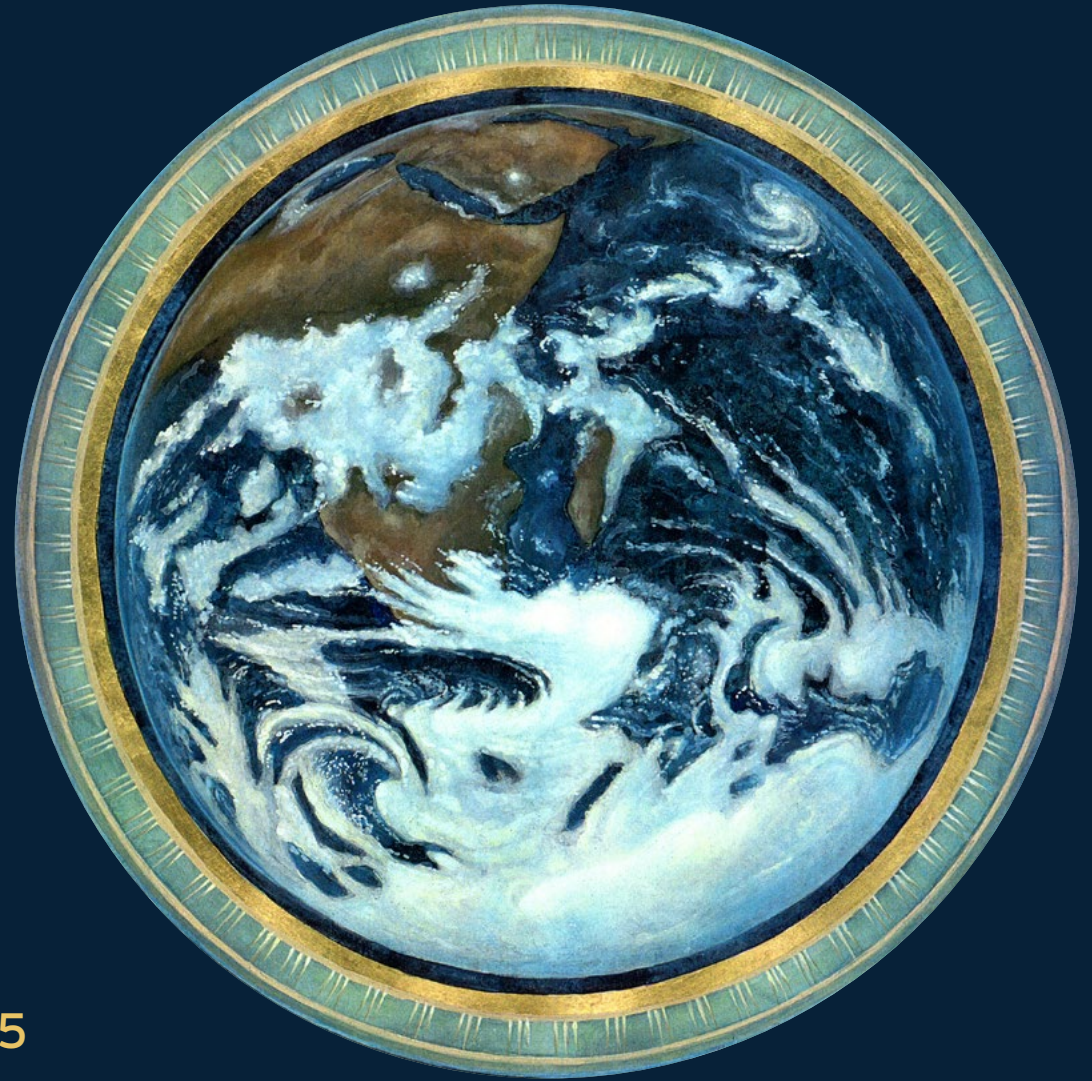




SEASON OF CREATION 2025

Peace with Creation

A CATHOLIC LITURGICAL GUIDE

Season of Creation 2025

The 2025 Season of Creation theme is **Peace with Creation**. It is rooted in **Isaiah 32:14-18**.

*Because the palaces will be forsaken,
The bustling city will be deserted.
The forts and towers will become lairs forever,
A joy of wild donkeys, a pasture of flocks—*

*Until the Spirit is poured upon us from on high,
And the wilderness becomes a fruitful field,
And the fruitful field is counted as a forest.*

*Then justice will dwell in the wilderness,
And righteousness remain in the fruitful field.*

*The work of righteousness will be peace,
And the effect of righteousness
Quietness and assurance forever.*

*My people will dwell in a peaceful habitation,
In secure dwellings and in quiet resting places.*

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2025 Season of Creation Prayer

Peace with Creation

Creator of all,

we praise you for the gift of life
and for the faith that unites us in care for our common home.
We confess how estranged we have become—
from one another, from your Creation, and from our truest selves.
We acknowledge that our greed and destructive impulses
have fractured our relationships with you, with others, and with the Earth.
Fertile fields have become barren,
forests lie desolate,
oceans and rivers are polluted.
Thriving communities have become places of suffering,
and the earth cries out.

Beloved Christ,

who spoke “Shalom” to frightened hearts,
stir us to compassionate action.
Inspire us to work for the end of conflict,
and for the full restoration of broken relationships—
with you, with the ecumenical community,
with the human family,
and with all Creation.

Prince of Peace,

through your wounds, teach us to stand in solidarity
with the woundedness of others,
of Creation, and of the world.
Through your resurrection,
make us people of hope—
with a vision of swords turned into ploughshares
and tears transformed into joy.
May we come together as one family,
to labor for your peace—
a shalom where all your people
may dwell in safety,
and rest in quiet places.
Amen.



Preface

The Place to Begin . . .

The new story of Creation, the Universe Story – so famously made known by Thomas Berry, Brian Swimme, Mary Evelyn Tucker, John Grim and their countless colleagues, students, and friends – makes very clear that at almost all times and seasons, in practically every day and every prayer, ***Our God is too small.***

In reality, the larger context of every moment of our lives is an expanding Universe of unimaginable size, power, and beauty.

In reality, the larger context of every moment of our evolving lives is the Mystery we call God, the Creator, who birthed this Universe in a great fiery flaring forth, and Who has cherished and shaped it through billions of years, up to this very evolutionary moment, this very evolutionary place.

Awareness of this Context of our lives demands that we pause in the deep quiet of awe.

It is important that this is the sense of Creator God to Whom we turn, Who opens our eyes, our ears, our hearts, and to Whom we respond in awe, worship, and action during this Season of Creation.

This guide includes the artwork of Angela Manno. The cover art is titled, *The Earthly Paradise: Icon of the Third Millennium*. Angela describes her work in this way:

As an iconographer and, knowing from ecology that we are all derivative of the Earth, I felt the need to expand the canon of images in traditional iconography to include an icon of the Earth – the living host of all we know.

This icon represents not only the physical dimension of the planet, but its spiritual dimension, symbolized by the gold halo and rays, which represent the Holy Spirit in traditional iconography.

The result is a contemporary icon in which we may see the Earth having come into its fullness as a bio-spiritual entity.¹

By elevating Earth itself and all the life it bears in this way, Angela makes a bold claim that is entirely in the spirit of Pope Francis' encyclical ***Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home*** which says "[all creatures and ecosystems] ... have intrinsic value independent of their usefulness. Each organism, as a creature of God, is good and admirable in itself."²



Angela's icons invite us to contemplate the voice of Creation and to listen with our hearts to its pleas for respect, love, and care. They invite us to make peace with Creation.

With deep gratitude to Angela, we offer her work as integral to our personal and communal prayer, to embracing the sacredness of Creation and learning its language, and to fulfilling our hope that Creation may find peace.

¹ Angela Manno's full collection of icons can be found at www.angelamanno.com.

² *Laudato Si'*, paragraph 140.

Introduction

The annual celebration of the Season of Creation invites the world's 2.6 billion Christians to prayer and action to protect Earth, our common home and to discern the guidance it offers us for bringing about the New Creation of which Jesus spoke. The Season of Creation takes place from September 1st, the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, to October 4th, the feast of St. Francis of Assisi. It is a liturgical season dedicated to prayer, reflection, and celebration of God as Creator. It invites all Christians and all people of faith and good will to reflect prayerfully on the gifts of Creation and the mission given us by God to care for Creation and respond to its needs and crises today.



The committee states clearly that the destruction is due to injustice, broken relationships with God, ourselves, the peoples of Earth and the rest of Creation. Those broken relationships become apparent in wars, in the habit of prioritizing profits over the needs and rights of Creation, in aggravated racial and social injustices, and in the promotion of overconsumption, unsustainable lifestyles, and throwaway cultures. Together these amount to what the committee calls a global war against Creation.

Without justice for all Creation, there will be no peace. Without peace, Creation cannot flourish.

In the [presentation of the theme](#) chosen for the 2025 Season of Creation, the Ecumenical Steering Committee calls attention to the devastation of Creation surrounding us on Earth in these times. The list is extensive and familiar. Climate change bringing more frequent and severe storms globally, droughts, flooding, wildfires, and more. We will look more at these dynamics in the next section of this Introduction.

Our hope then, the Committee writes, is for **Peace with Creation**, that Creation will find peace and will flourish when justice is restored. Realizing that hope will require a transformative change of mind and heart [metanoia, repentance] and the emerging of global solidarity.

Though it is a massive and challenging mission, by the grace of God, that process is underway. Through the Season of Creation and numbers

of other collaborative interfaith programs and movements in recent years, the Spirit is drawing the human family, through prayer, discernment, and committed action, into deeper ecological conversion, deeper understanding and formation of our cosmic family.

May the materials for the Season of Creation 2025 in this booklet contribute to the fruitfulness and success of these critical and urgent efforts.

The Bigger Picture: Assumptions Behind This Liturgical Guide

Drawing on Pope Francis's important encyclical, ***Laudato Si'***, and the rich background of Catholic Social Tradition, these resources assume that the human family is not facing various separate and distinct crises – social, economic, political, cultural, ecological – that are competing for our time, attention, and resources. There is only one complex and integrated social-economic-political-cultural-ecological crisis requiring prayer, an integral ecological conversion, and effective nonviolent action for the healing of the vast web of life. It is possible to identify several dimensions and facets to this integral crisis, but everything is connected. All of our struggles are related.

Ecological Dimension. The ecological dimension of this complex crisis has two important facets:

climate change, or what some are calling “*climate crisis*” or “*climate collapse*,” and *ecological degradation*, including pollution and biodiversity loss, through overproduction and overconsumption.

Climate change/collapse. Fossil fuel use and industrial production over approximately the last two centuries by what are now often referred to as the “developed nations” have, through the emission of heat-trapping greenhouse gases, produced a warming of the planet that is changing the climate everywhere in dynamic and dangerous ways. Increasingly, scientists and religious leaders are referring to the situation as a human-produced **climate crisis** that is destroying vast numbers of species and threatening the whole web of life on the planet. Storms and wildfires are already more violent, heat waves, droughts, and floods more frequent and damaging. Sea levels are rising, islands are beginning to be submerged, and coastal cities around the planet are coming under serious threat. Human suffering and tragedy are already more severe, especially among people who are poor and marginalized.

The situation is especially urgent in these times. Echoing Pope Francis in his encyclical **Laudato Sí**, the 2021 ecumenical steering committee, in their introduction to the 2021 Season of Creation, highlighted the destructive force of the “greed, exploitation, disrespect, disconnection and systematic degradation” of the richness of Creation by the processes of “development” embraced by so many in the human community over the last several hundred years.

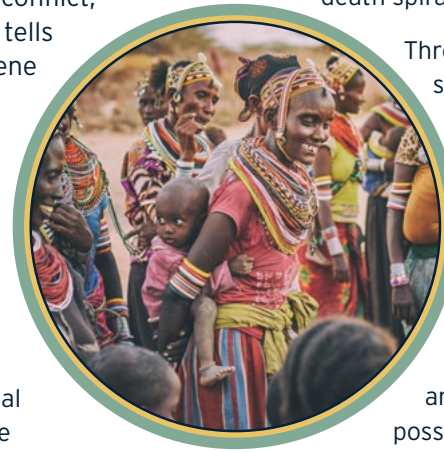
For centuries, humans have ordered our lives and economies according to the logic of markets rather than the limits of the Earth. This false logic exploits the household of God and makes Creation a means to economic or political ends. The current exploitation of land, plants, animals and minerals for profit results in the loss of habitats that are homes for millions of species, including humans whose homes are at risk due to climate conflict, loss and damage. Reason tells us that in this Anthropocene age, ecological and social disintegration and exclusion cause the current climate crisis and accelerate ecological instability.

Ecological degradation.

At the same time, it has become apparent, as ecological awareness has grown, that the human community is now using more of Earth's resources in a few months than the planet can replenish in a full year. In 1970, the first attempts were made to measure human production and consumption against Earth's regenerative capacities. The efforts resulted in the birth of **Earth Overshoot Day**, a calculation of the point at which as much of Earth's resources will have been used in a particular year as she can replenish in a full year.

In 1970, Earth Overshoot Day was determined to be December 29th. Since then, it has been

occurring earlier and earlier. This year, 2025, **Earth Overshoot Day occurred on July 24th**. In a little over half the year, the human community has consumed what it will take Earth a full year to replenish: resources such as water, food, clean air. For the rest of the year, we will be consuming from the reserves built up by Earth over millennia. This – a form of violence to Earth and to future generations – obviously cannot go on forever. Those reserves are limited. This is a death spiral.



Through the years, the sophistication of the measurement process and the collection of data have improved and increased immensely. It is now possible to find out your **Country Overshoot Day** based on national lifestyles and standards of living. The details and the comparisons they make possible are sobering.

Economic-Social-Political Dimensions. In each of these dimensions of human life around the planet, there are serious issues of injustice that must be addressed if the human community is to avoid the worst of the destructive environmental scenarios confronting us.

Economic Justice. Inequality of resources is stark and dangerous around the world. A small number of extremely wealthy people control as much wealth as half the human community of more than 8 billion people. While there is

currently more than enough food produced globally to feed everyone on the planet, up to **757 million people** lack adequate food and are chronically hungry, even malnourished. And climate change is continuing to reduce Earth's ability to be fruitful.

But hunger is just one of the issues. Poor nations – those that have historically contributed least to the forces producing climate change – do not have the resources to prepare for more violent storms and other destructive manifestations of climate change. Nor do they have the resources to help their communities recover from worsening climate tragedies.

