-respect-animal.org) [www.fraternitepourlerespectanimal.org](http://www.fraternitepourlerespectanimal.org) <https://fra-respect-animal.org/>

**Jesuit European Social Centre (JESC)** - Colm Fahy, *Ecology Advocacy Officer* <https://www.jcfj.ie/>

**Pan-Orthodox Concern for Animals** – President dr Christina Nellist, [panorthodoxconcernforanimals@gmail.com](mailto:panorthodoxconcernforanimals@gmail.com) <https://panorthodoxconcernforanimals.org/>

**Vegan Catholic Christian** - Daniel Mascarenhas, S.J. [vegancatholic.org](http://vegancatholic.org) ; [dmascarenhasj@thejesuitpost.org](mailto:dmascarenhasj@thejesuitpost.org)

#### **Individual support :**

John Berkman, Ph.D. Professor Ordinarius of Moral Theology, University of Toronto (Canada)

Elizabeth Johnson, PhD, Distinguished Professor of Theology Emerita, Fordham University (USA)

Catherine Vialle, Professeur d'Ancien Testament, Lille (France)

Marcin Majewski, dr hab. Professor of Bible Studies at Uniwersytet Papieski Jana Pawła II (Poland)

Richard Chartier, o.f.s., M.Sc., franciscain séculier. Laval – Quebec (Canada)

Robert Culat, priest, Diocese of Avignon (France)

Roman Batorski, Parish Priest, Słubice (Poland)

Marek Kurkierewicz, pastor w Kościół Chrystusowy -Społeczność Chrześcijańska, Koszalin (Poland)

Terry Martin, priest of the Diocese of Arundel & Brighton (UK)  
Andrzej Stefański, priest, Aartsbisdom Mechelen-Brussel (Belgium)  
Jerzy Ptach, priest emeritus, Śmiłowo (Poland)  
Lucille C. Thibodeau, Sister, p.m., Ph.D., Fellow of the Oxford Centre for Animal Ethics (France)  
Dorota Probučka, Ph.D. Professor Ordinarius, and The Chair of Social Ethics Department of the University of the National Education Commission, Chief Editor of the journal *Ethical Education* (Poland)  
Margarita Carretero González, PhD, Senior Lecturer and Fellow of the Oxford Centre for Animal Ethics (Spain)  
Ruby Alemu, PhD, Independent Scholar in Theological Ethics (UK)  
Barbara Gardner MBE, Animal Interfaith Alliance (UK)  
Juan Carlos Vila Alonso, Philosophy and Secondary and University Teacher (Spain)  
Jorge Antonio Jiménez Carrero, University Professor of Administrative Law (Spain)  
Ginny Martínez Valdés. Food for Life Instructor (Mexico)  
Alessandro Zara Ferrante, Catholic Animal Advocacy Team, musician (Spain)  
Zbigniew M. Karaczun, Dr hab. Professor of the Warsaw University of Life Sciences (SGGW), CEO of the Polish NGOs Climate Coalition (Poland)  
Piotr Skubała, PhD, Professor of University of Silesia in Katowice, Institute of Biology, Biotechnology and Environmental Protection (Poland)  
Dorian Raßloff, documentary filmmaker, ChristInnen für Tiere Berlin (Germany)  
Sébastien Doane, Professeur agrégé, FTSR, Université Laval, Québec (Canada)  
Benoît Calmels animal advocate member of the FRA and Notre Dame de Toute Pitié (France)  
Bartosz Bartosik, Editor of catholic socio-cultural portal: Więż.pl. (Poland)  
Katarzyna Sternal, journalist, Przewodnik Katolicki (Poland)  
Sister Ange-Marie Bender, osb and member of the FRA (France)  
Corinne Calmels, enseignant-chercheur, Toulouse, (France)  
Małgorzata Nabel-Dybaś, Dziennikarka radiowa, Radio Zachód (Poland)

*To be continued...*