

SoMi – Bulletin – JVID

Claretian Missionaries



Solidarity and Mission: Transforming Reality with Gospel-Centered Compassion

“Solidarity and Mission (SoMi) is the Claretian face of compassion and commitment in favor of the less privileged of our brothers and sisters on the planet and towards all Creation” (Mathew Vattamattan, 2023). The compassion and commitment to the cry of the poor and the cry of the earth (LS 2) that springs out of our prophetic call in the church and beyond it (SS 65) have been prayed and discerned in the last General Assembly of the Delegation (July 23-26, 2025). The same event made it clear that all our missionary actions, and especially SoMi commitments and **“actions flow from a spirituality of justice, peace, and care for creation (JPIC).”**

The document continues, “SoMi integrates our commitment with resource mobilization and communication for mission impact,” which is the main goal of **Mission Procure**: the mobilization of the human, material, and economic resources to enhance the mission effectiveness in transforming the reality.

One of the transversal elements of our Claretian life and mission is JPIC, which has to take part across all our personal and community plans. That is why the Assembly stresses, “Every Claretian shares this responsibility: to accompany the vulnerable, address structural injustices, and promote the dignity of every person, especially through collaborative, strategic, and sustainable approaches.” The life experience and implementation of the Assembly’s conclusions will strengthen our prophetic call and the voices of the voiceless in the high spheres of the international scenery through our **Claretian Presence at the U.N.**

Let us continue the paths of the Ecological Conversion to live Integral Ecology that harmonizes our deep relationship with creation, with all human community, and with God. Thus, God may be known, loved, served, and praised by all creatures.

The heart on which the present edition of our SoMi Bulletin centers is the remarkable global celebration of the *Season of Creation 2025* that stressed the 10th Anniversary of Encyclical Document “*Laudato Si*”. Fr. Mathew in his invitation Message to the Congregation on 1st of September pointed out, “this day is a call to:

- **Give thanks for creation**, God’s gift and reflection of His beauty.
- **Recognize our responsibility** to care for the environment and defend life, especially among the most vulnerable.
- **Renew our commitment** to live simply and promote initiatives that safeguard our common home.

As Claretians, “listeners and servants of the Word,” we also hear God speaking through creation. To care for it is to collaborate with His plan and give witness to the hope of the Gospel.”

In addition, other local experiences and international events like preparation for COP30 are part of our ecological conversion process that is taking place in local and global level.



Reporting Recent Developments

VAROD Offers Great Solidarity and Social Mission for Differently Abled Persons.



VAROD continues to stand as a beacon of compassion and inclusion through its remarkable solidarity and social mission for differently abled persons. Recently, it held its annual sports event with great enthusiasm and joy, bringing together hundreds of differently abled participants over three inspiring days 26th, 27th, and 28th June.

This celebration of ability, courage, and unity was graced by the presence of Rev. Dr. Anthonipillai Gnanapiragasam,

Bishop of Mannar; Fr. Joseph Jayaseelan CMF; and several government authorities, showing strong support for the empowerment of differently abled persons.

The event not only celebrated the athletic talents of the participants but also highlighted the ongoing mission of VAROD to build a society where every individual is valued, respected, and given opportunities to shine. All these are highly connected to the Sustainable Development Goals N. 1-5 and *Laudato Si* Goals N. 1, response to the cry of the poor, and N. 7, on community resilience and empowerment. (Fr. Everest, CMF.)

Season of Creation

“Peace with Creation”

The global Celebration of the Season of Creation 2025, with the theme “Peace with Creation,” which included the 10th Anniversary of the Encyclical Document “Laudato Si” of Pope Francis, started with an inaugural online prayer service on the 1st of September.

Our Claretian Family has participated in these activities; however, the JPIC General Secretariat and SoMi-JVID organized some additional activities that we describe in the following paragraphs:

JPIC workshop LS

The JPIC Workshop was organized by the JPIC Secretariat of General Government, Fr. Antonio Llamas and his team, on the 20th of September 2025. The guest speakers were Christina Leano, Associate Director of LS Movement; Alonso de Llanos, Program Manager of LS Action Platform; and Fr. Vincent Anes, CMF, ex-Secretary of JPIC.

At the initial part of the event, Fr. Mathew Vattamattan, CMF, Superior General, gave a motivational speech where he highlighted:

“Dear friends, as we gather to celebrate the 10th anniversary of Laudato si’, I find myself asking a simple but challenging question: What difference has this document made in my personal life and in our Congregation?”

