



U.S. Mission Center

4233 Sulphur Avenue
St. Louis, Missouri 63109

www.adorers.org

Phone (314) 351-6294

Fax (314) 351-6789

PRESS RELEASE

CONTACTS: Sr. Janet McCann (314) 351-6294, ext. 111 • Mark Clatterbuck (610) 233-9919

Religious Freedom Civil Rights Case Catholic Sisters vs. TRANSCO Fossil Fuel Pipeline Oral Arguments Before the 3rd Circuit Court of Appeals

**Thursday, September 15 @ 10:00 AM
Press Conference to follow @ 11:45 AM**

**James A. Byrne Courthouse • The Albert Branson Maris Courtroom • 19th floor
601 Market Street (Corner of 6th & Market Streets)
Philadelphia, PA 19106**

Appealing to protections guaranteed by the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), attorneys for the Adorers of the Blood of Christ will present oral arguments before a panel of judges for the US 3rd Circuit Court of Appeals, seeking damages from Transco/Williams Pipeline Company. In 2018, after seizing the historic farmland of the Adorers of the Blood of Christ despite the Order's strenuous objections, Transco/Williams constructed a high-volume export pipeline through the Catholic Sisters' property and began transporting huge volumes of climate warming fossil fuels. Transco/Williams proceeded with the project while being fully aware that it places a substantial burden on the Adorers' exercise of religion in direct violation of the guarantees and protections afforded the Sisters by RFRA.

The Adorers regard ecological justice as inseparable from their deeply held pro-life Catholic convictions.

Sr. Janet McCann, ASC, a member of the Adorers' US Regional Leadership Team, notes: **"We strongly believe that our case against Transco is about being true to our consistent life ethic and to our call as religious women, in solidarity with our Catholic Church's call to be pro-life in its fullest expression. Transco/Williams, a \$40B private corporation, has forced us to use our land in a way that directly violates not only our religious beliefs about the sacredness of Earth, but also our religious practice of faithfully stewarding our own land for future generations."**

She adds: **"Every day, since October 2018, when pipeline construction was completed and fossil fuel gas began flowing through our farmland in Lancaster County, Transco continues to add to the profits of its multi-billion-dollar corporation. Every day, since October, 2018, as fossil fuel gas flows through our farmland, so also flows Transco's blatant disregard and trampling of the Adorers' religious beliefs."**

The Adorers are a pontifical order of the Roman Catholic Church who take vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, and who share their lives together in community. In 2005, the US Region of the Adorers adopted a “Land Ethic” to guide their religious practice together in caring for Creation. Working for ecological justice is an explicit, core principle of the Order’s religious life, consistent with the social teachings of the Catholic Church as found in Pope Francis’ 2015 encyclical, *Laudato Si’*, which calls climate action a non-negotiable of Christian faith.

The Adorers and their attorneys will hold a brief press conference at 11:45 AM outside the courthouse, at the corner of 6th and Market Streets.

** **Note:** At this time, masks must be worn inside the Byrne Courthouse building.*

#