



**Recommendations for Sunday Liturgies during
The Season of Creation 2020
Theme: “CULTIVATING HOPE”**

**Pope Francis has announced this year as a special
Laudato Si’ Anniversary Year which runs from
24th May 2020 – 24th May 2021.**

**These resources are provided by the Laudato Si Working Group of the
Council for Catechetics.**



Note: The following suggestions for Sunday liturgies must ensure compliance with government COVID19 guidelines

Before the Liturgy

- Advise congregation on previous Sunday to bring something from nature and leave it at a table near the Altar when they enter the Church
- Invite volunteers, children or adults, to dress in nature costumes – bees, insects, fish, welcoming the congregation before mass.
- Technology can enhance the celebration in terms of visual resources. A set of visual resources will be available before September on the Irish Bishops Conference website as well as on www.lovingsisterearth.com, for use with PowerPoint, webcam, LCD, Live Streaming etc.

Suggestions for Music:

- St Francis' Canticle (could be used as Psalm)
- Our God Reigns
- All Creatures Great and Small
- Ag Criost an Siol
- For the Beauty of the Earth (John Rutter)
- How Great is Our God (Chris Tomlin)
- Laudate Omnes Gentes (Taizé)
- Here I am Lord
- How Great Thou Art
- Taizé Chants: e.g. Laudate Omnes Gentes
- Deirdre Ni Chinneide: Oscail Mo Chroi (meditative chant)
- God Has Given us the Earth (Grow in Love hymn) <https://vimeo.com/280567593>



Sacred Space & Entrance Procession suggestions:

- During opening hymn, children wave colourful cloths and bring them to Altar
- The theme of Cultivating Hope should be emphasised in the sacred space, for example using soil, seeds, water, plough, garden tools etc. Be creative.
- Globe, Waterfall, Rainbow (ancient symbol of God's providence) could also be brought forward.
- Statue / picture of local saints; of Bridget, Kevin etc.; Celtic Cross
- Photos of animals etc.
- Trees for planting after the mass / pot plants
- Banner for Season of Creation.

**MASS FOR 6 SEPTEMBER 2020,
FIRST SUNDAY OF THE SEASON OF CREATION
23RD Sunday in Ordinary Time**



INTRODUCTION (Priest, Leader of Care for Creation Group or Reader)

Welcome! I am happy to introduce the first Sunday of the Season of Creation. The Season of Creation has a special significance for the Catholic Church, particularly since Pope Francis established September 1st as the annual World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation. It is a time marked throughout the Christian world from 1st September to 4th October (Feast of St. Francis of Assisi) and celebrates the joy of creation as well as encourages awareness-raising initiatives to protect the natural environment. The theme this year is **Cultivating Hope**. We celebrate in the awareness that we are in the midst of an international health crisis. The environmental crisis and this health crisis are interconnected. “Both are global emergencies that will affect many people, both are experienced most deeply by the poor and vulnerable, and both expose the deep injustices in our societies. Both will be solved only through a united effort that calls on the best of the values we share.” (www.laudatosiweek.org).

PENITENTIAL RITE

O Gracious God, Creator Spirit, Source of life, you have given order, light and life to the world around us and you have expressed delight in your creation. You commanded us to till and care for the garden of life. And yet, we have trampled on the beauty of your creation and neglected to keep your Word.

And so:

1. For our failure to hear the cry of the poor and the earth: we think of people dying of hunger and thirst; Lord have mercy
2. For our contribution to the pollution of our land, air and sea: we think of birds and fish that die from eating plastic and of the huge plastic islands in our oceans; Christ have mercy.
3. For our taking for granted the fruitfulness of the earth: we think of species that have become extinct over the past year and of the burning of the Amazon forests; Lord have mercy.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GLORIA

As we say/sing the Gloria, let us remind ourselves that we are praising and celebrating God as the author of our universe and of our salvation.

HOMILY NOTES

Sunday September 6th 2020 - 23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time (By Fr. Brian Grogan SJ & Loving Sister Earth)

Today we celebrate the Season of Creation during which we are reminded of our duty to care for what Pope Francis has named Our Common Home. The word “home” is something that everyone one of us here today can connected with. We all have come from some kind of home and are held within the relationships of that experience. So too we are also held within a relationship with the natural world and all of God’s creation. God holds all within the loving relationship of the Trinity which flows out through the Spirit in creation. Jesus tells us “that even every hair on our head is counted”. For a moment look around you and see the people here today and pause for a minute to allow those words to resonate with you. Can you see God in all around you regardless of how it looks?

Each one of us has a place which is unique to us in God’s plan for creation. So too each creature has a place which is unique within the ecology and biodiversity of the natural world. Let us remember to reverence their place and work to protect it for God’s plan to unfold. How we relate to each other and to every part of our lives is important. Covid19 has shown us in a very powerful way just how huge an impact we can make to the lives of each other and the world around us.

The loving energy of God is always flowing through all of creation and this is something which we in Ireland have in our rich spiritual heritage. Celtic Christianity was very at home with this belief and they saw it as holding all things together such as the changing of the seasons, the movement of the seas, the force of the wind, even the movement of the animals. They called this energy Neart De’. God as Trinity was integral to the everyday life of our ancestors in the faith. An ancient prayer that has come down to us through the centuries speaks for itself.

