



## **The Pope's Encyclical: Messaging and Social Media Guide for Jewish Organizations** *Hazon / National Religious Partnership for the Environment*

### **Table of Contents:**

- I. General Messaging Framing
- II. Social Media Guide

### **I. General Messaging Framing**

In advance of the Pope's upcoming Encyclical, faith leaders and organizations across the nation are coming together to amplify a common message of caring for our shared home. With a diverse selection of voices driving this message, we've crafted a messaging and social media guide that addresses a wide variety of angles. The guidance below details messaging for faith communities, including Jewish communities, highlighting key points like moral obligation, creation care, etc.

#### **Overarching Messaging:**

- Pope Francis' Climate Encyclical highlights the moral obligation we have to future generations to address climate change.
- People of faith are rallying behind the core tenets of their faith, which encourage care for all of Creation (both humans and the environment).
- We must all promote the common good by protecting those who disproportionately feel the environmental impacts and health effects of climate change.
- The faith and environmental communities have both been strong advocates for action on climate change. The Encyclical marks a united moment across communities and is another example of widespread support to address this issue in advance of international negotiations later this year.

#### **Jewish messaging:**

- **Shmita:** Shmita teaches us that caring for the earth and caring for people are inseparable. It requires moderation and planning for the future. And it shows us that we must share our abundance with those living in poverty; in order for all to participate in shmita, the poor cannot be indebted to the wealthy. In all these ways, it can guide us towards building a healthier climate and society. Today, we who have benefited the most from a fossil fuel-driven economy must take the largest responsibility for addressing one of the chief side effects of that economy: a changing climate.
- **New seven-year cycle:** The end of the shmita year is approaching, a time when we must consider how to bring the lessons of shmita into the next six years of activity. At the same time, governments are drafting emissions reductions goals for the coming years, which will be ratified in Paris this December. We must ask ourselves: what sort of Jewish community and world do we envision creating by the end of the next seven

year cycle of Jewish life in 2022? Will every synagogue in America have founded a sustainability committee and completed an energy audit? Will every JCC and Jewish day school have cut its carbon footprint in half?

- **Providing leadership:** At the People's Climate March in September 2014, religious groups played a leading role. The Jewish community showed up in force; one in 10 of the cosponsoring organizations was Jewish, far out of proportion to our numbers. But Pope Francis' encyclical should inspire us to join with religious leaders and continue to redouble our efforts in both greening and advocacy, providing a needed religious voice in the climate movement. While there is no single leader of the Jewish community who can speak on our behalf, how can we follow Pope Francis' lead and publicly demonstrate the importance of this issue to our community and the world?
- **Tisha B'Av:** We will shortly enter the Three Weeks, a period of mourning in the Jewish calendar, when we commemorate the unheeded warnings of the prophetic voice in Jewish tradition, warnings that gave way to destruction. Today, the writing is on the wall (Daniel 5) – the earth is giving us constant warnings about our future, which we ignore at our own peril. As many have observed, we are the first generation to fully understand climate change and the last to be able to really do something about it. Pope Francis's encyclical provides us yet another warning.
- **Teshuva:** the Pope will be speaking to the U.S. Congress on Yom Kippur and addressing the UN the following day. In High Holiday sermons, rabbis can grapple with how we, as a powerful community in one of the most polluting countries on earth, can take responsibility for our continuing role in creating the climate crisis.
- **Love the stranger / love your neighbor as yourself:** The Pope's Encyclical emphasizes the undue burden climate change will place on the poor and the vulnerable – people who played little role in creating the climate problem to begin with. In Judaism, as in Catholicism, we are commanded to protect the needy and the stranger. Furthermore, climate change is already causing a wave of refugees forced from their homes by drought and extreme weather. Others should not suffer for our sake. And those uprooted by famine or by storm must be cared for by our community.
- **Baal Tashchit:** Jewish tradition forbids needlessly wasting resources. In our time, wasting energy is directly contributing to the destruction of a healthy climate. But it's also easier than ever to take small steps to cut our energy use, both as individuals and institutions, from undertaking energy audits to installing "smart" programmable thermostats to putting solar panels on our roofs.
- **Shema:** Later in the summer, we will read the Torah portions containing the Shema. The first line is an affirmation of the unity and interconnectedness of all things (Deuteronomy, 6:4). The second paragraph is a statement that if we live well in relation to our natural environment, our surroundings will treat us well and vice versa. (Deuteronomy 11:13-17). Although these passages have particularly Jewish significance, in an era of climate change, they clearly have universal ecological lessons to teach as well. These aspects need to be re-emphasized and taught.

**Sign the Rabbinic Letter on the Climate Crisis:** Arthur Waskow is both a rabbi and an indefatigable prophet, and you can hear his distinctive voice in the recently published rabbinic letter on climate action, which has been signed by a growing number of rabbis. You can join them [here](#).

