

Season Of Creation
To hope and act with Creation
Week 1: September 1
Theme; Light

Leader: God, come to our assistance

All: O Lord, make haste to help us.

Introduction; Theme and symbol

The Theme for Creation this year is To hope and act with Creation. The Symbol is “The first fruits of hope” (Roman 8:19-25). With this theme we have decided to capitalize on Creation for several reasons and to emphasize that Creation is not an object that has been created for human use only, but rather a subject that we are called to relate to as the mystery of God’s continuing act of creation. We acknowledge the whole created order of the cosmos, showing our theological respect, reverence, accountability and interdependence with the natural world.

The Season of Creation is the time to pray and act on behalf of creation. It is the annual Christian celebration in which we respond together to the cry of creation. The ecumenical family around world is listening to and caring for our common home. The Celebration begins on 1 September the feast of Creation and ends 4 October the feast of saint Francis Assisi the patron saint of ecology, beloved by many Christian denominations.

This season of creation is a time to renew our relationship with our Creator and all Creation through celebration, conversion, and commitment together. God is calling us in different ways and in our diverse contexts. For the first week of season of creation we will reflect on light.

Opening Prayer

Prayer for Our Earth

All powerful God, you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of your creatures. You embrace with your tenderness all that exists. Pour out upon us the power of your love,

that we may protect life and beauty. Fills us with peace, that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one. O God of the poor, help us rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth, so precious in your eyes. Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it, that may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction. Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain at the expense of the poor and the earth. Teach us to discover the world of each thing, to be filled with awe and contemplation, to recognize that we are profoundly united with every creature as we journey towards your infinite light. We thank you for being with us each day. Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love and peace. Amen (*Pope Francis, Laudato Si, 2015*)

Psalm

Antiphon: O God, You are our light and salvation.

Psalm 43

Grant me justice, O God; defend me from a faithless people;
from the deceitful and unjust rescue me.

You, O God, are my strength.

Why then do You spurn me? Why must I go about mourning, with the enemy oppressing me?

Send Your light and Your fidelity, that they may be my guide.

Let them bring me to Your holy mountain, to the place of Your dwelling,

That I may come to the altar of God, to God, my joy, my delight.

Then I will praise You with the harp, O God, my God.

Why are You downcast, my soul? Why do You groan within me?

Wait for God, for I shall again praise him, my savior and my God.

Glory be to God our Creator, to Jesus our savior, and to the life-giving Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and shall be forever. Amen

Reading: 1 John 1: 5-7

Now this is the message that we have heard from him and proclaim to You: **God is light**, and in him there is no darkness at all. If we say, “We have fellowship with him,” while we continue to walk in darkness, we lie and do not act in truth. But if we walk in the **light** as he is in the **light**, then we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of his Son Jesus cleanses us from all sin.

Reflection:

Dear Sister, Saint Francis Assisi said, “The earth is our sister and mother, who sustains and governs us. However, the times we live in reveal that we do not relate to her as a sister or a mother. But rather as a resource at our service.” Creation is groaning (cf. Roman 8:22) because of our greed and our unsustainable action that harm her. Along with our Sister Mother Earth, human creatures and other creatures cry out because of the consequences of our destructive action causing the climate crisis, loss of biodiversity and human and earth suffering. And yet, Creation teaches us that hope is present in the waiting, in the expectation for a better future. Creation also teaches us that to wait and to hope does not mean standing still and quiet, but rather it means to groan, to cry, and to actively strive for new life in the

midst of the struggles. Together with creation, we are called to worship the Creator, working together for the future.

Our Founder Mother Clare, wrote that each sister should respect, love and follow the example of St. Francis. As sisters, we are called to live as St. Francis lived in his love and conversion towards the creator and all creation. Conversion is not real nor true if it does not have a direct impact on the care of our world. This impact is based on small actions that, multiplied by the constancy and conviction of many people, are capable of generating great changes. And these Excerpts from the Laudato Si' Movement Prayer Book suggest small actions, such as turning off unnecessary lights, are not very difficult to carry out. It is enough to start with one of them: then, the force of habit will make us acquire the practice. These actions will be carried out naturally and will increase in number, intensity and effectiveness.