‘Three folds of the cloth yet one cloth is there

Three joints in the finger yet one finger fair

Three leaves in the shamrock yet one shamrock to wear

Frost, snowflakes and ice, all in water their origin share

Three Persons in God, to God alone we make prayer.’

Pope Francis says in LS “Discovering God’s presence in nature leads us to cultivate the ecological virtues.” We need today to act in a way to make this become reality for humanity, we need an ecological conversion. We would then live in harmony with nature and care for it as our loving partner in this relationship of life. The Spirit is calling us all at this time to make changes to the way we live. Perhaps over the next few weeks each one of us might try and put some changes into practice and play our part in the future of our world. But we must never give up hope as Jesus has promised us that the Spirit will always be with us. Let us pray for the Holy Spirit of come afresh and literally Renew the Face of the Earth.

Short silence after the homily

INTRODUCTION TO THE CREED

As we stand to recite the Creed, notice that we are speaking to God who is the 'Creator of heaven and earth'.

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

All powerful God, you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of your creatures. You embrace with tenderness all that exists. Pour out upon us the power of your love so that we may protect life and beauty:
Lord hear us

Fill us with peace that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one. O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of the earth, so precious in your eyes.
Lord hear us.

Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it that we may sow beauty and not destruction. Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain at the expense of the poor and the earth.
Lord hear us.

Teach us to discover the worth of each thing, to be filled with awe and contemplation, to recognise that we are united with each creature as we journey towards your eternal light.
Lord hear us

We thank you for being with us each day. Help us to discover a vaccine for the Coronavirus. [Name any current threat to health and life]. Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love and peace... Lord hear us. Amen

OFFERTORY PROCESSION

- A loaf of bread and bowl of grapes could be brought to the altar.
- Indicate that we have bread and wine to offer only because of the work of our endangered pollinators.
- If symbols were not brought up at the beginning of the liturgy soil, seeds, plants or a tree for planting could also be offered.

Suggested Music: Ag Criost an Siol

OUR FATHER

As we pray this prayer over the coming weeks, let us ask forgiveness for our sins against Creation and especially the poor. Let us be reminded of our deep interconnectedness.

BEFORE COMMUNION

Option: Celebrant could read aloud the prayer usually said quietly by the priest: 'Lord Jesus Christ, may our receiving of you ... be for us protection in mind and body, and a healing remedy'.

POST-COMMUNION REFLECTION

Please see Appendix for options.

FINAL BLESSING

- Indicate theme of next Sunday's Mass
- We are encouraging parishes to plant a tree during the Season of Creation, invite people to join outside if possible.
- The Final Blessing to include all aspects of creation, including what is around the Altar and outside the Church

Presider: The Mass is ended. Go in Peace to care for our common home and preserve the integrity of God's creation

AS CONGREGATION EXITS

- Small gift of seeds, bulbs, prayer card, booklet, photo, given out by children in costumes
- Planting of a native Irish Tree on church grounds to mark the Season of Creation 2020. Involve local groups and local media.



MASS FOR 13th September 2020
Second Sunday of the Season of Creation
24th Sunday in Ordinary Time



INTRODUCTION (Priest, Leader of Care for Creation Group or Reader)

Welcome! I am happy to introduce the second Sunday of the Season of Creation. The Season of Creation has a special significance for the Catholic Church, particularly since Pope Francis established September 1st as the annual World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation. It is a time marked throughout the Christian world from 1st September to 4th October (Feast of St. Francis of Assisi) and celebrates the joy of creation as well as encourages awareness-raising initiatives to protect the natural environment. The theme this year is **Cultivating Hope**. We celebrate in the awareness that we are in the midst of an international health crisis. The environmental crisis and this health crisis are interconnected. “Both are global emergencies that will affect many people, both are experienced most deeply by the poor and vulnerable, and both expose the deep injustices in our societies. Both will be solved only through a united effort that calls on the best of the values we share.” (www.laudatosiweek.org).

PENITENTIAL RITE

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And so:

1. For our failure to hear the cry of the poor and the earth: we think of people dying of hunger and thirst; Lord have mercy
2. For our contribution to the pollution of our land, air and sea: we think of birds and fish that die from eating plastic and of the huge plastic islands in our oceans; Christ have mercy.
3. For our taking for granted the fruitfulness of the earth: we think of species that have become extinct over the past year and of the burning of the Amazon forests; Lord have mercy.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GLORIA

As we say/sing the Gloria, let us remind ourselves that we are praising and celebrating God as the author of our universe and of our salvation.

HOMILY NOTES FOR THE 24TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

By. Fr. Brian Grogan and Loving Sister Earth

Today we celebrate the second Sunday of The Season of Creation. Recall the Spirit of this Season: Celebration, Repentance, Amendment--three themes but they're all about relationships.

Relationships make up our lives: look at our human relationships: here we are, a congregation related through a common faith; we are parent, child, husband, wife; family, friend, companion, teacher, priest. School, workplaces, neighbourhoods, sports clubs, entertainment, social media, -- all are webs of Relationships. In our gospel today, Jesus is urging us to constantly restore relationships, seventy-times-seven, i.e. infinitely.

Today we focus on our relationship with Creation. To stay alive, we depend totally on Creation – air, light, plants, animals, building materials, energy sources... When things go wrong with Nature, as we have seen in recent times, the world grinds to a halt. We know that we are plundering the earth's resources, we are in debt to nature. Nature is generous, on our side. We take and take, and she gives and gives: but she is going bankrupt--she can't keep up with our consumerism. We are destroying our relationship with her.

