

SEASON OF CREATION 2024

Hope & Act  
with Creation



**A CATHOLIC LITURGICAL GUIDE** | YEAR B – REVISED & UPDATED

## The Place to Begin...

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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 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.

Columban Fr. Vincent Busch, serving in the Philippines for about 50 years among the **Subanens** people, created the following Mandala and poem, trying to capture in a small way, in accessible images, symbols, and words from the new Universe Story, the overwhelming greatness of God and the Universe. We are grateful to Fr. Busch for permission to build upon his creative work.

These images will be reflected in the Introductory Comments and prayer suggestions for each of the Sundays of this year's Season of Creation in the materials that follow.

May they be a blessing upon our efforts to respond to the great Mystery we call God, Who cherishes us and the Universe of which we are a small part, and, in words attributed to the Creator Spirit by Fr. Busch, welcomes us

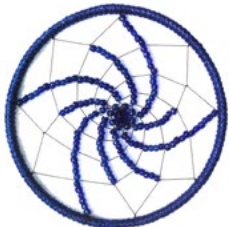
***"...to the celebration of Creation's transformation from my fire that grew to be a wondrous blue-green symphony."***

# The Creation Mandala



## The Birth of the Universe

In the beginning the Spirit said: "From my fire and its warmth  
Let all creation come flaring forth.  
Let matter and energy converse  
To weave the tale of the universe,  
And through the course of time and space  
I'll cherish all in my embrace."



## The Birth of the Galaxies

Then the Spirit said: "Let the fire begin to dance  
In cooling clouds of elements  
Where the tug of gravity  
Draws atoms into galaxies,  
And hugs the stars till they ignite  
To fill the darkness with their light."



## The Birth of the Solar System

Then the Spirit said: "Let stars blaze till  
they consume  
The nuclear fire in their wombs,  
And bursting forth as they collapse  
Sow the elements in their grasp,  
And from their dust let new stars grow  
With moons and planets in their tow."

## The Birth of Earth

Then the Spirit said: "Along with planets  
near and far  
Let Earth take shape around its star.  
While its crust solidifies,  
Let molten rock throb inside,  
Lifting the mountains, spreading the seas,  
Molding and folding its geography."



## The Birth of Life

Then the Spirit said: "Let heat and lightning  
stir the sea  
To animate its chemistry,  
And from that swirling pool of genes  
Let Earth give birth to living beings,  
Sprouting forth all kinds of things  
With roots and legs, fins and wings."



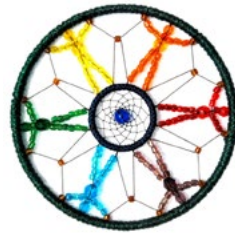
## The Birth of the Earth Community

Then the Spirit said: "From desert sand to  
mountain snow  
Let habitats emerge and grow,  
Where plants and beasts participate  
In nature's rugged give and take  
And every creature plays a role  
In keeping Earth alive and whole."



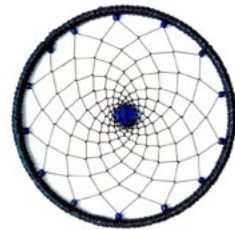
### The Birth of Humans

Then the Spirit said: "Let the fire of nature's chorus,  
Its raging storms and mighty forests,  
Its pounding seas and soaring peaks,  
Its blazing skies and teeming reefs,  
Burn human hearts with its splendor  
And forge their souls in awe and wonder."



### The Birth of the Ecological Age

Then the Spirit said: "Let life entwine the land  
and sea  
In the web of its community.  
Let its power move human hearts  
To mend the world they've torn apart,  
And sing with every leaf and stone  
This is our Earth. This is our home."

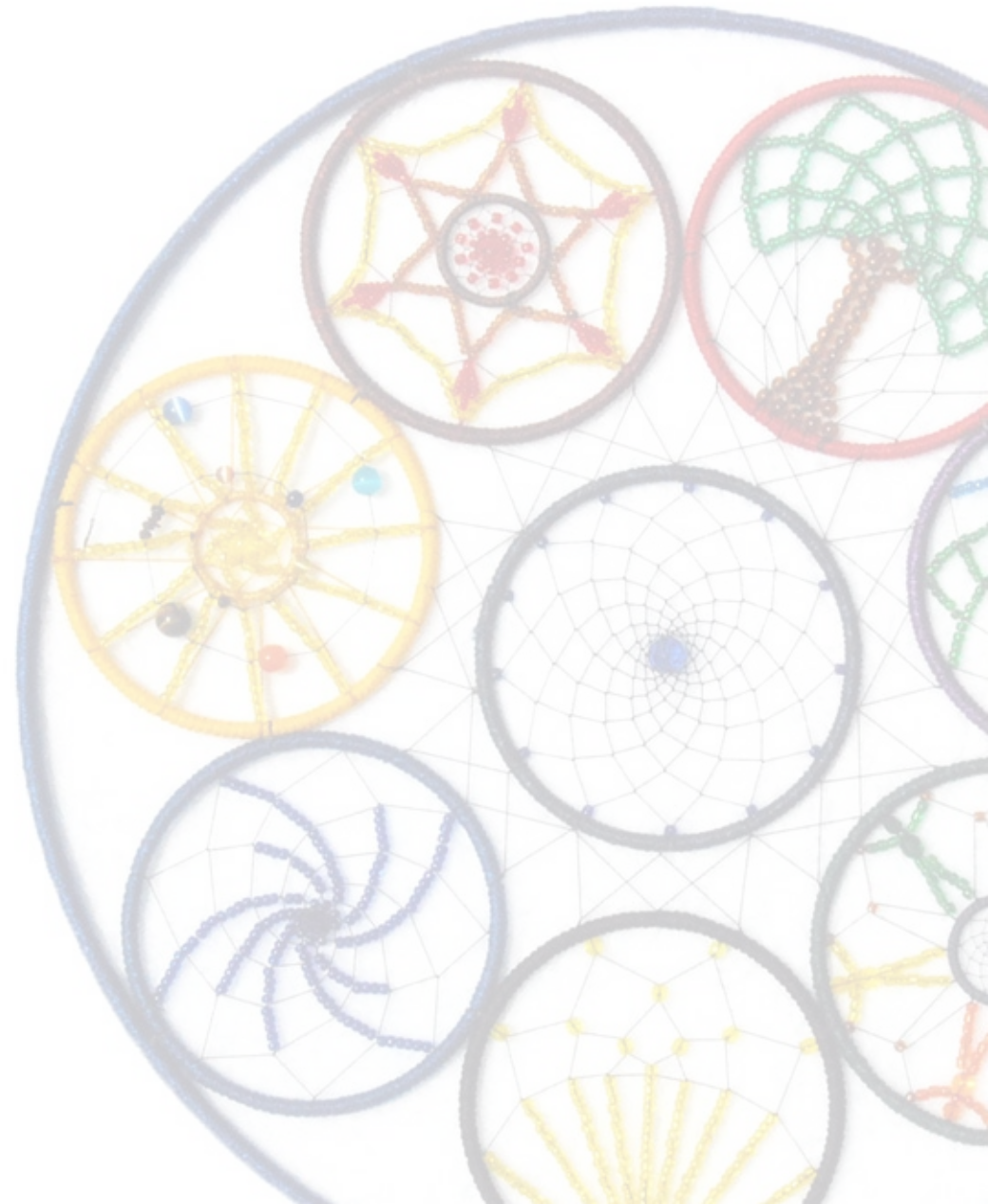


### The Birth of Your Story

Then the Spirit said: "The habitats that grace  
the Earth  
Were there to hold you at your birth  
And welcome you to the celebration  
Of creation's transformation  
From my fire that grew to be  
A wondrous blue-green symphony."



**The Creation Mandala poem and artwork by:**  
Fr. Vincent Busch, SSC, [subanencrafts.com](http://subanencrafts.com)



# Season of Creation 2024 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

# 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.

In its brief introduction to its [2024 Celebration Guide](#), the Season of Creation Ecumenical Steering Committee welcomed communities of faith around Earth to "this special season of ecumenical solidarity."

We rejoice in this opportunity to safeguard our common home and all beings who share it. This year, the theme for the season is **"To Hope and Act with Creation."** Amid the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution, many are beginning to despair and suffer from eco-anxiety. As people of faith, we are called to lift

the hope inspired by our faith, the hope of the resurrection. This is not a hope without action but one embodied in concrete actions of prayer and preaching, service and solidarity.

The 2024 theme was inspired by the text of St. Paul's letter to the Romans, 8:19-25, which acknowledges that Creation is groaning in pain. It identifies the pain as pain brought on by human selfishness and unsustainable ways of living on Earth. And it calls the whole family of Creation to work together actively in hope to bring about the reign of God's justice for which Creation waits with eager longing (Romans 8:19).

That mission is growing more and more urgent as the human community fails to respond adequately to the accelerating crisis of Creation in these times. What must we do to restore Earth, the "household of God," to its full purpose as nurturing and protective home for all its inhabitants, human and other-than-human? Can we do all that needs to be done before it is too late, before the damage to Earth is too great? What can we do in the face of discouragement, eco-anxiety, and even despair to work with Creation in ways that will draw upon the profound hope at the foundation of our faith?

## 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 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” has, 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 rising and islands disappearing, and human suffering and tragedy 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 it 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, 2024, Earth Overshoot Day occurred on August 1st. In 7 months, the human community has consumed what it will take Earth a year to replenish: resources such as water, food, clean air. For the next 5 months, 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. It 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 783 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”** is clearly asking the human community to take another important step toward conversion from the root causes that are creating the current dangerous crisis. It is calling 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.

## Season of Creation Important Dates

<b>1989</b> Ecumenical Patriarch Dimitrios establishes 1st Day of Prayer for Creation September 1st	<b>1991</b> Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew increases importance of the celebration	<b>2007</b> 5-week Season of Creation established by the World Council of Churches	<b>2015</b> Pope Francis issues <i>Laudato Si'</i>	<b>2015</b> Pope Francis designates September 1st as a World Day of Prayer for Creation for Catholics	<b>2016</b> Pope Francis urges Catholics to join the interreligious celebration of the Season of Creation
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## 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 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. The justice to which we are being called requires an end to climate change 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.

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 includes plans for a joint Christian advocacy initiative to support the **Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty**, beginning with a coordinated action around the planet on September 21st. This treaty offers “a concrete, binding plan to end the expansion of new coal, oil and gas projects and manage a global transition away from fossil fuels.” This Global Advocacy Action will be further explained in the materials for the First Sunday of this Season.

- Second, 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.

- Third, 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.
- Fourth, 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

## Season of Creation Important Dates Continued

2019	2020	2021	2023	2024
Vatican invites all pastors and Catholic communities to join ecumenical celebrations	<i>Laudato Si'</i> Week (May 16-24) and <i>Laudato Si'</i> Special Anniversary Year (2020-21) launched	<i>Laudato Si'</i> Action Platform launched	Pope Francis issues <i>Laudate Deum</i>	Global Advocacy Action on Fossil Fuels Non-Proliferation Treaty

**“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)

everything really is. These will feed a spirituality grounded in gratitude that is marked by growing global solidarity and freedom from consumerism and overconsumption.

- Fifth, 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 reduce its global consumption and waste, return to patterns of living compatible with Earth's 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, **To Hope and Act 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.” (L.S. 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 on 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.

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...

And 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.

This is the spirit, the emerging integral ecological spirituality, in which we are invited to approach the scriptures and liturgical prayers of the 2024 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 community on these critical issues, and to implement the faith vision, analysis and mission laid out in his 2015 encyclical, *Laudato Sí*.

In 2021, the Vatican launched the **Laudato Sí 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, 2024, this period includes the 22nd through 26th Sundays in Ordinary Time for Cycle B.

### **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.

The call to integral ecological conversion will be different for each of these communities and

individuals. Local liturgical/pastoral teams will need to be conscious of the characteristics and social location of their own specific communities as they work to discern God’s Word to 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 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, and they are diminishing as the human population “overshoots” 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.

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 human family 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"***

## The Materials

The five Sundays of the 2024 Season of Creation [22nd through 26th Sundays in Ordinary Time 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 22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time]** confront us with the truth that the severe and dangerous crises beginning to engulf us are coming from within us, from the selfishness, greed, and apathy deep in our hearts. We need to embrace this "word of truth" that is planted within us and come together to be "doers of the word," acting to change our destructive ways of living.

**The second Sunday's scriptures [the 23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time]** encourage us not to lose hope in the face of this complex crisis. God is faithful and is working to open the eyes of the blind and the ears of the deaf. God has chosen the poor who suffer most, and we need to listen especially to them. Spread the good news of those who do come to see and hear, whose ecological conversion is appearing around and among us.

**The scriptures of the third Sunday [the 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time]** warn that when God opens our ears and we hear, we must expect to suffer opposition. When we act on the call that we hear to care for Earth, we will face resistance and conflict, as Isaiah did, as Jesus did, and as Jesus called his disciples through the ages

to, even down to our own day. The history of ecological martyrs witnesses to this truth, as does our politics. Some of pictures of the eco-martyrs and links to their stories will appear in this and the following Sundays. Their stories are painful and tragic, but God is our help.

**The scriptures of the fourth Sunday [the 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time]** again raise up the opposition of the wicked and focus on the suffering to be expected by those God is calling. The passage from the letter of James identifies the roots of this conflict and violence in jealousies, passions, desires. The apostles' competition over who is the greatest among them is an illustrative case in point. Christ calls us to a wisdom that recognizes greatness and finds peace through service and childlikeness.