It is a foundational principle of the Catholic social tradition that God's gifts in Creation are meant for the wellbeing of all for whom this Creation is home. Those who accumulate more than they need while others lack the most basic necessities have been criticized for stealing the resources from the poor since the earliest Christian centuries. In ***Laudato Si'***, Pope Francis wrote:

In the present condition of global society, where injustices abound and growing numbers of people are deprived of basic human rights and considered expendable, the principle of the common good immediately becomes, logically and inevitably, a summons to solidarity and a preferential option for the poorest of our brothers and sisters.... It demands before all else an appreciation of the immense dignity of the poor in the light of our deepest convictions as believers. We

need only look around us to see that, today, this option is in fact an ethical imperative essential for effectively attaining the common good. [L.S. 158]

Social Justice. Justice also demands solidarity with and attention to the needs of people of all races, nations, and diverse communities, all genders, and all generations yet to come. Without justice and care for all, there can be no peace, no healing and renewal of the Earth. Again, Pope Francis writes:

Underlying the principle of the common good is respect for the human person as such, endowed with basic and inalienable rights ordered to his or her integral development.... [T]he common good calls for social peace, the stability and security provided by a certain order which cannot be achieved without particular concern for distributive justice; whenever this is violated, violence always ensues. Society as a whole, and the state in particular, are obliged to defend and promote the common good. [L.S. 157]

Droughts, floods, fires, storms, and other severe weather-related events are creating desperate poverty and deepening hunger. The poor suffer most from climate change/collapse and are increasingly forced to migrate in search of food, security, and other essentials. Millions of people

are now climate migrants or refugees, adding to the social pressures and unrest in so many parts of the world. Solidarity with our sisters and brothers in their deepest needs and a firm commitment to end the violence toward Creation at the heart of their suffering are essential to the justice that alone can bring permanent healing and transformation to life on Earth.

The 2023 Season of Creation prophetic call to **"Let Justice and Peace Flow"** clearly asks the human community to take another important step toward conversion from the root causes that are creating the current dangerous crisis. It calls us to embrace the global common good, Gospel nonviolence, and social justice in our ways of relating with all creatures. All of these are essential to bringing about healing responses to the Cry of Earth and the Cry of the Poor.

Some Basic Inferences to Guide Our

Responses. These dimensions of the current complex crisis support some basic conclusions which will be reflected in these liturgical materials and upon which our responses must be based.

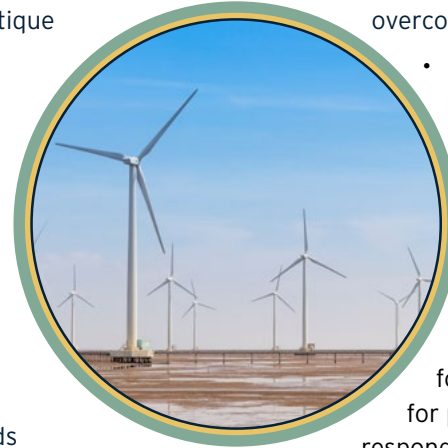
- First, the justice to which we are being called requires an end to climate change and climate crisis denial. It demands that truth replace the disinformation on climate too often used to protect profits or garner political gain. It



calls us all to committed concern for the common good of all.

- Second, the human community must move to clean, renewable energy and phase out carbon emissions as soon as possible to prevent catastrophic climate change that threatens the survival of the intricately interconnected and interdependent web of life of which humanity is but one strand. Phasing out carbon emissions requires the human community to end its dependence on fossil fuels with urgency. There are already more fossil fuels produced and processed than can be used without widespread ecological destruction. The 2024 Season of Creation included initial plans for a joint Christian advocacy initiative to support the [Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty](#). This treaty offers “a concrete and binding plan to end the expansion of new coal, oil and gas projects and manage a just global transition away from fossil fuels.” More information on the treaty and ways to support it can be found on its website.
- Third, even with clean, renewable energy, we cannot grow our way out of the severe poverty and great maldistribution of resources in which so many live globally. Those who hold up economic growth as the only way to overcome poverty and hunger are failing (or refusing) to face the reality of Earth’s resource limitations and the current death spiral of overproduction and overconsumption laid bare by the data behind Earth Overshoot Day.

- Fourth, this requires critique and rejection of the current dominant economic model with its assumptions about “development,” “progress,” economic growth, and “the good life.” These guide and govern the current destructive patterns of life. The human community needs instead to adopt a way of being that gives priority to dignified human life for all, especially the most vulnerable, and care for the environment. The quality of relationships, commitment to the universal common good, nonviolence, and global solidarity characterize authentic human development, the true “good life,” in Catholic Social Tradition, not the accumulation of industrial and political power, material goods, and wealth.
- Fifth, these changes demand what Pope Francis has called “integral ecological conversion.” That conversion requires cross-cultural encounter and dialogue as well as careful inter-species “listening” to learn from other-than-human Creation how interconnected and interdependent everything really is. These will feed a spirituality grounded in gratitude that is marked by growing global solidarity and freedom from consumerism and



overconsumption.

- Sixth, wealthy communities need to be open to welcoming climate migrants and refugees, to creating just migration policies for their own communities as well as for use by others that may need them. In addition, they need to advocate with their governments for adequate and just support for poor nations to enable them to respond to climate change with resilience and adequate care for their communities. Our solidarity must stretch to become global.

In short, the human family must recommit itself to truth and open itself to a commitment to the global common good. It must reduce its global consumption and waste, return to patterns of living compatible with Earth’s limited resources and regenerative capacities, rethink what constitutes the good human life and how to reach it, and redistribute or redirect wealth and resources to meet the basic needs of the whole human family, especially the poorest and most vulnerable, and the full web of life.

Themes: Elements of a Vital Spirituality

Each year the Ecumenical Advisory Committee recommends a theme for the Season of Creation to guide prayer and reflection. This year’s theme, **Peace with Creation**, joins a growing body of previous themes. Over time, these different themes are building up an integral

ecological vision and spirituality that nurtures less violent, more life-giving relationships with each other and with the natural world. Without such a vision and spirituality, the changes just summarized will become harder and harder to realize. Each theme and the interconnections of the themes richly reward contemplation.

In 2019, the theme focused on **The Web of Life**, stressing the interdependence of all life on the planet and the importance of its vast but endangered biodiversity. This theme resonates with the important and often-repeated message of Pope Francis that **everything is connected**. We are all strands in the one great Web of Life. As a result, we need to be attentive to the impacts of our ways of living throughout the Web.

In 2020, the theme called for **A Jubilee Time for the Earth**. The Advisory Committee noted that climate change results from the intersection of greed, inequality, and the destruction of Earth through overconsumption and economic systems that demand constant economic growth on a limited planet at the expense of the poor. The impacts of many ways of living on the planet are causing serious damage to the Web of Life. The biblical concept of Jubilee calls for rest for the land, restoration of ecosystems, and restitution from those who have profited most to

those who have suffered most. Suffering Earth needs Jubilee!

In 2021, the theme, **A Home for All?** called for prayerful recognition of all the species of life beyond the human that also make their homes on this planet. Human-produced climate change is destroying their habitats and driving millions of species into extinction. Both the Ecumenical Advisory Committee for the Season of Creation and Pope Francis have stressed that all the other-than-human life has as much right to a safe and secure home on Earth as humans do. They do not exist just for human exploitation and enjoyment. And theirs is a religious right: God loves them for themselves and they, in their own ways, give glory to God. As

Pope Francis wrote, "Because of us, thousands of species will no longer give glory to God by their very existence, nor convey their message to us. We have no such right." [*Laudato Sí*, #33]

The 2022 theme picks up on this judgment. It calls the whole human community to **Listen to the Voice of Creation**.

It calls us to learn to pay attention to the messages that Creation is trying to convey to us. It focuses special attention on the voices, human and other-than-human, that are no longer heard.

These voices hold a variety of important messages. There are messages of suffering,

diminishment, and loss as they show us the cost of destructive violence toward our common home and the impacts of climate change and ecological degradation. There are messages of thriving, beauty, and vital, reciprocal service - messages the scriptures speak of as glorifying God. There are messages of wisdom harvested through millennia about healthy living and mutuality throughout the Web of Life, messages that can guide us to more sustainable and resilient ways of living together within the limits of Earth.

The 2023 theme takes up the cry of the prophets to **Let Justice and Peace Flow....** In a brief "Invitation to Join Season of Creation 2023," ecumenical leaders state simply and forcefully:

The world humans have known, enjoyed and celebrated is changing rapidly beyond repair. Biodiversity is being lost at a rate not seen since the last mass extinction. The hope of keeping average temperature increases to 1.5 degrees Celsius is fading. The futures of young people are threatened by the cascading impacts of the loss of biodiversity and a changing climate. Industrialization, colonization and the extraction and consumption of resources have created great wealth, unequally distributed. We are presently more aware than ever of the link between fossil fuels, and violence and war.

The changing world and the growing ecological crisis threatening us and all who share Earth



are the fruits of injustice and violence. The Cry of Earth and the Cry of the Poor are desperate calls for justice and the peace that it can bring. The wisdom and courage of the prophetic Spirit must flow in us and through us....

The 2024 theme calls the Christian community to address the discouragement growing as the climate crisis, biodiversity loss, and pollution worsen, the global human response is falling short, and the urgency is growing. The theme, **To Hope and Act with Creation**, calls for a profound Christian hope rooted firmly in faith in the resurrection of Christ and re-energized action with Creation for the healing of Earth.

The 2025 theme returns to the focus on the injustice and violence, the broken relationships behind the many current forms of devastation of Earth. They constitute a “War on Creation.” Without justice, there can be no peace. Without peace, Creation cannot flourish. Our mission is to work for the justice and global solidarity that are essential to establishing **Peace with Creation**.

As we enter this Season of Creation, we are invited, then, to listen again to these thematic messages with deeply contemplative seriousness. They carry sacred revelation from the Holy Spirit of Truth for these times. They are calling the family of Creation to recognize how interconnected all Creation is, how greatly it is suffering, and how much it needs the healing and restoration of Jubilee. They are demanding a new, compassionate consciousness toward all for whom Earth is home, a commitment to listen

in new ways to their messages to us, and to commit ourselves to work in hope that has the power to restore a life-giving flow of justice and peace to Earth’s intricate and magnificent Web of Life.

From a deep contemplative presence, let’s listen from the heart:

We are all members of a vast and profoundly interdependent **Web of Life**,
The precious gift of God. Imagine, feel
the countless connections....

There is great need for **A Jubilee Time for Earth**
A time of rest, restoration, and restitution
from the destructive damage from climate
change and extensive, unjust ecological
degradation. Grieve with the suffering Earth....

Earth is **A Home for All** who share it,
not just humans. And all have the right to live,
to thrive, and to glorify God on it and in it.
Let that Spirit flow through us....

Listen to the Voice of Creation, the essential prophetic wisdom all around us, stretching us, urging deeper, more contemplative presence to the sacred revelation present but unheard, ignored throughout our Common Home....

The Cry of Earth, the Cry of the Poor are
pleading **Let Justice and Peace Flow....**
To overcome the injustice and violence of our
treatment of Earth and all who make it home,
To bring peace to all Creation....

In the face of all obstacles and discouragement
To Hope and Act with Creation,

Drawing deeply upon our faith in the
Creator’s infinite love and mercy
And the Christ’s invincible Resurrection.

As co-workers with the Creator, we ask to be
open to the Spirit, poured out upon us,
To be transformed in mind and heart,
Guided to ecological conversion and to
profound love of our cosmic family,
Working together for **Peace with Creation**.
For with God all things are possible!

This is the spirit, the emerging integral ecological spirituality, in which we are invited to approach the scriptures and liturgical prayers of the 2025 Season of Creation, living into a transformed future to which God is calling us.

Catholic Celebration of the Season of Creation

The Season of Creation was added to the Catholic liturgical calendar by Pope Francis over the last several years as a natural way to respond with urgent, prayerful action to the ecological crises facing Earth, to collaborate with the global ecumenical and interfaith communities on these critical issues, and to implement the faith vision, analysis and mission laid out in his 2015 encyclical, ***Laudato Si’***.

In 2021, the Vatican launched the **Laudato Si’ Action Platform** (LSAP) designed to call all parts of the global Catholic community - from families to parishes to businesses, schools, healthcare institutions, religious communities, and more - into extensive coordinated action over many years to address the complex socio-

ecological crisis facing Earth and to restore reverent respect and care for the sacredness of Creation. At the time, the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development wrote that the world needs, above all, “a peoples’ movement” from below, an alliance of all people of good will.

Action plans from around the world are being posted on the LSAP website to offer ideas, encouragement, and to help build that global “peoples’ movement.” Information on how to take part is also available on the **Laudato Sí Action Platform** website. As this global response spreads and grows, it is becoming a powerful stimulus to hope and further collaborative action.

The identification of the Season of Creation as a new liturgical season invites the whole Christian community into focused prayer and action. The Catholic community, however, does not yet have official seasonal liturgical texts proper to the Season of Creation, and many pastors may not feel free to use the ecumenical texts of other participating Christian communities.

The materials in this booklet have been prepared to help Catholic communities read and pray with the scriptures of the Catholic lectionary for the Sundays in Ordinary Time during this period through the lens of the Season of Creation. This year, 2025, this period includes the 23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time, the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, and the 25th and 26th Sundays in Ordinary Time for Cycle C.

Diversity of the Communities of Faith

Resources such as these, prepared for a global Church, must be adaptable to many different social, cultural and economic contexts. No single text can be expected to speak to such vast diversity without careful and prayerful local interpretation and adaptation.

The communities joining in the prayer, celebration, and activities of the Season of Creation this year will range from indigenous peoples to those marginalized, poor, and struggling to survive, from working and middle-class communities to the wealthiest elites

around the planet. They will include youth, young adults, middle-aged and elders, powerful and vulnerable weak oppressed. They will include those extremely conscious of the current interrelated web of crises, those suffering from them and those who are in compassionate solidarity with them. They will also include those unconscious of it all and those self-absorbed who don’t care, for personal or political reasons.

The call to integral ecological conversion will be different for each of these communities and individuals. Local liturgical/pastoral teams and religious educators will need to be conscious of the characteristics and social location of their own specific communities as they work to discern God’s Word with them. Only then will they be able to use and adapt the materials included here effectively.

But this much is clear from the nature of the complex crisis confronting the global human community and all for whom Earth is home. The way to a better life cannot be through economic growth and technological progress as modeled by the so-called “developed” nations



“The Amazon rainforest produces more than 20% of the world’s oxygen, affecting the air we breathe and the weather we experience.... It is vanishing at a rate of about 20,000 square miles a year. At the current rate of deforestation, the Amazon region.... could be destroyed by the end of this century.”

