

DECEMBER 2025

The UN & YOU

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AT A GLANCE

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From the NGO Desk



COP30 Falls Short



“Today, however, we have to realize that a true ecological approach always becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.” — Pope Francis

The annual Conference of the Parties (COP) concluded in mid-November in Brazil with disappointing results. This 30th session had high hopes, as world leaders met to address our warming planet and the need for urgent action.

Two years ago, for the first time, fossil fuels were included in the final COP document as a main contributor to our warming planet. There was significant hope as the agreement signaled the “beginning of the end” for fossil fuels. Unfortunately, in 2024 and this year, in 2025, fossil fuels and its impact was omitted.

There was great hope for these meetings, and for unity to be found. However, the meetings were contentious and filled with tense negotiations.

The United States was not present, which is not a surprise given the current administration's dismissal of climate change. When President Donald Trump spoke before the General Assembly in September, he called climate change a "con job." China, who with the United States, represent the two biggest emitters of planet-warming gasses, was also absent.

Many countries present, including those in Latin America and the European Union, demanded that language be included that marked a transition away from fossil fuels. On the other side, a coalition of countries including top oil exporter Saudi Arabia said any mention of fossil fuels was off-limits.

A side text on fossil fuels (and protecting forests), was issued to accompany the main document, but could not be included as an agreement would not be met. There is hope that over 90 countries have agreed to meet in Columbia this April to develop a road map away from fossil fuels. Like the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which started outside of the UN and was then accepted, the same will occur (we pray) with this road map to transition away from fossil fuels. You can read more about this upcoming gathering [here](#).

Last year was the world's warmest year since records started being collected in the early 20th century. The warming of our planet is already having devastating impact on the most vulnerable, as natural disasters are increasing in intensity and frequency, leading to greater risks for the most vulnerable, including mass migration, loss of homes, and an increase in all forms of poverty.



Thousands march for climate action at COP30 Andre Penner/Associated Press

When St. Vincent de Paul saw the suffering around him, he was posed with the famous question, "What must be done." This Vincentian question has guided us for generations in the face of many injustices.

For some time, our planet is now in need of an urgent response to this question. As a Vincentian Family, we must hold our government leaders accountable and make this issue an essential one.

If our world leaders continue to fail, we will only see an increase in severe weather, hurting all of God's creation. Our work toward ending homelessness and other forms of poverty will only become harder.

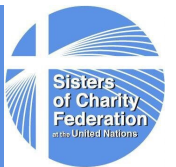
The good news is that climate change is reversible, although we are running out of time. You can read more about our warming planet [here](#) and what we can do [here](#).

For more resources on the COP:

- A general recap on the COP- read more [here](#),
- Updates related to finance, indigenous communities and forest conservation- read more [here](#).
- A timely [interview](#) with a colleague from Maryknoll who attended COP30 which captures some of the realities of our climate crisis.

CLIMATE

STORIES OF HOPE



The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) named five new climate visionaries on Wednesday as its [2025 Champions of the Earth](#) – the UN's highest environmental honor.

These five stories of hope are much needed after a disappointing COP30, and a reminder of the power and impact of grassroots efforts.

ADVENT



STORIES OF JUSTICE



As we journey through the season of Advent, we do so during a time of great anxiety, anger, and perhaps even hopelessness. U.S. Catholic compiled 9 articles of inspiration that connect Advent and Justice. You can read the articles [here](#).

As we look to the coming of Jesus in Christmas, let us continue to prepare our hearts and minds so we, together, can continue to shine the light of Christ for our communities and one another.

Reach Out



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For questions, feedback, article ideas, or story contributions, email JWalters@sistersofcharityfederation.org and we'll be in touch.

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