

Sisters Promote Care of Earth through Billboards Dubuque Prayer Service Slated for Jan. 27

DUBUQUE, Ia.—Catholic Sisters based in the Upper Mississippi River Valley are calling for care of the environment through urging others to support legislation to reduce carbon emissions, develop clean energy policies, and provide financial assistance to developing countries. To promote their points, Catholic Sisters are placing more than 20 billboards in Iowa in January through early February in advance of the caucuses to make sure delegates, potential presidential candidates, and voters remember this critical issue. Billboards with the message “Standing with Pope Francis; Caring for our Common Home” will also be placed in Illinois and Wisconsin. Catholic Sisters will hold a prayer service calling all to work together for the good of Earth, our “Common Home,” near the billboard site at the intersection of 8th and White in Dubuque at 12:30 p.m. on Wed., Jan. 27.

The plan for billboards was initiated by Catholic Sisters for a Healthy Earth Committee (CSHE) which is made up of representatives from the communities of women religious sponsoring the campaign. The committee explained, “In his recent encyclical *Laudato Si’*, Pope Francis urgently calls us to take action to care for our Common Home. ‘Everything is related,’ he writes, ‘and we human beings are united as brothers and sisters on a wonderful pilgrimage, woven together by the love God has for each creature and which also unites us in fond affection with brother sun, sister moon, brother river, and mother earth.’”

CSHE urges individuals to heed the cry of Earth and the cry of those who suffer from the effects of climate change. “We must care for Earth and each other by our own actions, by engaging in dialogue with others, and by pressing our lawmakers to prioritize bold action to turn the tide for climate justice,” said CSHE Committee Member Sister Joy Peterson, PBVM.

Catholic Sisters who collaborated on the billboards include the Dominican Sisters of Sinsinawa, Wis.; Benedictine Sisters of Rock Island, Ill.; Sisters of Mercy West Midwest Community; Notre Dame Sisters of the Central Province; Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration, LaCrosse, Wis.; Sisters of the Humility of Mary, Davenport, Ia.; Sisters of St. Francis, Clinton, Ia.; Sisters United News; and Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Dubuque Franciscan Sisters, and Visitation Sisters, all of Dubuque, Ia.

The Sisters’ “Care for our Common Home” message was first shared through ads placed in *USA Today* and local diocesan newspapers during Pope Francis’ visit to the United States in September. Catholic Sisters who collaborated on both the ads and the billboards have created other Gospel-themed messages over the past 20 years of their association, including, in 2012, a billboard urging others to welcome immigrants.

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Prayer Services:

Dubuque: Wednesday, Jan. 27 at 8th and White, 12:30 pm

Des Moines: Sunday, January 31st at 12:30 pm (location to be determined)

Quad City: Wednesday, January 27th at 12:30 pm at 2525 4th Ave in Rock Island, IL

Clinton: Tentative Prayer Service during evening prayers, Jan. 27

Billboard locations:

CEDAR RAPIDS (Jan. 11-Feb. 7): 1 billboard (Blair’s Ferry Rd.)

WEST DES MOINES (Jan. 11-Feb. 7): 2 billboards (5th St./Railroad Ave.; Grand Ave./8th St.)

DES MOINES (Jan. 11-Feb. 7): 10 billboards (2nd Ave./54th Ave.; Beaver Dr./Franklin Ave.; 9th St./Broad; Euclid/King Pkwy; 14th St./Frwy; Ingersoll Ave./37th St.; Hubbell Ave./42nd St.; University Ave./East 29th St.; 14th St./McKinley; Fleur Dr./Wakonda View)

DAVENPORT (Jan. 11-Feb. 7): 4 billboards (713 Harrison; Locust/Taylor; 410 E 4th St.; 53rd/Carey)

BETTENDORF (Jan. 11-Feb. 7): 1 billboard (3820 State St.)

DUBUQUE (Jan. 4-31): 2 billboards (8th/White; JFK [by McDonalds])

CLINTON (Jan. 11-Feb. 7): 1 billboard (Camanche/24 Pl.)
SIOUX CITY (Jan. 16-Feb. 15): 1 billboard (I-29/Floyd Blvd.)
ROCK ISLAND (Jan. 11-Feb. 7): 1 billboard (1st/5th Ave.)
MOLINE (Jan. 11-Feb. 7): 1 billboard (Hwy 5/I-74)
KIELER (Jan. 11-Feb. 7): 1 billboard (Hwy 151)