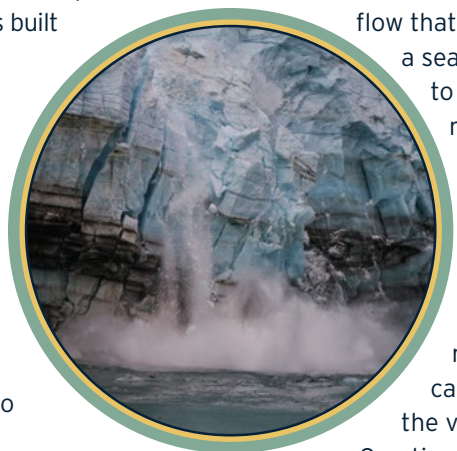
of the industrial world. Nor can it rely on the current economic systems built on consumerism, growth, and constant upward mobility defined by material goods. There are not enough planetary resources available for the long term to meet the needs of all who live here, and those resources are diminishing as the human population's lifestyles "overshoot" Earth's capacity to replenish what is being used.

The way to a better life must be through greater justice, sustainability, solidarity, and attentive care to the needs of all Earth's creatures and Earth itself. We must bring about an end to the "war against Creation."

Integral ecological conversion calls us all to a spirituality of gratitude, global solidarity, and simple, sustainable patterns of living. The quality of relationships, commitment to the common good, and care for all Earth's inhabitants and habitats characterize authentic human development, the true "good life," in Catholic Social Tradition.

The Materials: The Sunday Themes

The four Sundays of the 2025 Season of Creation [23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time, the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, the 25th and 26th Sundays in Ordinary Time for Cycle C in the



Catholic lectionary] have a certain thematic flow that helps us to integrate them as a season. They speak powerfully to the contexts we have just reviewed.

The first Sunday's scriptures [the 23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time] call us to humility before the complex Web of Life and vast interdependent networks of Creation. They call us to welcome and listen to the voices and wisdom of those in Creation that have long been dismissed and who themselves have even been enslaved. They present the costly challenge to true discipleship to Christ that is before us in this time of urgent global crisis.

The scriptures of the second Sunday [the Exaltation of the Holy Cross] emphasize the love of God, eager to forgive and to heal the suffering caused by our sins. Jesus emerged among us on that mission of God, humbly embodying God's forgiving, healing love, even to his death on the cross – and his rising in glory. In the gospel John states it clearly and forcefully: Jesus came among us not to condemn us but that we might be saved through him.

The scriptures of the third Sunday [the 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time] focus attention on the lies, dishonesty and unscrupulous attitudes and practices of those caught up in the idolatry of wealth and consumption, preferring their economic gain to the protection and care of

Creation. While God is eager to forgive, neither will God forget these actions and their impact on the poor. In the gospel, Jesus reminds us of what is most important in life and what constitutes the true "good life."

The scriptures of the fourth Sunday [the 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time] present even stronger and more dire warnings. They reflect the sense of urgency about climate change that Pope Francis, climate scientists, the young, and so many around the world have been declaring. They warn those who enjoy comfort and security yet remain indifferent to the suffering of their sisters and brothers elsewhere, promising them God's judgment and punishment. God loves and will lift up the poor. Finally, the gospel story stands as a warning that the time can come when it will be too late for our conversion. We need to act now.

The materials for use with the Sunday liturgies will be preceded by a summary of Pope Leo's reflection for the 2025 World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation. For those who wish to lead a public celebration of the opening of the Season, that entry concludes with a link to an ecumenical prayer service provided in the [Season of Creation Ecumenical Celebration Guide for 2025](#).

Following the Sunday materials, there will be a similar reference to an online ecumenical service on the feast of St. Francis of Assisi prepared and led by youth from around the world. Further information on that service will be found at seasonofcreation.org when it becomes available.

The Materials: The Worship Elements

The materials for each of the liturgies of the Sundays of the 2025 Season of Creation that follow will include these elements. They may also be useful in religious education settings.

- **Short Introductory Comments.** These will set the context briefly, focusing on the messages of the scriptures as they relate to the Season of Creation's themes of peace, hope and action to restore Earth as the household of God for all Earth creatures. These introductions could be published in a parish bulletin, be read as they are, be adapted for brief introductory comments at the beginning of a liturgy, or used in religious education classes.
- **A Creation-themed Sign of the Cross.** These will reflect a consciousness of the vastness of the universe, God's evolutionary process of creating, and thematic elements from the day's scriptures. Hopefully they will help those who choose to use them to set the

context of their prayer to experience more consciously the awesome reality of what they/we are doing when we turn to the real Creator God.

- **Suggestions for the penitential rite.** Although the Roman Missal gives various optional formulations for the penitential rite, it also allows for "other invocations" to be used in public Catholic liturgies. The suggestions included in these materials help to focus the community's repentance on the issues addressed by the scriptural messages of the day in the context of the Season of Creation.
- **Orations.** Alternative orations (the opening prayer, the prayer over the gifts, and the prayer after communion) are offered that reflect the themes of the Season of Creation and the scriptures for the given Sunday. While they are not currently approved for use in public Catholic liturgies, they may be useful for private or group prayer or for use in ecclesial Christian communities that have greater freedom. They could also be

useful for those in the Catholic community entrusted in the future with the task of preparing proper liturgical texts for the Season of Creation.

- **Points for Reflection on the Scriptures.** These points are not offered as an outline or text for a homily. Local contexts, cultures, and issues are too diverse to permit that kind of presentation. They are points for reflection drawn from the Sunday scriptures read against the background of the climate crisis and the Season of Creation. They are meant to inspire or suggest issues for homilists and religious educators to consider in their preparations or for anyone's personal reflection and prayer. The questions included can help homilists and teachers reflect on their own experience. In addition, they may, in many cases, be fruitfully posed to their congregations or classes for their own prayerful consideration.
- **Faith Reflections.** The creed at Mass can take the form of questions of faith, as for



"Because of us, thousands of species will no longer give glory to God by their very existence, nor convey their message to us. We have no such right."

(Laudato Sí, #33)

example during the Easter Vigil. The questions offered here are not currently approved for use in official Catholic liturgies, but they can serve as helpful invitations to faith raised by the scriptures and prayers of the particular Sunday of the Season of Creation. They are offered as helps to personal prayer and faith development and could be useful in homilies or class discussions.

In communities free to use this form of creed now, the questions evoke the answer, “I am” from the community. This is a deliberate reference to Jesus’s claim to the divine “I am” in chapter 8 of John’s gospel and the parallel use of “I am” in the context of the man born blind in chapter 9 whom Jesus sent to wash in the Pool of the Sent, a clear baptismal reference.

- **General Intercessions Petitions.** A few related petitions suitable or adaptable for the General Intercessions.
- **Final Blessings.** The Final Blessing too can reflect the themes of the Season of Creation and of the particular liturgy. These examples are offered to feed the imagination and to bring the liturgy or other gathering to an integral conclusion, blessing all involved for the work ahead in the Spirit.
- **Music Suggestions.** Musical suggestions related to the themes for each particular Sunday are offered for consideration by music planners and musicians.

A brief series of appendices provide supportive

materials:

Appendix 1 contains A Personal Witness: Learning the Language of Creation

Appendix 2 offers Listening to Creation: A Select Bibliography

Appendix 3 contains the Music Reference List.

Final Note: *Among the official Catholic Eucharistic Prayers, Eucharistic Prayer IV is generally considered the most appropriate in Creation-focused liturgies. However, early in the prayer it has these words in the English translation:*

“You formed man in your own image
And entrusted the whole world to his care,
So that in serving you alone,
He might have dominion over all creatures.”

In addition to the problematic use of exclusive male language, the claim of human “dominion over all creatures” tends to suggest what Pope Francis identifies as a distorted interpretation of our relationship with Earth. He writes:

Although it is true that we Christians have at times incorrectly interpreted the Scriptures, nowadays we must forcefully reject the notion that our being created in God’s image and given dominion over the Earth justifies absolute domination over other creatures.



The biblical texts are to be read in their context, with an appropriate hermeneutic, recognizing that they tell us to “till and keep” the garden of the world (cf. Gen. 2:15). [**Laudato Sí**, ## 66-67]

He closes the following paragraph with the strong statement:

Clearly, the Bible has no place for a tyrannical anthropocentrism unconcerned for other creatures.

[**Laudato Sí**, # 68]

In his Message for the tenth World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, Pope Leo repeats and reinforces this teaching of Pope Francis in **Laudato Sí**.

This authoritative teaching suggests that the prayer should be changed to reflect the Church’s true intent with language such as:

“You formed us in your own image
And entrusted the whole world to our care, so
that in serving you alone,
We might care for all creatures.”

Music Suggestions Introduction

The Psalmist wrote, “The Earth is the LORD’s, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.” (Psalm 24, NIV)

In 1858 William How wrote “...May we your bounties thus, as stewards true receive...” (We Give Thee But Thine Own) reminding us that stewardship reaches beyond a tithe to encompassing care for all Creation.

Despite this 19th century reminder, in the 20th and 21st centuries greed and avarice have still run rampant over God’s Creation. And we are still not paying attention to the Earth and her creatures as they cry out for mercy. So now, as the climate crisis continues to worsen around the planet, we *must* listen to the Earth. One of the psalm antiphons written by the Collegeville Composers Group implores, “Listen! Listen! Open your heart!”

As your community of faith prays for renewal, guidance, and a call to action, included in this publication are some musical suggestions to help in planning worship services. Planners may wish to have a “theme song” and some of the hymns and songs suggested for entrance or dismissal would work beautifully for a theme throughout the season. There are also many musical and liturgical resources online; hymnary.org is just one example.

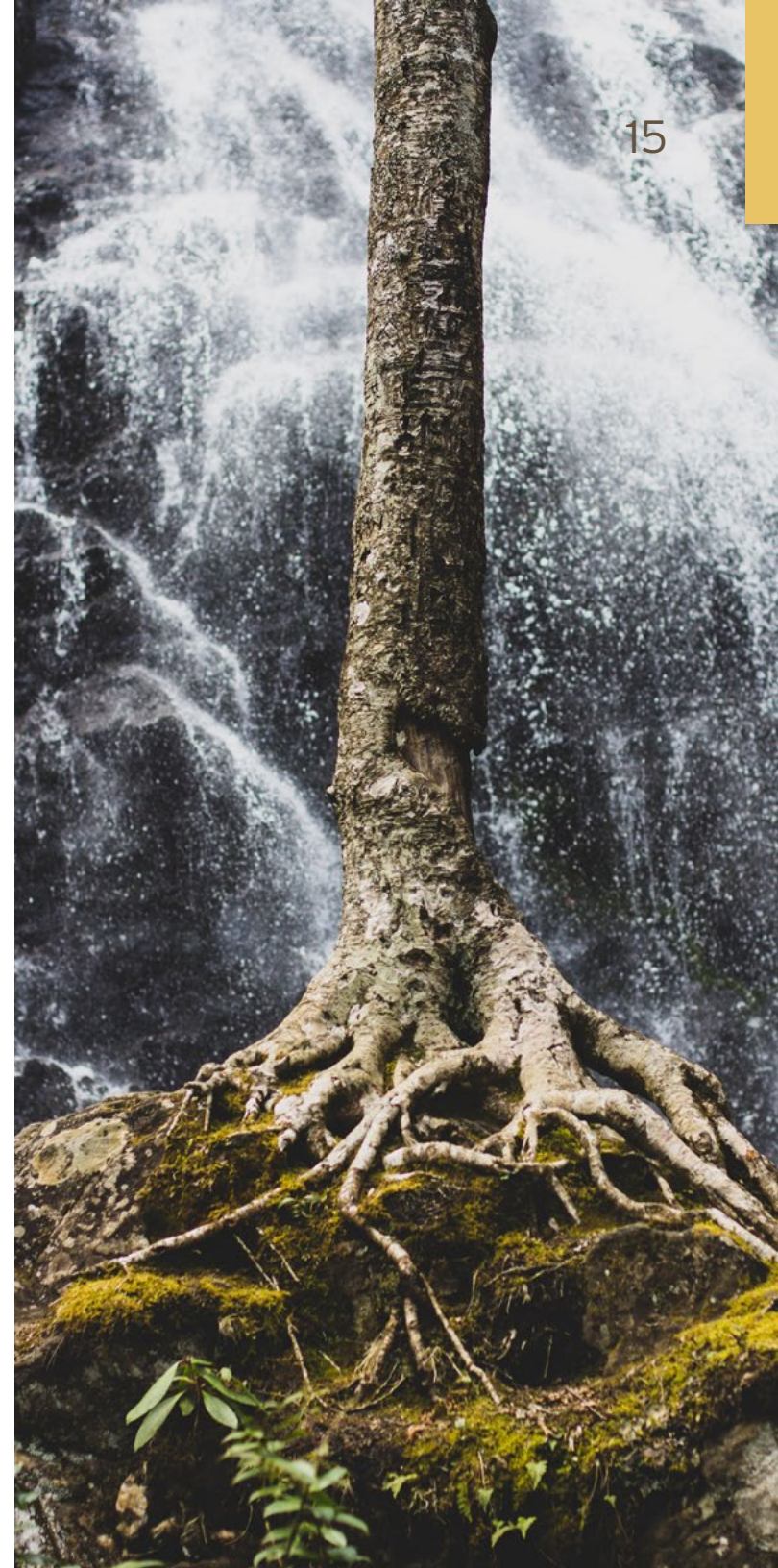
It is always useful to consider the community carefully, choosing songs to which they can relate culturally and socially, and to teach new songs in a way that enhances learning. This list is definitely not exhaustive—there are still many possibilities! Creativity should be a large part of musical planning for the Season of Creation.

For hymns, text authors only are listed—in some cases the author is also the composer. Depending on the meter, some hymns may have more than one tune possibility. For psalms, the composer of the musical setting is listed.

At the end of the suggestions for each of the Sundays, in [Appendix 3](#), is a complete list of all songs used, with additional possibilities. The hymn suggestions for October 4, the Feast of St. Francis, could also be used on any previous Sundays.

As we pray, plan, and act, may God’s wisdom guide and sustain us all!

– Denise Mathias



World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation | September 1, 2025

September 1, the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, opens the Season of Creation each year. Since adding this day to the Catholic liturgical calendar in 2015, Pope Francis issued an official message each year, offering his reflections on the Season of Creation ecumenical theme.

This year, 2025, he took a slightly different path. He chose a theme to complement and support the ecumenical theme of **Peace with Creation**. His theme: **Seeds of Peace and Hope**.

Then, as we know, on April 21st, Easter Monday, Pope Francis died, rising with Christ to new life of profound peace and prophetic hope.

While Francis had selected the Catholic theme for this year's Season of Creation, he left the reflection and official message to his successor.