Reflection; *What is one small, daily action each of us might undertake to better care for creation?*

Chantical of Creation

Ant; Blessed are you, O Lord, giver of all good things.

O Most High, all-powerful, good Lord God,
to you belong praise, glory, honor and all blessing.

Be praised, my Lord, for all your creation

and especially for our Brother Sun,

who brings us the day and the light;

he is strong and shines magnificently.

O Lord, we think of you when we look at him.

Be praised, my Lord, for Sister Moon, and for the stars

which you have set shining and lovely in the heavens.

Be praised, my Lord, for our Brothers Wind and Air and every kind of weather
by which you, Lord, uphold life in all your creatures.

Be praised, my Lord, for Sister Water,

who is very useful to us, and humble and precious and pure.

Be praised, my Lord, for Brother Fire, through whom you give us light in the darkness:
he is bright and lively and strong.

Be praised, my Lord, for Sister Earth, our Mother,

who nourishes us and sustains us,

bringing forth fruits and vegetables of many kinds
and flowers of many colors.

Be praised, my Lord,

for those who forgive for love of you;

and for those

who bear sickness and weakness

in peace and patience

- you will grant them a crown.

Be praised, my Lord, for our Sister Death, whom we must all face.

I praise and bless you, Lord, and I give thanks to you,

and I will serve you in all humility.

Glory be to God our Creator, to Jesus our savior, and to the life-giving Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and shall be forever. Amen

Intercession

We pray for your creation, the whole cosmos including our common home, and the intricate balance in every part of the ecosystems that sustains life on Earth. Creator God...

May we hope and act with Creation.

We pray that we all might be open to listen to the cry of the Earth and the cry of the Poor, especially for those people of the South who are facing the harsh reality of climate change. Creator God...

May we hope and act with creation.

God of the land, the sea, the sky: Creator of all that is seen and unseen. Open our hearts to the rhythm of Creation in the swells of the ocean, the movements of air and wind, the breath of all living things. Open our eyes to the fragile beauty of the biodiversity of which we are a part. Open our ears to the sounds of life around us. Open our minds to the awareness of our deep relationship with all your Creation. Creator God:

May we hope and act with Creation.

God of Light, Life and Love: Help us to seek and find your presence in all Creation. Help us to understand the roots of the ecological crisis and give us the wisdom to live resiliently in harmony with your Creation. Keep us firm in the faith that the gift of life in all its fullness is for all Creation. Help us to maintain hope that your reign of love is manifested in our common love for you, for ourselves, and for our neighbor - both human and non-human. Creator God:

May we hope and act with Creation.

God of truth and justice: Fill us with your spirit of compassion so we may live and act with and in solidarity with Creation. Guide us in paths of righteousness that help us to tread softly on the land and sail gently on the sea. Give us wisdom and courage to recognize our role in the evil of systemic exploitation and extraction and to speak truth to power. Give us strength of heart and arm to be agents of the ecological conversion the world so desperately needs. Creator God:

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Our Father:

Closing Prayer

Triune God, Creator of all, we praise you for your goodness, visible in all the diversity that you have created, making us a cosmic family living in a common home. Through the Earth you created, we experience love and nourishment, home and protection.

We confess that we do not relate to the Earth as a Mothering gift from you, our Creator. Our selfishness, greed, neglect, and abuse have caused the climate crisis, loss of biodiversity,

human suffering as well as the suffering of all our fellow creatures. We confess that we have failed to listen to the groans of the Earth, the groans of all creatures, and the groans of the Spirit of hope and justice that lives within us.

May your Creator Spirit help us in our weakness, so that we may know the redeeming power of Christ and the hope found in him. May the groans of the Spirit birth in us a willingness to serve you faithfully, so that we may hear and heal Creation, to hope and act together with her, so that the first fruits of hope may blossom. Loving and Creator God, we pray that you will make us sensitive to these groans and enable us to have the same compassion as that of Jesus, the redeeming Lord. Grant us a fresh vision of our relationship with Earth, and with one another, as creatures that are made in your image. In the name of the one who came to proclaim the good news to all Creation, Jesus Christ. Amen (*Season of Creation 2024 Prayer*)