

Energy transition vatican city

In his motu proprio *Fratello Sole*, an official proclamation of the Pope to the Roman Catholic Church, he diffused his instructions to the Vatican authorities to begin working with Italian officials to turn the Vatican into a green organization, as reported by *aciafrica*.

The Catholic Church first began publicly addressing climate change with Pope Paul VI, who expressed his concern in 1971 that humanity's exploitation of nature runs the risk of destroying it;

However, most notably and recently, under the stewardship of Benedict XVI two decades ago, the Vatican began diffusing plans to become the first "carbon neutral state" with the building of the Vatican Forest in Hungary in 2007. That has yet to materialize though. All the same, in 2008, the Vatican installed 2,400 solar panels on the roofs of Vatican's Paul VI Hall, as per *aciafrica*.

Elected in 2013, climate change, on the positive end, has marked Pope Francis's ten-year tenure as Pope and Head of the Catholic Church. He published *Laudato Si': On Care For Our Common Home* a seminal Encyclical Letter based on scientific research in 2015. Addressed to the Catholic community, it presented the climate change as pernicious with dire repercussions. The Vatican then updated its recycling system in 2016.

He opened his latest apostolic letter by harkening back to *Laudato Si'* which encouraged humanity to become aware of its environmental footprint, citing fossil fuels as a persuasive threat to the planet. He then cited his initiative in 2022, by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to put forth all efforts in supporting the global effort to combat climate change. Subsequently, the Vatican adopted electric cars in partnership with Volkswagen in 2023.

In a suite of efforts, Pope Francis has now declared to the Vatican authorities to carry out the next step: to begin constructing a solar plant within the extraterritorial zone of Santa Maria di Galeria that will not only supply power to the Vatican radio station but the entirety of Vatican City with a population estimated around 825 people.

At first glance, as a state, Vatican City's carbon emissions might appear insignificant, as *aciafrica* noted, at around a 0.0000443% output in 2022. However, the Vatican as a supporter of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change of 1992 continues to demonstrate its commitment to the cause by reducing its carbon footprint as an official state.

"There is a need to make a transition to a sustainable development model that reduces greenhouse gas emissions into the atmosphere, setting the goal of climate neutrality. Mankind has the technological means to deal with this environmental transformation and its pernicious ethical, social, economic and political consequences, and, among these, solar energy plays a key role."

Perhaps the Pope should direct the authorities to check out the solar panel booster that The University of Ottawa just studied of the solar cell, as recent innovations would increase its energy output. Go green.

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