Pope Leo XIV begins his reflection by noting how appropriate this theme is during this Jubilee year in which we are being called to be *Pilgrims of Hope*.

He then notes Jesus's frequent use of the image of seeds, even applying it to himself as a grain of wheat that must die to bring forth its fruit. In the mystery of their death, seeds are transformed and new life, new beginnings

emerge. In Christ, he writes, we too are seeds, "seeds of peace and hope."

Here he draws into his reflection this year's ecumenical theme based on Isaiah 32:14-18: the promise that "a spirit from on high will be poured out on us" and the desert created by so much injustice and abuse of Earth will be transformed into a fruitful field, a garden of beauty and peace.

That desert of devastation, however - from deforestation and pollution to the loss of biodiversity and ever more frequent and intense storms, fires, and even wars - is still with us. It hurts the poor, the marginalized, the excluded, and indigenous communities the most. And all of these wounds are the result of sin.

Pope Leo insists, then, that environmental justice is an urgent need, a matter of social, economic, and all-around human justice. And it is above all a duty born of faith since the Universe reflects the face of Jesus Christ. We must sow many seeds of justice to contribute to the growth of peace, offering us new hope.

He closes his message with these words:

I pray that Almighty God will send us in abundance his "Spirit from on high" (Isaiah

32:15), so that these seeds and others like them, may bring forth an abundant harvest of peace and hope.

The Encyclical **Laudato Sí** has now guided the Catholic Church and many people of good will for ten years. May it continue to inspire us and may integral ecology be increasingly accepted as the right path to follow. In this way, seeds of hope will multiply, to be "tilled and kept" by the grace of our great and unfailing Hope, who is the risen Christ. In his name, I offer all of you my blessing.

An ecumenical prayer service is available in the Season of Creation Celebration Guide, pp. 16-27, for use on September 1st and October 4th. It can be downloaded at SeasonofCreation.org.

First Sunday of the Season of Creation

September 7, 2025 | 23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

SCRIPTURES

Wis 9:13-18b

Ps. 90:3-6, 12-17

Philemon 9-10, 12-17

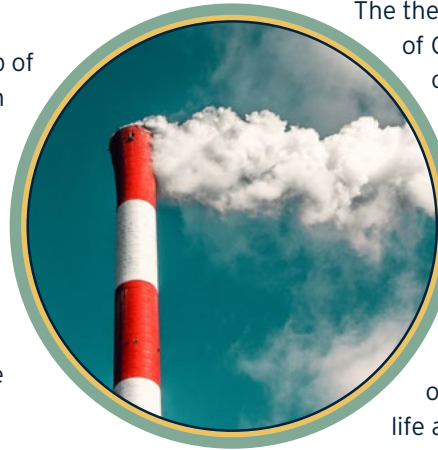
Luke 14:25-33

Introductory Comments

In recent years, under the leadership of Pope Francis, the Season of Creation has taken its place in the Catholic liturgical calendar, uniting Catholics worldwide with the more than 35-year Ecumenical/Orthodox history of its celebration. The Season of Creation extends from September 1st, the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, to October 4th, the feast of St. Francis of Assisi.

The Season focuses on God as Creator of the vast, cosmic Universe, God's revelation in Creation, and our response to our calling to care for Creation and address the urgent need to protect its rich diversity and its capacity to sustain life as we know it.

The celebration of the Season of Creation, since its foundation, has come amid a complex environmental, social, political, and cultural crisis. The impacts of this crisis make it hard to ignore the urgency of its message and the importance of our prayer and work to address it: record-setting heat waves killing people by the thousands around the planet, severe and long-term droughts, famines, massive wild fires and a never-ending fire "season," serious water shortages facing major cities, more violent storms and destructive flash floods, rising sea levels, millions of people driven from their homes as climate-change refugees, and so much more....



The theme serving as a focus for this year's Season of Creation is "**Peace with Creation.**" In choosing this theme, the Ecumenical Advisory Committee for the Season is reminding us that many human activities amount to a "war against Creation." Unsustainable lifestyles, exploitive business models, excessive consumption and throw-away cultures, thoughtless destruction of habitats, disregard for biodiversity loss, and the devastation of literal wars are just a few of the human dynamics threatening the web of life around planet Earth.

The mission before us as people of faith and members of the human community is to work for the justice and global solidarity that are essential to establishing "Peace with Creation." Coming to understand and enter into this process is one of the most important challenges of the Season of Creation.

The first scripture reading, from the Book of Wisdom, in today's liturgy calls us to humility before the great Mystery we call God and to prayer for God's Spirit of Wisdom to guide us into right living within this vast Web of Creation upon which we depend and of which we are a part. The second reading from St. Paul urges us to welcome as brothers and sisters in Christ people whose wisdom about Creation has for ages been disregarded and who themselves have been marginalized and even enslaved. In the gospel, Jesus wants us to hear the seriousness

and costs of discipleship in the face of these challenging conditions.

Opening Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Creator Spirit of God who gives birth to the entire Universe of Creation in love,

And of the Word of God, spoken into the silence, giving shape and form to all Creation,

And of the Wisdom of God, who weaves the evolving web of life, drawing us toward ever-greater justice, love, and peace with Creation.

Amen.

May the grace and peace of our creating God, who places us in the midst of the vast and expanding Universe on this beautiful and fragile planet, be with you!

Penitential Rite

Penitential Rite Suggestion (*The Roman Missal gives various optional formulations for the penitential rite. It also allows for other invocations intended to help shape the community's repentance in accord with the scriptural message of the day. The Penitential Rite suggestions offered in this Season of Creation Catholic Liturgical Guide, therefore, can be used in official Catholic liturgies or adapted to fit the needs and contexts of the local community.*)

As we begin our liturgy today, let's contemplate how we are being held here in the presence and love of the great Mystery that is God, the One whose life, to us, is immeasurable, extending beyond and embracing the nearly 13 billion 800 million years that the Universe, as we know it,

has been evolving in unimaginable complexity and beauty through God's creative work.

With a sense of awe before God and a consciousness of the great suffering and injustice threatening Earth and all who dwell here, let's enter into the quiet of our spirits, praying to hear clearly the wise guidance of God for us in Creation and to accept with courage the challenge and costs of discipleship with Christ....

[silent pause]

Loving Creator God, Mystery beyond our understanding, you have brought us forth in the midst of Earth's vast and wonderful web of life to receive it gratefully, learn from it, care for it wisely, and share it with all who live on it and in it – and so often we fail.

Loving Creator God, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you invite us to discipleship in our times. You demand that we be serious about its costs and courageous in accepting them.

Christ Jesus, have mercy.

Holy Spirit of God, we struggle to listen to your wisdom in and through all that is. We need you to guide us in listening to Creation and in caring wisely and with love for it.

Holy Spirit of God, have mercy.

May our Loving God, Creator of all time and space, have mercy on us, free us from our sins, and guide us into the fullness of divine Life.

Amen.

Gloria: Becoming conscious for a moment of the vast, beautiful, and awe-inspiring Universe of galaxies beyond imagining... and of the great,

complex web of life in which we are but a small strand, ... let's sing out our praise and gratitude to God.

Opening Prayer

God of all ages, you call us to keep watch in the world and to discern the signs of our times.

Grant us the wisdom which your Spirit offers, that with courage we may proclaim your prophetic word in this Season of Creation and carry forward the urgent work you have set before us.

We make our prayer through Jesus, the Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever.

Amen.

Points for Reflection on the Scriptures

Today's reading from the Book of Wisdom stresses how difficult it is for human beings to really understand Earth and the Creation of which we are a part. It is a warning to be humble before the complex and beautiful webs and networks of Creation. It is a warning too often unheard or ignored.

Pope Francis frequently warned against the technocratic mentality that approaches Creation as simply resources to be used to meet human needs and desires. Without humility before nature, people have too often been inadequately aware of or sensitive to the complex interconnections that make up the web of life. Serious unforeseen and unintended

consequences, like the warming of the planet and subsequent destructive climate change, are the result of inadequate humility before nature.

As Pope Francis pointed out in his important encyclical, ***Laudato Si***, what the world today considers “development” and “progress” is based on the production and accumulation of wealth and material goods in ways that have often not reflected humility before Creation or wisdom in its use. They have not shown understanding of or respect for the limits of Earth, leading to the overproduction that we see reflected in the dangerous realities of Earth Overshoot Day and in such troubling global economic inequality.

The mindset needed to serve the mission of caring well for the web of life will grow out of a contemplative spirituality that is rooted in humble openness and curiosity about individual creatures, one that sparks amazement, grows in consciousness of the parts of the web of reality within which those creatures thrive and upon which they depend, celebrates the mystery of it all, and matures into love and gratitude for Creation.

What in nature stirs humility and awe in me? A beautiful sunset? A powerful storm? A bird in song? The effortless circling high above of a hawk or the amazing sharpness of its hawk-eye vision? Two geese caring for and raising their brood of young? The inner life and the social life of trees?

What in nature delights me, makes me want to talk about it, gives me a sense of mystery, evokes my love?

Paul's letter to Philemon about his former slave, Onesimus, urges Philemon to welcome Onesimus back “no longer as a slave, but more than a slave, a brother” in the faith.

The healing and proper care of Creation, our common home, calls for overcoming the colonial attitudes that enslaved indigenous peoples, ignoring their wisdom garnered over thousands of years about the web of life we are part of. It also calls us to look in new ways on animals, plants, and other living creatures, to respect their own consciousness, relationships, learnings, communities, and more. Scientific studies are increasingly revealing that these other-than-human incarnations of life have much to teach us about caring for the amazing gifts of God's Creation.

Grappling with these issues in recent years, the Church has realized that it must convert from its colonial attitudes of superiority by seeking encounter and respectful dialogue with the indigenous peoples around the planet as brothers and sisters in faith to form integral communities with perspectives of global solidarity. And Pope Francis urged everyone to realize that other-than-human Creation is so much more than simply a pool of resources available to meet human needs and desires.

Are there ways that we can participate in that kind of cross-cultural dialogue? Do we believe there is important wisdom to be received from peoples with traditions and ways of relating to Creation long presumed to be backward or primitive by the dominant technocratic culture? How might we do that?

How must we change our beliefs about what authentic human progress and development mean and how to achieve them now that we are beginning to recognize how destructive our technocratic consumer societies truly are for Earth and all who dwell here?

How can we contribute to bringing about more just and universal ways of thinking about, valuing, and working for authentic human progress and development? What changes will they demand in me/us?

In the gospel, Jesus demands to be first in the affections and commitments of his disciples. He requires careful calculation of the costs of discipleship and willingness to pay them, even to the point of renouncing or losing all our possessions.

In this Season of Creation, we are being challenged to reflect on what the cost of true discipleship is in the complex ecological, social, economic, and cultural crisis facing the Earth community today. In his vitally important encyclical letter in 2015, ***Laudato Si***, Pope Francis spoke of a unique, multifaceted conversion to which we are being called that

must transform our ways of living. He calls it an “integral ecological conversion.” It is characterized by:

A global vision that takes in the needs and dynamics of the whole web of life, the entire planet – in this era that is more focused on “selfies,” self-promotion, and self-interest.

Global solidarity – in a time of nativism and nationalism, fear, distrust and hatred of the stranger, a time of widespread resentment against globalization.

Working for more adequate understanding of all the links and destructive dynamics within the complex web of life that need to be addressed if the human community is to reverse climate change and overproduction and learn to care wisely and sustainably for Creation.

Renouncing consumerism, accumulation of goods and wealth; embracing simple lifestyles that prioritize and support human dignity and just relationships for all – and to do these in the face of a destructive global economy that prioritizes and requires ever-greater material growth and accumulation by the very way it is structured.

Working to overcome the widespread inequality in the human community where the wealthiest 1% of its 8.23 billion people control 45%-48% of global wealth and have more wealth than 95% of the people of Earth, where about 8.5% [nearly 700 million people] live in absolute poverty [set at less than \$2.15 a day], and where 1 person out of every 11 goes to bed hungry.

For Pope Francis, then, Christ’s challenging, prophetic call to discipleship in today’s world demands that we seriously rethink our assumptions about progress and development, re-envision the future we hope and work for, and transform the way we live accordingly.

What are the most important costs of discipleship to Christ for me, for us at this time? What are the most challenging costs?

What elements of an integral ecological conversion do I, do we feel drawn to and able to embrace and live right now?

What steps might we take to prepare ourselves to embrace this discipleship more fully?

Faith Reflections

Are you among those who believe in God who creates all things and renews all things? who loves the web of life in which we live and all Creation of which it is a part?

Are you among those who believe in God who has created Earth as a temple, who dwells in it, and who has given it as a sacred home for us to share with all members of the Earth family?

Are you among those who believe in Jesus, God become flesh and blood, a human part of Earth, who lived and breathed and spoke among us, who listened to the wisdom of the birds of the sky and wildflowers, urging us to trust in God’s care?

Are you among those who believe in Jesus, who invites us into his Way, into the mission of the New Creation, and who challenges us to embrace the serious costs of this discipleship?

Are you among those who believe in Jesus, who gave himself in love to all those in need, and through the strength of his faith showed the power of love over oppression, rejection, judgment, suffering, and death itself to open before us the fullness of life?

Are you among those who believe in Jesus, the risen Christ, who is at the core of Creation reconciling all things to God, renewing all Creation, and filling the Universe?

Are you among those who believe in the Holy Spirit who renews life in Creation, who hears the voices of all creatures when they are suffering and when they are thriving, and who waits, working with us, for the rebirth of Creation?

This is our faith. Through it we see God’s revelation emerging in new ways among us. Through it we embrace the promise that our deepest spiritual longings will come to fulfillment through the Holy Spirit in the ages to come. **Amen.**

General Intercessions

That we may grow in awareness of the vastness and beauty of God’s Creation and be moved to deep gratitude, we pray...

That we may grow in prayerful awe of our Creator, revealed in the beauty and power of Creation around us, we pray...

For the wisdom and courage to embrace the challenging discipleship that Christ is calling us to in these times, we pray...

That we may deepen our gratitude for nature's rich web of life within which we live, that we may learn to listen to its wisdom and learn, and that we may grow in openness to wiser and more just ways of caring for it and sharing it, we pray...

Prayer over the Gifts

God, our Loving Creator, through your love you have given us these gifts to share. Accept our offerings as an expression of our deep gratitude and our concern for all in need, including all of our companion creatures on planet Earth. We ask this in the name of Christ, Jesus. **Amen.**

Prayer after Communion

Our Loving God, we have shared this Eucharist in thanksgiving for your beautiful, sacred Creation in which we live and for your invitation to discipleship in caring for it.

