



**SEASON OF
CREATION**



THE PRAYER GUIDE

SPIRITUAL ACTIVITY

PRAYER GUIDE *For the use
of local Season of Creation
organizing committees
wishing to inspire their faith
community to come together
in prayer for the well-being
of the Creation God entrusts
to our care.*



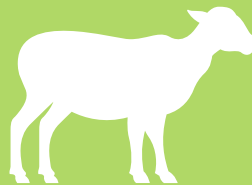
A LAND FLOWING WITH MILK AND HONEY

Exodus 3:8, Ezekiel 20:6

*"I have come to bring them to a good and broad land,
a land flowing with milk and honey,
the most glorious of all lands."*



SUNDAY CELEBRATIONS



**FEAST OF ST. FRANCIS OF
ASSISI**



THANKSGIVING

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

Prayer for the Season of Creation 2019

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 times we have taken the earth's resources
for granted

And wasted what You have given us.

Transform our hearts and minds

So that we may learn to care and share,

To touch the earth with gentleness and with love,

Respecting all living things. Amen

- Adapted from Fiona Murdoch, Eco-Congregation Ireland

SUNDAY CELEBRATIONS



*These verses describe a
land that is good for
pasture and agriculture.*

*Animals would have
plenteous grazing land so
they could produce milk;
people would be able to
cultivate plants and bees
to produce honey.*

*The pairing of milk and
honey symbolizes fullness
of life.*

Brief History

On 1 September 1989, His Holiness Dimitrios I, Patriarch of Constantinople, decreed the first day of September as a day of special reverence and prayer for the Safeguarding of Creation. The Orthodox Church continues to celebrate this important day, the start of the liturgical year, with the reading of Chapter 1 of Genesis.

Since 2008, The World Council of Churches has encouraged all Christian denominations to observe and celebrate this day. In 2015, Pope Francis announced that the Catholic Church would also mark September 1st as the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation. It provides an occasion for Christians from various churches around the

world to gather together in prayer for the well-being of the earth, our common home.

Quote

"Our obligation to use the earth's goods responsibly implies the recognition of and respect for all people and all living creatures. The urgent call and challenge to care for creation are an invitation for all of humanity to work towards sustainable and integral development.

Therefore, united by the same concern for God's creation and acknowledging the earth as a shared good, we fervently invite all people of goodwill to dedicate a time of prayer for the environment on 1 September." (Pope Francis and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I, Joint Message, 1 September 2017)

Prayer

Lord, grant us the wisdom to care for the earth and till it.
Help us to act now for the good of future generations
and all your creatures.

Help us to become instruments of a new creation,
founded on the covenant of your love.

Amen.

From: The Cry of the Earth



Read to yourself or to your children or grandchildren some of the scripture passages singing praise to God for his Creation:

Ps 65: 5-13, Ps 85: 10-13, Isaiah 11: 6-9, Ps 96: 10-12, Ps 148: 1-13

Suggestions

Compose a prayer to thank God for this rich land he has created for us. Promise him to do your best to make sure our land continues to flow with milk and honey for future generations.

Take the family to visit a forested area where autumn colours are unfolding. Absorb the beauty and harmony; vow to sustain and protect it.

A beautiful Franciscan prayer service for Sept. 1st is available in English and French at <https://missionsfranciscains.blogspot.com/>



SUNDAY
September 8

"NONE OF YOU CAN BECOME MY DISCIPLE IF YOU DO NOT GIVE UP ALL YOUR POSSESSIONS." (LUKE 14: 33)

Prayer

Sometimes, Lord, I too easily measure who I am by what I possess. Teach me to find real security in trusting myself and my needs to your loving care. Help us to be better stewards of the resources you have blessed us with. Make our hearts ready to give up our exclusive possession of earth's bounty so as to share it with our less fortunate brothers and sisters. Amen.