**The scriptures of the fifth Sunday [the 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time]** urge all to be prophets, speaking out. They encourage openness to all who are not explicitly against us, though they warn us against the rich whose wealth and luxury are effectively stolen from the poor of the world. They include prayer for cleansing from our unknown faults and insistence that we take those faults and the dangers and evils we are engaging with utmost seriousness.

The materials for each of the liturgies of the Sundays of the 2024 Season of Creation that follow will include these elements:

- **An Example of an Integral Ecological Sign of the Cross.** These will reflect a

consciousness of the vastness of the universe, God's evolutionary process of creating, and will draw on imagery from The Creation Mandala. 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.

- **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 hope and action to restore Earth as the household of God for all Earth creatures. These introductions could be published in a parish bulletin, read as they are or adapted for brief introductory comments at the beginning of a liturgy.
- **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 allowed to replace the

orations given in the Catholic Roman Missal, they may be useful for private prayer or for use in other 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 Season of Creation. They are meant to inspire or suggest issues for homilists to consider in their preparations or for anyone's personal reflection and prayer. The questions included can help homilists reflect on their own experience. In addition, they may, in many cases, be fruitfully posed to their congregations for their own prayerful consideration.
- **Faith Reflections.** The creed at Mass can take the form of questions of faith, as for 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.

- **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 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.

**An Appendix** offers links and further information on the eco-martyrs, human and other-than-human, appearing elsewhere through this booklet. This is far from a complete listing. It is estimated that more than a hundred activists working to protect Earth's ecologies have been martyred every year of this century. The numbers, tragically, are increasing, and the extinction of other living species continues at alarming rates.

### 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]*

*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."

## SEASON OF CREATION 2024

# Musical 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). Yet, greed and avarice have run rampant over God’s creation. So now, climate crisis is *arriving*. But, there is hope, and we must remember that God is Creator and Redeemer. Hymnwriter Mary Louise Bringle has penned, “Hope blooms in a weary world, when creatures once forlorn, find wilderness reborn.” (Light Dawns on a Weary World).

As your community of faith prays for renewal, guidance, and a call to action, included in this publication are some hymn and psalm suggestions to help in planning worship services. Music planners may wish to have a “theme song” and some of the hymns 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](http://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 not exhaustive—there are still many possibilities! Creativity can 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 planning suggestions is a complete list of all songs used, with some additional possibilities. The suggestions for October 4, the Memorial 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

***“The earth is the LORD’s,  
and everything in it, the world,  
and all who live in it.”***

*(Psalm 24, NIV)*

**SEPTEMBER 1, 2024**

# World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation

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 has regularly issued an official message promoting the Season of Creation theme.

Pope Francis's **Message for the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation** is, as it is each year, a contemplation on the this year's global ecumenical theme "To Hope and Act with Creation," a theme drawn from St. Paul's letter to the Romans 8:19-25.

This theme, he writes, is grounded on our faith, faith that comes from the Holy Spirit dwelling within us. The Spirit prompts us to live in authentic human ways, the ways revealed by Jesus, the creative and proactive ways of love that overcome all obstacles, even death. Christians are, then, to live lives of faith, active in charity and abounding in hope. We bear witness to that hope by caring for suffering humanity, nature itself, and our living environment, Earth.

Our hope is based on the realization that everything is ordered finally to the glory of God. That ultimate truth does not deny the current reality that humanity and all Creation are bound by the slavery resulting from sinful abuse of Creation. All Creation groans in the process of "new birth," of conversion from the arrogance of seeking power to exercise dominion over others and over nature. The path of this conversion is a new spirit of solidarity among all peoples and with Creation based on universal love and a mission of caring for Creation. That path is difficult and painful, like the groaning and pain of labor, but its success is assured in Christ.

Pope Francis concludes his message with these words:

In this way, our lives can become a song of love for God, for humanity, with and for Creation, and find their fullness in holiness.

An ecumenical prayer service will be available online on September 1st for a shared celebration of this crucial and sacred common mission. Once plans are complete, more information and directions for joining it will be available at [SeasonofCreation.org](https://SeasonofCreation.org).

For those who would prefer to celebrate a local ecumenical prayer service to launch the Season of Creation, a draft text is offered as Addendum 1 in the **Season of Creation Celebration Guide**, pp. 31-40.

For those who will use the celebration of Sunday Mass to launch the Season of Creation this year, suggestions to help focus and enrich their liturgy follow here.



# First Sunday **OF THE SEASON OF CREATION**

September 1, 2024 | 22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

## SCRIPTURES

Deut. 4:1-2, 6-8

Ps. 15:2-5

James 1:17-18, 21b-22, 27

Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

## Integral Ecological Sign of the Cross

We begin our celebration of the 1st Sunday of the Season of Creation...

In the name of our Creator God from Whom this universe flared forth in fiery birth,

And of the Word of God Who took on our flesh, working to give healing and hope to all Creation,

And of the Wisdom of God Who presided over the forming of atoms and galaxies and the birth of stars through billions of years. **Amen.**

May the grace and peace of our Creator God who cherishes us be with you!

## Introductory Comments

Today is the First Sunday of the 2024 Season of Creation. This liturgical season is a time of prayer and action stretching 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 celebrates God as Creator of the vast cosmic universe, God's revelation in Creation, and our calling to care for Creation, to protect its rich diversity and to address the urgent, destructive crises threatening its health and future - including our own.

This year's 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 profound Christian hope rooted firmly in faith in the resurrection of Christ and urges us to re-energized action with Creation for the healing of Earth.

This theme builds on the 2021 theme that emphasized that Earth is the home of every creature that lives on it and in it. The theme of Earth as our Common Home invites the global Christian community to recall that every creature of God upon Earth is loved by God for itself. It reminds us that the current exploitation of Earth is making it "a means to economic or political ends" and is destroying its ability to be the nurturing home for millions of species that God has created it to be. It invites us to ask what we must do to restore the planet to being the life-giving home God intends it to be for all that dwell here.

## Penitential Rite Suggestion

*(It should be noted that although the Roman Missal gives various optional formulations for the penitential rite, it also allows for "other invocations." These are intended to help shape the community's repentance in accord with the scriptural message of the day.)*

As we begin our celebration of this 1st Sunday in the Season of Creation, let's enter into the quiet of our spirits... conscious of Earth, our Common Home ... aware of the dramatic and destructive changes in our climate ... the

more frequent and too-often deadly crises of floods and fires, storms, hurricanes and tornadoes, droughts and more ...

Loving Creator God, we often lose hope in the face of the widespread devastation of climate change, the threats of far worse to come, the urgency of the needs, and the slowness of our response....

**Creator Spirit of God, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, you remind us that the crises bringing so much suffering to Earth begin within us, from our hearts....

**Christ Jesus, have mercy.**

Holy Spirit of God, you plant the word of truth in each of us and call us to be doers of the word and not hearers only....

**Holy Spirit of God, have mercy.**

May God, who has birthed the vast web of life in which we live through billions of years, have mercy on us, free us from our sins, and guide us into the fullness of divine Life.

**Amen.**

**Gloria:** In conscious awe, we join our voices with all Creation to praise and glorify God.

*As noted in the Introduction, the orations offered in these materials are not currently allowed to replace the orations given in the Catholic Roman Missal. They may be used for private prayer or by ecclesial Christian communities freer to adjust the language of their liturgies.*

### Opening Prayer

Loving Creator God, giver of every good gift that has ever been, is now, and ever will be,

Bring to fruition the word of truth sown in our hearts by your Spirit.

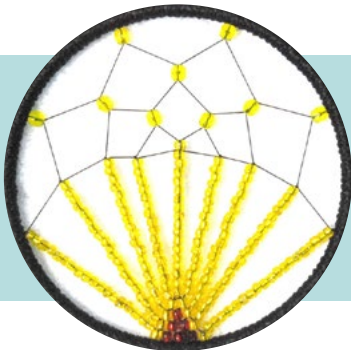
Open our minds and hearts to understand the laws that govern and guide all Creation and to live your law of love wisely with undivided hearts.

We ask this through Jesus, the 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 2024 Season of Creation begins at a critical and very delicate time for the human community as we face the climate crisis threatening Earth and its future. UN Secretary General António Guterres and Pope Francis have both added their voices to the overwhelming global consensus of scientists in warning that there is less than a decade left for the nations of the world to take the steps needed to reduce carbon emissions and keep the average temperature of the planet from rising more than 1.5 degrees Celsius.

If those steps are not taken with a sense of urgency and global solidarity, irreversible turning points will bring great devastation with lasting destructive impacts. **In some of the worst-case scenarios**, Earth's ability to sustain the human population could be reduced from its current capacity [a little over 8 billion people] to about 1 billion people. It is hard to imagine the suffering that the loss of 7 billion people and countless other living beings to fires, floods, droughts, other forms of violent weather, starvation, and more would impose.



**"Earth's ability to sustain the human population could be reduced from its current capacity [a little over 8 billion people] to about 1 billion people."**

It is widely acknowledged that the nations of the world are failing seriously to take adequate steps to meet the true urgency of the planetary crisis. This Season of Creation must help to build the sense of urgency and commitment to serious change that are essential for the future wellbeing of our common home. And yet, too great an emphasis on the severe threats of devastation can lead to discouragement, depression, and inaction.

Can the scriptures help us, as people of faith, to face and embrace the urgency of the situation threatening Earth and all creatures with **hope** and ready **commitment to the changes** so desperately required?

**Today's gospel** focuses on the first essential step that must be taken: acknowledgement of the sources of the crises. Scribes and pharisees want to know why Jesus's disciples don't follow the customs of the elders but eat their meals with unclean hands. In anger, Jesus summons the crowd (and us) and is clear:

Hear me, all of you, and understand. Nothing that enters one from outside can defile that person; but the things that come from within are what defile. From within the people, from their hearts....

This is an important message in facing ecological crises today. James Gustave Speth, an accomplished environmental lawyer and advocate, known for his important work at the United Nations and in co-founding and leading

the Natural Resources Defense Council in the United States, said in an interview on the BBC in 2013:

I used to think the top global environmental problems were biodiversity loss, ecosystem collapse and climate change. I thought that with 30 years of good science we could address these problems. But I was wrong. The top environmental problems are selfishness, greed and apathy, and to deal with these we need a spiritual and cultural transformation, and we scientists don't know how to do that.

In *Laudato Sí*, Pope Francis quotes Pope Benedict XVI as saying something basically the same:

The external deserts in the world are growing because the internal deserts have become so vast.

What kind of spiritual and cultural transformation can help us respond effectively to our contemporary climate crises? In the [Laudato Sí Action Platform](#), launched at the Vatican during [Laudato Sí Week](#) in 2021, the Catholic community identified seven practical goals. One of them is foundational and is important for our reflection and prayer here and into the future: **Ecological Spirituality**.

#### **Ecological Spirituality.**

This goal aims to recover a religious vision of Creation and urges more contact with Nature in a spirit of wonder, praise, joy, gratitude. Actions could include Creation-centered

liturgical celebrations, ecological retreats and formation programs, praying in Nature.

Does this type of action speak to my/our lives at this time? Do actions like these resonate with my/our sense of calling at this time? Can they help us and our communities face and overcome the "selfishness, greed and apathy," the "internal deserts," the sources of ecological destruction and ecosystem crisis that "come from within," from our hearts? Are there other people, communities, networks with whom I/we can join in this type of action?

How can we help each other grow in what Pope Francis calls "integral ecological conversion?" Can we trust that God is with us in these times, working to save us and our planet?

How are we being invited, as individuals, as communities, to share in this saving work? What is God inviting us to do?

There is a basic principle of spirituality implicit here. When we experience God as loving us and surrounding us with the gifts of Creation, stirring wonder, gratitude, and joy in our hearts, those are the times that we will find the peace and security to face and acknowledge our sinfulness and to want to begin significant change.

How might we embrace a deeper ecological spirituality? How might we incorporate

that spirit more in our personal prayer? In our liturgies? In the retreats and formation programs available to us? Do the awesome beauty and greatness of Creation and the generosity of God open us to our failures to care for Creation? How do they invite us to change how we live?

**In the second reading,** James reminds us that God has planted the word of truth in us that is able to save us. But we must be willing to welcome this word humbly and act on it, “be doers of the word and not hearers only.”

Actions must clearly be personal and involve our families and faith communities, as the questions above indicate. But climate is global and the crises we face are institutional and global. Responses must be national, regional, and global as well. What further actions might we take to foster and take part in larger efforts to address climate change?

This year, the Season of Creation ecumenical steering committee is recommending a common Global Advocacy Action as part of the Laudato Sí Action Platform goal of **Community Engagement**.

### **Community Engagement and Participatory Action.**

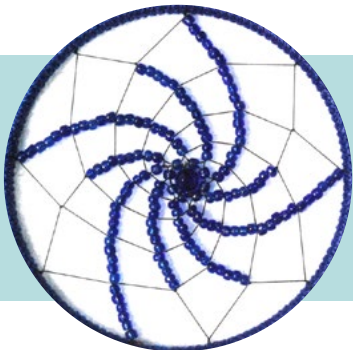
This goal seeks community engagement and action to develop cultures and policies that protect our common home and all who live in and on it. Actions could include advocacy, people’s campaigns, engaging decision makers and encouraging rootedness in local communities.

