



CELEBRATING THE SEASON OF CREATION TOGETHER

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TEXT

With this Message, I renew my dialogue with “every person living on this planet” (*Laudato Si'*, 3) about the sufferings of the poor and the devastation of the environment.

God gave us a bountiful garden, but we have turned it into a polluted wasteland of “debris, desolation and filth” (*ibid.*, 161). We must not be indifferent or resigned to the loss of biodiversity and the destruction of ecosystems, often caused by our irresponsible and selfish behaviour. “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” (*ibid.*, 33).

Global warming continues, due in part to human activity. This is leading to ever more severe droughts, floods, fires and extreme weather events. Climate change is also contributing to the heart-rending refugee crisis. The world’s poor, though least responsible for climate change, are most vulnerable and already suffering its impact.

As an integral ecology emphasizes, human beings are deeply connected with all of creation. When we mistreat nature, we also mistreat human beings. At the same time, each creature has its own intrinsic value that must be respected. Let us hear “*both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor*” (*Laudato Si'*, 49), and do our best to ensure an appropriate and timely response.

Pope Francis, 2017

RESPONSE Psalm 8

Lord, our Lord,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!
You have set your glory
in the heavens.

Through the praise of children and infants
you have established a stronghold against your enemies,
to silence the foe and the avenger.
When I consider your heavens,
the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars,
which you have set in place,
what is mankind that you are mindful of them,
human beings that you care for them?

You have made them a little lower than the angels
and crowned them with glory and honor.
You made them rulers over the works of your hands;
you put everything under their feet:
all flocks and herds,
and the animals of the wild,
the birds in the sky,
and the fish in the sea,
all that swim the paths of the seas.

Lord, our Lord,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Please pause for 10-15 seconds after each invocation ...

For political leaders, that they may act to protect the web of life on the planet.

For local communities in cities and regions, that all may understand their place in creation and their impact on the web of life.

For communities that are currently reliant on fossil fuels for energy and employment, that they may see the development of sustainable energy sources and jobs for the future of their children.

For all present, that we may appreciate and protect the plants and animals native to this area, and listen attentively to what they teach us about our Creator.

For communities affected by drought, that they may receive the rain that they need and the assistance of others to see them through.

We pray for the church leaders in our country, that they may help us to live more deeply an integral ecology.

We pray for political, corporate and community leaders, that they may they foster the global common good, keeping in mind the good of future generations.

We pray for all those displaced by climate change, that they may find welcome and assistance to make a new home.

We pray for our local community, that we may rise above self-interest to protect our common home for generations to come.

We pray for the leaders of Pacific island nations threatened by rising sea levels, that they may find ways of providing a secure future for their people.

We pray for First Nations peoples, that their relationship with their traditional lands and waters be respected, and that their wisdom may guide us all in forming right relationships with creation.

As we mark the Feast of St Francis, we pray for Pope Francis, that he may continue to inspire us to care for God's creation.

We make these and all our prayers in the name of God our Creator. **All: Amen.**

SIGN OF PEACE AND WELCOME

BLESSING

May God, the Creator of every living thing, open our eyes to the beauty and intricacy of all life's mysteries.

All: Amen

May Jesus, who learnt from the flowers and weeds, the wind and waves, the sparrows and fish of the sea, open our ears and hearts to the whispers of creation.

All: Amen

May the Holy Spirit open our minds and hearts to the cries of the earth and those made poor. May these prayers find their place in our deliberations, discussions and discernment today. **All: Amen**

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