Quote

"Ecological Justice means that we do not take more from the earth than we need; that we consume no more than we should, than is

healthy, than is sufficient; that we recognise our wasteful greed as one of the major causes of climate change and the massive loss of species and natural habitats; that we confess that as members of churches and communities, we are responsible for an ecological footprint that is far too large. ... Should we not develop a culture of caring rather than a culture of consuming? ...The Earth is a gift, not a possession. Living and sharing the gift with all living things increases the joy of life, joy which cannot be measured by monetary means only."

(Conference of European Churches, "Sharing God's Earth and its Riches Justly", 2018)

Petitions

We thank you, Father, for our bountiful land of milk and honey. Help us to understand that it is not our possession, but a gift entrusted to our care.

Cleanse our hearts, O Lord.

Lord of Creation, inspire our church community to find ways of sharing our possessions of faith and hope, our cohesion and our energy with those whose lives are sorely empty of these riches.

Open our hearts and our hands, O Lord.

Suggestions

Spread the bounty of your church community's love through a visit to someone neglected in a hospital or a retirement home. You could present them with drawings of flowers from children in the church or the school containing a happy thought.

Learn from First Nations' convictions that the earth cannot be owned but can be used with respect while thanking the tree that we cut or the animal that we kill. They are our brothers and sisters, fellow creatures of a loving God.



SUNDAY
September 15

'REJOICE WITH ME FOR I HAVE FOUND MY SHEEP THAT WAS LOST'. (LUKE 15:6)

Prayer

We pray, O Lord, for all those who care about prairie lands, natural habitats, clean air and water that their work to protect species of all kinds which are lost or at risk may come to fruition. We rejoice with you when one acre of natural habitat or one body of water is recuperated and saved. Strengthen us to join together in a united effort to protect creation and restore what has been lost. Amen.

Quote

'Connectivity is required for sustaining many species in all stages of their life cycles, for genetic health and to respond to a changing climate. We need to move from individual protected and conserved areas to ecological networks.'" (Developing a Post-2020 Strategy', UNEP, CPD/COP, November 2018)

Petitions

Lord Jesus, help us to follow the example of the shepherd you tell us about so we can protect and restore land and water from pollution and exploitation.

Hear us, O Lord.

Lord Jesus, may we rejoice with all our neighbours when the flowers and trees we have planted support pollinators and their ecosystems.

Hear us, O Lord.

May flora and fauna find the nourishment they need to restore their numbers, to produce abundance and support the harvest of our gardens.

- Hear us, O Lord.

Suggestions

Plant a section of lawn in wildflowers to attract pollinators like bees and butterflies

Make a gift of honey or maple syrup to those in need of an encouraging gesture.



**LET THE HEAVENS BE GLAD, AND LET THE
EARTH REJOICE;
LET THE SEA ROAR, AND ALL THAT FILLS IT;
LET THE FIELD EXULT, AND EVERYTHING IN IT!
THEN SHALL ALL THE TREES OF THE FOREST
SING FOR JOY**

(PSALM 96:11-12 ESV / 10)

SUNDAY
September 22

"THERE WAS A CERTAIN RICH MAN WHO HAD A STEWARD, AND CHARGES WERE BROUGHT TO HIM THAT THIS MAN WAS WASTING HIS GOODS. SO HE CALLED HIM AND SAID, 'GIVE ME AN ACCOUNTING OF YOUR STEWARDSHIP.' (LUKE 16:1-2)

Prayer

You entrust to us, O Lord, the stewardship of the goods of your Creation. You ask us to take care of the oceans and all the life they contain, to keep the soil healthy as so many plants and animals are sustained by it, to make sure that water is clean and available to all who need it. Make us mindful of not wasting these riches, of not carelessly disposing of them as if they were our personal possessions. You are the creator and the owner. We are your stewards, charged with their care. May we give a good account of our stewardship. Amen

Quote

"The earth is sacred. Creation has its own intrinsic value. We have a responsibility to protect and cherish the earth's ecological diversity, beauty and life-sustaining properties. Together, we must hold it in trust for future generations."
(Development & Peace, Canada)

Petitions

Help us to be sensitive to the needs of all the creatures and elements of our earth.