Does this type of action speak to my/our lives at this time? Do actions like these resonate with my/our sense of calling at this time? Are there other people, communities, networks with whom I/we can join in this type of action? Have some of our organizations or communities given us helpful examples that can give others hope and encourage their participation?

The particular Community Engagement action proposed for this year is based on the global scientific consensus that the human community must move to clean, renewable energy and phase out carbon emissions as soon as possible. This is essential in order to prevent the catastrophic climate change that threatens the survival of the intricately interconnected and interdependent web of life of which humanity is but one strand. It is a step the human community must take for the common good of all.

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 recommendation for global Community Engagement calls for a joint Christian advocacy initiative to support the **Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty**. This treaty offers “a concrete, binding plan to end the expansion of new coal, oil and gas projects and manage a global transition away from fossil



***“...climate is global and the crises we face are institutional and global. Responses must be national, regional, and global as well.”***

fuels” in ways that are just and protective for all people impacted by the transition.

### Global Advocacy Action

The section on Advocacy in the 2024 Season of Creation Celebration Guide, pp, 23 to 25, recommends a sign-on letter for parishes, faith communities, faith leaders, and other individuals which is available at [fossilfuel treaty.org/faith-letter](https://fossilfuel treaty.org/faith-letter). The Advocacy section includes other useful action recommendations and refers readers to the [resources page of the SeasonofCreation.org](https://resources.page.of.the.SeasonofCreation.org) website as well as to the [Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty website](https://FossilFuelNon-ProliferationTreaty.website). On the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty site, there is more information on the treaty, its history, its major pillars and where it is possible for endorsements to be made by national governments, cities, organizations and individuals. All signatures and endorsements will be used to influence decision makers at upcoming United Nations conferences on climate change.

### Faith Reflections

Are you among those who believe in God, who through billions of years has evolved Earth as a nurturing home for all creatures, all members of the Earth family?

Are you among those who believe in God who is bringing forth all Creation, cherishing every creature, and inviting us to care for each other wisely and with love?

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, suffered and died on a cross?

Are you among those who believe in Jesus, who through his dying and rising bears faithful witness to God’s loving care for all human beings and for all Creation?

Are you among those who believe in Jesus, the risen Christ, who is at the heart of the New Creation, reconciling all things to God?

Are you among those who believe in the Holy Spirit who renews life in Creation, groans in empathy with suffering Creation, and is working with us to renew the face of the Earth?

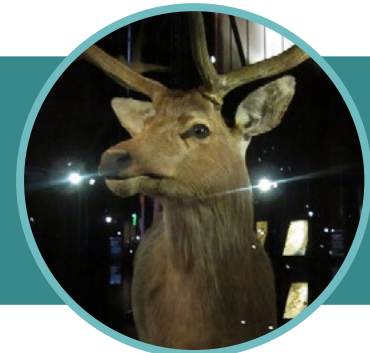
This is our faith. Through it we see God’s revelation emerging in new ways among us. Through it we embrace the promise of God’s saving love and our mission to restore our Common Home. **Amen.**

*“This is our faith. Through it we see God’s revelation emerging in new ways among us.”*



#### ECO-MARTYR

**Gloria Capitan**  
(1959-2016) Philippines



#### EXTINCT SPECIES

**Schomburgk's Deer**  
(declared extinct 2015) Asia

### General Intercessions

For ever-deepening trust in the faithful presence and loving work of God in us, among us, and through us, we pray...

For the success of the work of ecumenical and interfaith communities to promote global unity, to stir hope, and to restore Earth as a nurturing home to all its inhabitants, we pray...

That we may take up our prophetic responsibilities in this time of urgent crisis to speak God's Truth to each other and to call each other into ways of living on Earth wisely, sustainably, justly, and reverently, we pray...

That we may grow strong in hope and active in efforts to heal and renew Earth, we pray...

### Prayer over the Gifts

Loving Creator God, you inspire awe in our hearts. Through your love this Universe flared forth in fiery birth billions of years ago. Through all time, you have patiently prepared for us these gifts of bread and wine and community. We offer them in gratitude as simple signs of your faithful care for all our needs.

Through them we offer our lives, our talents, and our commitment to care for all in need on planet Earth and to work for the renewal of our Common Home itself. Receive them and transform our gifts and our energies into your true Bread of Life for our world. We ask this in the name of Christ, Jesus. **Amen.**

### Prayer after Communion

Gracious, Loving God, we have shared this Eucharist in thanksgiving for your sacred Creation in which we share and where we find our Common Home.

Now may the power of Christ's body and blood reach deep into our hearts, our minds, and our bodies to deepen our hope and stir us to action for the healing and renewal of Earth. We make our prayer in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

### Final Blessing

May the Spirit of God, who is above all and in all and through all, fill us with the knowledge of God's faithful presence and healing work on Earth and of the vibrant life of Christ within us. **Amen.**

And may almighty God bless us, God who is our Creator, Jesus the Word of God planted within us, and the Holy Spirit in whom we live and move and have our being now and forever. **Amen.**

***"I used to think the top global environmental problems were biodiversity loss, ecosystem collapse and climate change.... But I was wrong. The top environmental problems are selfishness, greed and apathy, and to deal with these we need a spiritual and cultural transformation...."***

*James Gustave Speth, Environmental Lawyer and Advocate*

# First Sunday **MUSICAL SELECTIONS**

September 1, 2024 | 22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

## Hymns

E - Entrance | O - Offertory | C - Communion | D - Dismissal  
OCP - Oregon Catholic Press | WLP-World Library Publications

- E, O A Place at the Table  
Shirley Erena Murray, ©1998 Hope Publishing Co.
- E, O All Things Bright and Beautiful  
Cecil F. Alexander
- E All Creatures of Our God and King  
Francis of Assisi, tr. By William H. Draper
- E,D Let All Things Now Living  
Katherine K. Davis, ©1939 E.C. Schirmer Music Co.
- E,D Praise to You, O Christ, Our Savior  
©1986 Bernadette Farrell, published by OCP
- O For the Beauty of the Earth  
Folliet S. Pierpoint
- O We Give You But Your Own  
William W. How
- C Life-giving Bread, Saving Cup  
James Chepponis, ©1987 GIA
- C Taste and See  
James E. Moore, Jr., ©1983 GIA
- C Take and Eat  
James Quinn and Michael Joncas, ©1989 GIA

D God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending  
Robert Edwards, ©1961, 1989 Hymn Society.

D Light Dawns on a Weary World  
Mary Louise Bringle, ©2002, GIA Publications

## Psalm Settings

Psalm 15: The One Who Does Justice,  
Owen Alstott, ©1970, 1990 OCP

Psalm 15: The One Who Does Justice,  
Paul M. French, ©1999, 2010 WLP

Psalm 15: Those Who Do Justice,  
©2005 The Collegeville Composers Group, adm. Liturgical Press

Psalm 15: One Who Does Justice,  
Michel Guimont, ©1994, 1998, GIA Publications

Psalm 15: The One Who Does Justice,  
Ken Canedo, ©2023 OCP

# Second Sunday OF THE SEASON OF CREATION

September 8, 2024 | 23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

## SCRIPTURES

Isaiah 35:4-7a

Ps. 146:6-10

James 2:1-5

Mark 7:31-37

## Integral Ecological Sign of the Cross

We begin our celebration of the 2nd Sunday of the Season of Creation...

In the name of our Creator God from Whom this universe with its countless solar systems flared forth in fiery birth,

And of the Word of God Who took on our flesh, working to give healing and hope to Earth,

And of the Holy Spirit of God Who is calling us all to a wiser, more just and sustainable spiritual vision and life. **Amen**

May the grace and peace of our Creator God Who cherishes us be with you!

## Introductory Comments

Today is the Second Sunday of the 2024 Season of Creation. This season is a time of prayer and action celebrating God as Creator of the vast cosmic universe, God's revelation in Creation, and our calling to care for Creation. It invites us to protect its rich diversity and to address the urgent, destructive crises threatening its health and future - including our own.

This year's 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. On this 2nd Sunday of the Season of Creation, the scriptures urge us not to lose hope in the face of the urgent and complex climate crisis facing us. They remind us to trust

in God Who is faithful and is even now working to save us. They challenge us to confront the false values of wealth and consumption that are so common and so destructive and to pray for Christ to open our eyes, our ears, our hearts.

## Penitential Rite Suggestion

As we begin our celebration of this 2nd Sunday in the Season of Creation, let's enter into the quiet of our spirits ... conscious of Earth, our home and the home of every other living and inanimate creature we know ... just a dot in the vast expanse of the Milky Way ... Suffering from overconsumption, devastation and warming temperatures ... home to millions of people rising up to restore and save our common home....

Loving God, we often lose hope in the face of the widespread devastation of climate change, the threats of far worse to come, the urgency of the needs, and the slowness of our response.

**Creator Spirit of God, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, You warned us how hard it is for the rich to enter the Kin-dom of God and yet we hold up wealth as a sign of success and "development" and pursue it in ways that are destroying our common home.

**Word of God, have mercy.**

Holy Spirit of God, You call us to be the voice of the voiceless of Creation suffering among us, working with them for their healing and rescue.

**Wisdom of God, have mercy.**



May God, Who gave fiery birth to all time and space and to 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:** In conscious awe, we join our voices with all Creation to praise and glorify God.

### Opening Prayer

Loving Creator God, You have been faithful through billions of years, patiently preparing Earth to be the nurturing home for all that dwell on it and in it. As we come to recognize the urgent threats to its well-being from values and actions of our human community, we ask You to deepen our hope in Your faithful love, Your power to save us, and Your action in us, among us, and through us.

Send the healing power of Christ to open our eyes, our ears, and our hearts. Unite the human family and teach us to recognize and embrace Your Wisdom, Wisdom that suffers, guides, heals and renews our Common Home.

We make our prayer in the name of Christ, Your Word, and in the power of the Holy Spirit, the

Wisdom at work renewing all things in Creation, now and forever. **Amen.**

### Points for Reflection on the Scriptures

In last week's reflections, we summed up the context the Earth community is facing simply and directly. It remains our context today. Can the scriptures help us to walk the fine line that will help us as people of faith to face and embrace the urgency of the situation threatening Earth and all its creatures with hope and ready commitment to the transformations so desperately required?

**In the first reading,** Isaiah urges his people to "Be strong, fear not" because God is faithful and is engaged in their history to save them. He sees the work of God in the eyes that are opened, the ears that hear again, in the lame and the mute being healed and Earth being restored to fruitfulness and life.

This is another essential dimension of **Ecological Spirituality**, one of the seven crucial **Laudato SÍ Action Platform goals**: growth in the ability to discern and identify the positive qualities

and actions of a healthy, integral ecological spirituality.

The faithful presence and work of God Who raised Jesus from the dead are the surest foundation against discouragement and losing hope in the face of the current crises. As St. Paul wrote so powerfully, "If God is for us, who can be against?"

Do we share Isaiah's prophetic faith here and now? Are we able to see the needs, hear the call, and act for healing and renewal of Earth?

Where do we see eyes being opened to the climate realities and dangers? Where do we see people who were deaf to the issues or refused to listen begin to hear and understand the powerful "statements" of Nature's destructive forces? Where are those who had been mute beginning to speak up with concern and care for Creation? Where do we see people whose response to the planetary crises had been halting in the past taking more bold steps? At the personal level? At the political level? Through international collaboration and networking?



***"Over sixty-five years ago, Teilhard proposed that 'our religion is becoming enfeebled.' The reason being that we are too cut off from awe and wonder and a 'passionate admiration of the Universe.'" Matthew Fox***

Do we see God at work in the unprecedented mobilization of the Catholic community through the *Laudato Sí* Action Platform, the global networks that are emerging, and the ecumenical and interfaith collaboration that is growing?

Where are we seeing Earth being healed and renewed through prophetic human efforts? Where do we recognize God at work in these efforts to address the climate crisis threatening Earth?

**The Psalm** acknowledges God's faithfulness in actions like these and invites us to praise God.

Can we pray it with heartfelt conviction and draw strength from its vision?

**In the second reading**, James focuses upon the widespread human temptation to honor wealth as a sign of success and value. That temptation feeds the greed, exploitation, and systematic degradation of the richness of Creation. The dominant model and processes of development embraced by so many over the last several hundred years are based on a vision of unlimited economic growth fed by production,

consumption, and competition for wealth on a limited planet. These have driven and continue to drive the destructive exploitation of Earth and the rapidly increasing diminishment of Earth's ability to renew itself and remain a nurturing home for all its inhabitants. These economic patterns and processes must be transformed.

Such transformation flows from a strong **Ecological Spirituality** and is made more specific in another of the *Laudato Sí* Action Platform goals, **Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles**:

**Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles.**

This goal promotes a sense of sufficiency rather than unnecessary accumulation or consumerism. Actions could include recycling, reducing waste, more sustainable diets, promotion of public transportation and avoiding single-use items.

Does this type of action speak to my/our lives at this time? Do actions like these resonate with my/our sense of calling at this time? Are there other people, communities, networks with whom I/we can join in this type of action?

How can I/we transform our lifestyles and values to embrace a more authentic and sustainable way of living on Earth in solidarity with all God's Creation?