Now may the power of Christ's body and blood reach deep into our hearts, our minds, and our bodies to heal our wounds. May we, in and through Christ, bring healing to all of Earth's communities. We make our prayer in the name of Jesus and in the power of your Holy Spirit where we live and move and have our being now and forever. **Amen.**

Final Blessing

We believe that all creatures come forth from the all-powerful hand of the Creator, evolving through time and space, filled with God's presence and tender love.

May God awaken our praise and thankfulness for every creature and unite us with them in love. **Amen.**

Through Christ all things were made. Formed in the womb of Mary our Mother, Christ Jesus became part of this Earth, gazing upon this world with human eyes.

May Christ bless us with eyes to see him alive in every creature in his risen glory. **Amen.**

The Holy Spirit guides this world toward the Creator's love and accompanies Creation as it groans in travail.

May this Holy Spirit dwell in our hearts and inspire us to do what is good, to care wisely and with love for Earth, our common home. **Amen.**

And may our God, wondrous community of infinite love, bless us all with justice, peace, love and beauty, God who is Creator, Word and Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen.**

Based upon "A Christian Prayer in Union with Creation" by Pope Francis from **Laudato Si'.**



"... a contemplative spirituality, one that is rooted in humble openness and curiosity about individual creatures, one that sparks amazement, grows in consciousness of the parts of the web of reality within which those creatures thrive and upon which they depend, one that celebrates the mystery of it all, and matures into love and gratitude for Creation."

First Sunday – Musical Selections

September 7, 2025 | 23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Hymns

E - Entrance | O - Offertory | C - Communion | D - Dismissal

- E, D God, Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens
Catherine Cameron, ©1967 Hope Pub. Co.
- E, D Who Can Measure Heaven and Earth
Christopher Idle, ©1982 Hope Publishing Co.
- E Morning Has Broken ©1931 Eleanor Farjeon
- E This Day God Gives Me
Ascribed to St. Patrick, adapt. ©1969 James Quinn
- O We Give You But Your Own William W. How
- O, D O God, Our Help in Ages Past Isaac Watts
- O Seek the Lord Roc O'Connor
©1975, 1996 Robert F. O'Connor, SJ, and OCP.
- O, C Unless a Grain of Wheat
Bob Hurd, ©1984, Bob Hurd, Published by OCP
- O, D Touch the Earth Lightly
Shirley Erena Murray, ©1992 Hope Publishing Company
- C Shepherd Me, O God
Marty Haugen, ©1986, 1987 GIA Publications, Inc.
- C Gift of Finest Wheat
Omer Westendorf, ©1977 Archdiocese of Phila.,
International Liturgy Pub.
- D God, You Spin the Whirling Planets
©1980 Jane Parker Huber (admin. Westminster John Knox Press)

Psalm Settings

(Common Psalms 19 and 95 could also be considered)

Psalm 90: In Every Age

Owen Alstott, ©1970, 1990, OCP

Psalm 90: In Every Age

Stephen R. Janco, ©1997, WLP

Psalm 90: In Every Age

The Collegeville Composers Group, ©2006, Liturgical Press

Psalm 90: In Every Age

©2017 Iván Díaz, published by OCP

Psalm 90: In Every Age

Stephen Pishner, ©2013, 2014, 2015 by GIA
Publications, Inc.

Psalm 90: In Every Age

Michel Guimont, ©1994, 1998, by GIA
Publications, Inc.

Psalm 90: In Every Age

©1996 Timothy R. Smith, published by OCP

OCP - Oregon Catholic Press, WLP—World Library Publications

Note: WLP copyrights are now owned by GIA.



Second Sunday of the Season of Creation

September 14, 2025 | The Exaltation of the Holy Cross

SCRIPTURES

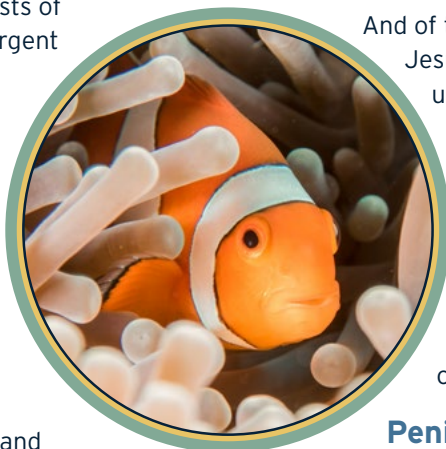
Numbers 21:4b-9
Ps. 78:1b-2, 34-38
Phil. 2:6-11
John 3:13-17

Introductory Comments

The 1st Sunday of this Season of Creation called us to humility before the vast and intricate web of Creation and laid out before us some of the costs of discipleship to Christ in this time of urgent global crisis.

The complex, integral ecological crisis confronting us in these times bears witness to humanity's lack of humility in relating to the rest of Creation, our attitude of domination toward nature and the lack of attention to the challenging dimensions of discipleship to Christ. The punishing natural consequences of those failures - the more frequent and severe fires, floods, and many other impacts of the warming of the planet - threaten the future of life on Earth in all its dimensions.

Today's liturgy assures us of God's readiness to forgive us and to welcome our conversion while warning us of the punishing natural consequences of sinful values and actions so visible in the sufferings of the crucified Christ. In these times we need to see them as well in the crucifying suffering of Earth and of the poor.



Opening Sign of the Cross

In the name of our Creator God who gives birth to the entire Universe of Creation in love,

And of the Word of God, who came among us in Jesus to embody God's love and forgiveness for us all,

And of the Wisdom of God, who weaves the evolving web of life, revealing her wisdom through the many different voices of Creation. **Amen.**

May the grace and peace of our creating God who loves us, forgives us, and sends us on a challenging mission, be with you!

Penitential Rite

As we begin our liturgy today, aware of the presence and love of the great Mystery we call God.... in awe of the One whose life is immeasurable, extending beyond the 13.8 billion years the Universe has been evolving in unimaginable complexity and beauty through God's creative work...

Let's enter into the quiet of our spirits, asking for greater consciousness of the destructive threats to the web of life and the natural punishments they bring upon us... *[silent pause]*

Loving Creator God, for all the ways we participate consciously or unconsciously in the idolatry of wealth

and consumption, of destructive forms of so-called “progress” or “development...”

Loving Creator God, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you were lifted up on the cross to show us the brutal destructive impact of sins and draw us to conversion and hope...

Christ Jesus, have mercy.

Holy Spirit of God, the true Source of wisdom and understanding, you are raising up people in movements around the world to resist the idolatry of wealth and consumption and find ways to overcome waste, injustice, and destruction of the web of life.

Holy Spirit of God, have mercy.

May God, Creator of all time and space and the vast web of life in which we live, have mercy on us, free us from our sins, and guide us into the fullness of Life. **Amen.**

Gloria: Becoming conscious for a moment of the vast, beautiful, and awe-inspiring Universe of galaxies beyond imagining and of the great, complex web of life in which we are but a small strand, *[brief pause]* let's sing out our praise and gratitude to God.

Opening Prayer

Our Loving God, Jesus was lifted up on the cross for all to see the cruelty and brutality of his crucifixion, the effects of the sins of his people, and to experience his unwavering witness to your love and forgiveness for us all. Open our eyes to see the crucifying effects of our sins in the expanding ecological crisis of these times.

Transform our minds and hearts that we may be, with you, a healing presence to Earth and to all who make up its web of life.

We make our prayer through Jesus, our Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Points for Reflection on the Scriptures

The first reading from the Book of Numbers reveals God's ready willingness to forgive and to heal the Israelites by transforming an image of the cause of their suffering and death into the source of healing for them. All they had to do, having asked God for relief, was to look upon the bronze image of the saraph serpent “lifted up” on a pole and they were healed.

In today's gospel, Jesus tells Nicodemus that the Son of Man must be lifted up just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert “so that everyone who believes in him might have eternal life.” In the Gospel of John, the term “lifted up” has a double meaning. First it refers to Jesus being “lifted up” on the cross, lifted up in the cruel and shameful death resulting from the sinful actions and ways of his people.

But it also refers to Jesus being “lifted up” in the glory of his resurrection and ascension to God. That “lifting up,” he promises Nicodemus and us, will be given to everyone who believes in him.

The passage closes with a clear statement meant to relieve any fears or anxiety we might have because of our sins: “For God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him.”

In the passage from Paul's Letter to the Philippians, we can see the way Jesus lived his mission which led God to “lift him up” in glory after suffering the crucifying consequences of the sins of his times and his people. His way was kenosis, emptying service. He emptied himself, humbly serving, even to death on the cross.

Belief in Christ means embracing that life of self-emptying service for the forgiveness and healing of the sins of our time and our people. In the context of the complex and urgent integral ecological crisis punishing Earth and all life on it, this mission of faith confronts us with many specific challenges.

For example, since the industrial revolution launched the intensive use of fossil fuels for energy, humans have squandered clean air and water and warmed the planet, unleashing ever



more devastating storms, fires, floods, heat waves, droughts, famines, rising sea levels and more.... And scientists warn of tipping points looming in the near future that could threaten life as we know it on the planet for centuries or millennia.

Those who support the dominant visions of “progress” and “development” claim that the path to achieving them is greater economic growth. People around the world are promised by politicians that economic growth will be a major priority for them and that they know how to achieve it for their people. The dominant global economy is built on the demand for ever increasing production and consumption and produces great suffering when recession or depression belies the unquestioned political promise of endless economic growth.

That promise of constant economic growth is a destructive short-term illusion. Earth Overshoot calculations measure each year how quickly the human family uses up the resources that it will take Earth a full year to replenish. This year Earth Overshoot Day was July 24th. That means that this year the human community has used in a little less than 7 months - barely more than half a year - what it will take Earth a full year to replenish. Earth cannot restore the resources as fast as the human community is using them up. Reserves from earlier centuries are being exhausted. This is a death spiral for Earth. When rivers run dry, soils are depleted,

and more and more lands succumb to wildfires, rising global temperatures, and floods, life suffers and dies.

How can we listen more attentively and effectively to the messages of the rivers, the heat waves, the diminishment of fish, animal, and insect populations, and the many, many other signs of a declining planet? To the messages of indigenous people and of scientists? How can we open ourselves with self-emptying service to the Cry of the Earth?

The pursuit of UNLIMITED production, consumption, and economic growth on a LIMITED planet is an illusion whose destructive consequences will only continue to increase and worsen.

How does this affect our ways of thinking about our own futures? Our hopes and goals for life? What does self-emptying service in the spirit of Christ mean for us in this context?

How can we begin to question the calls for more economic growth on our limited planet that is already suffering from destructive patterns of overproduction and unjust distribution of resources and wealth?

It is easy to participate in and support the dominant culture of consumerism and waste, money and power that Catholic Social Tradition condemns without being aware of it.

For example, the few major rainforests of the planet are among the largest producers of the air we breathe, the weather that determines the contexts of our lives, and medications essential to our healthcare. They are home to the richest biodiversity on the planet. But there is clear evidence now of destruction of vast areas of the rainforests in Indonesia and the Amazon for the expansion of palm oil plantations.

Palm oil is thought to be in about 50% of packaged products in supermarkets today: all sorts of foods, soft drinks, bread, cosmetics, chocolate. The list is too long to quote. Demand for palm oil is expected to double by 2030 and triple by 2050.

That demand is driven by global demand for a vast array of consumer goods that are unexamined parts of everyday life for billions of people around the planet.

Do I know how I am part of this picture? Do we? Do we know what consumer goods we buy and enjoy that contain palm oil? Do we know if that palm oil is sustainably farmed [this can be done]? Or if its suppliers are among those destroying rainforests, the source of the very air we breathe, to enrich themselves while endangering the survival of the web of life?

Do we know the groups that are working to end this threat to the web of life and how we might support and join this work?

Palm oil is only one of the ingredients responsible for rainforest destruction present in well-known and common products. By the 2000's, more than three-quarters of forest clearing in the Amazon was for cattle ranching linked to global hamburger chains.

We can ask ourselves the same or similar questions about everything that we consume and about the packaging in which it comes.

How can I/we accept the mission that comes with the invitation in Christ to become part of his healing and saving presence in our world today?

How can I/we become apostles of the integral ecological conversion that is at the heart of Christ's call to discipleship in today's world?

Can we take part in the demonstrations in our area? Can we protest governments' efforts to ignore or deny climate realities? Do we know what our government is prepared to do at the annual United Nations meetings being called to encourage and support global collaboration and cooperation to save Earth? Can we encourage their generous participation and strong commitment to fight climate change?

Can we find inspiration and new ideas from the efforts of others around the world described, for example, in the [Laudato Si' Action Platform](#)?

How can we join Christ in self-emptying service to help lift up for all peoples and all life on Earth hope of a world made new?

Faith Reflections

Are you among those who believe in God who creates all things and renews all things? Who loves the web of life in which we live and all Creation of which it is a part?

Are you among those who believe in God who dwells in us and among us with loving forgiveness, inviting us to the mission of healing and renewing Earth?

Are you among those who believe in Jesus, God become flesh and blood, a human part of Earth, who lived and breathed and spoke among us, who listened to the teachings of seeds and soils, learning how to bring forth much greater fruitfulness from the sowing of God's Word?

Are you among those who believe in God who sent Jesus, not to condemn the world, but to show all peoples the Way of justice and love that can save us and lead us to the fullness of Life?

Are you among those who believe in Jesus, who gave himself in love to all those in need and was lifted up by God to show the power of love over oppression, rejection, judgment, suffering, and death itself?

Are you among those who believe in God's Holy Spirit who continues to lift up the poor in these times to open our eyes to the sin and injustice of our economic and social systems and cultures?

Are you among those who believe in the Holy Spirit who renews life in Creation, who hears the

voices of all creatures when they are suffering and when they are thriving, and who waits, working with us, for the rebirth of Creation?

This is our faith. Through it we see God's revelation emerging in new ways among us. Through it we embrace God's call to build a New Creation through our lives of loving, self-emptying service. **Amen.**

General Intercessions

That we may grow in awareness of the vastness and beauty of God's Creation and be moved to deep gratitude, we pray...

That God will open our minds and hearts to turn from the conscious and unconscious ways we are part of the devastating actions and systems that are driving the destruction of Earth and all for whom it is home, we pray...

That we may be open to God's mercy and forgiveness and embrace Christ's challenging mission for us to bring healing care to Creation, our common home, we pray...

That we may deepen our gratitude for nature's rich web of life within which we live, that we may learn to listen to its wisdom and learn, and that we may grow in openness to wiser and more just ways of caring for it and sharing it, we pray...

Prayer over the Gifts

Our loving God, we bring you these gifts of bread and wine, nourishing signs of your faithful care for our needs. Through these simple gifts, we offer our lives, our talents, our commitment to serve you through our loving service to each other and to your Creation.