- Lord, hear our prayer.

May we feel the life pulse of rocks and mountains, waters, winds and deserts. May we become their protectors and your faithful stewards.

- Lord, hear our prayer.

Help us to carry out a just stewardship of this marvellous Creation you confide to our care.

- Lord, hear our prayer.



Suggestions

Find out how your grocer disposes of bruised or less attractive fruits and vegetables. Ask if these could also be offered for sale.

Visit a used clothing shop, a Salvation Army store or a St. Vincent de Paul sale with your children or grandchildren. Let them purchase an article that is still useful.

Instead of throwing them out, collect gently used items from your house and drop them off at a charitable organization



SUNDAY
September 29

'AT HIS GATE LAY A POOR MAN NAMED LAZARUS, COVERED WITH SORES, WHO LONGED TO SATISFY HIS HUNGER WITH WHAT FELL FROM THE RICH MAN'S TABLE.' (LUKE 16:19-31)

Prayer

Heavenly Father, may our administration of the goods of your Creation together with a readiness to share from our own tables enable the earth to produce enough to satisfy the hunger of all our brothers and sisters.

Amen

Quote

"Seven out of 10 children in Nunavut go to bed hungry every day. When you're hungry, you're not thinking of anything else. You're thinking about food and where you're going to get food. You're not able to achieve what you're meant to achieve to make life better if you're hungry."

(Aluki Kotierk, President, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., December 2018)

Petitions

Give us eyes, O Lord, to recognize Lazarus when he lies at our door.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Help us not to imitate the selfishness of the rich man who abused his stewardship by wasting his substance upon himself.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Help us, O Lord, to heed the frequent warnings about the dangers our wasteful behaviour poses to life on earth. Guide us to traverse the chasm of indifference by adopting more ecologically-friendly practices.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Suggestions

Drop off tins of food, peanut butter or other staples at a food bank. Consider volunteering there.

Get teenagers involved in delivering Christmas food baskets.

Learn more about food insecurity in the north and in other parts of the country.



OCTOBER 4

FEAST OF ST.FRANCIS OF ASSISI

CANTICLE OF THE CREATURES

A PRAYER BY SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI, 1224

Most high, all powerful, all good Lord! All praise is yours, all glory, all honour, and all blessing. To you alone, Most High, do they belong. No mortal lips are worthy to pronounce your name.

Be praised, my Lord, through all your creatures, especially through my lord Brother Sun, who brings the day; and you give light through him. And he is beautiful and radiant in all his splendour! Of you, Most High, he bears the likeness.

Be praised, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars; in the heavens you made them, precious and beautiful.

Be praised, my Lord, through Brothers Wind and Air, and clouds and storms, and all weather, through which you give your creatures sustenance.

Be praised, my Lord, through Sister Water; she is very useful, and humble, and precious, and pure.

Be praised, my Lord, through Brother Fire, through whom you brighten the night. He is beautiful and cheerful, and powerful and strong.

Be praised, my Lord, through our sister, Mother Earth, who feeds us and rules us, and produces various fruits with coloured flowers and herbs.

Be praised, my Lord, through those who forgive for love of you; through those who endure sickness and trial. Happy are those who endure in peace, for by you, Most High, they will be crowned.

Be praised, my Lord, through our Sister Bodily Death, from whose embrace no living person can escape. Woe to those who die in mortal sin! Happy those she finds doing your most holy will. The second death can do no harm to them.

Praise and bless my Lord, and give thanks, and serve him with great humility.



FEAST OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI



God's artistry is in
everything,
everywhere and we
as humanity are
part of His creativity.

THE SAINT'S LOVE FOR CREATURES ANIMATE AND INANIMATE

In art he praises the Artist;

whatever he discovers in creatures

guides him to the Creator.

He rejoices in all the works of the Lord's hands, [Ps 92:5]

and through their delightful display

he gazes on their life-giving reason and cause.