We are also in debt to the poor of the world. Millions of them workday and night for tiny wages which kills them when they're still young: but we benefit by having a cheaper lifestyle. So, we are in deep debt to Nature and to the poor: we owe them a lot of love and apology. This is why Pope Francis calls us to an Eco-Conversion: a softening of our hearts and minds leading us to a new love and respect for the poor and for Nature. We must ask their forgiveness and change our relationship with them into a partnership. Then we will find ways, however small, to pay back the debts we owe them. Jesus loved small gestures: think of the boy giving in his five loaves and two fish; or the widow putting her tiny coins into the treasury. He loves our small gestures too.

Our ancestors in the faith lived in loving relationships with the natural world and with God. They sensed the presence of God in everything, and called it *Neart De*, the power of God. They cared for Nature. At their best, they were grateful to God for the goodness of Nature, and generous to their poor. Let's learn from them and 'go and do likewise' in our time and place. We can be part of God's workforce in restoring Creation. God needs each of us to be a source of hope for our small blue planet. 'It takes only one good person to restore hope' (*Laudato Si'* 71).



PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

1. O Creator God, in this month of creation time, teach us to see your footprints in the beauty of creation. Inspire us to care for the earth, to respect the rights of all people, and all living species to share in your gifts today and to be always mindful of those who come after us.

Lord hear us

2. God of all life, we give thanks for the gift of the earth, our common home. At this time, many people, the oceans, and the eco-systems of the earth are struggling to survive. Help us to change our ways and guide us to live a life which is not centred exclusively on ourselves but on the needs of others and the worship of you as our ultimate concern.

Lord hear us

3. At this time in human history we are mindful that the survival of our planet and the well-being of humanity is threatened. Let us pray that UN Agreements to reduce global warming and to care for the poor will be honoured by governments throughout the world.

Lord hear us.

4. Let us pray for each other at this time that we may live the vision and values of Pope Francis' encyclical *on care for our Common Home*. In particular we pray for greater attention to social justice, climate justice, and intergenerational justice.

Lord hear us

5. Let us pray for all the souls of the faithful departed. In particular we remember the following who have died recently.....

Lord hear us

OFFERTORY PROCESSION

- A loaf of bread and bowl of grapes could be brought to the altar.
- Indicate that we have bread and wine to offer only because of the work of our endangered pollinators.
- If symbols were not brought up at the beginning of the liturgy soil, seeds, plants or a tree for planting could also be offered.

Suggested Music: Ag Criost an Siol

OUR FATHER

As we pray this prayer over the coming weeks, let us ask forgiveness for our sins against Creation and especially the poor. Let us be reminded of our deep interconnectedness.

BEFORE COMMUNION

Option: Celebrant could read aloud the prayer usually said quietly by the priest: 'Lord Jesus Christ, may our receiving of you ... be for us protection in mind and body, and a healing remedy'.

POST-COMMUNION REFLECTION (see APPENDIX for options)

FINAL BLESSING

- Indicate theme of next Sunday's Mass
- We are encouraging parishes to plant a native Irish tree on church grounds during the Season of Creation, invite people to join outside if possible.
- The Final Blessing to include all aspects of creation, including what is around the Altar and outside the Church

Presider: The Mass is ended. Go in Peace to care for our common home and preserve the integrity of God's creation.

AS CONGREGATION EXITS

- Small gift of seeds, bulbs, prayer card, booklet, photo, given out by children in costumes
- Planting of a native Irish Tree on church grounds to mark the Season of Creation 2020. Involve local groups and local media.



MASS for Sunday September 20th 2020

Third Sunday of the Season of Creation.

25th Sunday in Ordinary Time



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the 3rd Sunday within the Season of Creation 2020. This is a time set aside by Pope Francis for all of us to reflect on our place within the story creation and to accept our individual and collective responsibility to care for our common home. The season of creation offers all of us a unique opportunity to renew our vocation to become stewards of God's creation. Our commitment to the care of our common home is not something optional, or some kind of add-on to our faith, or some kind of extra; instead as Pope Francis continually reminds us the care of creation is at the centre of our Christian faith. Our theme this year is Cultivating Hope. We celebrate in awareness that alongside an environmental crisis we are also in the midst of an international health crisis.

PENITENTIAL SERVICE

O Gracious God, Creator Spirit, Source of life, you have given order, light and life to the world around us and you have expressed delight in your creation. You commanded us to till and care for the garden of life. And yet, we have trampled on the beauty of your creation and neglected to keep your Word.

And so:

1. O gracious God, we have exploited your creation for our own ends at the expense of the poorest people of the world. We now ask your forgiveness Lord, have mercy.
2. O merciful God, we have contributed to global warming, the breakdown of biodiversity, to environmental devastation which now threatens the very survival of future generations. We now ask your forgiveness. Christ, have mercy.
3. O Creator God, we have failed to recognise the interdependence of all your creatures, and we have neglected the integrity of your creation. We now ask your forgiveness. Lord, have mercy.

May Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us for our sins against the integrity of creation, and inspire us to work towards a new heaven and a new earth, Amen.

HOMILY NOTES, Matthew 21:1-16a:

25th Sunday in ordinary time by Fr. Dermot Lane

One of the striking features of the Covid 19 pandemic crisis was the way people turned to nature. Many spent more time in their gardens, getting in touch with the life, and beauty, and complexity of nature. Some found themselves dwelling within the spiritual shelter of nature, communing with the Creator within creation.

