

MODELS OF CREATION CARE

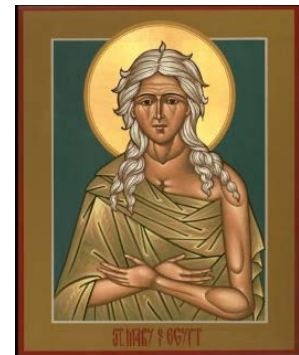
in chronological order

Clement of Rome (+ 100 ca.)

In his letter to the Corinthians (chap. 20), Clement wrote a long chapter on the kindness of God the Creator: "The land is fertile, subject to His decree and abundantly offers, according to season, to mankind, animals and all living creatures their livelihood; it does not deviate from its laws, it does not modify the order He intended. [...] Therefore, in all creation, the Sovereign Master and Creator of the universe intended peace and harmony for **he wishes good for all His creatures** and proves to be abundantly generous towards us who call upon His mercy through our Lord Jesus Christ to whom be glory and majesty for ever and ever. Amen".

Mary of Egypt (+ 421 ca.)

After having lived the life of a prostitute, Mary of Egypt was converted at the Holy Sepulchre on a visit to Jerusalem. She felt a calling: "If you cross the Jordan, you will find true peace". She brought only three loaves of bread with her and, after having eaten all of them, she fed on what she could find in the desert. She lived as a hermit for the remainder of her life. She wore no clothing other than her long hair as a sign of great humility and in communion with nature. Near the end of her life, she walked upon the Jordan River and met Zosimus and told him her life story. Two years later, Zosimus found her dead and a lion helped to bury her body.

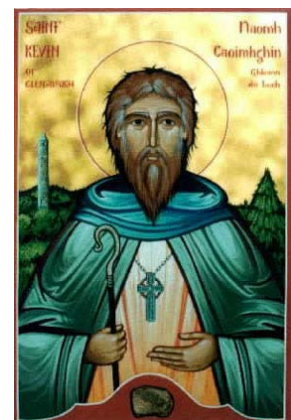


Gerasimos of the Jordan (+ 475)

He was a monk who lived in Asia Minor and then moved to the banks of the Jordan River in the Jericho desert. There he founded a monastery which combined community life for beginners and for the more advanced. These men lived alone in their cells during the week in the greatest poverty, feeding themselves on bread and dates and braiding palms for a living. On Sunday, they would gather with the rest of the community to celebrate the liturgy and to eat together. It is said that, one day, Gerasimos met a lion in the desert with a thorn stuck in its paw. The good monk took the thorn out and healed the wound. During the next five years, the lion became Gerasimos' disciple and followed him everywhere, just like a dog. When the monks' donkey was stolen, the lion took over its tasks. When death came to Gerasimos died, the old lion lay down on his tomb and died.

Kevin of Ireland (498-618)

Legend has it that, at the age of 7, Kevin was praying on the first day of Lent with his hands lifted up to heaven. A blackbird came and laid its eggs in his hands which Kevin held still while the bird built its nest. He did not move for the entire duration of Lent. The bird fed Kevin with nuts and berries. At the end of Lent, the birds flew away and the nest was empty. As soon as they had gone, Kevin went to church to celebrate Easter. Later, he spent 7 years living as a hermit in a grotto at Glendalough. He would only pray outdoors in nature, at the foot of a tree, on a rock or even in the river. When he prayed for a long time in the river, an otter would bring him fish so that he could keep up his energy.

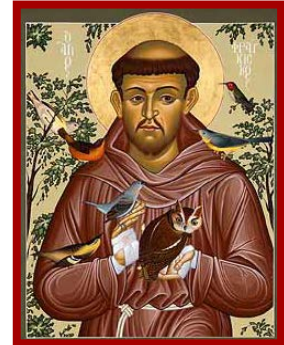


MODELS OF CREATION CARE (2)

in chronological order

Francis of Assisi (1180-1226)

A wolf was terrifying the village of Gubbio. This wolf had killed and eaten livestock, chickens and even attacked a man. Francis, filled with love, took it upon himself to resolve the situation: "Brother wolf, come here. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, I order you not to hurt myself or any other people". The wolf came up to him. People were watching through the shrubbery. Francis leaned over to the wolf: "Brother wolf, you have done much wrong by killing creatures made by God. You deserve to be judged as a murderer. I want to make peace between you and the people." Francis understood that this wolf was hungry. He explained to the villagers that it would be nice if they could offer him food. The wolf showed every sign of submission and even lifted his paw.



As Francis walked with two brothers (Angel and Massey) near Cannara, he told them "Stay here while I preach to our brothers, the birds". There were birds of many different species looking at him. He told them: "Brother birds, be full of praise for the Lord who has done so much for you! Praise Him for your freedom and your plumage. How the Lord loves you to give you all this! Brother birds, don't be ungrateful, but celebrate the praise of Him who has been so gracious with you". As he was speaking, the birds remained quiet but as soon as he finished, they began to sing, each according to its song, after which he blessed them with the sign of the cross and they flew away.

Martin Luther (1483-1546)

In his book entitled *Table Talk*, Luther sees Creation, as did Isaiah in his vision, as a universe filled with glory at the end of time. "We should not think that heaven will be only air and the earth only sand. Everything that belongs to them will have to be there or else, the heaven and the earth would not be what they are: with sheep, oxen and other animals, fish and all the rest [...] There will no longer be carnivores, nor will there be venomous beasts such as snakes and toads which have become malevolent and a nuisance but these will become loveable, attractive and touchable so that we may play with them.



Kateri Tekakwitha (1656-1680)

This First Nations' maiden enjoyed being alone in the forest so as to secretly spend time with the Lord. It was there, among the trees and the silence that the Great Spirit would speak to her heart. Everything in nature told her that He was the Creator and she felt at peace. Being in harmony and one with Creation was an aboriginal value she learned early on in life. The cross held great meaning for her and she would often put two branches together to form a cross. The example of Jesus who had suffered for her was a great comfort to her.