James also reminds us that God chooses the poor of the world to be rich in faith. This important reminder echoes throughout Christian history, most recently raised up in Pope Francis's call in *Laudato Sí* to listen to the Cry of the Poor and the Cry of Earth. The poor are most often the first to suffer and, in their suffering, to reveal the injustices and unsustainable ways of living of our societies. This is a focus of a fourth Platform goal.

**Response to the Cry of the Poor.**

This goal calls us to promote ecojustice and to defend human life and all forms of life on Earth. Actions toward this goal could include promoting solidarity, attention and support to vulnerable groups: indigenous communities, refugees, migrants, racial minorities, children. They could include analysis and improvement of social systems and institutions.

Does this type of action speak to my/our lives at this time? Do actions like these



***"For ever-deepening trust in the faithful presence and loving work of God in us, among us, and through us to respond to the Cry of the Earth and the Cry of the Poor, we pray..."***

resonate with my/our sense of calling at this time? Are there other people, communities, networks with whom I/we can join in this type of action?

Pope Francis has often spoken of the wisdom and faith of indigenous peoples and the poor as rich resources for learning to live sustainably on Earth and contribute to its healing restoration. How can I/we engage that wisdom and grow in that faith?

Do I/we have relationships with people in poverty? With indigenous peoples? What wisdom do they have to share with us about caring for Creation sustainably, reverently? How do their warnings and demonstrations in resistance to development projects speak to us and invite our solidarity?

Looking to indigenous communities and other oppressed peoples, do we see the environmental racism from which they so often suffer? Do we see the growing ecological crises behind the increasing flows of climate refugees? Does their suffering stir our compassion? Do we hear Christ's command to welcome the "stranger," who approaches in the form of a climate refugee?

**In the gospel,** Jesus struggles, groaning, to give healing to a deaf person with a speech impediment. Without a doubt, the work over

the next decade of restoring the household of God, our Common Home, will be difficult and challenging.

Are we ready to pray for the healing power of Christ to be at work in us and through us so that we may hear and speak clearly the Word of God given us to share in this critical time?

Can we offer ourselves to join Christ in the difficult work of opening eyes and ears, freeing tongues, and supporting bold efforts to embrace the integral ecological conversion required in these times?

### Faith Reflections

Are you among those who believe in God, who through billions of years has evolved Earth as a nurturing home for all creatures, all members of the Earth family?

Are you among those who believe in God who is bringing forth all Creation, cherishing every creature, inviting us to care for each other wisely and with love?

Are you among those who believe in Jesus, who can open eyes and ears and loosen tongues to speak a prophetic call to simple living and loving response to the Cry of the Poor?

Are you among those who believe in Jesus, who through his dying and rising bears faithful witness to God's loving and healing care for all people and for all Creation?

Are you among those who believe in the Holy Spirit who groans in empathy with suffering Creation and is working with us to renew the face of Earth?

Are you among those who believe that with Christ and in the Holy Spirit we will rise with people of all faiths and people of good will to celebrate a New Creation?

This is our faith. Through it we see God's revelation emerging in new ways among us. Through it we embrace the promise of God's saving love and our mission to restore the household of Creation. **Amen.**

### General Intercessions

For ever-deepening trust in the faithful presence and loving work of God in us, among us, and through us to respond to the Cry of the Earth and the Cry of the Poor, we pray...

For the success of the work of ecumenical and interfaith communities to promote global unity and restore Earth as a nurturing home to all its creatures, we pray...

That we may take up our prophetic responsibilities in this time of urgent crisis to speak God's Truth to each other and to call each other into ways of living on Earth wisely, sustainably, justly, and reverently, we pray...

That we may hear and respond in faith and in hope to the Cry of the Poor among us and around the planet, we pray...

### Prayer over the Gifts

Creator God, You inspire awe in our hearts. Through Your love this Universe flared forth from You in fiery birth billions of years ago. Through all that time, You have patiently prepared and provided us these gifts and so much more to share. We offer them in gratitude as signs of Your faithful care for all our needs.

Through them we offer our lives, our talents, and our commitment to care for all in need on planet Earth and to work for the renewal of our Common Home itself. Receive them and transform our gifts and our energies into Your true Bread of Life for our world. We ask this in the name of Christ, Jesus. **Amen.**

*How are we being invited, as individuals, as communities, to share in this saving work? What is God inviting us to do?*

### Prayer after Communion

Gracious, Loving God, we have shared this Eucharist in thanksgiving for Your sacred Creation in which we share and where we find our Common Home.

Now may the power of Christ's body and blood reach deep into our hearts, our minds, and our bodies. Heal our wounds, open our eyes, our ears, and our hearts, and renew all Earth's communities. We make our prayer in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

### Final Blessing

The Creating Spirit of God is above all and in all and through all.

May that Loving Spirit fill us with knowledge of God's faithful presence and healing work.

**Amen.**

Christ Jesus opens eyes and ears and tongues for the healing of Earth.

May Christ open our eyes and ears, minds and hearts to love and care for each other and for Creation. **Amen.**

The Holy Spirit is at work around Earth to raise up communities working together to renew the face of the Earth.

May the Spirit nourish hope and unity in our hearts. **Amen.**

And may almighty God bless us, God who is our Creator, Jesus the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit in Whom we live and move and have our being now and forever. **Amen.**



#### ECO-MARTYR

**Wayne Lotter**

(1965 - 2017) South Africa

#### EXTINCT SPECIES

**St. Helena Olive**

(declared extinct 2004) Africa



# Second Sunday **MUSICAL SELECTIONS**

September 8, 2024 | 23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

## Hymns

E - Entrance | O - Offertory | C - Communion | D - Dismissal  
OCP - Oregon Catholic Press | WLP-World Library Publications

- E, D A Place at the Table  
Shirley Erena Murray, ©1998 Hope Publishing Co.
- E, O,D Abundant Life  
Ruth Duck, ©1992 GIA
- E, D Flow, River, Flow  
©1986 Bob Hurd, Published by Oregon Catholic Press
- E, D Say to the Frightened Heart  
©2012 Bob Hurd, published by OCP.
- E Glory and Praise to Our God  
©1972, 1974, 2008, Daniel L. Schutte, pub. OCP
- E Morning Has Broken  
©1957 Eleanor Farjeon, Harold Ober Assoc.
- E I Sing the Mighty Power of God  
Isaac Watts
- E, O Praise to You, O Christ, Our Savior  
©1986 Bernadette Farrell, published by OCP
- O, C Healer of Our Every Ill, by Marty Haugen  
©1987 GIA Publications, Inc.
- O, C Open My Eyes ©1988, 1998, 1999  
Jesse Manibusen, published by Spirit and Song (OCP)

- C Now in This Banquet  
Marty Haugen, ©1986 GIA Publications, Inc.
- D Touch the Earth Lightly  
Shirley Erena Murray, ©1992 Hope Publishing Company.
- D Light Dawns on a Weary World  
Mary Louise Bringle, ©2002, GIA Publications

## Psalm Settings

- Psalm 146: Praise the Lord, My Soul  
Owen Alstott, ©1977, 1990 OCP
- Psalm 146: Praise the Lord, My Soul  
Bob Hurd, ©2011 OCP
- Psalm 146: Praise the Lord, My Soul  
Richard Proulx, ©1975, GIA Publications, Inc.
- Psalm 146: Praise the Lord, My Soul  
©2016 Sarah Hart, published by OCP
- Psalm 146: Praise the Lord, My Soul  
Paul Tate, ©2013, 2014 GIA Publications, Inc.
- Psalm 146: Praise the Lord, My Soul  
James Gerrish, ©1971 WLP

# Third Sunday **OF THE SEASON OF CREATION**

September 15, 2024 | 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time

## SCRIPTURES

Isaiah 50:5-9a

Ps. 116:1-9

James 2:14-18

Mark 8:27-35

## Integral Ecological Sign of the Cross

We begin our celebration of the 3rd Sunday of the Season of Creation...

In the name of our Creator God Who, from the death of stars, births new stars and planets and spreads the seeds of life through the Universe,

And of the Word of God spoken into a hostile world, accepting suffering to give hope to all Creation,

And of the Wisdom of God, at work among us calling forth the New Creation. **Amen.**

May the grace and peace of our loving Creator God be with you!

## Introductory Comments

Last Sunday, we heard the encouragement of Isaiah to "Be strong and fear not," relying on God's faithful presence. We were invited to recognize God in the opening of eyes and ears to the crises Earth is suffering. We were encouraged to discern and accept God's invitation to share in the work of saving Earth and all the communities whose home it is.

Today again we hear the call to listen to God's Word coming in the Cry of the Earth and the Cry of the Poor. We are urged to put our faith into action and to expect resistance and suffering, our share in the cross of Christ.

## Penitential Rite Suggestion.

As we begin today, let's enter into the quiet of our spirits, ... conscious of Earth, our home and the home of every other living and inanimate creature we know ... just a dot in the vast expanse of the Milky Way ... the Milky Way itself but a small dot in the vast expanse of the Universe... conscious of the destruction and suffering on Earth from overconsumption, exploitation, poverty, and warming temperatures ... yet home to millions of people rising up to restore, heal, and save our Common Home....

Creator God, we often lose hope in the face of widespread destruction from fires, floods, droughts, violent storms, and other devastation from our changing climate, from the urgency of the needs, and the slowness of our response.

**Creator Spirit of God, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, You call forth compassion and insist that we must be ready to suffer and sacrifice, taking up our crosses in Your spirit of love and healing forgiveness.

**Word of God, have mercy.**

Holy Spirit of God, You call us to action, to be the voice of the voiceless suffering among us on Earth, our Common Home.

**Wisdom of God, have mercy.**

May God, the Creator of all time and space, Who through the death of a star brought forth 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:** In conscious awe, we join our voices with all the stars and planets, all the inanimate and living inhabitants of our galaxy and of all Creation, to praise and glorify God.

### Opening Prayer

Loving Creator God, You have been faithful through billions of years, patiently preparing Earth to be the nurturing home for all that dwell on it and in it. As we come to recognize the urgent threats to its well-being from some of the values and actions of our human community, we ask You to deepen our trust in Your faithful love, Your power to save us, and Your work in us, among us, and through us. Send the healing power of Christ. Give us strength of faith and courage to speak Your prophetic Word of truth and transformation, ready to face resistance,

rejection, and suffering with love, creativity, and perseverance.

We make our prayer in the name of Christ Jesus, Your Word, and in the power of the Holy Spirit, the Wisdom at work renewing all things in Creation, now and forever. **Amen.**

### Points for Reflection on the Scriptures

The human community around the world has been growing in recent decades in its consciousness of the increasingly destructive threats from Earth's changing climate. The inadequacy of national responses and commitments, however, is now widely recognized. More dramatic and far-reaching commitments to transformative change are urgent if we hope to avoid catastrophic environmental tipping points in as little as five years or so into the future.

The issues have been highly politicized in nations around the planet and populations are deeply divided. Disinformation and denial

are rampant, especially in wealthy nations, to protect individual and group interests and to resist the global transformations essential to the survival and common good of the planet and all creatures who make their home on it and in it.

**The first reading from Isaiah** today picks up one of the key themes from last week: God's presence and work among us are recognized in the opening of eyes and ears, the loosening of tongues to proclaim God's prophetic Word.

Today's reading is taken from the **3rd Servant Song**. In the verse just before today's passage begins, the Servant of God declares, "God has given me a well-trained tongue, that I might know how to speak to the weary a word that will rouse them." And she/he continues, "Morning after morning God opens my ear that I may hear...."

**In the second reading**, James insists that faith that is not put into action is worthless. Faith without works is dead.



***"Will we adopt, as an international community, the necessary measures to stop the devastation of the environment or will we continue denying the evidence?"*** Pope Francis

In other words, in the context of our current planetary crises, we whose ears have been opened to God's Word in the Cry of the Poor and the Cry of Earth must use our "well-trained tongues" to speak out the prophetic Word we have received. How might we take up the opportunities God provides us each to forward the healing and saving of Earth and all its communities?

Do I, do we as communities have a sense of the prophetic Word given to us? How could I/we put that prophetic Word into action in our world today?

In the **Laudato Si Action Platform**, Catholic communities and people of good will around the world have identified seven practical goals and have begun to articulate actions and transformations that the prophetic Cry of the Poor and the Cry of Earth are calling forth from us, actions for healing our relationships with God, the human family, the community of Creation, and Earth itself.

**From Faith into Action.** These goals offer guidance for discerning our effective faith response. Three of the goals were raised for reflection and commitment to action in last Sunday's points on the scriptures: **Ecological Spirituality, Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles, and Response to the Cry of the Poor.**

Would it be valuable to revisit one or more of those goals, exploring further commitments to action and implementation?

A fourth of the seven goals follows naturally and can help individuals and communities discover important insights and lines of action that can increase the quality and wisdom of their spiritualities, lifestyles, and action responses to those in poverty: **Ecological Education.**

**Ecological Education.** This goal seeks curricular and institutional reform to foster ecological awareness and transformative action. Actions could include ensuring access to education for all, promoting human rights, fostering *Laudato Si* themes, and encouraging ecological leadership and restoration activities.

Does this type of action speak to my/our lives at this time? Do actions like these resonate with my/our sense of calling at this time? Are there other people, communities, networks with whom I/we can join in this type of action?

How might I/we further educate ourselves on the issues and dimensions of the crises we face? What areas or issues stir our curiosity and invite deeper understanding, wiser action?

How might I/we learn about and explore the possibilities for more sustainable lifestyles and alternate approaches to development than the dominant one?