In our first reading today, Isaiah issues a number of challenges to us:

Seek the Lord while he may be found

Call upon the Lord while he is near

Return to the Lord, that he may have mercy on us(Is.55:6-7)

These invitations from Isaiah provoke the following questions for us today: Where will we find the Lord today, Where is God in our world? Where do I look to discover God ?

Many of the Psalms in the Bible find God in the wonders of nature. Let us look at Psalm 95 as a good example of this.

“In his hand are the depth of the earth, the height of the mountains are his also.

The sea is his, for he made it, and the dry land, which his hands have formed...

O come let us worship and bow down.

Let us kneel before the Lord our master” (Ps 95:4-6).

A similar linking of nature with God the creator can be found in Psalm 104.

This Psalm outlines in detail the work of creation:

“You stretch out the heavens like a tent

You set the earth on its foundations.

You cover it with the deep as with a garment (Ps 104:2, 5-6)...

You make the spring gush forth in the valleys(v10)

You cause the grass to grow for cattle and plants for people to use, to bring forth food from the earth, and wine to gladden the human heart, and oil to make the face shine, and bread to strengthen the human heart (v.5-15)

You have made the moon to mark the seasons (v19)

Then comes the response evoked by this wide-ranging experience of creation:

“May the glory of the Lord endure forever.

I will sing to the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have my being.

May my meditation be pleasing to him, for I rejoice in the Lord (v31-34)

And then the Psalm concludes as it began:

Bless the Lord, O my soul, praise the Lord (v. 35)"

During this season of creation, we are invited to get in touch with the wonders of creation and discover the presence of the Creator within creation. Dwelling within nature, listening to nature, reading nature like a book gives us a little glimpse of the mystery of God living among us within nature.

To conclude, there is an old proverb that sums up what I have been saying: "Close to nature, Close to God". Here is how the poet Elizabeth Barrett Browning of the 19th century puts it:

"Earth is crammed with heaven, and every common bush afire with God: but only he who sees takes off his shoes. The rest sit around and pluck the blackberries" ('Auror Leigh')

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

1. O Creator God, in this month of creation time, teach us to see your footprints in the beauty of creation. Inspire us to care for the earth, to respect the rights of all people, and all living species to share in your gifts today and to be always mindful of those who come after us.

Lord hear us

2. God of all life, we give thanks for the gift of the earth, our common home. At this time, many people, the oceans, and the eco-systems of the earth are struggling to survive. Help us to change our ways and guide us to live a life which is not centred exclusively on ourselves but on the needs of others and the worship of you as our ultimate concern.

Lord hear us

3. At this time in human history we are mindful that the survival of our planet and the well-being of humanity is threatened. Let us pray that UN Agreements to reduce global warming and to care for the poor will be honoured by governments throughout the world.

Lord hear us.

4. Let us pray for each other at this time that we may live the vision and values of Pope Francis' encyclical *on care for our Common Home*. In particular we pray for greater attention to social justice, climate justice, and intergenerational justice.
Lord hear us

5. Let us pray for all the souls of the faithful departed. In particular we remember the following who have died recently.....

Lord hear us

OFFERTORY PROCESSION

- A loaf of bread and bowl of grapes could be brought to the altar.
- Indicate that we have bread and wine to offer only because of the work of our endangered pollinators.
- If symbols were not brought up at the beginning of the liturgy soil, seeds, plants or a tree for planting could also be offered.

Suggested Music: Ag Críost an Siol

OUR FATHER

As we pray this prayer over the coming weeks, let us ask forgiveness for our sins against Creation and especially the poor. Let us be reminded of our deep interconnectedness.

BEFORE COMMUNION

Option: Celebrant could read aloud the prayer usually said quietly by the priest: 'Lord Jesus Christ, may our receiving of you ... be for us protection in mind and body, and a healing remedy'.



POST-COMMUNION REFLECTION (also see APPENDIX for options)

God our Creator, maker and shaper of all that is, seen and unseen;
You are present in the breadth and depth of the whole of creation,
and in the processes that make life possible.

Yet, we are distracted by the gods of the marketplace.

Our lives have become fractured and fragmented.

In our brokenness we disturb
the Earth's capacity to hold us

Call us back from the brink.

Help us to choose love and not fear,
to change ourselves and not the planet,
to act justly for the sake of the vulnerable,
and to make a difference today for the life tomorrow.

We make this our prayer in your name, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Amen.

(Martyn Goss, Diocese of Exeter)



FINAL BLESSING

- Indicate theme of next Sunday's Mass
- We are encouraging parishes to plant a native Irish tree on church grounds during the Season of Creation, invite people to join outside if possible.
- The Final Blessing to include all aspects of creation, including what is around the Altar and outside the Church

Presider: The Mass is ended. Go in Peace to care for our common home and preserve the integrity of God's creation.

Mass for Sunday 27th September 2020

Fourth Sunday of the Season of Creation.

26th Sunday in Ordinary Time

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the fourth Sunday within the Season of Creation, that time set aside by Pope Francis for all of us to reflect on our place within the story creation and to accept our individual and collective responsibility to care for our common home. The Season of Creation offers all of us a unique opportunity to renew our vocation to become stewards of God's creation. Our commitment to the care of our common home is not some kind of add-on to our faith or optional extra; instead as Pope Francis continually reminds us the care of God's creation is at the centre of our Christian faith. The theme for this year is Cultivating Hope.