For me, Laudato si’ has not been just a text to read but a call to conversion. It has shaped my attitudes and approach to life in several ways:

- First, it awakened in me a deeper awareness of our responsibility to care for our common home.
- Second, it made me realize how ecological degradation and human exploitation go hand in hand. The abuse of nature and the abuse of human beings spring from the same root—greed and manipulation.
- Third, it taught me that respect for Mother Earth and respect for women are profoundly connected. When we lose the sense of mystery, both creation and humanity are impoverished.
- Fourth, it reminded me that Laudato si’ will remain only a slogan if we do not walk the talk—if we do not convert ideas into concrete action.

I would also add three more lessons from this prophetic text:

- Fifth, Laudato si’ invites us to rediscover simplicity of life, freeing ourselves from consumerism so that we may live with joy, gratitude, and solidarity.
- Sixth, it challenges us to recognize that everything is interconnected—our prayer, our choices, our communities, our ecosystems—and therefore every small gesture of care carries global significance.
- Seventh, it calls us to educate the next generation in an ecological spirituality so that care for creation becomes not just an obligation but a way of living our faith with hope and responsibility.



As we enter this meeting, may we be inspired not just to discuss but to embody the spirit of *Laudato si’*. Let us walk the talk—so that our love for God’s creation and for one another becomes a living witness of hope” (September 20).



Joined to the incarnate Son, present in the Eucharist, the whole cosmos gives thanks to God. Indeed the Eucharist is itself an act of cosmic love: “Yes, cosmic! (LS 236)

Ecological Mass.

As it was planned for the first week of the Season of Creation, the Ecological Mass was celebrated in different communities of our Delegation, namely Claret Center, Casa Claret–Novitiate, Claret Nivas, and so on. Fortunately, our Catholic Church has officially

promulgated the Decree for the Mass on Care of Creation in July 2025.

Ecology in Vipassana: A Journey of Harmony with Nature

Attending the ten-day Vipassana course at the Dhamma Kuta Vipassana Meditation Centre in Mowbrey, Mahakanda, offered me not only an inward journey toward self-awareness but also a deep ecological awakening. Nestled amid the lush greenery overlooking the hills of Kandy, the serene environment of the center itself became a silent teacher. The stillness of nature, the rustling of leaves, the rhythm of rain, and the songs of birds created a living harmony that mirrored the meditative calm cultivated within.

Vipassana teaches the art of observing reality as it is, with equanimity and awareness. This mindful observation naturally extends beyond oneself to the environment. The discipline of silence, simplicity, and mindful living during the retreat reduces consumption and waste, fostering an ecological consciousness rooted in respect and gratitude toward all forms of life. Every act, walking gently on the earth, eating modestly, and conserving water, becomes an expression of harmony with nature.

In Vipassana, one realizes that inner pollution—greed, anger, and ignorance—mirrors the external pollution that threatens our planet. By purifying the mind, we contribute to purifying the world. My experience at Dhamma Kuta thus revealed that ecological balance begins within. True environmental care flows from a serene mind that sees the interconnectedness of all beings, human, animal, and earth alike. Vipassana, in this sense, is not merely a path to personal liberation but a way of nurturing ecological harmony and compassionate coexistence. (Bro. Davin, CMF)



Coming Back Home – Eco Spirituality Retreat

In August 2025 I had the grace of taking my retreat at Nivas Claret House in Kandy, Ampitiya. The topic of these days of reflections was eco-spirituality. Through the Scripture, the Encyclical of Pope Francis *Laudato Si’*, and contact with nature, I had the opportunity to experience and reflect on our connectedness and the presence of God in the creation.

With the help of Fr. Efrain, I went through the acknowledgement of the beauty of creation and how it has an impact on my life and on the lives of others. Starting from the point of being aware of God’s inter-relatedness and how this touches all the aspects of life, even in nature and the universe.

The core passage from the Scripture that helped me to deepen my personal and social situation on our relationship with nature was Luke 15:11-32 (The parable of the Prodigal Son). This passage invited and challenged me to undergo an ecological conversion. It is not only in being aware of the beauty of creation and the resources creation offers to us in our daily lives and how we have to make use of them.

