



WORLD DAY OF PRAYER FOR THE CARE OF CREATION - 1 SEPTEMBER -

According to Pope Francis, the annual World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation offers to **individual believers** and to the **community** a precious opportunity to renew our personal participation in this vocation as *guardians of creation*, raising to God our **thanks** for the marvellous works that He has entrusted to our care, **invoking his help** for the protection of creation and **his mercy** for the sins committed against the world in which we live.

Some Things An Individual Might Do to Take Part in this World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation



Begin your day by praying with one of the prayers that Pope Francis composed for his Laudato Si' encyclical. It is for all who believe in God who is the all-powerful Creator.

A Prayer for our world

Creator God, who made our beautiful world, appointed us as its guardians and gifted us with everything we need, forgive us for the times we cause it harm; for the times our way of life affects our neighbours. Inspire us to care for the environment; to help rebuild lives and communities; to share in the griefs and anxieties, joys and hopes of all your people, so that all your creation may flourish. Amen.

A prayer for our earth

All powerful God, you are present in the 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 your 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.

Some Things A Family Might Do to Take Part in this World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation



- A family might simply pause, during a grace before meals, to recall all that they are grateful for in creation and then turn to give thanks to God for the food that we are going to eat.
- A family might use this day to reflect upon our sisters and brothers around the world who have so much less than we do. Trying to imagine their lives and what they experience is the first step toward compassion and then solidarity.
- A family might reflect upon what changes we might make in our everyday lives. We can desire and decide to simplify our lives, perhaps in stages. We can get used to less, and consciously do that as we feel more connected with those who have so much less.
- A family might take some time, perhaps over a weekend, even after 1st September, to talk about the family lifestyle and consumption. Children can be helped to understand what damage we have done to this planet over the past years. Children have a natural sense of compassion for animals and nature, and sense of the injustice of the suffering of others.
- A family could choose to do some simple actions, like choosing to conserve our use of water more.
- A family might simply pause to give thanks for all of Creation, and ultimately, for the Creator. We can make this as personal as we are able to do. We might start a journey, which lists all that we are grateful for today, and add to us, beginning a pattern of appreciation and gratitude.
- A family might Watch a Youtube clip – for example - Laudato Sii (6 min Youtube video) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1tYdOlqvpqg&feature=youtu.be> -



A GUIDED ROSARY ON CARING FOR CREATION SORROWFUL MYSTERY (Tuesdays)

1. Agony in the garden:



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Knowing that the time when His horrifying death was to be fulfilled, Jesus left his followers to pray in the garden at Gethsemane. He left his companions, whom He loved very much, to find solitude and consolation in nature, and there was able to receive the comforting presence of angels.

- a. Do we, like Christ before us, look for God and look for God's comforting help in nature? Are we able to find comfort from God's presence in the small things in life, those moments of relief among flowers, trees and vegetation?
- b. Reflect on Genesis 2:15: "The Lord God took man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it." Human beings began in the garden to be in union with God; do we return there, in either the physical or spiritual sense?

2. Scourging at the pillar:



Jesus is taken and tied to a stone pillar, where he is cruelly whipped and scourged. His agonizing death begins, and those who have had a chance to stop the horrible events or stand with Christ have neglected to do so.

- a. Have we neglected standing with God in solidarity for the protection and integrity of God's creation?
- b. Again, call to mind our responsibility to stand with the lowly, the persecuted and the downcast. If we were present at the scourging, who would we represent?

Those who openly persecuted and whipped Jesus, those who ran away or would we try to protect His dignity?

What response would that look like today as God's creation, as well as the disadvantaged, are "scourged" by a world that is often hostile to anything that stands in the way of the interests of the most powerful? People living in poverty contribute least to climate change but they are likely to suffer its worst consequences with few resources to adapt and respond." Like Christ, they are innocent of any wrongdoing and yet are punished for apparently no reason.

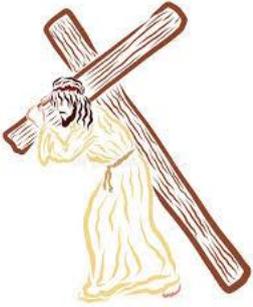
3. Crowning with thorns:



In order to humiliate Jesus, a crown of thorns was woven and placed on His head. This perhaps characterizes that we are able to betray the inner goodness in both our fellow human beings and the world that God has created by twisting them to our own selfish purposes.

- a. Do we tend to see the world around us as something to be used for our own purposes? Do we twist creation to the point of abuse?

- b. Though the thorns were meant to cause Jesus pain and humiliation, He was eventually crowned in a glory that continues through our faith and witness. All creation, however, is supposed to give witness to God's glory. As Pope Francis points out, "The earth, our home, is beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth" (Laudato Si, 21). How can we help our planet to reflect once more the glory of God?



4. Carrying of the Cross:

There are very many reflections as deep or as rich as that of the 4th Sorrowful Mystery. We are able to see Jesus in all of His human weakness; we see Him stumble, struggle and fall. We see the cruelty of the authorities as Jesus continues to make His way to the painful climax. But we are also witnesses to small acts of hope through the actions of Simon and Veronica, as well as Jesus' strength in continuing to get up after falling. And these things are what we are called to do in our spiritual journey as well as helping one another in theirs.