PENITENTIAL SERVICE

O Gracious God, Creator Spirit, Source of life, you have given order, light and life to the world around us and you have expressed delight in your creation. You commanded us to till and care for the garden of life. And yet, we have trampled on the beauty of your creation and neglected to keep your Word.

And so:

1. O gracious God, we have exploited your creation for our own ends at the expense of the poorest people of the world. We now ask your forgiveness
Lord, have mercy.
2. O merciful God, we have contributed to global warming, the breakdown of biodiversity, to environmental devastation which now threatens the very survival of future generations. We now ask your forgiveness.
Christ, have mercy.
3. O Creator God, we have failed to recognise the interdependence of all your creatures, and we have neglected the integrity of your creation. We now ask your forgiveness.
Lord, have mercy.

May Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us for our sins against the integrity of creation, and inspire us to work towards a new heaven and a new earth, Amen.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GLORIA

As we say/sing the Gloria, let us remind ourselves that we are praising and celebrating God as the author of our universe and of our salvation.

Homily Notes, Matthew 21: 28-32

By Anna Keegan

The Gospel today tells us the Parable of the Two Sons. One son makes a promise to action that is broken, and the other who initially refuses to work, but then has a change of heart. In the world today we often say things without really meaning it. I will start a new diet, I will walk to work or I will recycle more, but often we forget, we don't really do what we say.

In this season of creation, we are called to think even more consciously about our actions. Actions matter to our planet and to each other. We are urged to make sure we are treating people and God's creation with goodness and joy.

In Laudato Si Pope Francis reminds us of the call in Genesis chapter 1 to "till" and "keep" the garden of the world. God is calling us to action, calling us to reconnect again with the earth. In Laudato Si we read, "Tilling" refers to cultivating, ploughing or working, while "keeping" means caring, protecting, overseeing and preserving. This implies a relationship of mutual responsibility between human beings and nature." LS 67. Like the second son in the parable today, we have lost sight of our responsibilities where our relationship with the vineyard is concerned.

How will we respond to this call to action today? Like the first son in the Gospel say no but then think about it and go and help. Or like the second son say we will do something but not do it?

Could we together as a parish act? Could we set up a 'Care for Creation' group in our parish? Create a biodiversity garden or become an eco-parish? I know that together as a faith community we can. Pope Francis says to us, it is not too late, we know that things can change and that truly much can be done.

In our penitential rite today, we began by saying sorry for our inaction. Let us use the Season of Creation as a springboard forward, cultivating hope for our planet and its future.



PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

1. O Creator God, help us to remember that words are important. Teach us to say what we mean and to think about the words we use. May we always seek your advice when we are unsure of what to say.
Lord hear us
2. God of all life, we give thanks for the gift of the earth, our common home. At this time, many people, the oceans, and the eco-systems of the earth are struggling to survive. Help us to change our ways and guide us to live a life which is not centred exclusively on ourselves but on the needs of others and the worship of you as our ultimate concern.
Lord hear us
3. At this time let us be mindful of all our actions. Let us act always in love for each other and the beautiful gift of this earth that the Lord has intrusted to us
Lord hear us.
4. Let us pray for each other at this time that we may live the vision and the values of Pope Francis' encyclical *on care for our Common Home*.
In particular we pray for greater attention to social justice, climate justice, and intergenerational justice.
Lord hear us
5. Let us pray for all the souls of the faithful departed. In particular we remember the following who have died recently.....
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OFFERTORY PROCESSION Suggested Music: Ag Criost an Siol

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BEFORE COMMUNION

Option: Celebrant could read aloud the prayer usually said quietly by the priest: 'Lord Jesus Christ, may our receiving of you ... be for us protection in mind and body, and a healing remedy'.

POST-COMMUNION REFLECTION (other options in Appendix)

THE SAINT FRANCIS PLEDGE

From United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

We Pledge to:

- **PRAY** and reflect on the duty to care for God's Creation and protect the poor and vulnerable.
- **LEARN** about and educate others on the causes and moral dimensions of climate change.
- **ASSESS** how we-as individuals and in our families, parishes and other affiliations contribute to climate change by our own energy use, consumption, waste, etc.
- **ACT** to change our choices and behaviours to reduce the ways we contribute to climate change.
- **ADVOCATE** for Catholic principles and priorities in climate change discussions and decisions, especially as they impact those who are poor and vulnerable.

FINAL BLESSING

- Indicate theme of next Sunday's Mass
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- The Final Blessing to include all aspects of creation, including what is around the Altar and outside the Church

Presider: The Mass is ended. Go in Peace to care for our common home and preserve the integrity of God's creation.



Mass for Sunday 4th October 2020

Fifth Sunday of the Season of Creation

Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

INTRODUCTION (Priest, Leader of Care for Creation Group or Reader)

Welcome! Today marks the end of the Season of Creation in the church calendar for 2020. For the past 5 weeks we have been asked to pray with and for creation in our Sunday liturgies and to think about ways in which we can care more deeply for our environment. As the Season comes to a close let us pray that this acts as a springboard from which to move forward. As we reflect today, let us also be mindful that it is the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of ecology. St. Francis saw God in all of creation and had a deep mystical relationship with all of nature. Let us pray today that we might re-awaken within us that same sense of awe and wonder and strive to protect our world, our common home.