It is deeper; it tackles recognizing the presence, the spark of God in every creature, and how I relate with it and protect and nourish it. It is about listening and contemplating the presence of God in it and what God wants to reveal to me. It is about a transforming style of life, spirituality, how I relate with others and nature, and being able to look at nature and others from God’s perspective.

God’s unconditional love for each other and nature is reflected every day in small gestures through the food we eat, the sun, the water we drink, the air we breathe, the song of birds, and the flowers that surround our homes. Everything is a manifestation of the love of God.

I was invited through these days to enter in harmony with creation, to take concrete steps in my lifestyle, and to be more inclusive with the creation in my personal prayer, rereading the Scriptures from an ecological perspective, community prayer, ministry, and daily life.

I thank God for this wonderful experience and the Claretian Community in the person of Fr. Efrain, who welcomed me during those days. Their hospitality helped me to enter into an environment of prayer, reflection, and contemplation. God bless you.

(Sr. Lorena Morales, Comboni Missionary Sister, at Hatton – Parish)



Human Rights Workshop for Priests and Religious



The Second Workshop for the Priests and Religious, 2025, was held from 14th to 17th July at Fatima Retreat House - Lewella, Kandy, with the theme “The Impact of Civil Society on Governance,” organized by the Human Rights Office Kandy. From our Claretian Delegation participated Frs. Ithayaraj, CMF, and Stephenraj, CMF.

After the first day inaugural session, on the second day, the participants had exposure visits to three distinct communities. One group travelled to Kurunegala, where

homes were damaged due to the construction of the last stretch of the Central Expressway. Another group visited Anandapuram to observe the struggles of the Batalegoda Estate workers for land rights. The third group attended a non-summary inquiry at the Naula Magistrate Court regarding a case of extrajudicial killing.

On the third day, the workshop offered participants insights delivered by several resource persons. Mr. Hirantha Imesh de Silva, a lecturer from the Department of Law at the University of Peradeniya, with the topic "Beyond the Self: Reclaiming Solidarity through Religion"; Bishop Kumara Illangasinghe, the Emeritus Bishop of the Diocese of Kurunagala of the Anglican Church, initiated a reflection on "Civil Society and Good Governance from a Christian Perspective." Fr. Jeyabalan Croos, in his part, shared the topic on "The development projects which threaten the very existence of the Island of Mannar"; he stressed that there were several protests against ongoing illegal sand mining, proposed ilmenite extraction, and large-scale wind power developments that endanger the island's delicate biodiversity, local livelihoods, and cultural heritage. Ruki Fernando was exposed on "Community Struggles for Justice." Finally, HRO's Legal Team highlighted the legal provisions, policies, and legal remedies with the title "Legal tools to monitor government activities," equipping participants with a concrete legal framework with the primary and secondary sources.

Vatican Announces "Creation Care Mass"



On July 9, 2025, Pope Leo XIV will celebrate the first "Mass for the Care of Creation," with a new formulary of the Roman Missal, produced by the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development and the Dicastery for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments.

The main part of the Vatican Decree signed by Arthur Card. Roche, the Prefect, states: "At this time, it is evident that the work of creation is seriously threatened because of the irresponsible use and abuse of the goods

God has endowed to our care (cf. LS 2).

This is why it is considered appropriate to add a Mass formulary "*pro custodia creationis*" to the Missae "*pro variis necessitatibus vel ad diversa*" of the Roman Missal.

In the Eucharist, "the world which came forth from God's hands returns to him in blessed and undivided adoration: in the bread of the Eucharist, 'creation is projected towards divinization, towards the holy wedding feast, towards unification with the Creator himself' (Benedict XVI, 15 June 2006). Thus, the Eucharist is also a source of light and motivation for our concerns for the environment, directing us to be stewards of all creation" (LS 236).

The Supreme Pontiff LEO XIV approved this formulary along with appropriate biblical readings, drawn up in Latin and attached to this Decree, and ordered that they be disseminated, and now the Dicastery for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments promulgates it and declares it to be the typical text" (June 08, 2025)¹.

The Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4)

Seville, Spain. The Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4) concluded on July 3, 2025, in Seville, Spain, gathering over 15,000 global delegates to tackle urgent financial challenges. Among them, the Claretian Missionaries actively advocated for a just economic system centered on human dignity and environmental care.