Where can we find education for ourselves and our communities to deepen and expand an ecological spirituality? Who are the best teachers? How can I/we begin?

### **Take up your cross and follow me.**

The second major theme running through today's readings is equally challenging and more disturbing. Those who are chosen to proclaim God's prophetic Word must expect rejection and suffering, perhaps even death.

**The passage from the 3rd Servant Song** in the first reading from Isaiah, immediately after describing God's action to open her/his ears to the prophetic message, goes on to describe the beatings, resistance, and abuse that the Servant endures.

**In the gospel,** Jesus begins teaching his disciples that he too must suffer, be rejected and killed. He rejects Peter's insistence that God would not let that happen to the Messiah. Jesus knew that he was preaching God's prophetic Truth to a divided and hostile social-religious context. His Word threatened the control and social status of those in positions of religious and political power. They would not be able to let him succeed in the Way or the Truth he was proclaiming or the Life of the Kin-dom that he was revealing and calling into being.

Like the Servant of God in Isaiah, Jesus affirms strong faith that God will be present with help and vindication. Jesus insists that he will rise again. The witness of his love and forgiveness



through excruciating suffering and a shameful death, and then of his rising to new, transformed Life would speak more powerfully of God's good news of loving forgiveness.

People around the planet who are raising their prophetic voices for Care of Earth and Care of the Poor in these times are enduring the resistance, persecution, suffering, and death we hear about here. They make up a community of the human martyrs of this age, joining the plants, animals and other species suffering extinction from the effects of humanly-generated climate change.

These human martyrs have numbered between 100 and 200 each year in the last two decades and represent all major areas of the planet. A few of their pictures appear in these pages as powerful witnesses calling us all to the seriousness of our mission and to courage and hope. More on each of them and links to

additional information can be found in the Appendix on eco-martyrs and extinct species at the end of this booklet.

**The Psalm** featured in today's liturgy offers the perfect prayerful expression of the faith of both the Servant and of Jesus. It expresses gratitude for God's mercy in saving the Servant in the past and reaffirms the belief that she/he will walk again with God in the land of the living.

What do these scriptures say to communities being urgently called to speak out and work to save Earth as a nurturing home for all its creatures in such a deeply divided and conflictive time in human history?

Are there responses that I/we fear, that make me/us hesitate or hold back from the urgent prophetic mission before us? What are they?

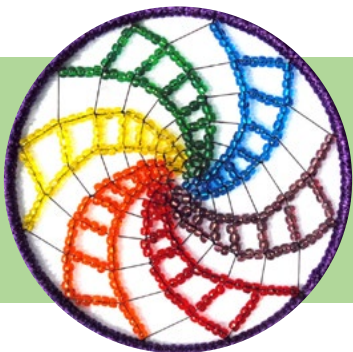
What groups in my/our context will resist the call to what Pope Francis describes as an

integral ecological conversion? What groups/individuals will reject and push back against actions I/we are feeling called to take as expressions of our faith?

Even when there is little chance of physical harm, do I/we fear the hardships that may be involved in speaking out publicly and embracing the transformations in my/our ways of living that an integral ecological conversion will call us to?

Does our faith in God's presence and faithful protection reflect the faith of the Servant in Isaiah and of Jesus? Can we pray in the spirit of the psalm in gratitude for God's mercy and faithful presence to us in our lives, drawing strength and trust from our experiences?

Am I/Are we ready to speak out and stand with vulnerable communities under attack for their work and witness for eco-justice? Indigenous communities? Communities of



***“Here I want to recognize, encourage and thank all those striving in countless ways to guarantee the protection of the home which we share.”***

*Pope Francis, Laudato Si', #13*

the poor and communities of color resisting environmental racism?

Am I/Are we conscious of those who have been killed or have suffered great violence for their work responding to the Cry of Earth and the Cry of the Poor? Who are these prophets in our region of the planet? How do their courage and witness affect me/us? How can it inspire and encourage us to express our faith in God's mission to us to heal Earth in urgent action?

Can we call upon their presence in the communion of saints to support and guide us?

### Faith Reflections

Are you among those who believe in God, Who births all created things, renews all things, and cherishes all things with love?

Are you among those who believe in God, Who through billions of years has evolved Earth as a nurturing home for the vast variety of creatures around us, all members of the Earth family?

Are you among those who believe in God, Who opens the ears and frees the tongues of those called to be Servants of the New Creation among us in these times?

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 accepted rejection, suffering and death

on a cross, a faithful witness to God's call to loving care for all human beings and healing restoration for all Creation?

Are you among those who believe in Jesus, the risen Christ, Who is at the heart of the New 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, groans in empathy with a suffering Creation, and waits, working with us, for the rebirth of Creation?

Are you among those who believe that with Christ and in the Holy Spirit we will rise to celebrate the New Creation?

This is our faith. Through it we see God's revelation emerging in new ways among us. Through it we embrace the promise of God's saving love and our mission to restore the household of Creation. **Amen.**

### General Intercessions

For ever-deepening trust in the faithful presence and loving work of God in us, among us, and through us to respond effectively to the Cry of the Earth and the Cry of the Poor, we pray...

For the success of the work of ecumenical and interfaith communities to promote global unity and restore Earth as a nurturing home to all its creatures, we pray...

For the urgent, generous, and effective response of the global community in the ongoing United Nations conferences on biodiversity and climate change, we pray...

That we may take up our prophetic responsibilities in this time of urgent crisis to speak God's Truth to each other and to call each other into ways of living on Earth wisely, sustainably, justly, and reverently, we pray...

### Prayer over the Gifts

Loving Creator God, from the explosive death of a star You planted the seeds of life on Earth. Through vast periods of time, You have prepared and given us these gifts of bread and wine and so much more to share. We offer them in gratitude as simple signs of Your faithful care for all our needs.

Through them we offer our lives, our talents, and our commitment to care for all in need on planet Earth. Guide us in working for the restoration of our Common Home itself. Receive and transform our gifts and our energies into Your true Bread of Life for our world. We ask this in the name of Christ Jesus. **Amen.**

### Prayer after Communion

Gracious, Loving God, we have shared this Eucharist in thanksgiving for Your sacred Creation in which we share and where we find our Common Home.

Now may the power of Christ's body and blood reach deep into our hearts, our minds, and our bodies to heal our wounds, to open our eyes, our ears, and our hearts. Strengthen and protect us in the prophetic mission to heal and renew all of Earth's communities that You have entrusted to us. 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 are blessed with the great gift of Creation and with God's patience and forgiveness for our failures to care for it wisely and lovingly.

May our Creator God bless us all with deep, contemplative gratitude for the beauty and richness of Creation. **Amen.**

May Christ Jesus bless us with the courage to speak the prophetic Word entrusted to us. **Amen.**

May the Spirit of Wisdom bless us with patient understanding and forgiveness with each other. **Amen.**

May our Loving God bless us all, God who is our Creator, Jesus, our Brother, and the Holy Spirit in whom we live and move and have our being now and forever. **Amen.**

***"You have the bullet ...  
I have the word. The  
bullet dies when  
detonated, the word  
lives when spread."***

Berta Cáceres



#### ECO-MARTYR

**Berta Cáceres**  
(1971-2016) Honduras

#### EXTINCT SPECIES

**Golden Toad of Costa Rica**  
(declared extinct 2020) South America



# Third Sunday **MUSICAL SELECTIONS**

September 15, 2024 | 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time

## Hymns

E - Entrance | O - Offertory | C - Communion | D - Dismissal  
OCP - Oregon Catholic Press | WLP-World Library Publications

- E For the Beauty of the Earth  
Folliet S. Pierpoint
- E Journey of Faith  
Delores Dufner, © 2012 Sisters of St. Benedict, pub. by WLP
- E,D God Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens  
Catherine Cameron, ©1967 Hope Publishing Co
- O,D Here I Am, Lord  
Daniel L. Schutte, ©1981 OCP
- O,D Take Up Your Cross  
Charles W. Everest
- O When We Are Living /Pues Si Vivimos  
Roberto Escamilla, ©1989 United Meth. Pub. House
- O,C Christ Has No Body Now But Yours  
Teresa of Ávila/Stephen C. Warner, ©2003 WLP
- C Gift of Finest Wheat  
Omer Westendorf ©1977 Archdiocese of Phila., Internat.  
Liturgy Pub.
- C One Bread, One Body  
© 1978 John B. Foley, SJ. Published by OCP.

- D O God, Our Help in Ages Past  
Isaac Watts
- D Stewards of Earth  
Omer Westendorf, ©1984 World Library Publications

## Psalm Settings

- Psalm 116: I Will Walk Before the Lord  
Owen Alstott, ©1977, 1990, OCP.
- Psalm 116: I Will Walk Before the Lord  
Kathleen Harmon, ©2013, 2014 by GIA Publications, Inc.
- Psalm 116: I Will Walk Before the Lord  
©2016 Casey McKinley, published by OCP
- Psalm 116: I Will Walk Before the Lord  
©2002 Randall DeBruyn, published by OCP.
- Psalm 116: I Will Walk Before the Lord in the Land of the Living  
Howard Hughes, ©1994 WLP

# Fourth Sunday OF THE SEASON OF CREATION

September 22, 2024 | 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time

## SCRIPTURES

Wis. 2:12, 17-20

Ps. 54:3-8

James 3:16-4:3

Mark 9:30-37

## Integral Ecological Sign of the Cross

We begin our celebration of the 4th Sunday of the Season of Creation...

In the name of our Creator God Who gave birth to all Earth's living things, providing them a home in Earth's nurturing, supportive lands and seas,

And of the Word of God speaking into the world visions of true human greatness in service,

And of the Wisdom of God guiding every creature in keeping Earth alive and whole. **Amen**

May the grace and peace of our loving Creator God be with you!

## Introductory Comments

In today's readings, we are given a sense of the destructive power of passions, divisions, jealousies, greed, and competition, both for people and, in this Season of Creation, for Earth itself and all Earth inhabitants. This destructive dynamic contrasts sharply with what the Letter of James calls "the Wisdom from above," a wisdom that embraces the importance of turning our competitive energies to true service of the least among us and the Creation of which we are a part.

## Penitential Rite Suggestion

So, as we begin, let's enter into the quiet of our spirits ... conscious of God's gift of Earth, the nurturing home of such rich diversity of life, ... conscious of its destruction and suffering from overconsumption, exploitation, and warming

temperatures ... yet home to millions of people rising up to restore, heal, and save our common home....

Creator God, we have become alienated from each other and from Earth and viewed this planet as disposable, a source of endless resources.

**Creator Spirit of God, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, the human family has polluted Earth's air, land, and waters, made countless species extinct, turned our greed into global warming, devalued human life, and loved what was called "progress" more than the planet and each other.

**Word of God, have mercy.**

Holy Spirit of God, You are at work in us and among us now in these times, teaching us of Your presence in Earth, calling us to take part in Your New Creation.

**Wisdom of God, have mercy.**

May God, the Creator - Who birthed life from the seas and drew it forth to increase and evolve and fill Earth, its sacred home, -- have mercy on us, free us from our sins, and guide us into the fullness of divine Life. **Amen.**

**Gloria:** The Word of God that flared forth nearly 14 billion years ago, unfolding into the vast beauty and expanse that we know as the created Universe today, reveals to us a God of unimaginable Beauty, Creativity, and Vibrancy of Life and Love. Take a moment to contemplate our reality and ask for conscious awe. ... And then let's join our voices with all Creation to sing our praise to God.

## Opening Prayer

Loving Creator God, You have been faithful through billions of years, patiently preparing Earth to be the nurturing home for all that dwell on it and in it.

As we come to recognize the urgent threats to Earth's well-being from the values and actions of our human community, deepen our longing for the true wisdom "full of mercy and good fruits" that will bring the change and healing that Earth and we so urgently need.

Protect us from all who would resist our efforts to care for Earth. Stir in us Christ's passion for the greatness of service, service of all people, of all creatures, and of our Common Home. And give us strength of faith and courage to speak Your prophetic Word of Truth and service, ready to face resistance, rejection, and suffering with love, creativity, and perseverance.

We make our prayer in the name of Christ Jesus, Your Word, and in the power of the Holy Spirit, the Wisdom at work renewing all things in Creation, now and forever. **Amen.**

## Points for Reflection on the Scriptures

**In the reading from the Book of Wisdom,** the wicked are preparing to torture and kill the just one whom they experience as a living condemnation of their ways. They tell themselves, "If the just one be the son of God, God will defend him." This is the assumption that Peter made in last Sunday's gospel, the assumption which Jesus rejected, telling Peter

that he was thinking not as God does but as humans do. [Mark 8:27-35]

Hearing this in the Season of Creation raises a disturbing question. If God does not intervene to save God's beloved sons or daughters from suffering and death, could it true that God will not protect Earth either, no matter how precious it is, from the destructive effects of humanity's actions? God is certainly not protecting people from martyrdom who are working to defend Earth. The eco-martyrs highlighted throughout this resource show that. But what of Earth herself?

The warnings of scientists about the devastation that would come from the dangerous tipping points in the near future because of climate change press that question upon us. From what we are already seeing in more devastating storms, heat waves, droughts, fires, floods, the looming threat of dramatic sea level rise, the increasing frequency of extinctions of species globally, and the continuing rise of average annual global temperature, there is no denying that the risks and threats are real. And it is hard to imagine the extent of their widespread destructive power.