PENITENTIAL RITE

O Gracious God, Creator Spirit, Source of life, you have given order, light and life to the world around us and you have expressed delight in your creation. You commanded us to till and care for the garden of life. And yet, we have trampled on the beauty of your creation and neglected to keep your Word.

And so:

1. For our failure to hear the cry of the poor and the earth: we think of people dying of hunger and thirst; Lord have mercy
2. For our contribution to the pollution of our land, air and sea: we think of birds and fish that die from eating plastic and of the huge plastic islands in our oceans; Christ have mercy.
3. For our taking for granted the fruitfulness of the earth: we think of species that have become extinct over the past year and of the burning of our great forests; Lord have mercy.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GLORIA

As we say/sing the Gloria, let us remind ourselves that we are praising and celebrating God as the author of our universe and of our salvation.

HOMILY NOTES Matthew 21:33-43

27th Sunday in Ordinary Time by Jane Mellett

When Jesus taught in parables, he always described situations that His listeners would be familiar with; in today's example, a vineyard. We read and hear that the owner of the vineyard has left the workers to care for the land and trusts that they will do what is necessary so that it can bear fruit. The workers have freedom to do as they wish, but still, the vineyard belongs to the landlord. They are expected to honour the agreement that has been made. However, they do not. They have lost sight of the original plan and, consumed by greed and selfishness, have lost their way.

Today we mark the end of the Season of Creation, a time where we celebrate all that is part of our beautiful world, God's creation. It is a season where we pray with and for creation and remind ourselves that we are protectors of this earth, given responsibility to 'till' and to 'care', not to plunder and destroy. We are the tenants of this parable, provided with everything we need to prosper and given responsibility to protect our world for the generations to come. Yet we know that our world is suffering. In *Laudato Si*, Pope Francis' encyclical on Care for Our Common Home, we are asked to hear the cry of the earth, to awaken to what is happening to God's creation and to take the urgent action that is needed.

St. Francis of Assisi, whose feast day is today, was someone who was intimately connected with nature. He experienced all of God's creation as family, '*Brother Sun, Sister Moon, Brother Wind, Sister Water*'. St Francis was a mystic and a pilgrim who saw how intimately connected everything in this world really is. The COVID 19 crisis has reminded all of us of this deep interconnection. It has shown us how what happens in one part of the world affects us all. We share one common humanity and live together on a common home. This health crisis and the environmental crisis are deeply linked. Both are global emergencies that affect millions of people; both are experienced most deeply by the poor and vulnerable, and both expose the deep injustices in our societies. Both will be solved only through a united effort that calls on the best of the values we share.

During the days of cocooning and lockdown we were/are forced to embrace a quiet time, a slower pace of life where we became more aware of simple things like birdsong, the wind, soil, trees, flowers, the earth resting. This time brought big questions to the fore for many people, such as 'what is truly important in my life?' It also brought opportunity, an opportunity for each of us to move into a different way of life, a life where we live more consciously, more sustainably and walk more gently on the earth. This deeper awareness, "*takes us to the heart of what it is to be human*" and gives us an opportunity to regain a sense of awe and wonder for creation. "*Just as happens when we fall in love with someone, whenever St. Francis would gaze at the sun, the moon or the smallest of animals, he burst into song, drawing all other creatures into his praise.*" (LS, 11). In *Laudato Si* we also read: "*If we approach nature and the environment without an openness to awe and wonder, if we no longer speak to the language of fraternity and beauty in our relationship with the world, our attitude will be that of masters, consumers, ruthless exploiters. . . By contrast, if we feel intimately united with all that exists, then sobriety and care will well up*

spontaneously.” (LS, 11). To put it another way, “we will only fight for what we love” (Thomas Berry). Laudato Si describes the roots of the environmental crisis as deeply spiritual, because, like the workers in the vineyard, we have forgotten who we are and where we come from. Let us recommit today to restoring this relationship.

As we bring this Season of Creation to a close, let it be a beginning, a spring-board into contemplation and action where our relationship with God’s creation is concerned. This is an urgent call. And one which faith communities have a responsibility to respond to. Let us Live Laudato Si. “Truly much can be done!” (LS, 180).

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

1. God of all life, we give thanks for the gift of the earth, our common home. At this time, many people, the oceans, and the eco-systems of the earth are struggling to survive. Help us to change our ways and guide us to live a life which is not centred exclusively on ourselves but on the needs of others and the worship of you as our ultimate concern.

Lord hear us

2. At this time in human history we are mindful that the survival of our planet and the well-being of humanity is threatened. Let us pray for world leaders, that they have the courage that is necessary to take urgent action so that UN Agreements will be honoured by governments throughout the world.

Lord hear us.

3. Let us pray for each other at this time that we may live the vision and values of Pope Francis’ encyclical *on care for our Common Home*. In particular we pray for greater attention to social justice, climate justice, and intergenerational justice.

Lord hear us

4. Creator God, let us remember those who have given their lives to protect our common home. We think especially of indigenous people who live to protect our vast ecosystems. They and many others are sent as messengers to the vineyard. May we listen to them. May our ears and hearts be open to their call. Lord, hear us.



