



IGREJA EPISCOPAL ANGLICANA DO BRASIL

Pastoral Letter from the House of Bishops

Creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now.
(Romans 8.21-22)

We are facing the worst wave of fires in Brazil in seven years. For more than two weeks the Amazon Forest has been on fire, burnt by greed and hatred. In 2019 only the Amazon suffers from 52.5% of fire outbreaks in Brazil. It is worth noticing that a rise in fires happened soon after the president of the republic criticized INPE (National Institute for Space Research) and dismissed its coordinator when the institute warned that an increase (more than 80%) in forest fires in Brazil between January and August this year, if compared to the same period last year.

Those fires in the Amazon are not the result of drought, nor the result of natural hazards. Those are actions orchestrated by people representing agribusiness, land grabbers and prospectors encouraged by the president's irresponsible speeches and statements. He argued that Ibama (the National Institute for the Environment) was a tax industry, and said his government would not regulate any more natural or indigenous reserves. He also constantly mentions that intends to allow mining and digging in such reserves. He claims environmental discourse is "vegan stuff" and that it delays the country's progress. The burning in the Amazon is also the result of a government policy that seeks to scrap and dismantle Socio-Environmental policies and Environmental protection agencies. This year, the Ministry of Environment suffered a R\$ 187 million cut and Ibama suffered a R\$ 89 million cut.

As a result of this scenario, we have watched flames consume part of the forest that contains the greatest biological and cultural diversity of the planet. Flames have reached the triple border between Brazil, Bolivia and Paraguay, consuming thousands of hectares of vegetation, carbonizing fauna and flora, and violating rights of indigenous peoples, caboclos and quilombola communities. The president has been silent. His ironic attitude towards what is happening in the Amazon, as a means of minimizing consequences of forest fires, coupled with the attempt to hold environmental protection NGOs responsible constitute a systematic strategy of a death government resulting in a huge catastrophe and the unprecedented devastation of part of the Amazon biome.

As Anglican Christians, we cannot be silent. We must reclaim the Anglican Marks of Mission we affirm through our Baptismal Covenant and commit to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, transform the unjust structures of society and challenge violence of every kind, respecting the dignity of every human being and seeking peace and reconciliation.

The House of Bishops of the Church Episcopal Anglican of Brazil repudiates our current government's actions. We urge our people to pray for the Amazon, to bear witness to their faith and denounce all disrespectful actions towards the environment and society. We must affirm life by promoting human dignity, justice, peace, social and environmental preservation as signs and fruits of Christ's commandment to love God and one another.

"Breath of life, who bore in your womb all created order, teach us to respect all creatures, as witnesses to the Gospel, which encourages us to fight for the preservation of nature, restoring the dream of Eden and perfecting what you have given us as a gift. In the name of Jesus Christ, we present our prayers. Amen." (Collect for Environmental Responsibility - 2015 Brazilian Book of Common Prayer, page 520)

House of Bishops

Bishop Naudal Alves Gomes, Anglican Diocese of Paraná e Primaz

Bishop Maurício Andrade, Anglican Diocese of Brasília

Bishop Renato Raazt, Anglican Diocese of Pelotas
Bishop Francisco de Assis da Silva , Southwestern Brazil Diocese
Bishop Humberto Maiztegui , Southern Brazil Diocese
Bishop João Cândia Peixoto, Anglican Diocese of Recife
Bishop Eduardo Coelho Grillo, Anglican Diocese of Rio de Janeiro
Bishop Marinez Rosa dos Santos Bassotto, Anglican Diocese of the Amazon
Bishop Clóvis Erly Rodrigues, Emeritus
Bishop Almir dos Santos, Emeritus
Bishop Celso Franco, Emeritus
Bishop Jubal Pereira Neves, Emeritus
Bishop Orlando Oliveira, Emeritus
Bishop Filadelfo de Oliveira, Emeritus
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