

The season of creation takes place between the World Day of Prayer for Creation on September 1st and the Feast of St. Francis October 4th. Thousands of Christians will be coming together around the world to pray and care for creation. Can you also bring together your parish and others in your community in prayer for creation.

The service here is for a formal church setting, for other purposes you may wish to shorten this one or you may prefer do your own with readings etc. of your choice.

Prayer Service for Feast of Creation and for Creation Time - September 1-October 4, Feast of St Francis (**Member of the congregation is invited to light a candle on the altar**).

Procession to the altar with locally-grown plants, flowers, vegetables, fruit, and corn from a field if available. If you wish you may already have them at the altar

Hymn: All creatures of Our God and King (Arr. R. Vaughan Williams).

All Sing: All creatures of our God and King
Lift up your voice and with us sing,
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Thou burning sun with golden beam,
Thou silver moon with softer gleam!

Refrain: **O praise him! O praise him!**
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Thou flowing water, pure and clear,
Make music for thy Lord to hear,
O praise him! Alleluia,
Thou fire so masterful and bright,
That givest us both warmth and light. **Refrain**

Dear mother earth, who day by day
Unfoldest blessings on our way,
O praise him! Alleluia!
The flowers and fruits that in thee grow,
Let them his glory also show. **Refrain**

Let all things their Creator bless,
And worship him in humbleness,
O praise him! Alleluia!
Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son,
And praise the Spirit, Three in One! **Refrain**

Words of welcome

Opening Prayer:

Let us pray: God of all creation,
Your spirit dances throughout the earth,
You give drink to the trees,
shade for the birds,
bread for the hungry,
you bring life and make all things holy,
Flood us with your grace,
so we may sow seeds of love, justice and beauty,
and reflect your kingdom here on earth.
We ask this through Christ your son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Reflection – (Members of the congregation to read this quietly to themselves)

This Sister Mother Earth now cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use of the goods with which God has endowed her. We have come to see ourselves as her lords and masters, entitled to plunder her at will. The violence present in our hearts, wounded by sin, is also reflected in the symptoms of sickness evident in the soil, in the water, in the air and in all forms of life. This is why the earth herself, burdened and laid waste, is among the most abandoned and maltreated of our poor; she “groans in travail”. We have forgotten that we ourselves are dust of the earth. Our very bodies are made up of her elements, we breathe her air and we receive life and refreshment from her waters (L.S.2)

(Or another reading of your choice)

Litany of Repentance

(Say or sing responses)

Priest/Leader: O God, your fertile earth is slowly being stripped of its riches,

All: Open your eyes to see.

Priest/Leader: O God, your living waters are slowly being choked with chemicals,

All: Open your eyes to see.

All: **Kyrie eleison/Lord have mercy**

Priest/Leader: O God, your clear air is slowly being filled with pollutants,

All: Open your eyes to see.

Priest/Leader: O God, your creatures are slowly dying and your people are suffering,

All: Open your eyes to see.

Christe eleison/Christ have mercy

Priest/Leader: God our Maker, so move us by the wonder of creation,

All: That we repent and care more deeply.

Priest/Leader: So move us to grieve the damage to the climate and the loss of life,

All: That we learn to cherish and protect your world.

Kyrie eleison/Lord have mercy.

Lament: Instrumental or sing

[Gaelic lament sing or say a few times]



Solo Reading

"It's 3:23 in the morning
and I'm awake
because my great great grandchildren
won't let me sleep.
My great great grandchildren
ask me in dreams
What did you do while the Planet was plundered?
What did you do when the Earth was unravelling?
surely you did something
when the seasons started failing?
As the mammals, reptiles, birds were all dying?
Did you fill the street with protest
when democracy was stolen?
What did you do
once
you
knew?..."

Excerpt from "Hieroglyphic Stairway" by Drew Dillinger

**(A member of the congregation lights a candle on the altar)
(Pause for silent reflection time)**

First Reading from: Book of Wisdom 11:24-26-12:1 or alternative Reading Book of Job 12:7-10

For you love all things that exist and detest none of the things that you have made,
For you would not have made anything if you had hated it.
How would anything have endured if you had not willed it?
Or how would anything not called forth by you have been preserved?
You spare all things, for they are yours,
O Lord, you who love the living.
For your immortal Spirit is in all things.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm: (Choir may sing a suitable creation psalm or sing a response to a solo reading of this Psalm)

Response: Send forth your spirit, O Lord and renew the face of the earth.

Bless the Lord, my soul!

Lord God, how great you are,
Clothed in majesty and glory,
Wrapped in light as in a robe!

Response

You founded the earth on its base,
to stand firm from age to age.
You wrapped it with the ocean like a cloak:
the waters stood higher than the mountains.