5. Lord, we know that it is the poorest who suffer the most because of environmental destruction. We pray that we all might be open to listen to the cry of the Earth and the cry of the Poor, especially the people of the Global South who are facing the harsh reality of climate change. **Lord, hear us.**
6. Let us pray for all the souls of the faithful departed. In particular we remember the following who have died recently.....

OFFERTORY PROCESSION

- A loaf of bread and bowl of grapes could be brought to the altar.
- Indicate that we have bread and wine to offer only because of the work of our endangered pollinators.
- If symbols were not brought up at the beginning of the liturgy soil, seeds, plants or a tree for planting could also be offered.

Suggested Music: Ag Criost an Siol

OUR FATHER

As we pray this prayer over the coming weeks, let us ask forgiveness for our sins against Creation and especially the poor. Let us be reminded of our deep interconnectedness.

BEFORE COMMUNION

Option: Celebrant could read aloud the prayer usually said quietly by the priest: 'Lord Jesus Christ, may our receiving of you ... be for us protection in mind and body, and a healing remedy'.

POST COMMUNION REFLECTION (further options in Appendix)

The Canticle of Creatures (St. Francis)

Most High, all-powerful Lord,

Yours are the praises, the glory,

and the honour and all blessing.

Praised be you, my Lord, with all Your creatures,

especially Sir Brother Sun, who is the day,

and through whom You give us light.

And he is beautiful and radiant with great splendour;

and bears a likeness of You, Most High one.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars,
in heaven You formed them, clear and precious and beautiful.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Wind,
and through the air, cloudy and serene,
and every kind of weather through which you give sustance to your creatures.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister water,
who is very useful and humble and precious and chaste.

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, and who produces various fruit
with coloured flowers and herbs.

Praised be You, my Lord, through those who give pardon for Your love,
and bear infirmity and tribulation.

Blessed those who endure in peace,
for by You, Most High, shall they be crowned.

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



FINAL BLESSING

- Indicate theme of next Sunday's Mass
- We are encouraging parishes to plant a native Irish tree on church grounds during the Season of Creation, invite people to join outside if possible.
- The Final Blessing to include all aspects of creation, including what is around the Altar and outside the Church

Presider: The Mass is ended. Go in Peace to care for our common home and preserve the integrity of God's creation.



APPENDIX - POST COMMUNION REFLECTIONS

1. A Prayer for the Earth (from Laudato Si, 246)

All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe
and in the smallest of your creatures.
You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.
Pour out upon us the power of your love,
that we may protect life and beauty.
Fill us with peace, that we may live
as brothers and sisters, harming no one.
O God of the poor,
help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth,
so precious in your eyes.
Bring healing to our lives,
that we may protect the world and not prey on it,
that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.
Touch the hearts
of those who look only for gain
at the expense of the poor and the earth.
Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,
to be filled with awe and contemplation,
to recognize that we are profoundly united
with every creature
as we journey towards your infinite light.
We thank you for being with us each day.
Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle
for justice, love and peace.

2. A Christian prayer in union with creation (from Laudato Si).

Father, we praise you with all your creatures.
They came forth from your all-powerful hand;
they are yours, filled with your presence and your tender love.
Praise be to you!
Son of God, Jesus,
through you all things were made.
You were formed in the womb of Mary our Mother,
you became part of this earth,
and you gazed upon this world with human eyes.
Today you are alive in every creature
in your risen glory.
Praise be to you!

Holy Spirit, by your light
you guide this world towards the Father's love
and accompany creation as it groans in travail.
You also dwell in our hearts
and you inspire us to do what is good.
Praise be to you!

Triune Lord, wondrous community of infinite love,
teach us to contemplate you
in the beauty of the universe,
for all things speak of you.
Awaken our praise and thankfulness
for every being that you have made.
Give us the grace to feel profoundly joined
to everything that is.
God of love, show us our place in this world
as channels of your love
for all the creatures of this earth,
for not one of them is forgotten in your sight.
Enlighten those who possess power and money
that they may avoid the sin of indifference,
that they may love the common good, advance the weak,
and care for this world in which we live.
The poor and the earth are crying out.
O Lord, seize us with your power and light,
help us to protect all life,
to prepare for a better future,
for the coming of your Kingdom
of justice, peace, love and beauty.
Praise be to you!
Amen.

3. St Patrick's Breastplate – extract sung, danced or read, followed by silent pause.

I arise today, through the strength of heaven,
The light of the sun, radiance of the moon, splendour of fire,
The speed of lightning, the swiftness of wind,
The depth of the sea, the stability of the earth, the firmness of rock.
I arise today, through God's strength to pilot me,
God's might to uphold me, God's wisdom to guide me,
God's eye to look before me, God's ear to hear me,
God's word to speak for me, God's hand to guard me,
God's shield to protect me, God's host to save me
From everyone who shall wish me ill, afar and near.
Against every cruel and merciless power, that may oppose my body and soul,

Christ with me, Christ before me,
Christ behind me, Christ in me,
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ on my right, Christ on my left,
Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down,
Christ when I arise, Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me,
Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me,
Christ in every eye that sees me, Christ in every ear that hears me.

I arise today
Through a mighty strength, the invocation of the Trinity,
Through belief in the Threeness, Through confession of the Oneness
of the Creator of creation.



4. The Hazel Nut by Julian of Norwich

‘God showed me a little thing, the size of a hazel nut, lying in the palm of my hand. I looked upon it and wondered, “What might this be?” And I was answered, “It is all Creation.”

