



**Statement by Andante, the European Alliance of Catholic Women's Organisations, following the General Assembly in Lizari, Latvia. Issued 06 June 2022**

The vulnerable world resonates with all of us and especially with the wisdom of women. It relates to the challenges affecting our environment, sustainability and the integrity of creation for all humans, animals and plants, and how we can preserve our planet for future generations.

In his encyclical *Laudato Si* (June 2015), and many times thereafter, Pope Francis has called upon us to take care of our common home. Climate change, sustainability, ecology and the environment are key concepts that require global attention.

Andante, the European Alliance of Catholic Women's Associations, has been addressing these complex issues in different areas, sharing faith, strengthening each other and searching for answers.

Our common Christian heritage and values form the basis for action together to address the violation to every creature of our creation, the developing crises caused by wars, climate change and natural disasters and the consequences resulting from these. Looking away or showing compassion and/or understanding is not enough. ANDANTE, as an alliance of Catholic women's organisations in 12 member countries of the Council of Europe is concerned about the needs of all those who are particularly affected by these ongoing crises. We are very aware that women are often the ones who suffer most, violated in dignity, physically and in their own rights.

Each one of us is called upon to take action – starting in personal and family contexts, then in our organisations and beyond, to carry the concern for our damaged world and subsequent demands/messages into the church and politics.

The non-human reality plays an important role in many Bible texts. We often overlook the fact creatures are capable of acting and surviving on their own, without human intervention.

Pope Francis calls for ecological conversion! This means not just doing some things in a slightly greener way, but treating our fellow creatures as brothers and sisters in our common home.

Climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution are all major threats to the health of the planet and the health of people.

Economic inequalities make poorer people vulnerable to food choices that can negatively affect their health and the health of their children, as well as harm the planet's ecosphere.

Physical, mental, social and spiritual health can best be maintained and supported in partnership with nature, not in competition with it.

We realise that church means both me as an individual, we as a community (example, a women's organisation) and also the institution of the church.

We are called to be careful stewards of our common earth because of our Christian values!

The celebration of Sunday as a day of rest and the period of Creation Time from 1 September to 4 October as another important season of the Church would contribute to raising awareness!