

# Customizable Faith-Based Healthcare System Outreach Document

Hospitals operated by religious organizations are a large part of the American healthcare system. Twenty percent of hospitals in the U.S. have a religious affiliation. The policies and operations of a hospital owned by a particular religion are guided by the doctrines of that religious organization. It is important to understand how that doctrine relates to healthcare and climate.

To learn more about CCL outreach to the faith communities regarding climate change, review the material in Outreach to Faith Communities on Community.

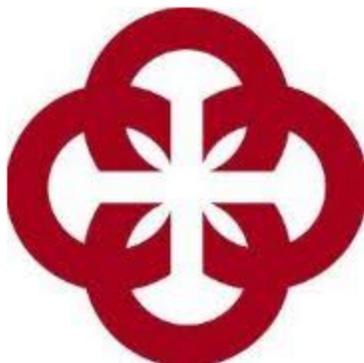
Here we are providing examples of ways to present the church's position of health and climate when seeking an endorsement of CF&D. Presented are examples of approaching a catholic hospital based on the church's doctrine.

Customize this for your outreach to a faith based organization.

## Introduction

This document makes the case for (name of healthcare system) to join other (state) nonprofit and business leaders who are asking (name of MoC) to e.g. introduce legislation that mitigates the impacts of climate change; join the bipartisan CSC, support CFD legislation, etc). The [redacted] Chapter of Citizens' Climate Lobby believes that being a part of the growing number of organizations, corporations, and leaders who promote action on climate change is compatible with [redacted] (fill in hospital system's name) mission, vision, and core values.

## St. Alphonsus' Answer: Compassionate and Transforming Gospel Values <sup>1</sup>



In the midst of these contentious times, when the US healthcare system seems broken, our political system divided, economic disparity between rich and poor growing, and with ever worsening human health effects due to environmental degradation, St. Alphonsus stands as a beacon, addressing these challenges with a commitment to Gospel values.

—  
[g/mission-vision-core-values](#)

“We, Saint Alphonus Health System, serve together in the spirit of the Gospel as a compassionate and transforming healing presence within our communities.”

St. Alphonus Core Values speak directly to those most affected by climate change.

St. Alphonus’ **reverence** for the sacredness and dignity of every person, especially its **solidarity with the poor and most vulnerable**, shows that it stands with those most affected by climate change. Climate change disproportionately affects the poor.<sup>2</sup>

St. Alphonus calls for **justice**, that is, to foster right relationships to promote the common good, including sustainability of the Earth. This value addresses the fact that the countries who create the most greenhouse emissions are least affected by climate change.<sup>3</sup>

St. Alphonus is a faithful **steward**, honoring its heritage and being accountable to the human, financial, and natural resources entrusted in its care. This stewardship must reach outward to address the sources of the problems affecting those in its care.

Finally, St. Alphonus has **integrity**, striving to be faithful to its core values and vision.

Not only do St. Alphonus’ mission, core values, and vision speak to the need to take action on climate change, they are backed by our Pope Francis in *Laudato Si*.

13. The urgent challenge to protect our common home includes a concern to bring the whole human family together to seek a sustainable and integral development, for we know that things can change. The Creator does not abandon us; he never forsakes his loving plan or repents of having created us. Humanity still has the ability to work together in building our common home...

14. I urgently appeal, then, for a new dialogue about how we are shaping the future of our planet. We need a conversation which includes everyone, since the environmental challenge we are undergoing, and its human roots, concern and affect us all. The worldwide ecological movement has already made considerable progress and led to the establishment of numerous organizations committed to raising awareness of these challenges. Regrettably, many efforts to seek concrete solutions to the environmental crisis have proved ineffective, not only because of powerful opposition but also because of a more general lack of interest. Obstructionist attitudes, even on the part of believers, can range from denial of the problem to indifference, nonchalant resignation or blind confidence in technical solutions. We require a new and universal solidarity. As the bishops of Southern Africa have stated: “Everyone’s talents and involvement are needed to redress the damage caused by human abuse of God’s creation.”<sup>4</sup> All of us can cooperate as instruments of God for the care of creation, each according to his or her own culture, experience, involvements, and talents.

---

<sup>2</sup> <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/2015/12/151201-datapoints-climate-change-poverty-agriculture/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.skepticalscience.com/co2-limits-poor-poverty.htm>

<sup>4</sup> Southern African Catholic Bishops’ Conference, “Pastoral Statement on the Environmental Crisis” (5 September 1999).

15. It is my hope that this Encyclical Letter, which is now added to the body of the Church’s social teaching, can help us to acknowledge the appeal, immensity, and urgency of the challenge we face...<sup>5</sup>

Trinity Health, St. Alphonsus’ parent organization, takes the Pope’s encyclical seriously. Like St. Alphonsus, it was established on a foundation of faith-based principles: Respect, Social Justice, Compassion, Care of the Poor and Underserved, and Excellence.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, it follows that Trinity made public its disagreement over President Trump’s withdrawal from the Paris Climate Accord. “The CEOs of three large faith-based health systems—Kevin Lofton at Catholic Health Initiatives, Lloyd Dean at Dignity Health, and Dr. Richard Gilfillan at Trinity Health—sent a letter to Trump in May urging him not to abandon the Paris deal because it is ‘simply essential to the health of the US and global populations.’”<sup>7</sup> On June 5, 2017, Trinity signed “We Are Still In,” a consortium of more than 1,200 leaders in response to the US pulling out of the Paris Climate Accord.<sup>8</sup>



---

5

[http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco\\_20150524\\_enciclica-laudato-si.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html), 13 - 15

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.trinity-health.org/body.cfm?id=59&fr=true>

7

<https://www.axios.com/hospitals-arent-happy-about-trumps-withdrawal-from-paris-climate-deal-2429316843.html>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.wearestillin.com/we-are-still-declaration>