Further resources about the Encyclical and Jewish approaches to climate change are also available on **COEJL's** [website](#).

### **Interfaith Angle:**

- Action on climate change unites the faith community across denominations. Pope Francis is a strong messenger for this call to action.
- Teachings of faith encourage people to uphold their moral responsibility to protect all of God's creations.

### **II. Social Media**

Many faith and environmental groups have been raising awareness about the Encyclical through social media, and will continue to do so after its publication.

**If you're Jewish and you care about these issues, please like the [Jewish Climate Campaign](#) on Facebook – use that as a place to post ideas, photos, and questions.**

**Where to Find Images:** Accompanying visuals for faith communities, courtesy of NPRE, be downloaded from [Dropbox](#). These graphics include various images (faith, environmental, children, ecology, etc.) and language (quotes from Pope Francis, messaging on moral obligation, etc.) which you can mix and match with the Facebook text and Tweets below. Dropbox link: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/23mawzd01uboz5d/AAAoUsrLX9NqCDcOMavIqX6fa?dl=0>

**Post-release Hashtags:** #PraisedBe, #OurCommonHome, #JewishClimateCampaign

Using previous encyclical title translations, we've determined that using the English version of the title will be the most effective hashtag – it's simple, uniting, and allows all constituencies and audiences to put their own voice in the body of the tweet/post while still referring to the document. It is expected that the Encyclical's English subtitle will include the phrase "common home" and NPRE is encouraging use of #OurCommonHome when talking about the announcement.

### **Sample Facebook Posts:**

Pope Francis is releasing an #Encyclical on climate change. As Jews, we stand with the Pope and people of all faiths who agree that it is our moral responsibility to address this threat to all of creation. #JewishClimateCampaign #PraisedBe #OurCommonHome

In his much anticipated #Encyclical, Pope Francis named addressing climate change a priority for the faith community. Our Jewish community agrees that we can protect #OurCommonHome and those most impacted by our changing climate. #PraisedBe #JewishClimateCampaign

Climate change is a human rights issue. Communities across the globe are dealing with the devastating impacts – from families displaced from their homes by extreme weather to our children suffering from the health impacts of poor air quality. Thank you, Pope Francis, for placing these social justice issues front and center. #JewishClimateCampaign #OurCommonHome

The end of the shmita year is approaching, a time when we must consider how to bring the lessons of shmita into the next six years of activity. Meanwhile, Pope Francis has just issued a strong call for action on climate change in the coming years. We must ask ourselves: what sort of Jewish community and world do we envision creating by the end of the next seven year cycle in Jewish life in 2022? What can each of us do to reduce our contribution to climate change? #JewishClimateCampaign

Through the concept of shmita, the sabbatical year, the Torah shows us that caring for the planet and caring for the poor are deeply intertwined. As Pope Francis has pointed out in his groundbreaking encyclical, climate change will most deeply affect the poor and vulnerable – and we have an obligation to stop it. #JewishClimateCampaign #PraisedBe

As Jews and stewards of the earth, we must protect the planet and our brothers and sisters from the environmental and health impacts of climate change. We have a moral obligation to address this threat to all of God's creation. #JewishClimateCampaign #OurCommonHome

The Torah instructs us to care for the stranger. Today, we know that it is often those living far away in developing nations who experience the effects of climate change most severely. Pope Francis has released a Papal #Encyclical on his vision for the care and protection of our fellow brothers and sisters, and we join him in calling upon all of us to show our care for these frontline communities. #JewishClimateCampaign

We must protect creation for future generations – it's our moral obligation to address climate change and protect the environment. Thank you, Pope Francis for voicing our shared vision of care and protection for human beings and the environment in your #Encyclical. #JewishClimateCampaign

Jewish tradition forbids needlessly wasting resources. In our time, wasting energy is directly contributing to the destruction of a healthy climate. Thank you, Pope Francis, for reminding us to take actions as individuals and as a community to take steps to make our buildings more efficient and reduce our energy use. #JewishClimateCampaign #OurCommonHome

We see the impacts of climate change threats every day – from extreme weather that ravages our communities to air pollution impacting the health of children. Protecting the health and wellbeing of our communities means we must act on the greatest environmental challenge of our time – climate change.

#### **Tweets:**

As Jewish caretakers of the earth, we stand with @Pontifex in addressing the threat of climate change. #Encyclical #JewishClimateCampaign

The Jewish community stands with Pope Francis @Pontifex and people of all faiths addressing climate change. #Encyclical #JewishClimateCampaign

Jewish tradition obligates us to address threats to God's Creation – together we can #ActOnClimate. #PraisedBe #JewishClimateCampaign

Communities of faith – including #JewishClimateCampaign — are united in the call to serve as stewards to God's Creation – together, we must #ActOnClimate

Faith leaders like Pope Francis @Pontifex are calling for action on climate change. Together, we can #ActOnClimate. #OurCommonHome