¹ To see in: <https://www.vatican.va/content/romancuria/en/dicasteri/dicastero-culto-divino-e-disciplina-sacramenti/documenti/20250608-decreto-missa-custodiacionis.htm>

Held amid rising inequality and global debt, the conference adopted the “Compromiso de Sevilla” (Seville Commitment), a bold document aiming to close the US \$4 trillion development financing gap.

Civil society played a vital role, with over 1,000 participants attending the Civil Society Forum. Proclade Bética and the Claretian delegation contributed to key discussions and side events, highlighting issues of debt relief and ecological transition.

Claretian delegates included Rohan Dominic, Lord Winner, José Antonio Benítez Pineda, José Ramón García García, Constantino Rodríguez Méndez, Ana María Estévez Barroso, Sandra Martínez Cantero, and María del Carmen García Babío. They co-sponsored two official events, reaffirming the congregation’s commitment to economic justice.



High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF)

From July 14 to 24, the Claretian Missionaries took active part in the 2025 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) at the United Nations Headquarters in New York City, reaffirming their commitment to the 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Representing the Claretian family at the forum were Caridad Cala (Dominican Republic), Fr. Oscar Barrera, CMF (El Salvador), Fr. Reagan Soosai, CMF (USA-Canada), and Fr. Rohan Dominic, CMF of the Claretian.

The SDG Progress Report 2025 revealed that only 35% of targets are on track or moderately improving, while nearly half show inadequate progress, and 18% have regressed.

Throughout the first week, the forum focused on key goals: SDG3 (Health), SDG5 (Gender Equality), SDG8 (Economic Growth), SDG14 (Life Below Water), and SDG17 (Partnerships). In preparation, 31 Claretians from 12 Voluntary National Review (VNR) countries joined a six-month formation program coordinated by the Justice Coalition of Religious (JCoR), equipping them to engage meaningfully with the SDG process.

A major highlight was the Claretian side event on July 18, hosted by Fondazione Proclade Internazionale-onlus via Zoom. Delegates discussed their nations’ Volunteer National Reports and showcased local Claretian initiatives that contribute to sustainable development, embodying the theme of “local mission to global impact.”²



² <https://www.claret.org/claretians-engage-in-un-high-level-forum-to-advance-global-sustainable-development/>

COP30 – Claretian Orientation Program



In response to the escalating climate crisis and ahead of the 30th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP 30) set for November 2025 in Belém, Brazil, the Claretian Missionaries joined partners from across continents in a global virtual conversation on July 29. The meeting aimed to share strategies and deepen commitment to ecological action, highlighting the Catholic Church’s prophetic role in safeguarding creation and advocating for vulnerable communities.

The invited expositor, Monsignor Juan Carlos Barreto, Bishop of Soacha and President of Social Pastoral – Caritas Colombia, shared the Church’s initiatives around the Atrato River, recognized with legal rights status, and spoke of regional efforts to promote ethical approaches for COP 30. Bishop Allwyn D’Silva, Emeritus Bishop of Mumbai, warned of rising sea levels threatening food security and displacing coastal populations, calling for stronger Asian participation. From Cameroon, Bishop Michael Bibi highlighted Africa’s struggles with drought, land degradation, and extreme weather, linking environmental harm to social injustice... (Rohan Dominic, CMF – UN Presence)³.

The SoMi Committee for the Present Triennium



It is a joy to present the SoMi Committee members appointed for 2025-2028. In this occasion the committee has broadened its scope that includes the representatives of the Claretian Family. This diversity of the members united in one vision and mission expresses the Synodal Way of our life and mission in line with the universal church’s mission.

The members of the new committee are Srs. Jeevathy, MRC, Dayola, MRC, Anita, MC; Mr. Vinoth; Frs. Ithayaraj, Jeganatham,

Everest, Jenis (Mission Procure in charge), Efrain, CMF (SoMi coordinator).

The committee has held its first online meeting on 09 of October, 2025 to elaborate the SoMi Action Plan for the coming triennium 2025 – 2028.

Upcoming Programs

Upcoming UN Conferences and Claretian Participation:

- November 4–6: 2nd UN World Summit for Social Development (WSSD2) – Doha, Qatar
- November 10–22: UN Climate Change Conference (COP30) – Belém, Brazil
- December 8–12: United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA7) – Nairobi, Kenya

January 11, 2026 SoMi Committee’s in person meeting.

³ <https://www.claret.org/church-and-climate-justice-claretians-prepare-for-cop-30-in-brazil/>