Could Earth be facing what Jesus was trying to teach his apostles in today's gospel: "I will be handed over to people who will kill me..."? From the evidence of the five great extinctions etched in our planetary history and the mysterious remnants of vast lost civilizations of the past, Earth has and could again endure vast and terrible death.

That history also bears witness that Earth could rise again, but that "resurrection" would, without doubt, as it has in past recoveries from major extinctions, take thousands and tens of thousands if not millions of years.

**The reading from the Letter of James** in today's liturgy warns of the destructiveness of selfish competitive patterns of action. Those are the behaviors that Pope Francis identified in *Laudato Si'* as driving the destructive dynamics now threatening the life of the planet, including the human community. The global economy is structured on competition that drives consumption and requires constant economic growth on a planet with limited resources. Recall that less than two months ago on August 1st Earth Overshoot Day was commemorated, highlighting the fact that the human community had consumed in just 7 months the renewable resources that it will take the planet a full year to replenish. And Earth Overshoot Day is coming earlier every year.

Those economic systems, structures and patterns of living are also the drivers of growing inequality around the planet that promises increasing social crises and conflict. When the average worker for a major corporation in a wealthy nation makes about \$28,000 a year while its CEO makes \$28,000 every nine seconds, social crisis seems inevitable. While that may be an extreme example, the competitive structures of the global economy are aggravating what Pope Francis has described as one complex and interrelated global crisis.

**Finally, in the gospel,** Jesus catches the Twelve arguing among themselves, competing to be recognized as the greatest in the group. Most all of us have to acknowledge a competitive streak in ourselves. It may show itself in different situations and ways. Some people's competitive juices flow when the issue is recognition. Some instinctively compete for power and control. The economy is driven when people compete for wealth. Others compete to be most helpful....

What is worth noting in this gospel passage is that Jesus does not tell the Twelve to stop competing. The drive to compete can provide powerful energy to drive action. Jesus tells them that his disciples need to channel their competitive energies into service, service of the least.

**"Faith without works is dead."**

The spiritual work coming out of this Sunday's reflection certainly should include continuing and deepening attention to the Laudato Si' Action Platform's goal of **Ecological Spirituality** that we looked at the 1st Sunday.

What competitive challenges do we find ourselves rising to most naturally and spontaneously? Through study and prayerful reflection, how can we best direct our competitive energies, both individually and as communities, to serve Creation and the human community in this time of growing crisis and need?

Will our plans and efforts deepen our personal and community ecological spirituality? Can they help to free us from the competitive dynamics driving climate change and social conflict? How can we nurture growth in mutual service, simplicity of life, and the true wisdom "full of mercy and good fruits" that will bring the change and healing that Earth and we so urgently need?

This reflection also highlights the importance of two other **Platform** goals.

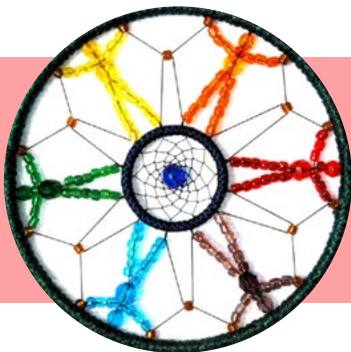
**Response to the Cry of the Earth.**

The severity of the various dimensions and impacts of the changing climate express Earth's great cry for help. This goal invites

action to protect Earth for the wellbeing of all who make it home. Actions toward this goal could include adopting renewable energies, working for carbon neutrality, protecting biodiversity, sustainability, and more - all the ways human creativity can identify or create to address the warming of the planet and the resultant climate change.

Does this type of action speak to my/our lives at this time? Do actions like these resonate with my/our sense of calling at this time? Are there other people, communities, networks with whom I/we can join in this type of action? How might we move into further action toward this goal now?

**Ecological Economics.** This goal sees the economy as being in service of the whole human community which in turn needs to be in service of the biosphere. Actions could include sustainable production and consumption, ethical investments and divestment from fossil fuels, and prioritizing the care economy and the dignity of workers.



***"Could it be true that God will not protect Earth from the destructive effects of humanity's actions?"***

It promotes transition to economic systems which respect Earth's limits and are not based on competitive consumption, greed and the assumption of unlimited growth.

Does this type of action speak to my/our lives at this time? Does it counter the destructive human passions driving climate change that the Apostle James and Pope Francis warn against? Do actions like these resonate with my/our sense of calling at this time? What are we being called to?

How can we identify and grow in understanding more sustainable economic systems? What are some of their fundamental values and principles? More and more local communities are choosing these systems to transform the ways they are living. What changes would they require of us/our communities in how we live and what we aspire to? Where can we find individuals, communities and networks living them now in practical ways? Are there ways that I /we can join

in this type of action? How might we move into further action toward this goal now?

### Faith Reflections

Are you among those who believe in God Who births all created things, renews all things, and cherishes all things?

Are you among those who believe in God, Who nearly 4.5 billion years ago began to form Earth, Who patiently evolved Earth as a nurturing home for all creatures, all members of the Earth family?

Are you among those who believe in God, Who opens the ears and frees the tongues of those called to protect and care for Earth as servants of the New Creation among us in these times?

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 accepted rejection, suffering and death on a cross, a faithful witness to God's call to loving care for all human beings and healing restoration for all Creation?

Are you among those who believe in Jesus, the risen Christ, Who is inviting us to the greatness of service, evolving the New Creation?

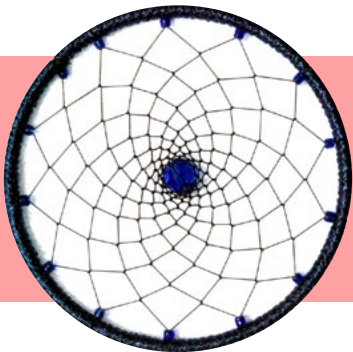
Are you among those who believe in the Holy Spirit, offering the peaceable, gentle Wisdom of God among us?

Are you among those who believe in the Holy Spirit, Who is working now among us to deepen in all peoples a spirit of solidarity dedicated to service for the renewal of Earth as a nurturing home for all?

This is our faith. Through it we see God's revelation emerging in new ways among us. Through it we embrace the promise of God's saving love and our mission to restore the household of Creation. **Amen.**

### General Intercessions

For ever-deepening trust in the faithful presence and loving work of God in us, among us, and through us, for ever-greater attentiveness to the Wisdom from above guiding us to respond effectively to the Cry of the Earth and the Cry of the Poor, we pray...



***“Ecological Economics promotes transition to economic systems which respect Earth's limits and are not based on competitive consumption, greed, and the assumption of unlimited growth.”***



For the creativity, global solidarity, and courage to address the warming of the planet and the resulting, destructive climate change effectively, we pray...

For those who are today suffering most from the effects of the changing climate and for generous response to their needs from the rest of the human community, we pray...

For the success of the work of ecumenical and interfaith communities to promote global unity and restore Earth as a nurturing home to all its inhabitants, we pray...

For the urgent, generous, and effective response of the global community in the ongoing United Nations conferences on biodiversity and climate change, we pray...

That we may take up our prophetic responsibilities in this time of urgent crisis to speak God's Truth with courage, calling each other into ways of living on Earth wisely, sustainably, justly, and reverently, we pray...

### Prayer over the Gifts

Loving Creator God, from the explosive death of a star You planted the seeds of life on Earth. Through billions of years, You have prepared and given us a rich diversity of Earth's gifts to share. From among them all and representing them all, we offer this bread and wine, grateful for Your faithful care for our needs.

Through them too we offer our lives, our talents, and our commitment to care for all in need on planet Earth and to work for the restoration of our Common Home itself. Receive and transform our gifts and our energies into Your true Bread of Life for our world. We ask this in the name of Christ, Jesus. **Amen.**

### Prayer after Communion

Gracious, Loving God, we have shared this Eucharist in thanksgiving for Your sacred Creation in which we share and where we find our Common Home.

Now may the power of Christ's body and blood reach deep into our hearts, our minds, and our

bodies to heal our wounds, to open our eyes, our ears, and our hearts. Strengthen and protect us in the prophetic mission to heal and renew all of Earth's communities that You have entrusted to our care. 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 God bless us all with deep reverence and love for Creation in all its beauty, intricacy, and lavish goodness and guide us in caring for it wisely and well...

God who is our Creator, Christ Jesus our Brother, and the Holy Spirit in whom we live and move and have our being now and forever. **Amen.**



#### ECO-MARTYR

**Dorothy Stang, SNDdeN**  
(1931-2005) United States

#### EXTINCT SPECIES

**Po'ouli**  
(declared extinct 2019) Hawaii, USA



# Fourth Sunday **MUSICAL SELECTIONS**

September 22, 2024 | 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time

## Hymns

E - Entrance | O - Offertory | C - Communion | D - Dismissal  
OCP - Oregon Catholic Press | WLP-World Library Publications

- E, D God, Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens  
Catherine Cameron, ©1967 Hope Pub. Co.
- E,D Touch the Earth Lightly  
Shirley Erena Murray, ©1992 Hope Publishing Company.
- E,O,D For the Healing of the Nations  
Fred Kaan, ©1968 Hope Publishing Co
- O For the Fruits of This (All) Creation  
Fred Pratt Green, ©1970 Hope Publishing Co
- O Everything That Has Voice  
Shirley Erena Murray, ©2003 Hope Publishing Co.
- 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 Be Not Afraid  
©1975, 1978 Robert J. Dufford, published by OCP
- D This Is My Song  
Lloyd Stone & Georgia Harkness, ©1964 Lorenz Publishing Co.
- D How Can I Keep From Singing  
Robert Lowry

## Psalm Settings

- Psalm 54: The Lord Upholds My Life  
Owen Alstott, ©1970, 1990, OCP
- Psalm 54: The Lord Upholds My Life  
J. Michael Joncas, ©1989, WLP
- Psalm 54: The Lord Upholds My Life  
Michel Guimont, ©1994, 1998, GIA Publications, Inc.
- Psalm 54: The Lord Upholds My Life  
Stephen Pishner, ©2013, 2014 GIA Publications, Inc.
- Psalm 54: You Alone Are My Help  
Collegetown Composers Group, ©2005 Liturgical Press

# Fifth Sunday OF THE SEASON OF CREATION

September 29, 2024 | 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time

## SCRIPTURES

Numbers 11:25-29

Ps. 19:8-14

James 5:1-6

Mark 9:38-43, 45, 47-48

## Integral Ecological Sign of the Cross

We begin our celebration of the 5th Sunday of the Season of Creation...

In the name of our Creator God Who drew forth from Creation the human family, inviting awe and wonder,

And of the Word of God, calling us in Jesus to freedom from sin and healing in his name, ,

And of the Holy Spirit, who weaves the web of life's community. **Amen.**

May the grace and peace of our God be with you!

## Introductory Comments

Today's readings continue to warn us that our sinfulness is destroying our communities, the human family, and Earth, the supportive and nurturing home of us all. They challenge us to be active and prophetic in working for the New Creation in these times. The Responsorial Psalm guides us in prayer to ask for greater awareness of our "unknown faults" and of their grave seriousness, to ask for freedom from their destructive power no matter the cost.

## Penitential Rite Suggestion

So, as we begin, let's enter into the quiet of our spirits ... conscious of God's gift of Earth, its rich diversity of life, ... conscious of its destruction and suffering from overconsumption, exploitation, and warming temperatures ... yet home to millions of people rising up to restore, heal, and save our common home....

Loving Creator God, You have evolved extraordinary consciousness in the human family and revealed to us Creation's overwhelming power, beauty, and splendor, yet we too often respond with greed and abuse rather than awe, gratitude, and care

**Loving Creator God, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, the human community is polluting Earth's air, land, and waters, driving countless species extinct, turning our greed into global warming, devaluing human life, and tearing the Web of Life of which we all are a part.

**Word of God, have mercy.**

Holy Spirit of God, You are at work in us and among us now in these times, reweaving the web of life, restoring Earth, our common home.

**Wisdom of God, have mercy.**

May God, our Creator, Who is raising up prophets and inviting humanity into one loving community in a New Creation, have mercy on us, free us from our sins, and guide us into the fullness of Life. **Amen.**

**Gloria:** The awesome beauty of the created Universe today reveals to us a God of unimaginable Beauty, Creativity, Vibrancy of Life and of Love. As we contemplate our true reality, let's join our voices with all Creation to sing our praise to God.

## Opening Prayer

Gracious, Holy God of all that was, is, and ever shall be, we bless You. In Your goodness and infinite generosity, You pour Yourself out into Creation, from the first flaring forth of matter and energy to this very day.

Through the slow unfolding over billions of years, You have brought forth a richly diverse, powerful, and nurturing home for all that You have created.

Open our eyes in awe at the wonder of the Universe.

Turn our hearts to gratitude for Your ongoing work of Creation.

Awaken our hope and stir us to prophetic action for the dream of a renewed Creation where Your justice and love will govern all and all will live in Your peace.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, our Christ, and of Your life-giving Spirit, in Whom we live and move and have our being now and forever. **Amen.**

## Points for Reflection on the Scriptures

**In the reading from the Book of Numbers,** God bestowed some of the Spirit that was on Moses on 70 elders who immediately began to prophesy. Two other elders who were not present at this gathering also received the Spirit and began to prophesy. Joshua was upset and wanted to stop them, but Moses was clear:

“Would that all the people of God were

prophets! Would that the Lord might bestow the Spirit on them all!”

