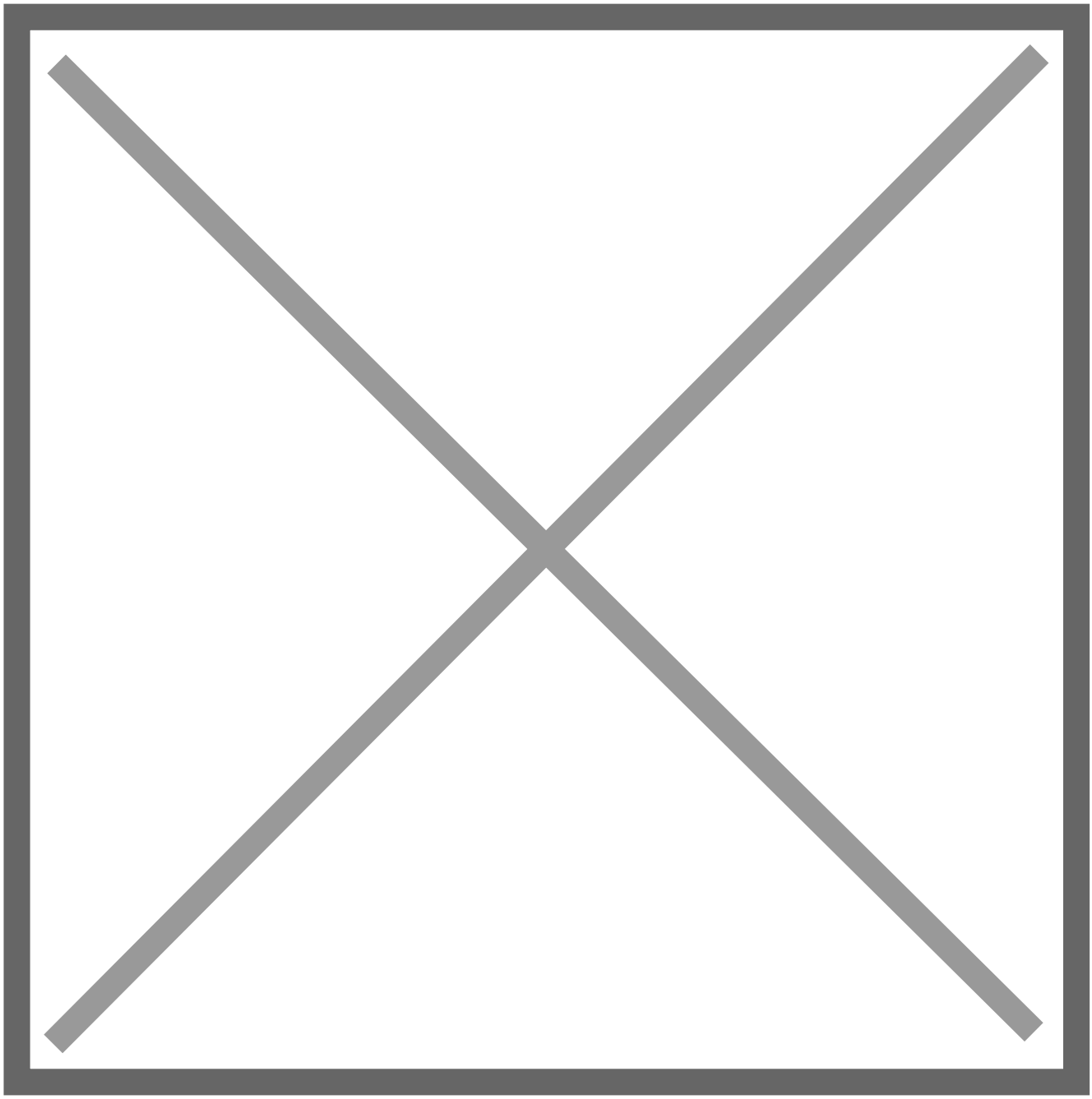


Brazil Finance Minister Fernando Haddad speaks next to Simon Stiell, executive secretary of the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change, and Brazil's COP30 President Andre Correa do Lago during the ministerial preparatory meeting Oct. 13, 2025, in Brasilia, Brazil, ahead of the COP30 Climate Summit, which is taking place Nov. 10-21 in Belém, Brazil. (OSV News/Reuters/Mateus Bonomi)

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Washington — November 5, 2025
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Ahead of the United Nations' annual climate conference, two U.S. Catholic bishops and the leader of a top Catholic aid agency are calling for urgent, long-term action to safeguard both creation and humanity.

