



The Parish of St. Mary York

# Faith in Action

*Building hope for tomorrow in the face of climate change*

## Climate Change Parish Primer: What is Climate Change?

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The extreme weather events of this past summer, such as the western wildfires and the British Columbia heat event, have both magnified the impact of climate change, and increased the interest in the subject for many Canadians, including members in our parish. This has brought forward many questions and concerns about the role of climate change and the impact on ourselves, our families, and the environment in which we live. Many folks are just asking, **what is going on?**

This five-part “parish primer” will provide a simple overview into the science behind, and the evidence for climate change. It will talk about some of the impacts that are happening now, and those that are most likely to occur over the coming years, both globally and here at home.

When trying to explain climate change, perhaps the best way to start is to clarify what it is not.

First, it's important to note that **climate change is not weather**. Weather refers to the short-term changes (such as rain, snow and sun) that “Mother Nature” delivers on an hourly, daily or weekly basis.

**Climate Change is also not global warming**. This was a term used many years ago to describe the impact of climate change. In fact, global warming is only one of several impacts of climate change.



Climate Change actually refers to **any change in climate over time** – whether due to natural variability or as a result of human activity.

At this point, the evidence to support climate change is overwhelming. About 97% of the world's climate scientists have concluded that climate change is happening, and that it is caused by human activity.<sup>1</sup>

So now we have defined what climate change is, next time we will discuss the basics of the science that explain climate change.

### **For further reading**

<sup>1</sup> Global Climate Change: Vital Signs of the Planet – NASA <https://climate.nasa.gov/scientific-consensus/>