The scriptural understanding of prophets is not of people who predict the future. Biblical prophets are inspired to speak God’s Word to the people of their time. Given the urgency and seriousness of the planetary crisis and the threats to Earth confronting us, Moses’ response needs to be ours today. May God bestow the Spirit on everyone, raising people up around the planet as prophets. There is clearly urgent need for a global chorus of such prophets to speak out now as the destruction and dangers to Earth are escalating so rapidly.

The Laudato Sí Action Platform encourages that kind of universal prophetic response throughout the Catholic community. During the 2021 **Laudato Sí Special Anniversary Year**, a program was launched with public commitments from the various institutions that constitute the Catholic Community globally. Leaders from each of those types of institutions committed to beginning “a 7-year journey to total sustainability in the spirit of Laudato Sí.” And they invite all like institutions to join them. Today’s prayer for all of God’s people to be prophets provides a perfect context for asking ourselves how these **Laudato Sí Action Platform Partners** in our communities can respond more fully to this commitment.



### Laudato Sí Families.

How might each of our families join more fully in achieving the Laudato Sí Action Platform goals we have been reflecting on and praying over during this season? How might our families join other families, networking to advance the goals in ways that are particularly appropriate and possible for families as families? Have some of our families given us helpful examples that can give others hope and encourage their participation?

### Laudato Sí Parishes and Dioceses.

How might each of our parishes and dioceses join more fully in achieving the Laudato Sí Action Platform goals we have been reflecting on and praying over during this season? How might our parish and

diocese join other parishes and dioceses, networking to advance the goals in ways that are particularly appropriate and possible for parishes and dioceses as parishes and dioceses? Have some of our parishes given us helpful examples that can give others hope and encourage their participation?

#### **Laudato Sí Educational Institutions.**

How might each of our schools, universities, and other educational institutions join more fully in achieving the Laudato Sí Action Platform goals we have been reflecting on and praying over during this season? How might our educational institutions join other educational institutions, networking to advance the goals in ways that are particularly appropriate and possible for educational institutions as educational institutions? Have some of our educational institutions given us helpful examples in recent years that can give others hope and encourage their participation?

#### **Laudato Sí Hospitals and Health Care Institutions.**

How might each of our hospitals and health care institutions join more fully in achieving the Laudato Sí Action Platform goals we have been reflecting on and praying over during this season? How might our hospitals and health care institutions join other health institutions, networking to advance the goals in ways that are particularly appropriate and possible for hospitals and health care institutions as hospitals and health care institutions? Have some of our health care institutions given us helpful examples that can give others hope and encourage their participation?

#### **Laudato Sí Economic Entities.**

How might each of our economic entities join more fully in achieving the Laudato Sí Action Platform goals we have been reflecting on and praying over during this season? How might they join other economic entities, networking to advance the goals in ways that

are particularly appropriate and possible for economic entities as economic entities? Have some of our businesses given us helpful examples that can give others hope and encourage their participation?

#### **Laudato Sí Organizations and Groups.**

How might each of our organizations and groups join more fully in achieving the Laudato Sí Action Platform goals we have been reflecting on and praying over during this season? How might they join other organizations and groups, networking to advance the goals in ways that are particularly appropriate and possible for organizations and groups as organizations and groups? Have some of our organizations given us helpful examples that can give others hope and encourage their participation?

#### **Laudato Sí Religious Orders.**

How might each of our religious orders join more fully in achieving the Laudato Sí Action



***“Would that all the people of God were prophets!”***

*~Moses*

Platform goals we have been reflecting on and praying over during this season? How might our religious orders join other religious orders, networking to advance the goals in ways that are particularly appropriate and possible for religious orders as religious orders? How have some of our religious communities given us helpful examples that can give others hope and encourage their participation?

**The reading from the Letter of James** is a devastating, direct condemnation of the rich. It reflects the judgment widespread through the early centuries of Christianity that those who have more than they need are in effect stealing from those who don't have the basics they need. In this age of unprecedented **inequality** between the 1% with unimaginable wealth and the vast majority of the human family, James' words are a sharply appropriate prophetic warning.

Today it is clear that this warning applies not just to wealthy individuals or groups but also to the wealthy industrialized nations. Their development through fossil-fuel-driven production has over the last century and a half polluted and warmed Earth dangerously. The widespread culture and systems of competitive consumption and accumulation have consolidated global wealth, creating what Pope Francis has called "throw-away societies." The majority of nations, often exploited and controlled by the economic and political power of the wealthy nations, remain poor and are

struggling to deal with the impacts of the changing climate.

Wealthy nations and wealthy communities and individuals have an urgent responsibility to address the crises their ways of living have created for the world community. These times demand human solidarity and collaboration totally unprecedented in human history to this time.

**In the gospel passage**, John plays the same role Joshua played with Moses. He tells Jesus that he and the others tried to stop someone who didn't follow Jesus from driving out demons in his name. Like Moses, Jesus rejects exclusive ownership to the good works. He urges his disciples to respect those doing these works, "For whoever is not against us is for us."

This message is important to remember as members of the Catholic community collaborate with and form networks with people of other faiths or no faith who do not share all the Church's beliefs or moral positions. In recent years, many Catholic social service agencies around the world have come under withering attack from members of their own church for collaborating on work for justice and for protection and restoration of Earth with those who do not share the Church's official positions on controversial ethical issues, especially abortion. In working to restore Earth and save all its inhabitants from devastating suffering and destruction, our position needs to be, in the

words Jesus used, that whoever is not against us is for us. And our prayer needs to be, "Would that everyone were a prophet!"

In the latter section of the gospel, Jesus gives grave warning about how seriously we need to take our sins and what terrible punishment will lie ahead for teaching the young our sinful ways. In the context of the Season of Creation, those sins include the destructive patterns of living identified by Pope Francis in *Laudato Si'*, patterns of ecological degradation, greed, overconsumption, lack of solidarity across economic classes, and many others referred to throughout these materials and identified by so many other contemporary ecological prophets. Jesus's warning demands we look at how we are raising our children and how they are learning to relate to Earth.

Jesus's repeated reference to the horror of the fiery abyss, the unquenchable fire of Gehenna, draws upon the imagery of Jewish apocalyptic eschatology. And his injunction to cut out of our lives what causes us to sin is vivid and effective use of Jewish hyperbole. But the imagery of Gehenna is eerily contemporary when we see video of the massive wildfires destroying everything and everyone in their paths in Australia, the western United States, Siberia and the Arctic, Indonesia, and the Amazon Rainforest, to name just a few. Until the human family can embrace what Pope Francis calls an integral ecological conversion, until we can cut out of our lives the sinful, destructive patterns

of living on Earth that are driving climate change, we will continue more and more to face the fiery abyss, the unquenchable flames that are the contemporary incarnation of Gehenna.

**The prayer of today's Responsorial Psalm** speaks to this world: a prayer for the wisdom and guidance of God, a prayer to cleanse us even from our unknown faults.

### Faith Reflections

Are you among those who believe in God, Who nearly 4.5 billion years ago began to form Earth and Who patiently evolved Earth as a nurturing home for all creatures, all members of the Earth family?

Are you among those who believe in God, Who opens the ears and frees the tongues of those called to be prophets guiding us to integral conversion to nurture the New Creation among us in these times?

Are you among those who believe in Jesus, God become flesh of our flesh, a human part of the Earth community, Who lived and breathed and spoke prophetic truth among us, sending us to be prophets of His Word for the healing of the Earth community?

Are you among those who believe in Jesus, Who was rejected, tortured, and put to death on a cross, a faithful witness to God's call to loving care for all human beings and healing restoration for all Creation?

Are you among those who believe in Jesus, the risen Christ, Who is at the heart of the New Creation, guiding us in our conversion and reconciling all things to God, renewing Creation?

Are you among those who believe in the Holy Spirit Who is working now among us to deepen in all peoples a spirit of solidarity dedicated to service for the renewal of Earth as a nurturing home for all?

Are you among those who believe that with Christ and in the Holy Spirit we will rise to celebrate the New Creation?

This is our faith. Through it we see God's revelation emerging in new ways among us. Through it we embrace the promise of God's saving love and our mission to restore the household of Creation. **Amen.**

### General Intercessions

For ever-deepening trust in the faithful presence and loving work of God in us, among us, and through us; for ever-greater attentiveness to the Wisdom guiding us to respond effectively to the Cry of the Earth and the Cry of the Poor, we pray...

For the rich diversity of groups, organizations, and institutions within our community, that they may grow in creativity, global solidarity, and prophetic courage to address the warming of the planet and the resulting destructive climate change effectively, we pray ...

For those who are today suffering most from the effects of the changing climate, that the human family may listen attentively to their prophetic word and respond generously to their needs, we pray ...

For the success of the work of ecumenical and interfaith communities to promote global unity and restore Earth as a nurturing home to all its inhabitants, we pray...

For the urgent, generous, and effective response of the global community in the ongoing United Nations conferences on biodiversity and climate change, we pray...

That we may take up our prophetic responsibilities in this time of urgent crisis to speak God's Truth with courage, calling each other into ways of living on Earth wisely, sustainably, justly, and reverently, we pray...

### Prayer over the Gifts

Loving Creator God, from the explosive death of a star You planted the seeds of life on Earth. Through billions of years, You have prepared and given us a rich diversity of Earth's gifts to share. From among them and representing them all, we offer this bread and wine, grateful for Your faithful care.

Through them too we offer our lives, our talents, and our commitment to care for all in need on Earth and to work for the restoration of this planet as the Common Home for all who dwell on it and in it. Receive our offering and

transform our gifts and our energies into Your true Bread of Life for our world. We ask this in the name of Christ, Jesus. **Amen.**

### Prayer after Communion

Gracious, Loving God, we have shared this Eucharist in thanksgiving for Your sacred Creation and for Earth which we share with all creatures for whom it is home.

Now may the power of Christ's body and blood reach deep into our hearts, our minds, and our bodies to heal our wounds, to open our eyes, our ears, and our hearts. Strengthen and protect us in the prophetic work of integral conversion and of healing and renewing all of Earth's communities that You have entrusted to our care. 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

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

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 bless us with the grace of feeling profoundly joined to everything that is. **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 Triune 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.**



#### ECO-MARTYR

**Glen Turner**  
(1963-2014) Australia



#### EXTINCT SPECIES

**Thick-billed Ground-dove**  
(declared extinct 2016) Oceania



# Fifth Sunday **MUSICAL SELECTIONS**

September 29, 2024 | 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time

## Hymns

E - Entrance | O - Offertory | C - Communion | D - Dismissal  
OCP - Oregon Catholic Press | WLP - World Library Publications

- E,D Praise to You, O Christ, Our Savior  
©1986 Bernadette Farrell, published by OCP
- E All Are Welcome  
Marty Haugen, ©1994 GIA Publications, Inc.
- E,D The Church of Christ  
Fred Pratt Green, ©1971 Hope Publishing Co.
- O, C At the Table of the World  
Brian Wren, ©1989 Hope Publishing Co.
- E, O Come Holy Spirit, Wind and Fire  
Alan J. Hommerding, ©1993 WLP
- O O Beauty, Ever Ancient  
©2004 Robert F. O'Connor, published by OCP
- O, D Stewards of Earth  
Omer Westendorf, ©1984 World Library Publications
- O, C Here I Am, Lord  
Daniel L. Schutte, ©1981 OCP
- C Life-giving Bread, Saving Cup  
James Chepponis, ©1987 GIA
- D Lord, You Give the Great Commission  
Jeffery Rowthorn, ©1978 Hope Publishing Co.

## Psalm Settings

Psalm 19: The Precepts of the Lord  
Stephen Pishner, ©2013, 2014 GIA Publications, Inc.

Psalm 19: The Precepts of the Lord  
Steven R. Janco, ©2010, WLP

Psalm 19: The Precepts of the Lord  
Michel Guimont, ©1994, 1998 GIA Publications, Inc.

Psalm 19: The Precepts of the Lord  
©2019 Thomas Muglia, published by OCP

Psalm 19: The Precepts of the Lord, (ref. II)  
Tony E. Alonso, ©2003, 2012 GIA Publ., Inc.

Psalm 19: The Precepts of the Lord  
Owen Alstott, ©1977, 1990 OCP

## SEASON OF CREATION 2024

# Feast of St. Francis of Assisi

Friday, October 4, 2024

October 4th, the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, marks the formal closing of the 2024 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 at the beginning of the Season, 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 the Season of Creation Ecumenical Youth Committee. Once plans are complete, more information and directions for joining it will be available at [SeasonofCreation.org](http://SeasonofCreation.org).

For those who would prefer to celebrate a local ecumenical prayer service to close the Season of Creation, a draft text is offered as Addendum 1 in the [Season of Creation Celebration Guide](#), pp. 31-40.

### 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 honour 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 splendour, 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 coloured 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.

Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks, And serve Him with great humility. Amen.