I marvelled how it could last, for I thought it might suddenly fall to nothing, it was so small.

And I was answered, “It lasts and ever shall last, for God loves it.’

In this little hazel nut I saw three truths: the first is that God made it; the second is that God loves it; and the third is that God keeps it safe.’

5. The Eucharist and Creation – Pope Francis, *Laudato Si’* 236

‘The Eucharist is an act of cosmic love: yes, cosmic! Because even when it is celebrated on the humble altar of a country church, the Eucharist is always in some way celebrated on the altar of the world. The Eucharist joins heaven and earth: it embraces and penetrates all creation. The world which came forth from God’s hands returns to him in blessed and undivided adoration. In the bread of the Eucharist creation is projected towards divinisation, towards unification with the Creator himself.’

6. The Dance of Creation: Brian Grogan SJ, *Creation Walk 90-91*

We may imagine heaven, not as an endless choir practice on a wet Sunday afternoon, but as the unrestricted and all-inclusive joy of dancing in a transfigured universe. Even an initial awareness of the infinite imagination and power of God who plays in creation shows that ours is already a dancing universe.

We are part of the unfathomable weave of the universe, immersed in its deep mystery. Its dance has already begun: it has always been in process. Each of us has a role in it. Jesus and his Father are working (John 4:34) for the good of all creation and we can tune in to their signals and do likewise. Thomas Merton says that every moment and every event in every person's life plants seeds of spiritual vitality in their hearts. This is the divine at work on Earth: this is grace, and grace is everywhere. All is sacred, and so are we. We must not desecrate our Common Home. We belong to the great Creation Story, to a whole that is infinitely greater than ourselves. We are called even now to share with all of creation 'in the freedom of the children of God' (Romans 8:21). So let's put on our dancing shoes and learn the steps of the cosmic dance!

7. A Poem for Mother Earth

(An abridged version follows this full version)

A poem for Papatūānuku – Mother Earth-- by Jacinda Ardern, Prime Minister of New Zealand, after the lockdown announced in NZ, March 2020, to limit the coronavirus

Rest now, e Papatūānuku, Breathe easy and settle
Right here where you are, We'll not move upon you
For a while we'll stop, we'll cease, We'll slow down and stay home.
Draw each other close and be kind, Kinder than we've ever been.
I wish we could say we were doing it for you as much as ourselves,
But hei aha (*Oh well*) We're doing it anyway

It's right. It's time. Time to return
Time to remember, Time to listen and forgive
Time to withhold judgment, Time to cry, Time to think about others

Remove our shoes, Press hands to soil
Sift grains between fingers, gentle palms.
Time to plant, Time to wait, Time to notice, To whom we belong

For now it's just you And the wind
And the forests and the oceans and the sky full of rain

Finally, it's raining!

Ka turuturu te wai kamo o Rangi ki runga i a koe (*Tears from the eyes of our Sky
Father drip down on you*)

Embrace it. This sacrifice of solitude we have carved out for you

He iti noaiho – a small offering
People always said it wasn't possible
To ground flights and stay home and stop our habits of consumption

But it was, It always was.

We were just afraid of how much it was going to hurt
– and it IS hurting and it will hurt and continue to hurt
But not as much as you have been hurt.

So be still now.

Wrap your hills around our absence
Loosen the concrete belt cinched tight at your waist

Rest.
Breathe.
Recover.
Heal –



And we will do the same

A Poem for Mother Earth (*abridged version*)

Rest now, Mother Earth
Breathe easy and settle
Right here where you are
We'll not move upon you

For awhile

We'll stop, we'll cease
We'll slow down and stay home

And draw each other close and be kind
Kinder than we've ever been.
I wish we could say we were doing it for you
as much as ourselves

But we're doing it anyway

It's right. It's time.

Time to think -- About others

To remove our shoes
Press hands to soil
Sift grains between fingers
Time to notice
To whom we belong

For now it's just you
And the wind
And the forests and the oceans and the sky full of rain

Embrace it, this sacrifice of solitude we have carved out for you

A small offering.
People always said it wasn't possible
To ground flights and stay home and stop our habits of consumption

But it was. It always was.

We were just afraid of how much it was going to hurt
– and it IS hurting and it will hurt and continue to hurt
But not as much as you have been hurt.

So be still now. Wrap your hills around our absence
Loosen the concrete belt cinched tight at your waist

Rest. Breathe. Recover. Heal – And we will do the same



8. Our Common Home seen from Space: Astronaut Russell Schweickart 1969

'The astronaut looks back and sees the Earth not as something big but small. And now the contrast between Earth--that bright blue-and-white Christmas tree ornament--and that black sky, that infinite universe, really comes through. Earth becomes so small and so fragile, and such a precious little spot in the universe, and you realize that on that small spot, that little blue-and-white thing, is everything that means anything to you; all of history, music, poetry, art, games, war and death, birth and love, tears and joy, all of it is on that little spot out there that you can cover with your thumb.

'You're going 25,000 mph, ripping through a vacuum, and there's not a sound. There's a silence, the depth of which you've never experienced before, and you think about what you're experiencing and why. Have you been separated out by God to have some special experience that other people cannot have? No.

'It's not for yourself. You have to bring it back, somehow--a rather special responsibility. It tells you something about your relationship with this life. When you come back, there's a difference—so precious-- in the relationship between you and that planet and all its forms of life, because you've had that kind of experience.'