Government officials, scientists, business leaders, activists and others from more than 190 nations will gather for the U.N.'s COP30, which will take place Nov. 10-21 in Belém, Brazil.

Named for the "Conference of the Parties" that signed the original 1992 U.N. climate agreement, the COP gatherings are held under the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change, which entered into force in 1994 and now counts 198 parties (representing 197 countries plus the European Union).

According to the official COP30 website, the talks will focus in particular on "aligning the commitments of developed and developing countries in relation to climate finance, ensuring that emission reduction targets are compatible with climate science, and dealing with the socio-economic impacts of climate change on vulnerable populations."

The gathering "convenes while the Catholic Church celebrates the Jubilee Year of Hope," which marks "a sacred opportunity to restore relationships and renew

creation at a time when the gift of life is under grave threat," said Metropolitan Archbishop Borys Gudziak of the Archeparchy of Philadelphia, Bishop Elias Zaidan of the St. Louis-based Maronite Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles, and Sean Callahan, president and CEO of Catholic Relief Services, in a joint statement issued Nov. 4.

All three work directly on addressing climate policy: Gudziak as chair of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development; Zaidan as chair of the USCCB's Committee on International Justice and Peace; and Callahan as head of CRS, the USCCB's international humanitarian and development agency, which in turn is part of Caritas Internationalis, the Catholic Church's global humanitarian network.

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The bishops and Callahan quoted an Oct. 1 address by Pope Leo XIV on the 10th anniversary of Pope Francis' environmental encyclical *Laudato Si*'.

In that address, Leo exhorted participants in three upcoming U.N. summits — COP30, the 53rd Plenary Session of the Committee on World Food Security and the 2026 Water Conference — to "listen to the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor, families, indigenous peoples, involuntary migrants and believers throughout the world."

"Climate change, biodiversity loss, and environmental degradation are devastating communities already burdened by poverty and exclusion," said Gudziak, Zaidan and Callahan. "Farming and fishing families confront threats to their livelihoods; Indigenous Peoples face destruction of their ancestral lands; children’s health, safety, and futures are at risk. Failing to steward God’s creation ignores our responsibility as one human family."

They observed that in Laudato Si', Francis "reminded us that the climate is a common good, belonging to all and meant for all, and that intergenerational solidarity is not optional."

In addition, they implored "world leaders to act urgently and courageously for an ambitious Paris Agreement implementation that protects God’s creation and people."

Adopted at COP21 by 195 parties in 2015, and taking effect in 2016, the Paris Agreement is a legally binding international treaty to limit global warming — the long-term heating of Earth's surface due to human activities — to 1.5 degrees Celsius, well below pre-industrial levels of 2 degrees Celsius.

"As all of us are impacted, so must we all be responsible for addressing this global challenge," said Gudziak, Zaidan and Callahan.

They also stressed that countries, organizations and businesses should recommit to implementations that remain centered on human dignity, while balancing both economic opportunity and climate care.

Among the aims they pointed to were investment in adaptations that also foster economic opportunities, along with "bold mitigation efforts" to reduce emissions contributing to global warming.

Other priorities they highlighted included "loss and damage financing that guarantees priority and direct access to vulnerable affected communities"; the development of "a just transition to a sustainable economy centered on workers, communities and creation"; and efforts to make "financing for climate solutions, including debt relief, timely and transparent while at the same time upholding human dignity."

"Together, these actions can work towards integral ecology" and — as Leo said in his Oct. 1 Laudato Si' anniversary address — "'give priority to the poor and marginalized in the process,'" said Gudziak, Zaidan and Callahan, adding they offered their prayers and solidarity and pledged "to work collaboratively to safeguard the future of our common home."

This story appears in the **COP30 Brazil** feature series. View the full series.