# Feast of St. Francis **MUSICAL SELECTIONS**

Friday, October 4, 2024

## Hymns

**E - Entrance | O - Offertory | C - Communion | D - Dismissal**  
**OCP - Oregon Catholic Press | WLP-World Library Publications**

- 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 All Things Bright and Beautiful  
Cecil F. Alexander
- E, D Stewards of Earth  
Omer Westendorf, ©1984 World Library Publications
- E,O,D Creating God, Your Fingers Trace  
Jeffery Rowthorn, ©1979 Hymn Society of America
- O, D 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.
- O The Thirsty Cry for Water, Lord  
Herman Stuempfle, ©1997 GIA Publications, Inc.
- C Take and Eat  
James Quinn and Michael Joncas, ©1989 GIA
- C I Believe This Is Jesus  
Alan J. Hommerding, ©2004 WLP

- D God Is Still Speaking  
Marty Haugen, ©2009 GIA Publications, Inc.
- D God of the Fertile Fields  
Georgia Harkness, ©1955, Renewal 1953 Hymn Society.
- D The Church of Christ Fred Pratt Green, ©1971 Hope Publishing Co.

## Psalm Settings

- Psalm 16: You Are My Inheritance, O Lord  
Owen Alstott, ©1977, 1990 OCP
- Psalm 16: You Will Show Me the Path of Life (Antiphon III)  
Marty Haugen, adapt. Kodner, ©1988, 1994, GIA Publications, Inc.
- Psalm 16: You Are My Inheritance  
©2005, 2010 Barbara Bridge, published by OCP.
- Psalm 16: You Are My Inheritance  
Tony Alonso, ©2013 GIA Publications, Inc.
- Psalm 16: You Are My Inheritance, O Lord  
Michel Guimont, ©1994, 1998 GIA Pub., Inc.

## SEASON OF CREATION 2024

# Closing Reflection

As we come to the end of this Season of Creation, it should be clear that we human members of the full Earth community are standing at a critical, urgent, dangerous crisis point. Advancing and ever more destructive climate change is revealing Earth to be sliding quickly toward devastating ecological collapse.

Effective response to this situation cannot be a five-week focus on the issues annually that then turns to other issues and devotions. Pope Francis, 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 before our contemplative presence. It is inviting us to a new level of consciousness. 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 its 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.

With the blessing of the Hope that Jesus Christ inspires, a few additional questions based on the Laudato Sí Action Platform Goals may help us to imagine paths to guide the Action with Creation unfolding 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 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? Alternative visions of the successful human life more in harmony with nature and Christ’s gospel vision of the Kin-dom?

Do our efforts help families, organizations, institutions, and local communities like parishes and dioceses become active in the larger civic communities, engaging in ways that promote public policies for responding

to the Cry of Earth and the Cry of the Poor? 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 human community of Earth will become able to move effectively and urgently together for the healing and restoration of Earth 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 among us.

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 great symphony of  
beauty in the New Creation. Amen.

## APPENDIX 1

# Music Reference List

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

At the Table of the World

Brian Wren, ©1989 Hope Publishing Co.

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

Creating God, Your Fingers Trace

Jeffery Rowthorn, ©1979 Hymn Society of America

Everything That Has Voice

Shirley Erena Murray, ©2003 Hope Publishing Co.

Flow, River, Flow

© 1986 Bob Hurd, Published by Oregon Catholic Press

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

Gift of Finest Wheat

Omer Westendorf, ©1977 Archdiocese of Phila., International Liturgy Pub.

Glory and Praise to Our God

©1972, 1974, 2008 Daniel L. Schutte, pub. by OCP

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

God, Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens  
Catherine Cameron, ©1967 Hope Pub. Co.

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

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

I Sing the Mighty Power of God  
Isaac Watts

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  
©2015 Ricky Manalo, CSP, published by OCP.

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

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

Light Dawns on a Weary World  
Mary Louise Bringle, ©2002, GIA Publications.

Lord, You Give the Great Commission  
Jeffery Rowthorn, ©1978 Hope Publishing Co.

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling  
Charles Wesley

Love One Another  
Feargal King, ©2000 WLP

Make of Our Hands a Throne  
Steven C. Warner, ©2001 WLP

Many and Great  
Dakota hymn, para. Philip Frazier

Morning Has Broken  
©1931 Eleanor Farjeon

O Beauty, Ever Ancient  
© 2004 Robert F. O'Connor, published by OCP

One Bread, One Body  
© 1978 John B. Foley, SJ, pub. by OCP

O God, Our Help in Ages Past  
Isaac Watts

Now Join We to Praise the Creator  
Fred Kaan, ©1968 Hope Publishing Company

Now In This Banquet  
Marty Haugen, ©1986 GIA Publications, Inc.

Pan de Vida  
Bob Hurd and Pia Moriarty, ©1988 by Bob Hurd, pub. by OCP

Praise to the Lord  
Joachim Neander, trans. Catherine Winkworth

Praise to You, O Christ, Our Savior  
©1986 Bernadette Farrell, published by OCP

Prayer of Saint Francis  
St. Francis of Assisi, adapt. Sebastian Temple, ©1967 OCP

Say to the Frightened Heart  
©2012 Bob Hurd, published by OCP.

Seek the Lord  
©1976 Robert F. O'Connor, SJ, and New Dawn Music

Sing Out, Earth and Skies  
Marty Haugen, ©1985 GIA

Sing, O Sing  
©1987, 1989, 1992, Daniel L. Schutte, published by OCP

Stewards of Earth  
Omer Westendorf, © 1984 World Library Publications

Take and Eat  
James Quinn and Michael Joncas, ©1989 GIA

Taste and See  
James E. Moore, Jr., ©1983 GIA

Tend the Ground  
©2016 Curtis Stephan, published by OCP.

Thank You, God, for Water, Soil, and Air  
Brian Wren, ©1975 Hope Publishing Co.

The Church of Christ  
Fred Pratt Green, ©1971 Hope Publishing Co.

The Earth Is the Lord's  
Erik Routley, ©1978 Hope Publishing Co.

The Stars Declare His Glory  
Timothy Dudley-Smith, ©1981 Hope Publishing Co.

The Thirsty Cry for Water, Lord  
Herman Stuempfle, ©1997 GIA Publications, Inc.

This Is My Song  
Lloyd Stone & Georgia Harkness, ©1964 Lorenz Publishing Co.

Touch the Earth Lightly  
Shirley Erena Murray, ©1992 Hope Publishing Company.

Ubi Caritas  
©1979 Les Presses de Taizé, GIA, agent

We Give You but Your Own  
William W. How

We Sing the Mighty Power of God  
Isaac Watts

When Love Is Found  
Brian Wren, ©1983, Hope Publishing Co.

When We Are Living /Pues Si Vivimos  
Roberto Escamilla, ©1989 United Meth. Pub. House

Where Charity and Love Prevail  
Paul Benoit, ©1960 WLP

Who Can Measure Heaven and Earth  
Christopher Idle, ©1982 Hope Publishing Co.

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

**APPENDIX 2**

# Eco-Martyrs & Extinct Species

## Introduction

Martyrdom, beginning with Jesus, has as long tradition in the Church. This most radical act of sacrifice in defense of one's beliefs gives testimony to radical selfless love. In our contemporary world, we recognize the growing number of eco-prophets who because of their complete dedication to defending life, become eco-martyrs. The lives taken in the name of profit, extraction, consumption, and accumulation of wealth cannot be simply defined as casualties of growth and development.

In addition, if we think of human eco-martyr and how they are defined by their defense and protection of lives, habitats, and relationships, we can also include other-than-human species and creation as eco-martyrs. Scientific research increasingly illuminates evidence nonhuman species also, in their own ways, try to defend and protect their lives, habitats, and relationships. Just like human eco-martyrs, so too animals, plants, and entire ecosystems have been tortured and killed to extinction for human consumption, greed and monetary gain.

This appendix includes both human and nonhuman eco-martyrs from around the globe. This is only a small representation of a much larger story. During this Season of Creation, consider learning about your local community and the lives that have been taken because they were considered a barrier to the current global economic and technocratic paradigm which ensures that profits not prophets will be the voice that is heard.

To learn more about the extinct species listed and many others visit the International Union for Conservation of Nature Red List of Threatened Species. Each species listed in the IUCN database includes a downloadable pdf with extensive scientific data including reasons for extinction. The species highlighted here are extinct due to human activity. Precisely because they are not well known throughout the world, we have chosen to lift up their existence to give praise and glory to God for creating them as well as lament our human responsibility for not protecting them.

While there is no known central database that collects the names and stories of the world's eco-martyrs, to learn more about any of the individuals included here, a simple google search will lead to additional information.



## APPENDIX 2

## Eco-Martyrs &amp; Extinct Species

## Asia

**Gloria Capitan (1959-2016)**, a member organization of the Philippine Movement for Climate Justice (PMCJ), was shot and killed July 1, 2016. She had been very active in the fight against coal and led in a series of mass actions and petitions calling for a permanent closure of a coal stockpile in their village.

**Stan Swamy, SJ (1937-2021)** Fr. Stan was a vocal 84-year-old activist for indigenous rights in India, protecting their lands and forests from mining companies and other predatory interests. Fr. Stan died in prison in July of 2021.

**Schomburgk's Deer**, declared extinct in 2015. Commercial production of rice for export began in the late nineteenth century in Thailand's central plains, leading to the loss of nearly all the grassland and swamp areas that this deer depended on, and greatly fragmented what remained. Intensive hunting pressure at the turn of the 19th-20th century restricted the species further and it disappeared in the 1930s.

**Credit:** [iucnredlist.org/species/4288/79818502](https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/4288/79818502)



## APPENDIX 2

## Eco-Martyrs &amp; Extinct Species

## Africa

**Ken Saro Wiwa (1941-1995)** was a Nigerian environmental activist. He was a member of the Ogoni people, an ethnic minority whose homeland was targeted for oil drilling and suffered extreme ecological damage from decades of indiscriminate oil waste dumping. He led a nonviolent campaign against the damage done to the land and waters by multinational oil companies, especially Shell. At the height of the campaign, he was tried by a special military tribunal on trumped up charges and hanged in 1995. Photo Copyright: © Tim Lambon / Greenpeace

**Wayne Lotter (1965-2017)** was a South African leading elephant conservationist and head of an anti-poaching NGO who was shot dead in Tanzania on 16 August 2017.

**St. Helena Olive**, declared extinct in 2004. The majority of the population was probably lost to deforestation following the establishment of a permanent colony on St Helena by the East India Company in 1658. Trees were cleared for pasture land and also to provide fuel and timber, for which the hard, yellow wood was probably reasonably priced.

**Credit:** [iucnredlist.org/species/37598/67372241](http://iucnredlist.org/species/37598/67372241)



## APPENDIX 2

## Eco-Martyrs &amp; Extinct Species

## Latin America

**Berta Cáceres, (1971-2016)** a Honduran environmental activist and indigenous leader, was co-founder and coordinator of the Civic Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras (COPINH). She was involved in numerous land and water struggles alongside indigenous Lenca communities across western Honduras. Her efforts to stop construction of a hydroelectric dam on the Gualcarque river, in the community of Río Blanco, led to her murder in her home on March 2, 2016.

**Macarena Valdés, (1983-2016)** young Mapuche environmental activist, opponent of the hydroelectric project of the transnational company RP Global (Austrian company) and the Chilean Saesa. She was found hanged in her home on August 22, 2016. Initially her death was catalogued as "suicide", by Carabineros and the Forensic Medical Service, a thesis that all her acquaintances discarded from the beginning. After multiple investigations on January 16, 2018 the forensic doctors declared: "the thesis of suicide of environmental activist Macarena Valdés is discarded".

**Golden Toad of Costa Rica**, declared extinct in 2020. Its restricted range, climate change, chytridiomycosis and airborne pollution probably contributed to this species' extinction.

**Credit:** [iucnredlist.org/species/3172/54357699](https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/3172/54357699)



## APPENDIX 2

## Eco-Martyrs &amp; Extinct Species

## North America

**Dorothy Stang, SNDdeN (1931-2005)**, born in the U.S., a Notre Dame de Namur sister, moved to Brazil as a missionary in 1966 and became a Brazilian citizen. She settled in Anapu, a city in the state of Pará, in the Amazon Basin of Brazil. She dedicated herself to defending the Amazon rain forest and the indigenous poor who lived there from loggers and landowners who wanted their land. This led to death threats against her. She was shot to death while walking through the forest to a community meeting on February 12, 2005.

To this day indigenous people living in and trying to protect the rain forests of the planet suffer from what has been called an epidemic of environmental martyrdom at the rate of nearly 3 assassinations every week.

**Native Americans of the United States and Canada** have been systematically and forcibly removed from their ancestral lands, tortured and murdered to the point of extinction by the U.S. and Canadian governments and related institutions with impunity.

**Poo-uli** declared extinct in 2019. Habitat destruction and modification, and the rapid spread of disease-carrying mosquitoes in the lowlands are thought to be responsible for past declines.

**Credit:** [iucnredlist.org/species/22720863/153774712](https://iucnredlist.org/species/22720863/153774712)



## APPENDIX 2

## Eco-Martyrs &amp; Extinct Species

## Oceania

**Glen Turner (1963-2014)** was an environmental officer who was shot and killed over a land dispute in New South Wales, Australia, in 2014. His murderer was facing prosecutions by the Office of Environment and Heritage over illegal land clearing.

**Thick-billed Ground-dove** declared extinct in 2016. The species is likely to have declined through a combination of predation by the widespread introduction of cats and rats on Makira, and habitat destruction. Most lowland forest has been logged or is in logging concessions, and the larger pigeons are targeted by local hunters.

**Credit:** [iucnredlist.org/species/22691056/93301654](https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/22691056/93301654)





# Hope & Act with Creation

SEASON OF CREATION 2024 | A CATHOLIC LITURGICAL GUIDE

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