Transform our gifts and our energies into your true Bread of Life for our world in these difficult and troubled times. We ask you this in the name of Jesus and in the power of your Holy Spirit where we live and move and have our being now and forever. **Amen.**

Prayer after Communion

Loving Creator God, we have shared this Eucharist in thanksgiving for your sacred Creation in which we abide and for the witness of self-emptying love and the promise of new Life that Jesus gave us.

May our sharing in Christ's body and blood heal our wounds. May we be transformed in and through Christ and bring healing to all of Earth's communities. We make our prayer in the name of Jesus and in the power of your Holy Spirit where we live and move and have our being now and forever. **Amen.**

Final Blessing

Through the resurrection of Christ, God has renewed us, and we have become witnesses to hope for all Creation. May God bless us with unshakable hope and great joy. **Amen.**

Christ Jesus has given us lasting freedom. May we live it in grateful service. **Amen.**

Christ has sent us God's Holy Spirit to teach and guide us in bringing forth the New Creation. May we work proudly with the Spirit for the healing of Creation. **Amen.**

May our Loving God bless us with fullness of Life, God who is Creator, Word, and Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen.**

"The pursuit of UNLIMITED production, consumption, and economic growth on a LIMITED planet is an idolatry whose destructive impacts will only continue to increase and worsen. That is the only UNLIMITED growth we can expect."



Second Sunday – Musical Selections

September 14, 2025 | Exaltation of the Holy Cross

Hymns

E - Entrance | O - Offertory | C - Communion | D - Dismissal

- E Sing to the Mountains
©1975 Robert J. Dufford, SJ, and OCP
- E, D Praise to You, O Christ, Our Savior
©1986 Bernadette Farrell, published by OCP
- E, O For the Beauty of the Earth
Folliet S. Pierpoint
- O Christ Has No Body Now But Yours
St. Teresa of Ávila/Stephen C. Warner, ©2003 WLP
- O When I Survey the Wondrous Cross
Isaac Watts
- O,C Alleluia No. 1
Donald Fishel ©1973, International Liturgy Publications
- C,D We Glory in the Cross of Christ
James J. Chepponis, ©2015 GIA Publications, Inc.
- C Take and Eat
James Quinn and Michael Joncas, ©1989 GIA
- C,D The Cross of Jesus
Francis Patrick O'Brien ©1996 GIA Publications, Inc.
- D Tend the Ground, ©2016 Curtis Stephan, published by OCP.

Psalm Settings

(Common Psalm 27 could also be considered)

Psalm 78: Do not forget the works of the Lord
Michel Guimont ©1998 GIA Publications

Psalm 78: Do not forget the works of the Lord
Owen Alstott, ©1977, 1990 OCP

Psalm 78: Do not forget the works of the Lord
©2001 John Schiavone, published by OCP

Psalm 78: Do not forget the works of the Lord
James M. Burns ©1975, 1984 WLP



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Third Sunday of the Season of Creation

September 21, 2025 | 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time

SCRIPTURES

Amos 8:4-7
Ps. 113:1-2, 4-8
1 Tim. 2:1-8
Luke 16:1-13 or
16:10-13

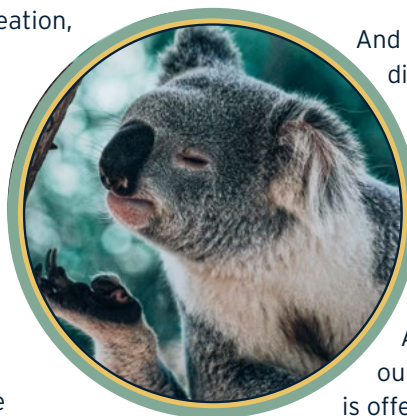
Introductory Comments

The liturgy today focuses attention first on the dishonesty and unscrupulous attitudes and practices of those caught up in the idolatry of wealth and consumption. They value their unjust financial pursuits more than their religious practices or beliefs.

In the context of the Season of Creation, these include the people today who will subordinate the sacred mission of care for Creation to “the economy” and the advance of their personal financial interests. It includes those who have no concern or scruples about what their economic activities are doing to the poor and to the whole web of life. And it certainly includes those who use their power and resources to spread false information and lies, to hide the truth about climate change and ecological crisis from people who will suffer most and those who could help bring about salvific change.

The prophet Amos and the psalmist warn that God will not forget their actions. God has special care for the poor and power to raise them up and “seat them with princes.”

In the gospel, Jesus reminds us through the parable of the unjust steward what is most important in life and what constitutes the true “good life.”



Opening Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Creator Spirit of God, who gives birth to the entire Universe of Creation in love,

And of the Word of God, who came among us in Jesus to reveal God’s vision of authentic human development and true success in life,

And of the Wisdom of God, speaking through the many different voices of Creation, calling us to work together for the renewal of Earth. **Amen.**

May the grace and peace of our God, who loves us, forgives us, and is calling us to a challenging mission in these times, be with you!

Penitential Rite

As we begin our liturgy, let’s enter into the quiet of our spirits, asking for openness to the conversion God is offering us, for commitment in our actions to what is truly most important in life in God’s sight.... *[silent pause]*

Creator Spirit of God, for all the ways we participate consciously or unconsciously in the idolatry of wealth and consumption, of destructive forms of so-called “progress” or “development,”

Creator Spirit of God, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you remind us of the wisdom of nurturing relationships in our search for security and the good life rather than putting our trust in accumulating wealth and power.

Word of God, have mercy.

Holy Spirit of God, true Source of wisdom and understanding, you are raising up people in movements around the world to resist the idolatry of wealth and consumption and to work together for the care and healing of our common home.

Wisdom of God, have mercy.

May God, Creator of all cosmic time and space and the vast web of life in which we live, have mercy on us, free us from our sins, and guide us into the fullness of divine Life. **Amen.**

Gloria: Grateful for our birth in the midst of this vast, beautiful, and awe-inspiring Universe, for God's patient forgiveness for our failures to care for Earth, our home, and for God's renewed invitation to work together to bring about the New Creation, let's sing our gratitude from our hearts to God.

Opening Prayer

Our loving God, you call us into your service. Draw forth our wisdom and resourcefulness. Make us children of the light who continue your work in this world with untiring concern for integrity and justice for all Earth's interdependent communities of life.

We ask this through Jesus, the Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Points for Reflection on the Scriptures

In today's first reading, Amos's description of the attitudes, dishonest business practices,

and abuse of the poor is classic. People in every generation can recognize it. Today one of its strategies even has a new name in some parts of the world. "Diminishing the ephah" is now called *shrinkflation*.

But in the context of the Season of Creation, Amos's description of the dishonesty and abuse of the poor must be expanded to include the arguments and political policies that give the growth of "the economy" priority over more urgent and wise care of Creation. The fact is that a healthy economy depends upon the health of the planet and the whole web of life. And it cannot be an approach to economy that values unlimited growth on a limited planet whose ability to replenish itself annually is already overwhelmed.

The scientific community globally is universally and unequivocally insistent in its ever more dire warnings: unless the rapidly expanding ecological crises of Earth are effectively addressed within the very near future, tipping points will be passed which will trigger irreversible changes, endangering the survival of life on the planet, including human life. The changing climate is already bringing new, more extensive and powerful patterns of drought, fire, and flood, more violent storms and global heat waves, famine and social unrest.

It is widely acknowledged that the poor suffer first and most in times of socio-ecological crisis and breakdown. In their poverty, they lack the needed resources for survival and recovery. Overproduction [Earth Overshoot data] and

vast inequality in the distribution of wealth and resources around the planet lock the poor into their poverty and steal the promise of a more just and sustainable future from them and from generations yet to come. These are social realities that will guarantee increasing migration and greater social unrest and conflict. For a while, the wealthy may be able to shield themselves and their lifestyles, but only for a while.

Last week we noted that the purchase of everyday items in nations around the world, for example, can provide economic incentives to destroy large areas of rainforests for agribusinesses such as palm oil plantations and cattle farms.

Have we found out yet whether, through our purchases, we contribute to the economic incentives for destruction of the rainforests, called the lungs of Earth, that make it possible for all living creatures to breathe?

Have we discovered ways to demand an end to unjust and destructive business practices? Ways to confront and challenge climate change denial and misinformation? Ways to promote just and sustainable business practices and to support the poor and indigenous peoples?

Amos affirms that God will not forget what is being done to the poor and the psalmist praises God who lifts up the poor.

It is important to note that the poor, including in a special way the indigenous peoples of Earth, are not simply victims in this situation. Pope Francis recognized that their worldviews

and wisdom, gathered over millennia, “have much to teach those of us who do not belong to their culture.” He called the Church around the world to respectful dialogue with indigenous peoples on the interrelationships, the interconnectedness of all creatures. That dialogue is an important part of listening to the voices of Creation and being transformed. It is essential to learning how to make peace with Creation.

In the larger context, Pope Francis called all dimensions of the global Church – from families, parishes, dioceses, and religious communities to businesses, educational institutions, and healthcare – into multi-year commitments to concerted action for healing Earth through the [Laudato Sí Action Platform](#).

How might we take part in this global Catholic response to the Cry of the Earth and Cry of the Poor? How might our community take part in it and encourage others to join us?

In the gospel, the steward is praised for his prudence because he recognizes that his future will not be secured by gathering up his commissions (or more), his part of the rich man’s wealth. He uses the wealth to make friends who will welcome him and support him in the future.

Jesus taught – and Catholic social teaching has long emphasized – that the successful human life is not measured by the accumulation of wealth or power. The “good life” is the fruit of strong and loving relationships, bonds of friendship and justice, and commitment to community wellbeing.

“Mammon” means “what we trust in.” Jesus is uncompromising: we cannot put our trust in both God and money. The severe socio-ecological crisis in these times makes very clear how pursuing and valuing a practical idolatry of wealth above all else threatens and destroys God’s gifts in Creation. It betrays our sacred mission to care for Creation and share it in gratitude and love.

Are we choosing? Or are we hoping to hang onto both God and Mammon? How do we experience the conflicts involved in trying to serve both God and money?

True “progress” and authentic human “development,” as understood in Pope Francis’s teaching on integral ecology, are characterized by rich and growing personal, social, and ecological relationships, reciprocity, and harmony. This understanding of authentic human development is a vision of the New Creation inviting us to change. It is inviting us to a holistic conversion that includes cultural changes in how we value life on Earth as well as structural changes in social habits, laws, and corresponding economic programs. Our teaching and preaching must contribute to this.

Are we currently living this gospel vision of the “good life?” Is our community? What next steps in integral conversion are possible for us?

Although Jesus insists that we must choose sides between God and Mammon, **Paul reminds Timothy** to pray for everyone because God wills everyone to be saved and come to know the Truth.

Do we pray for those we believe to be

driven by greed and/or who disregard their destructive impacts on the web of life? Do we believe that our prayer for them is important? Can we look upon them with love as God does?

How might we help them come to know the truth about successful living and care of Creation?

Do we pray for our leaders to embrace and serve this view of true human development?

Faith Reflections

Are you among those who believe in God who creates all things, is present in all things, who loves the web of life in which we live and all Creation of which it is a part?

Are you among those who believe in Jesus, God become flesh and blood, a human part of Earth, who lived and breathed and spoke among us, and who guides us gently into true Ways of life?

Are you among those who believe in Jesus, who teaches us what true wealth is, who challenges us to trust in and serve God, not Mammon, and to embrace the serious costs of discipleship?

Are you among those who believe in Jesus, who gave himself in love to all those in need and through his courageous faith showed the power of love over oppression, rejection, suffering, and even death itself to open before us the fullness of life?

Are you among those who believe in the Holy Spirit who renews life in Creation, groans in empathy within a suffering Creation, and is working with us, through us, and among us for the rebirth of Creation?

This is our faith. Through it we see God's revelation emerging in new ways among us. Through it we embrace the promise that our deepest spiritual longings will come to fulfillment through the Holy Spirit in the ages to come.

Amen.

General Intercessions

That we may grow in our understanding of and love for the "good life" to which Christ calls us, a life of commitment to grateful, loving, and just relationships with God, each other, and all Creation, we pray...

For the Church, that we might preach the gospel values in the world through the lives of love and service that we lead, we pray ...

For all who have wealth and power, that we might hear the cries of the poor and of Earth and seek whatever benefits the common good of all, we pray ...

Prayer over the Gifts

Our loving God, we bring to you these gifts of bread and wine, nourishing signs of your faithful

care for our needs. Through these simple gifts, we offer our lives, our talents, our commitment to serve you through our loving service to each other and to your Creation.



Guide us into the ways of authentic growth and development in your Spirit. Transform our gifts and our energies into your true Bread of Life for our world in these difficult and troubled times. We ask you this in the name of Jesus and in the power of your Holy Spirit where we live now and forever. **Amen.**

Prayer after Communion

Loving Creator God, we have shared this Eucharist in thanksgiving for this sacred Creation that has brought us into being and in which we live, grateful for your invitation to discipleship in caring for it.

May the power of Christ's body and blood, which we have received, reach deep into our hearts, our minds, and our bodies to heal our wounds. May we be transformed in and through Christ and bring healing to all of Earth's communities. We make our prayer in the name of Jesus and in the power of your Holy Spirit in whom we live and move and have our being now and forever. **Amen.**

Final Blessing

Our Creator God is the ultimate source of everything, the loving foundation of all that exists. May God bless us with deep gratitude for our relationships with all creatures in the vast web of life. **Amen.**

Christ, the Word through whom all things were created, took flesh through Mary, becoming part of the vast web of life on Earth. May Christ help us to be good news to the poor, to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this Earth. **Amen.**

The Holy Spirit, infinite bond of love, is intimately present at the very heart of the Universe, inspiring and opening new pathways. May this Holy Spirit bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it, that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction. **Amen.**

And may God bless us with a spirit of global solidarity flowing from the Mystery of the Trinity, God who is Creator, Word and Holy Spirit now and forever. **Amen.**

Based upon *Laudato Si*, §§ 238-240, and "A Prayer for Our Earth" by Pope Francis.