Response

You make springs gush forth in the valleys:
they flow in between the hills.
On their banks dwell the birds of heaven;
from the branches they sing their song.

Response

From your dwelling you water the hills;
Earth drinks it fill of your gift.
You make the grass grow for the cattle
And the plants to serve people's needs.

Response

How many are your works, O Lord!
In wisdom you have made them all.
The earth is full of your riches/
Bless the Lord, my soul!

Response

Gospel: Mark 16:15

And Jesus said to them, 'Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole of creation'

The gospel of the Lord

All: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ

(A member of the congregation lights a candle on the altar)

Parish /group may wish to show slides or a PowerPoint presentation on the beauty of creation. This could include images of places of beauty in the parish/locality. An alternative is to listen to some reflective instrumental music and /or invite participants to make a personal commitment to caring for our common home

Let us pray

Most provident God, you graciously give us all good gifts. Teach us to care for the earth: to till the soils responsibly, to keep the air pure, to free the waters from pollution, to harvest the warmth of the sun, to protect the climate and to respect the rights of all species. May we willingly share the gifts of your goodness with all. We ask this of you, God of the universe, through Christ Our Lord. Amen

(Member of congregation lights candle on altar)

Prayers of Intercession

Response

“O Lord hear us we pray. O Lord give us your love” (or other suitable response)

1. We pray for all leaders in the Church as they strive to work for justice, peace and the integrity of creation
Sung or spoken response
2. Creator of God, you showed us how to live on this earth when you were present among us in the person of Jesus. May we live out the values he embodied, especially in his appreciation of the ordinary wonders of life: the lilies of the field, the sparrows that fall, the way the wind blows.
Sung or spoken response
3. Creator God, in Christ you walked among us, attuned to the earth and its elements, the plants, trees and animals as well as human beings. May we have the same sense of connection and interdependence with the whole of creation.
Sung or spoken response
4. Creator God, we pray for visionaries, artists and writers, that through their work we may see Creation afresh.
Sung or spoken response
5. Creator God, the sun, the wind and the waves are your gifts for the flourishing of the whole community of life on earth. Help us to use them creatively to produce sustainable energy for all.
Sung or spoken response
6. Creator God, inspire the Church to develop partnerships of action with others to address the pressing issues of our planet especially climate change.
Sung or spoken response

Leader:

Let us pray

7. Creator God, we confess that the way we are using fossil fuels and other destructive forms of energy today is destroying the forests, changing the climate, the seas, the soils, the biodiversity and the balance of life on our fragile planet, dispossessing the poor and future generations. Help us to choose life for all that is at risk – for neighbours near and far and for those who came after us. Give us the knowledge to learn what we do not know but long to understand, so that we may honour and nurture all that makes us one with you. We ask this through Christ Our Lord. **Amen**

(A member of the congregation lights a candle on the altar)

The choir may sing a creation hymn here or you may use reflective instrumental music

Ritual: Bulbs or seeds are handed out to all present for planting at home and/or a planting ritual at the Church or elsewhere in the parish or any other ritual of your choice. (As an alternative quiet time for making a commitment to caring for our common home may be included here)

Concluding Prayer

God of the universe

We thank you for your many good gifts –

For the beauty of creation and its rich and varied fruits,

For clean water and fresh air for food and shelter, animals and plants.

Forgive us for the time we have taken the earth's resources for granted.

Transform our hearts and minds so that we would learn to care and share,

To touch the earth with gentleness and with love, respecting all living things.

We pray for all those who suffer as a result of our waste, greed and indifference.

Help us to respect the rights of all people and all species.

And help us to willingly share your gifts today and always.

Amen

(A member of the congregation lights a candle on the altar.)

Final Blessing:

Bless us, + in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. As we go forth with joy and hope to care for God's creation,

- walking gently on the earth,

- in right relationship,

- nurtured by your love,

- taking only what we need,

- giving back to the earth in gratitude,

- honouring all with reverence,

- reconciling and healing,

- mindful of those who will come after,

and of the poor today

- recognising our proper place as part of, not apart from, your creation.

Ignite your spark within us, that we may know ourselves as truly human and irrevocably part of the Web of Life

Final Hymn: O Lord my God! When I in awesome wonder
consider all the works thy hand hath made,
I see the stars, I hear the mighty thunder,
thy pow'r throughout the universe display'd.

Then sings my soul, my saviour God, to thee,

How great thou art! How great thou art!

Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to thee,

How great thou art! How great thou art!

When through the woods and forest glades I wander,
and hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees;
when I look down from lofty mountain grandeur,
and hear the brook, and feel the gentle breeze:

When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation
and take me home – what joy shall fill my heart!

Then I shall bow in humble adoration

and there proclaim, my God, how great thou art!

Hymn based on Psalm 8, Romans 5 and 1 Thessalonians 4