



**Address of Reverend Fr. Talal Hachem**  
**Ecumenical Perspectives on Climate Change**  
**October 4, 2023**

- Your Excellencies
- Reverend Fathers
- Ladies and gentlemen, esteemed guests, dear faculty members, and beloved students,
  
- It is with great pleasure that I welcome you all to the Holy Spirit University of Kaslik and to this symposium on ecumenical perspectives on climate change.
  
- Today, we gather here as a community united by a common cause, that was described by His Holiness Pope Francis, in his encyclical Laudato Si, as (I quote) an “urgent challenge to protect our common home (that) includes a concern to bring the whole human family together to seek a sustainable and integral development”.
  
- Climate change is a global problem that goes beyond borders, affiliations, convictions, etc. It is a real crisis that affects every living being in our “common home”. That is why it requires a collective response, and a collective determination, to come up with a comprehensive implementable solution.



And here we have to admit that it is only through the collaboration of diverse entities in diverse disciplines that we can pave the way for a sustainable future.

- This symposium serves as a platform for fostering constructive discussions, a better understanding of, and a solid collaboration on this urgent need to address the global challenge of climate change.
- I am truly happy that we are hosting this event at USEK. In fact, throughout the years USEK has been actively committed to sustainability, and this was reflected in its rankings as one of the most sustainable universities in the region, promoting sustainable development goals, having a societal impact, and creating a culture of caring and working hand in hand for the preservation of our planet. Our university has been sparing no effort to respond to this “emergency – also as described by His Holiness, (and I quote) that no longer remains at the margins of society, and that has assumed a central place, reshaping not only industrial and agricultural systems but also adversely affecting the global human family, especially the poor and those living on the economic peripheries of our world” (end of quote).



- Today, we have the privilege of hearing different perspectives that will enlighten us with various insights on the intersection of faith and environmental stewardship. We will delve into the moral, ethical, and spiritual dimensions of climate change and explore how these perspectives can guide our individual and collective actions.
  
- Finally, I want to express my deep appreciation to all the organizers of this symposium. Your commitment to this vital cause is commendable, and I am confident that the ideas, which will emerge from this event will form a roadmap for our actions towards a more sustainable future and a thriving planet for the generations to come.
  
- Thank you, and may this symposium be a source of inspiration, collaboration, and hope.