



The InterFaith Conference of Metropolitan Washington (IFC)

“Advancing Justice, Building Community, Nurturing Understanding”

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Your Holiness,

On the occasion of your first historic visit to the United States of America and our nation's capitol of Washington, DC, we the InterFaith Conference of the Metropolitan Washington (IFC) extend to you our sincere and heartfelt greetings. The IFC, a coalition of 11 faith communities – Baha'i, Buddhist, Hindu, Islamic, Jain, Jewish, Latter-Day Saints, Protestant, Roman Catholic, Sikh and Zoroastrian – founded in 1978, applauds your prophetic witness on behalf of the most vulnerable and your call for people of all faith traditions to aspire to bring greater healing into our broken world.

In particular, we echo your great concern for all of creation articulated in your second encyclical *Laudato Si*, “On Care for Our Common Home.” We are grateful for your leadership in bringing greater attention to the necessity of caring for both the “human environment and the natural environment.” Indeed, “everything is connected” in our globalized world and this means that we all must respond to the call for “an unwavering commitment to resolving the problems of society.” As people of faith and believers in the divine order we recognize our unique responsibility towards this end.

We the members of IFC would like to convey to you our solidarity in dialogue towards the protection of nature, defense of the poor, and the building of networks of respect and friendship. Please count on our prayers for a fruitful and safe trip to our country and city as we also ask you to pray for our interfaith work in the nation's capitol.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Batya Steinlauf, Chair of the Board of Directors

Fr. Avelino Gonzalez, President

Dr. Siva Subramanian, First Vice-President

Michael Turner, Secretary

Mythili Bachu, Treasurer

Members of the Executive Committee of the IFC