Third Sunday – Musical Selections

September 21, 2025 | 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Hymns

E - Entrance | O - Offertory | C - Communion | D - Dismissal

- E Litany for the Earth
©2016 Barbara Bridge, published by OCP
- E, D Stewards of Earth
Omer Westendorf, ©1984 World Library Publications
- E, D God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending
Robert Edwards, ©1961, Renewal 1989 Hymn Society
- E,D The Earth Is the Lord's
Erik Routley, ©1978 Hope Publishing Co.
- O At the Table of the World
Brian Wren, ©1989 Hope Publishing Co.
- O For Every Child
Adam M. I. Tice, ©2011 GIA Publications, Inc.
- O The Thirsty Cry for Water, Lord
Herman Stuempfle, ©1997 GIA Publications, Inc
- C Pan de Vida
Bob Hurd and Pia Moriarty, ©1988 by Bob Hurd, pub. by OCP
- C Bread to Share
Marty Haugen, ©1995 GIA
- C Alleluia No. 1
Donald Fishel, ©1973 International Liturgy Publications

Psalm Settings

(Common Psalm 103 could also be considered)

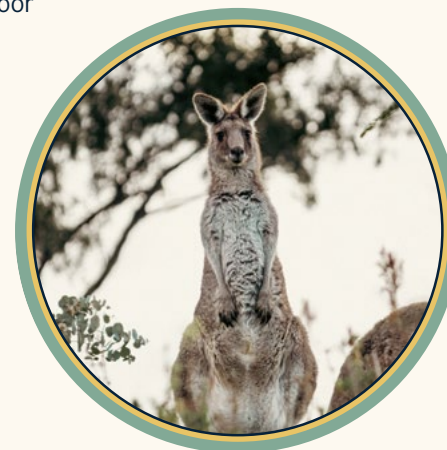
Psalm 113: Praise the Lord who lifts up the poor
©2017 Tom Booth Published by OCP

Psalm 113: Praise the Lord who lifts up the poor
Stephen R. Janco, ©1997, WLP

Psalm 113: Praise the Lord who lifts up the poor
©2001 John Schiavone, Published by OCP

Psalm 113: Praise the Lord who lifts up the poor
Michel Guimont, ©1994, 1998, GIA Pub. Inc.

Psalm 113: Praise the Lord who lifts up the poor
Owen Alstott, ©1977, 1990. Published OCP



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Fourth Sunday of the Season of Creation

September 28, 2025 | 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time

SCRIPTURES

Amos 6:1a, 4-7

Ps. 146:7-10

1 Tim. 1:12-17

Luke 16:19-31

Introductory Comments

As this year's Season of Creation draws to its end, the warnings from the scriptures grow stronger and more dire. They reflect and support again the sense of urgency about climate change that Popes Leo XIV and Francis, climate scientists, the young, and so many around the world have been declaring.

Amos focuses attention on those who remain indifferent to the suffering of their sisters and brothers and promises them punishment. The psalmist again insists that God loves and will lift up the poor.

Jesus tells the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, warning that the time can come when it will be too late for our conversion. We need instead to listen to Moses, the prophets of our time, and Jesus himself, the one who has indeed risen from the dead.

Paul urges Timothy and us to remain faithful, living and preaching our faith through all that lies ahead.



Opening Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Creator Spirit God who gives birth to the Universe in love,

And of the Word of God, who became human among us in Jesus to reveal our mission to care for each other and for all Creation,

And of the Wisdom of God, reaching out in the prophetic voices of Creation, calling us to renew Earth. **Amen.**

May the grace and peace of our God, who loves us, forgives us, and is calling us to transformation and prophetic action be with you!

Penitential Rite

As we begin, let's enter into the quiet of our spirits, asking to enter more fully into the ecological consciousness to which we are being urgently called for the healing and preservation of Earth, our home...
[silent pause]

Creator God, you have brought forth our lives on this small piece of your vast cosmic Creation, and you ask us to care for the web of life in which we live – but this intricate web is at severe risk in our hands.

Creator Spirit of God, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you remind us forcefully that God will embrace the Lazarus among us, and that the rich who ignore the poor and suffering of our world will be liable to judgment and grief.

Word of God, have mercy.

Holy Spirit of God, true Source of wisdom and understanding, you are raising up people in movements around the world to resist the idolatry of wealth and consumption, to care for each other, especially those most vulnerable and in need among us, and to work together for the care and healing of our common home.

Wisdom of God, have mercy.

May God, Creative Source of all cosmic time and space and the vast web of life in which we live, have mercy on us, free us from our sins, and guide us into the fullness of divine Life. **Amen.**

Gloria: Grateful for all the blessings of Creation that we enjoy and conscious of all those who reach out in compassion and love to care for us, let's sing out our gratitude from our hearts, giving glory to God.

Opening Prayer

Just and loving God, you hear the cry of the poor, the cry of Earth, and our cry.

Save us all. Let your word to us through the prophets rouse us to the demands of the gospel and guide us in living them wisely, courageously, and generously.

We ask this through Jesus, our Christ, your son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Points for Reflection on the Scriptures

Today's readings carry a harsh warning to the complacent, those who go on living well, "not made ill by the collapse" of their sisters and brothers [Amos], ignoring or failing to see the suffering poor outside their doors [Luke].

The gospel parable illustrates Jesus's belief in God's special love for the poor and illustrates how God can extend that love through other-than-human parts of Creation. Note that the dogs were far more compassionate toward Lazarus than the rich man, trying to heal his sores.

In the parable, the rich man ignored Lazarus when he was alive and continues to do so after his death, relating to Abraham as his assumed peer, asking Abraham to send Lazarus as a servant to attend to his needs.

From Christ's perspective, Lazarus is Abraham's peer and companion; we never even learn the rich man's name. Popes Francis and Leo direct our attention to the poor, to migrants and refugees, to indigenous peoples. Too often they are looked down upon as backward or undeveloped, turned away as a threat to our comfort, wealth, and lifestyles. Many simply ignore them, as the people Amos challenges do, the people represented by the rich person in Jesus's parable.

For years, Pope Francis urged us to dialogue respectfully and openly with indigenous peoples because of their long traditions of listening to the teaching of the Creation around them,

because of the wisdom they received about how to live in harmony with the natural world. Those living in poverty too have important wisdom from their experience that we all need.

Are there people we ignore or don't see, whose suffering we do not feel compassion for, whom we do not recognize as sisters and brothers? Who are they?

How might we respond more compassionately to the millions of our sisters and brothers around the world suffering from climate change, ecological destruction, forced migration, and poverty?

How can we nourish a more inclusive global perspective in ourselves? In our communities?

The main part of the story Jesus tells in today's gospel plays out once it is too late to do anything to change the situation. This stirs in the rich man a sense of urgency for his family at home whom he loves.

In the context of the Season of Creation and the complex ecological and social crisis humanity is facing, there is still too little urgency for action. The latest warning from the scientific community indicates there are only a few years left for humanity to end the warming of the planet before it is pushed past tipping points that will escalate climate change and ecological destruction and make them impossible to stop or reverse. It is urgent that this be responded to with more meaningful global action immediately. Otherwise, it could take millennia for Earth to repair the

damage done, as it has before in the planetary history of traumatic changes and great mass extinctions.

One important region of Earth, the Amazon, provides a sobering lesson. The Amazon rainforest has been developing for 55 million years. It provides more than 20% of the oxygen on which Earth's life depends. It removes and sequesters countless tons of greenhouse gases that warm the planet, is home to one of the richest communities of biodiversity anywhere, and shapes the global climate.

However, at the current rate of human destruction of the Amazon rainforest for palm oil plantations, cattle ranches, and other corporate efforts to exploit consumer desires, it could be destroyed by the end of this century.

The evolutionary work of those 55 million years in all its richness and service to life on Earth is irreplaceable. It is urgent that this destruction be stopped. Immediately.

In another alarming example, the ice sheets on the planet are melting more and more rapidly each year now from the rising global average temperature. Scientists point out that there is enough water in just the ice sheet now covering Greenland to raise sea levels around Earth by as much as 23 feet if it all melts. The Danish Meteorological Institute reported that in July 2019 the melting from the Greenland ice sheet alone added 197 billion tons of water to the Atlantic Ocean.

Three years later, in July of 2022, a CNN report noted: "The amount of ice that melted in Greenland between July 15 and 17 alone – 6 billion tons of water per day – would be enough to fill 7.2 million Olympic-sized swimming pools, according to data from the US National Snow and Ice Data Center. Put another way, it was enough to cover the entire state of West Virginia, USA, with a foot of water." [CNN report, 7/23/2022]

And a May 20, 2025 article in *The Washington Post* indicated that the current levels of warming on Earth of 1.2 degrees above preindustrial levels seem to be enough to continue the rapid melting of the polar ice sheets that will displace coastal communities around Earth. The current emerging scientific judgment in a new report seems to be that even an average global temperature rise of 1 degree above preindustrial levels will inundate cities, towns and even whole states on the world's coasts and radically change human life on Earth as we know it.

What will it take to stir the strong global response that is so urgently needed?

Abraham told the rich man that his family had all the warning they needed in Moses and the prophets. Humanity today has all the warning it needs in the cries of the poor and of Earth, in the warnings of scientists and the suffering and movement of tens of millions of climate refugees.

How can we be part of the prophetic outcry?
How can we help create the sense of urgency that is needed over the next five to ten years?

Are there specific things that our communities can do to raise awareness of the urgency of the situation and respond to it?

In his letter to Timothy about how to live in a difficult, even hostile world, St. Paul urges him to "pursue righteousness, devotion, faith, love, patience, and gentleness." [1 Tim. 6:11]

In the context of the Season of Creation and the socio-ecological crisis facing life as we know it, Paul would join Pope Francis in translating the message of faithful discipleship into a call for integral ecological conversion.

That message would say, "You, People of God in today's world, pursue:

- A vision and global solidarity that takes in with love and compassion the needs and dynamics of the whole web of life,
- A more adequate understanding of the links and destructive dynamics within the complex networks of life that need to be addressed if the human community is to reverse climate change and overproduction and care wisely and sustainably for Creation,
- A rejection of consumerism and the compulsive accumulation of goods and wealth,
- An embrace of simple lifestyles that prioritize and support human dignity and just relationships for all,
- A transformation of the destructive global economy that prioritizes and requires ever-greater material growth and accumulation by the very way it is structured, and

- Ways to overcome the widespread inequality in the human community."

How can we take up this prophetic call?
What next steps might we take?

What elements of an integral ecological conversion do I/we feel drawn to and able to embrace and live right now? What elements can our community embrace and live right now?

What steps might we take to prepare ourselves to embrace this discipleship more fully?

Faith Reflections

Are you among those who believe in God, the source of all that is, who loves Creation, and who is calling us to respond urgently to the cry of Earth?

Are you among those who believe in Jesus, who teaches us what true wealth is, who invites us into his Ways of compassion and justice, and who challenges us to serve God, not wealth or power over others?

Are you among those who believe in Jesus, who gave himself in love to all those in need and, through his courageous faith, showed the power of love over oppression, rejection, judgment, suffering, and even death itself?

Are you among those who believe in the Holy Spirit who groans in empathy within a suffering Creation and is working with us and through us, raising up prophetic voices and movements, calling us to save and care for Creation as we know it and to nurture its rebirth?

This is our faith. Through it we see God's revelation emerging in new ways among us. Through it we embrace the promise that our deepest spiritual longings will come to fulfillment through the Holy Spirit in the ages to come. **Amen.**

General Intercessions

That we may become more aware of the great gift of Creation and grow in awe and gratitude to our Creator, we pray...

That we may be seized by the importance and urgency of the discipleship that Christ is calling us to in these times, we pray...

That we may grow in openness to wiser and more just ways of caring for Earth and sharing it with the whole of the web of life in which we live, we pray...

For Pope Leo, that he might continue to call us to conversion and open our eyes to the needs of those around us, we pray...

Prayer over the Gifts

Our loving God, we bring you these gifts of bread and wine, nourishing signs of your faithful care for our needs through the rich diversity and bounty of Earth. Through these gifts, we offer you our true wealth: our lives, our talents, our commitment to serve you through our loving service to each other and to your Creation. Transform our gifts and our energies into your true Bread of Life for our world in these difficult and troubled times.

We ask this in the name of Jesus and in the power of your Holy Spirit where we live now and forever. **Amen.**

Prayer after Communion

Our loving God, we have shared this Eucharist in thanksgiving for your sacred gift of Creation in which we live and move, share life and thrive. We thank you for your invitation to discipleship in caring for it.

Now may the power of Christ's body and blood reach deep into our hearts, our minds, and our bodies to heal our wounds. Help us to listen more attentively to the prophets from our traditions and to the voices from Creation all around us. Strengthen us to act with wisdom, compassion, urgency, and love to renew Earth.

We make our prayer in the name of Jesus and in the power of your Holy Spirit where we live and move and have our being now and forever. **Amen.**

Final Blessing

May the Spirit of God, who is beyond all and in all and through all, fill us with consciousness of God's presence in Earth and the vibrant life of Christ within us. **Amen.**

May almighty God bless us, Creator, Word, and Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen.**

Fourth Sunday – Musical Selections

September 28, 2025 | 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Hymns

E - Entrance | O - Offertory | C - Communion | D - Dismissal

- E All Are Welcome
Marty Haugen, ©1994 GIA Publications, Inc.
- E God, Our God of Distant Ages
Omer Westendorf ©1984, WLP
- E All Good Gifts
Matthias Claudius (We plow the fields and scatter)
- E,D A Place at the Table
Shirley Erena Murray, ©1998 Hope Publishing Co.
- O Light Dawns on a Weary World
Mary Louise Bringle, ©2002 GIA Publications, Inc.
- O,D Here I Am, Lord
Daniel L. Schutte, ©1981 OCP
- O When We Are Living /Pues Si Vivimos
Roberto Escamilla, ©1989 United Meth. Pub. House
- C Bread for the World
©1990, Bernadette Farrell. Published by OCP
- C Tend the Ground, ©2016 Curtis Stephan, published by OCP
- C Taste and See
James E. Moore, Jr., ©1983 GIA
- D Journey of Faith
Delores Dufner, © 2012 Sisters of St. Benedict, published by WLP
- D Lord, You Give the Great Commission
Jeffery Rowthorn, ©1978 Hope Publishing Co.

Psalms Settings

(Common Psalms 34, 63, or 95 could also be considered)

Psalm 146: Praise the Lord, my soul
Paul Tate, ©2013, 2014, 2015 by GIA Publications, Inc

Psalm 146: Praise the Lord, my soul
©2016 Sarah Hart, published by OCP

Psalm 146: Praise the Lord
©1994 Noel Ansell, published by OCP

Psalm 146: Praise the Lord
©2011 Bob Hurd, published by OCP

Psalm 146: Praise the Lord, my soul
Paul Lisicky, ©1988 WLP

Psalm 146: Praise the Lord, my soul
Michel Guimont, ©1994, 1998, GIA Pub. Inc



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Feast of St. Francis of Assisi

Saturday, October 4, 2025 | Final Day of Season of Creation

October 4th, the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, marks the formal closing of the 2025 Season of Creation. St. Francis's great love of God's Creation, commitment to peace, global popularity, and ecumenical and interfaith importance all combine to make him an important inspiration for the Season of Creation, one capable of keeping its focus and energy dynamic through the rest of the year.

