



**SEASON OF
CREATION 2020**
September 1 – October 4



ALTERNATIVE PRAYER SERVICE

1. INTRODUCTION (1st Reader)

Friends, we gather today in prayer at the start of the Season of Creation 2020 (September 1st – October 4th, feast of St Francis of Assisi, patron of Ecology) an annual celebration which was initiated with the first Day of Prayer for Creation on Sept 1st 1989. This year’s theme is *Jubilee for the Earth*. We take time to reflect together on the relationship between Mother Earth and our lifestyles, between the “rest” so badly needed for our earth to recover, and our ecological, economic, social and political ways of living which prevent regeneration of our common home.

We yearn for the moral imagination that must accompany the Jubilee and pray for just and sustainable systems which the far-reaching effects of the global COVID pandemic have revealed to be sadly in disarray. We are re-awakened to the urgent need to heal our relationships with creation and with each other.

During the season this year, we enter a time of restoration and hope, a jubilee for our Earth that requires radically new ways of living with creation.

The Season of Creation unites the world’s 2.2 billion Christians around one shared purpose. With so much injustice all around us, now is the time for Christians everywhere to come together and show the world how to love each other and creation.

In *Laudato Si’*, Pope Francis has underlined the fundamental connection that exists between the environmental crisis and the social crisis that we are currently experiencing, and asks us for a personal and community ecological conversion. The Holy Father often reminds us that “everything is interconnected” and their connections are provided with an opportunity to make a difference in our care of the planet.

2. PRAYER OF STEWARDSHIP

Let us, then, begin our prayer: (2nd Reader)

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit

God of all Creation,
At the beginning of time
You place a single mandate on humankind
To be stewards of Creation

To replenish and nurture through all generations
What you have made

We pray today amid that same Creation –
A world that is, in many ways, more splendid than ever
But, in too many ways, scarred beyond recognition

Turn us from our unmindfulness
Help our touch be light
Help us renew the world that supports us
So that we may once more know creation
As it was in the beginning.

Amen.

(Catholic Relief Services)

3. SONG OF ST FRANCIS

When we refer to “the *Laudato Si*’ message”, we refer also to the broader “*Laudato Si*’ paradigm” (charism) embodied by the Canticle of the Creatures of St Francis which was first expressed by his proclamation “*Laudato si*’, *mi*’ *Signore*” – “Praise be to you, my Lord”, as a response to the beauty of Brother Wind, Sister Water, Brother Fire & Sister Mother Earth. And so let us listen to the [Song of St Francis: *The Heavens are telling the Glory of God*](#) (St Francis of Assisi ... Canticle of the Sun composed by Marty Haugen SJ; St Louis Jesuits)

Refrain:

**The heavens are telling the glory of god,
and all creation is shouting for joy,
come, dance in the forest, come play in the field
and sing, sing to the glory of the Lord.**

Sing to the sun, the bringer of day,
he carries the light of the Lord in his rays,
the moon and the stars, who light up the way unto your throne. **(Refrain)**

Praise to the wind, that blows through the trees,
the seas mighty storms, the gentlest breeze,
they blow where they will, they blow where they please, to please the Lord. **(Refrain)**

Praise to the rain that waters our fields,
and blesses our crops, so all the earth yields,
from death unto life her myst'ry concealed, springs forth in joy. **(Refrain)**

Praise to the fire, who gives us his light,
the warmth of the sun to brighten our night,
he dances with joy, his spirit so bright, he sings of You. **(Refrain)**

Sing to the earth, who makes life to grow,
the creatures You made to let Your life show,
the flowers and trees that help us to know the Heart of Love. **(Refrain)**

Praise to our death, that makes our life real,
the knowledge of loss that helps us to feel,
the Gift of Yourself, Your Presence revealed to bring us home. **(Refrain)**

4. A PRAYER FOR OUR EARTH (3rd Reader)

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 recognise that we are profoundly united
with every creature
as we journey towards your infinite light.
We thank you for being with us each day.
Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle
for justice, love and peace.
Amen
(Pope Francis)

5. CHANT FOR PEACE

Let us end with the Sanskrit chant for peace (RSCJ community)

शान्तिः द्यौः शान्तिरन्तरिक्षं शान्तिः

Peace is in Sky; Peace is in Space

पृथिवी शान्तिरापः शान्तिरोषधयः शान्तिः

Peace is in Earth; Peace is in Water; Peace is in Plants

वनस्पतयः शान्तिर्विश्वेदेवाः शान्तिर्ब्रह्म शान्तिः

Peace is in Trees; Peace is in God (presiding over Nature); Peace is in Brahman (Absolute Consciousness);

सर्वं शान्तिः शान्तिरेव शान्तिः सा मा शान्तिरेधि ॥

Peace is pervading everywhere; Peace alone (which is outside) is in Peace (which is inside) May you be (established in) that Peace (which makes your life fulfilled);

शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

Peace, Peace, Peace.