



# Call to Renew Our Common Home: The Vision of Saint Francis

## Declaration of the Summit held on 9 February 2026

We, the EkoSkola students attending Church schools, believe that the world is our common home and that we must take care of it together. We ...

- already do our part at home and at school to care for this common home and for everyone who lives in it;
- know that we must move from words to action;
- understand that we must lead by example, even when adults sometimes do not set a good example; and
- feel that those who make decisions about our future, especially within the Church, should listen to the ideas and suggestions we discussed during the Summit.

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### Theme 1: Care for those in danger or in need: Justice, Solidarity, and Human Dignity

- Around us there may be people who often remain invisible: individuals from different cultures, languages, religions, and nationalities; the elderly; people with mental-health difficulties; and others who may feel excluded. We propose to:
- Create opportunities in schools for open discussions so that everyone feels included.
- Organise school-community clean-ups and collaborate with other organisations.
- Support students who feel excluded by including them in group work.
- Ensure educators prevent anyone from being left out or isolated during group work.
- Pay attention to students who do not mix with others and create support systems such as buddy benches, observing adults, EkoSkola committee members, or comfort soft toys.
- Establish an annual Buddy System so students support one another.
- Create comfortable spaces such as Chill Rooms and Cosy/Calming Corners—small tents or nooks where students can play, read, craft, and get to know each other in a quiet, safe environment.
- Hold lessons on helping one another and on appreciating each person's uniqueness.
- Offer basic sign-language lessons to include those with communication difficulties.
- Hold assemblies on the importance of inclusion.
- Ensure school social media is inclusive and represents students from diverse backgrounds.

- Consult those most affected before decisions are taken.
- Give EkoSkola committees a stronger voice in school decisions.
- Invite different school communities to our activities to raise awareness of our work.
- Encourage food shops to reduce prices on items close to expiry to help those in need and reduce food waste.
- Use public spaces to grow fruit trees or leave food bags for those who need them.
- Organise volunteer days, such as visits to soup kitchens.
- Create a register of places in Malta and Gozo where students can volunteer.
- Organise fundraising or item-collection drives for people in need.
- Run programmes like People for Others (POP), where each year group does voluntary work and learns about the needs of the most vulnerable.
- Place permanent donation boxes in shops and schools.
- Encourage Pay-it-Forward campaigns in cafés and restaurants.
- Collect toys and clothes in good condition to donate locally or send to countries affected by war or disaster.
- Set up school discussion groups on global issues, incidents, or particular incidents.
- Create a variety of break-time clubs on different topics, including crafts, so everyone finds something they enjoy.
- Create an inclusive environment for students of different cultures, religions, and languages.
- Ensure all shops are accessible to wheelchair users.
- Provide training courses for people who want to improve their skills so they have a better chance of finding work.
- Create more spaces and centres in every town or village for people experiencing homelessness.
- Build a culture where seeking help is not seen negatively. For example, through vouchers for vulnerable people that can be used in various accessible shops and restaurants.
- Make fair-trade and ethical products more accessible by subsidising prices and encouraging shops to sell them.
- Ensure proper laws so that all workers (foreign and local) receive equal pay, conditions, and benefits, and to prevent modern slave labour.
- Promote better resource use in ways that include people from disadvantaged economic backgrounds and support a circular economy.
- Create a chain reaction through our example: when people see us doing good, they follow.

- Avoid competitions that favour only one skill or one group within the school community.
- Create certificates that celebrate each student's unique qualities.
- Extend our work beyond school and speak with parishes to dedicate days that include different denominations.
- Celebrate awareness days for conditions such as ADHD and Down Syndrome.
- Do small things that mean a lot: offer water to road workers, or call people who are lonely or elderly.

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### **Theme 2: Care for Creation: Climate, Biodiversity, and Sustainable Living**

- Plant more trees and plants to clean the air and create better ecosystems.
- Increase awareness about keeping the environment clean, especially from dog waste, to prevent disease.
- Share information on waste separation using images and lists showing what goes where, to reduce black-bag waste.
- Organise clean-ups because litter is dangerous for both animals and humans.
- Encourage campaigns asking people to take their litter home if bins are not available.
- Appreciate all creatures, even small insects, and learn about their role in creation.
- Put up information boards and slogans about local insects and their benefits (e.g., "Leave the flowers for the bees to make honey").
- Ensure everyone in school takes responsibility for caring for their environment.
- Introduce awards for the class that shows the most environmental responsibility.
- Practise responsible consumption and use FSC-certified paper from sustainably managed forests.
- Use alternative energy sources such as solar panels on walls and car parks—while recognising not everyone has access to panels.
- Invest in wave and sea-current energy.
- Say no to single-use items. Shops should offer discounts when customers bring their own cups. Coffee machines should allow the use of personal cups.
- Create more botanical gardens and safe spaces for wildlife—pesticide-free habitats for insects (like bug hotels) and animals.
- Encourage schools to set up compost bins, possibly using soil worms.
- Promote "bring your own cup/container/basket" practices, especially in food shops and greengrocers.
- Stop the removal of wild plants, especially in gardens and rural roads.
- Provide more awareness about companion planting.

- Create more pedestrian and cycling roads, not only car-dedicated roads. Some streets could be pedestrianised on weekends and holidays.
- Suggest that local councils designate certain streets for exercise, walking, and cycling on specific days, especially when schools are closed.
- Encourage students living near school to walk or cycle.
- Put up information boards on sustainable mobility.
- Provide incentives for people to walk or cycle more.
- Make car-pooling mandatory; single-occupant cars should not be accepted.
- Provide more information on the advantages and disadvantages of electric cars, while promoting hydrogen-powered cars as a better option.
- Offer incentives to reduce water consumption.
- Install drinking-water stations to refill bottles, even for a small fee, to reduce plastic bottle use.
- Build more reservoirs to collect rainwater, allowing it to seep into the rock and refill the water table instead of flowing straight into the sea.
- Reduce concrete-covered areas in playgrounds and sports grounds, leaving more soil and natural grass.
- Organise campaigns to teach people and children to cook and use local products instead of relying on takeaways, reducing packaging waste.
- Permanently ban paper advertising (junk mail) and use TV and social media instead.
- Avoid buying souvenirs or items made from protected species, and ban their production.
- Run campaigns to eradicate existing invasive plants and animals, and ban their importation from pet shops and garden centres.
- Ensure regular opportunities to present our ideas to politicians—and ensure they take our suggestions seriously.

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