- a. This mystery calls to mind how we can ease Christ's suffering, even today, through simple acts of kindness. Every time we perform an action- regardless of how small or seemingly insignificant- we are like Simon or Veronica helping Jesus to carry His cross or wiping His blood-soaked face.
Acts such as picking up rubbish scattered on the ground, planting a tree or cultivating a food garden, recognizing the humanity of a homeless person with a smile or a kind word or switching off an unnecessary light, are all small gestures that help to bring Jesus' glory to greater recognition in the world.

5. Crucifixion:

Christ our Lord dies on the cross. A profoundly heart-breaking event remembered whenever we look lovingly upon a crucifix, celebrate Mass meditate on this mystery. The death of Jesus on the cross, terrible as it is, is a necessary element of our salvation history.

- a. What is the first mental image that comes to mind when you think about the death of Jesus? What do His surroundings look like? For many, we probably think about dark, stormy clouds while His followers are mourning His death and others are cheering it. The light of Jesus, at least temporarily, has been put out.
- b. When we "crucify" Christ by doing things harmful to the growth of His Kingdom, we call upon those same storm clouds. Instead, we are called to love and care for all of God's creation in its infinite goodness.

- c. Remember that at the crucifixion of Jesus the Earth rumbled and shook, terrifying the people who were witnesses of what was happening. As Christ groans in agony, so does the Earth and as the Earth groans in agony so does Christ.





**PRAYER SERVICE -
' CARETAKERS OF GOD'S CREATION '**

(Prayer in the family / small prayer groups)

Leader:

In the name of the Father.....
Let us together praise the Lord,
from whom we have rain from the heavens
and abundance from the earth.
Blessed be God now and for ever. *All: Amen*

Leader:

Pope Francis has called for 1st September to be an *Annual World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation*. God is calling us to be the caretakers of His creation.

Sing: All creatures of our God and King (or a similar hymn)

Verse One:

All creatures of our God and King, lift up your voice and with us sing: Alleluia. Alleluia! You burning sun with golden beam, you silver moon with softer gleam:
O praise him, O praise him, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Verse Two:

You rushing wind that art so strong, you clouds that sail in heaven along, O praise him, alleluia!
You rising morn, in praise rejoice, you lights of evening, find a voice.
O praise him, O praise him, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Verse Three:

You flowing water, pure and clear, make music for your Lord to hear, alleluia, alleluia!
You flowers and fruit that also grow, let them his glory also show.
O praise him, O praise him, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Verse Four:

You fire so masterful and bright, that gives us warmth and gives us light, alleluia, alleluia!
Praise Father, praise the Son, and praise the Spirit, Three in One.
O Praise him, O praise, him, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!



EARTH

READER: EARTH

The entire material universe speaks of God's love, of God's endless care for us. Soil, water, mountains: everything is, as it were, a touch of God. We can all surely remember a beautiful sunrise or sunset, a walk among plants and flowers or sitting beside a running stream drinking fresh, cool water. All these places have given us a chance to recover something of our true selves (*Laudato Si' 84*)

Leader:

In silence, press your feet into the ground and become aware of the earth beneath.

Marvel and be grateful for the life and nourishment that we receive from mother earth.

Silent Prayer



AIR

READER: AIR

Let us remind ourselves that we are made of the dust of the earth (Gen 2:7); our bodies are made up of her elements; we breathe her air and we receive life and refreshment from her waters. The earth, our home, is however beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth. (*Laudato Si'* 2:21).

Leader: Become conscious of your breathing. Be grateful for the gift of air and resolve to use your voice to promote the need to purify earth's atmosphere.
Silent Prayer



FIRE

READER: FIRE

Climate change is a global problem with grave implications: environmental, social, economic, political as well as for the distribution of goods. Climate change represents one of the main challenges facing our world today. Our lack of response points to a loss of that sense of responsibility for the needs of our brothers and sisters. (*Laudato Si'* 25)

Leader: Open and close your hands, aware that our ability to do so is through the sun's energy that is captured by the plant life we eat. Rejoice in the energy of the sun and resolve to use your energy to face climate change, one of the principal challenges facing humanity in our day.
Silent Prayer



WATER

READER: WATER

Access to safe drinking water is a basic and universal human right, since it is essential to human survival. Our world has a grave social debt towards the poor who lack access to drinkable water, because they are denied the right to a life consistent with their human dignity. (*Laudato Si'* 30).

Leader: Breathe again deeply, taking in molecules of water that have also passed through the bodies of all breathing creatures. Be grateful for the gift of water and resolve to use it with reverence and justice.
Silent Prayer

Concluding Prayer:

O God, from the very beginning of time you commanded the earth to bring forth vegetation and fruit of every kind. You provide the sower with seed and give bread to the hungry to eat. Grant, we pray, that this land, enriched by your abundance and cultivated by human hands, may be fertile with abundant crops. Then your people, enriched by the gifts of your goodness, will praise you unceasingly now and for all ages unending. Grant this through Christ our Lord. R. Amen.

The following may be sung to the tune of "All Creatures of Our God and King."

Dear mother earth, who day by day unfolds rich blessing on our way, O praise God! Alleluia!
The fruits and flowers that verdant grow, let them his praise abundant show.
O praise God, O praise God, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.