As the 2025 Season of Creation comes to its formal close, people of faith around the world are invited to participate in an online prayer service. It will be prepared and led on October 4th by youth associated with the Season of Creation Ecumenical Committee. Once plans are complete, more information and directions for joining it will be available at SeasonofCreation.org.

In the spirit of his feast, we share here the famous Canticle of St. Francis celebrating the wonders of God's Creation.

Canticle of Brother Sun and Sister Moon of St. Francis of Assisi

Most High, all-powerful, all-good Lord,
All praise is Yours, all glory, all honor and all blessings.

To you alone, Most High, do they belong,
and no mortal lips are worthy to pronounce
Your Name.

Praised be You my Lord with all Your creatures,
especially Sir Brother Sun,
Who is the day through whom You give us light.
And he is beautiful and radiant with great
splendor,
Of You Most High, he bears the likeness.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Moon
and the stars,
In the heavens you have made them bright,
precious and fair.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Brothers Wind
and Air,
And fair and stormy, all weather's moods,
by which You cherish all that You have made.

Praised be You my Lord through Sister Water,
So useful, humble, precious and pure.
Praised be You my Lord through Brother Fire,
through whom You light the night
and he is beautiful and playful and robust
and strong.

Praised be You my Lord through our Sister,
Mother Earth
who sustains and governs us,
producing varied fruits with colored flowers
and herbs.

Praise be You my Lord through those who
grant pardon
for love of You and bear sickness and trial.
Blessed are those who endure in peace,
By You Most High, they will be crowned.

Praised be You, my Lord through Sister Death,
from whom no-one living can escape.
Woe to those who die in mortal sin!
Blessed are they She finds doing Your Will.
No second death can do them harm.



Feast of St. Francis – Musical Selections

Saturday, October 4, 2025 | Final Day of Season of Creation

Hymns

E - Entrance | O - Offertory | C - Communion | D - Dismissal

- E All Creatures of Our God and King
Francis of Assisi, tr. by William H. Draper
- E Canticle of the Sun
Marty Haugen, ©1980 GIA
- E Laudato Si! Be Praised
©2015 Ricky Manalo, CSP, published by OCP
- O The Peace of the Earth/La Paz de la Tierra
trad. Guatemalan, tr. by Christine Carson
©1998 Christine Carson and the Iona Community, GIA
Publications, Inc., agent
- O Prayer of Saint Francis
St. Francis of Assisi, adapt. Sebastian Temple, ©1967 OCP
- O Everything That Has Voice
Shirley Erena Murray, ©2003 Hope Publishing Co
- C Come to Me
Gregory Norbet, ©1994 The Benedictine Foundation of the
State of Vermont
- C Ubi Caritas
©1979 Les Presses de Taizé, GIA, agent
- C One Bread, One Body
© 1978 John B. Foley, SJ, pub. by OCP
- D Sing to the Mountains
©1975 Robert J. Dufford, SJ, and OCP

- D For the Healing of the Nations
Fred Kaan, ©1968 Hope Publishing Co
- D Now Join We to Praise the Creator
Fred Kaan, ©1968 Hope Publishing Company

Psalm Settings

(Common Psalm 139 could also be considered)

- Psalm 16: You are my inheritance
©2005, 2010 Barbara Bridge, published by OCP
- Psalm 16: You are my inheritance
©2016, 2017 Paul Hillebrand, published by OCP
- Psalm 16: You are my inheritance
Tony E. Alonso, ©2013 GIA Publications, Inc.
- Psalm 16: You are my inheritance
Owen Alstott, ©1977, 1990 OCP
Publications
- Psalm 16: You are my inheritance
James Scavone, ©2004 WLP



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Peace with Creation: A Closing Reflection

As we come to the end of this Season of Creation, it should be clear that all members of the full Earth community, no matter their species, are standing at a critical, urgent, dangerous crisis point. Advancing and ever more destructive climate change is revealing Earth to be sliding toward devastating ecological collapse.

A description like this is hard to imagine...
It seems alarmist, impossible...
It demands changes we don't want to think about or commit ourselves to.
But we must! We must imagine it!
We must imagine the healing changes!
We must commit!

Effective response to this situation cannot be a five-week focus on the issues annually that then turns to other issues and devotions. Even more dangerous are the individuals and governments that are denying the reality of the climate crisis, deliberately obscuring it, and promoting policies and actions that are contributing to greater devastation. Pope Francis, his successor Pope Leo XIV, the Vatican, and their collaborators are right in treating it as an "all-hands-on-deck" effort over many years committed to achieving full sustainability and a planet restored to health as a nurturing home for all its inhabitants.

A new vision of interconnected and interdependent "family relations" is beginning to emerge. It is inviting us to a new level of consciousness and honesty. And it demands a new level of global solidarity for Care of the Earth and all for whom it is home, if humans are to have a place in Earth's future evolution.

The [Laudato Sí Action Platform Goals](#) chart a clear and promising path forward. The [Laudato Sí Action Platform Partners](#) connect us to committed partners for the journey. Together they offer one promising Catholic response to the signs of these times.

But ours is far from the only faith community responding. Every major faith community is organizing and responding to meet the severe challenges. We need to stand together in new and creative ways with our interfaith and ecumenical sisters and brothers. The one God whose children we all are is calling us together to heal and renew the face of Earth.

With the blessing of the Hope that Jesus Christ inspires in us, a few additional questions may help us to imagine paths to greater global solidarity and to Peace with Creation opening before us.

Do our efforts to embrace Ecological Education and foster deeper Ecological

Spiritualities help families, organizations, institutions, and communities to understand, care for, and protect the interdependent ecologies of Earth in these times? Do they help all of us grow in contemplative awe and gratitude before the revelation of God in Creation all around us?

Do our efforts and work for sustainability enable families, institutions, organizations, and communities to hear the Cry of the Earth and the Cry of the Poor? Are we who participate in them exploring and undertaking sustainable lifestyles in response to those cries? Are we embracing alternative visions of the successful human life for everyone more in harmony with nature and Christ's gospel vision of the Kin-dom?

Do our efforts help families, organizations, institutions, and local communities become active in the larger civic and faith communities, engaging in ways that promote public policies for responding to the Cry of Earth and the Cry of the Poor? Are we working creatively in open dialogue to promote alternative cultural values to help all people live more sustainably and justly in peace?

Are we promoting and nurturing an Ecological Spirituality of global solidarity so that the community of Creation of Earth will become able to move effectively and urgently together for the healing and restoration of the planet as a nurturing ecology, a nurturing home for all its creatures?

Throughout the months and years, the hopes and actions that lie ahead,

May the Renewing Spirit of God bring to fulfillment the integral ecological conversion

beginning around the planet.

May God's Spirit of Wisdom provide us all the hope, wisdom, and courage we need to restore the household of God on Earth, making it once again a true Home for All.

May the prophetic Spirit of God bring about just and loving global solidarity in the human community so that together in that Spirit

We may give birth to a life-giving and profound Peace for all in the New Creation.

Amen.



APPENDIX I: A Personal Witness

Learning the Language of Creation | Amy Woolam Echeverria

I always appreciate the morning calls outside my window of my cohabitants the House Sparrow, Tufted Titmouse, Carolina Wren and Chickadee, Robin, Barred Owl, and the Mourning Dove. Their cheerful busy-ness rouses me with a spark of gratitude for the day unfolding. Waking up recently, I found myself listening in a unique way.

Usually, I imagine the birds communicating amongst themselves. I imagine them chattering about where to find food, danger on the horizon, or an appeal for help. However, on this morning I heard an invitation from them. Their invitation was for me to listen to them speak to me. So, I opened my heart and my imagination a bit wider and sat in stillness for their words to communicate. The longer I sat, the more clearly I could hear the birds speaking to me about beauty, about home, about being in relationship, and about gratitude for being heard.

This mystical moment of interspecies listening eventually made way for curiosity to rise in my mind about the birds. This curiosity began to move me from my inner encounter of beauty to an outer one - one that impelled me to investigate how birds communicate. For me, this movement from inner stillness to outer engagement has always been a measure of authentic encounter with Creator.

From my research, I learned that birds have two voice boxes, called syrinx. Birds are the only species with this unique anatomy. This allows the birds to sing with two voices at the same time from the same mouth. When I learned this, I remembered Pope Francis' message that the voice of the earth and the voices of her people are not separate but, like the bird, two notes sung simultaneously of the same song. In my desire to learn more, I further discovered that the earth was mostly without sound as we understand it until about 400-500 million years ago when amphibians emerged from the ocean to land. Imagine - a world without birdsong or any kind of song at all!

This scientific information leads me to ponder deeply how God communicates both in silence and sound. It teaches me about evolution

as an expression of conversion – both being slow turning wheels of God's love in action. It helps give me a perspective that is much longer and more vast than human inhabitation on earth. It illuminates how the other-than-human inhabitants of the earth might experience the state of the planet.

In my view, often we confuse environmental crises like biodiversity collapse and climate change as the cries of the earth. If we go deeper in our spirituality, education, and imagination, I believe that we can discover that in fact, the real cries are longing for love, respect, protection, and the ability to have life to the fullest. The crises are how we know that Creation is crying.

A spirituality of listening to Creation and learning its language moves us to a multidimensional, nonlinear way of being present and participant in living into our ecological vocation, which is to love and care for all life, human and other-than-human alike. Cultivating relationships with different species and ecosystems deepens our ecological vocation but allows us to experience that all things created by God have been endowed with intrinsic meaning and value by their very being. In other words, all of Creation has a vocation and it is in relationship that we can fully live into that web of life. [*Laudato Si'* 140, 240]

There are many types of languages we can learn. There is the language of the heart. There is the language of the soul. There are human languages. There is the language of art and music. All of these languages and more require two essential ingredients to learn: a listening ear and the openness to encounter. Learning the language of Creation is no different. When we take time for listening and encountering other species, immersed in our habitat, we can be amazed by what we hear.



APPENDIX II: Listening to Creation: A Select Bibliography

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"By your Holy Wisdom you made the Earth to bring forth a diversity of creatures who praise you in their being."



APPENDIX III: Music Reference List

For Everyone Born (A Place at the Table) Shirley Erena Murray, ©1998 Hope Publishing Co.

Abundant Life Ruth Duck, ©1992 GIA Publications, Inc.

All Are Welcome Marty Haugen, ©1994 GIA Publications, Inc.

All Creatures of Our God and King Francis of Assisi, tr. by William H. Draper

All Good Gifts Matthias Claudius (We plow the fields and scatter)

All Things Bright and Beautiful Cecil F. Alexander

Alleluia No. 1 Donald Fishel ©1973, International Liturgy Publications

Ang Katawan ni Kristo/Behold the Body of Christ ©2003, published by OCP

At the Table of the World Brian Wren, ©1989 Hope Publishing Co.

Bread for the World ©1990, Bernadette Farrell. Published by OCP.

Bread to Share Marty Haugen, ©1995 GIA

Be Not Afraid ©1975, 1978 Robert J. Dufford, published by OCP

Canticle of the Sun Marty Haugen, ©1980 GIA

Christ Has No Body Now But Yours St. Teresa of Ávila/Stephen C. Warner, ©2003 WLP

Come to Me Gregory Norbet, ©1994 The Benedictine Foundation of the State of Vermont

Creating God, Your Fingers Trace Jeffery Rowthorn, ©1979 Hymn Society of America

Day of Delight Delores Dufner, ©2010 GIA Publications, Inc.

Everything That Has Voice Shirley Erena Murray, ©2003 Hope Publishing Co.

Flow, River, Flow © 1986 Bob Hurd. Published by Oregon Catholic Press

For Every Child Adam M. I. Tice, ©2011 GIA Publications, Inc.

For the Beauty of the Earth Folliet S. Pierpoint

For the Fruits of This (All) Creation Fred Pratt Green, ©1970 Hope Publishing Co.

For the Healing of the Nations Fred Kaan, ©1968 Hope Publishing Co.

Forgive Our Sins, as We Forgive Rosamund E. Herklots, ©1969 Oxford University Press

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God Is Love Timothy Rees

God Is Still Speaking Marty Haugen, ©2009 GIA Publications, Inc.

God of the Fertile Fields Georgia Harkness, ©1955, Renewal 1953 Hymn Society.

God, Our God of Distant Ages Omer Westendorf ©1984, WLP

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God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending Robert

Edwards, ©1961, Renewal 1989 Hymn Society.

God, You Spin the Whirling Planets ©1980 Jane Parker Huber (admin. Westminster John Knox Press)

Healer of Our Every Ill Marty Haugen, ©1987 GIA Publications, Inc.

Here I Am, Lord Daniel L. Schutte, ©1981 OCP

How Can I Keep From Singing Robert Lowry

How Great Thou Art Stuart K. Hine, ©1949, 1953 The Stuart Hine Trust, admin. Hope Pub.Co.

I Believe This Is Jesus Alan J. Hommerding, ©2004 WLP

I (We) Sing the Mighty Power of God Isaac Watts

In the Breaking of the Bread, ©1984 Bob Hurd, published by OCP

Journey of Faith Delores Dufner, © 2012 Sisters of St. Benedict, published by WLP

Joyful, Joyful We Adore You Henry van Dyke

Laudato Si! Be Praised, O God ©2015 Ricky Manalo, CSP, published by OCP.

Let All Things Now Living Katherine K. Davis, ©1939, 1966 E. C. Schirmer Music Co.

Let Us Rise Marty Haugen, ©2015 GIA Publications, Inc.

Life-giving Bread, Saving Cup James Chepponis, ©1987 GIA

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Love One Another Feargal King, ©2000 WLP

Make of Our Hands a Throne Steven C. Warner,
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Many and Great Dakota hymn, para. Philip
Frazier

Morning Has Broken ©1931 Eleanor Farjeon

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©1968 Hope Publishing Company

Now In This Banquet Marty Haugen, ©1986 GIA
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Prayer of Saint Francis St. Francis of Assisi,
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©1960 WLP

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Idle, ©1982 Hope Publishing Co.

Your Word Went Forth Herman Stuempfle,
©1993 GIA Publications, Inc.

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Special Thanks to Organization Partners

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Missionary Society of St. Columban
[columbanmission.org](#)

Laudato Si Movement: [laudatosimovement.org](#)

Pax Christi International: [paxchristi.net](#)

Catholic Nonviolence Initiative: [paxchristi.net/cni](#)



SEASON OF CREATION 2025

Peace with Creation

A CATHOLIC LITURGICAL GUIDE

FOR INFORMATION ABOUT THE SEASON OF CREATION AND THIS LITURGICAL GUIDE PLEASE CONTACT:

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