In beautiful things he discerns Beauty Itself;

all good things cry out to him: [Gen 1:31]

"The One who made us is the Best." [Ps 100:3]

Following the footprints imprinted on creatures,

he follows his Beloved everywhere; [Job 23:11, Song 5:17, Matt 12:18]

out of them all he makes for himself a ladder [Gen 28:12-13]

by which he might reach the Throne. [Jb 23:3]

He embraces all things

with an intensity of unheard devotion,

speaking to them about the Lord

and exhorting them to praise Him.

(Thomas Celano's "The Remembrance of the Desire of a Soul")

(Francis of Assisi: Early Documents, Vol. 2, The Founder, page 353)

Reflection

Some of the sayings of St. Francis of Assisi reveal aspects of his vision:

"Start by doing what is necessary, then what is possible, and suddenly you are doing the impossible."

"He who works with his hands is a laborer. He who works with his hands and his head is a craftsman. He who works with his hands and his head and his heart is an artist."

"The deeds you do may be the only sermon some persons will hear today."

"Preach the Gospel. If necessary, use words."

"Remember that when you leave this earth, you can take with you nothing that you have received – only what you have given."

"True progress quietly and persistently moves along without notice."

"We should seek not so much to pray but to become prayer."

"I have been all things unholy. If God can work through me, He can work through anyone."

Suggestions

Organize a Blessing of Animals in the church yard or inside the church. Like St. Francis, we want to show our appreciation and respect for these "brothers and sisters" who reflect God's love to us. To illustrate the lowly poverty of the infancy of the Saviour born at Bethlehem, Francis organized the first live nativity scene in 1223.

He ensured that everybody including flora (hay) and fauna (ox and ass) had a part to play since he knew that the Saviour was born for all. Perhaps a blessing prayer of your manger scene could be repeated at services throughout the Christmas season:

Lord, bless all who look upon this manger; may it remind us of the humble birth of Jesus, and raise our thoughts to him who is "God-with-us" and Saviour of all. Amen *Download our Blessings of the Animals pdf* : <https://greenchurches.ca/tools/spirituality/activities/>



Alleluia!

Praise the Lord from the heavens;

praise him in the heights!

Praise him, all his angels;

praise him, all his host!

Praise him, sun and moon;

praise him, all you shining stars!

Praise him, you highest heavens,

and you waters above the heavens!

Let them praise the name of the Lord,
for he commanded and they were created.
He established them forever and ever;
he fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed.

Praise the Lord from the earth,
you sea monsters and all deeps,
fire and hail, snow and frost,
stormy wind fulfilling his command!
Mountains and all hills,
fruit trees and all cedars!
Wild animals and all cattle,
creeping things and flying birds!
Kings of the earth and all peoples,
princes and all rulers of the earth!
Young men and women alike,
old and young together!

Let them praise the name of the Lord,
for his name alone is exalted;
his glory is above earth and heaven.
He has raised up a horn for his people,
praise for all his faithful,
for the people of Israel who are close to him.
Praise the Lord!
Alleluia! **- Psalm 148**



THANKSGIVING



Suggestions

Address a word of thanks to God sometime today; perhaps as you gather together for your Thanksgiving meal: Bless us O God as we sit together. Bless the food we eat today. Bless the hands that made the food. Bless us O God. Amen. Invite each one in turn to say what they are thankful for. Don't forget the children!

OCTOBER 14 THANKSGIVING

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. - (Col. 3: 15-17)

Prayers

You've blessed me with friends and laughter and fun
With rain that's as soft as the light from the sun
You've blessed me with the stars to brighten each night
You've given me help to know wrong from right
You've given me so much, so please Lord give me too
A heart that is always grateful to you.

http://www.faithandworship.com/Celtic_Blessings_and_Prayers.htm#ixzz5lBb5i6cX



A CELTIC THANKSGIVING PRAYER

Posted on April 2, 2011 by celticozarkian

King of all glens and moors, of all cliffs and seas. You were God before the beginnings of the Universe. You moved through the heavens before the waters of the seas. You are the alpha and omega, our beginning and end. You created the earth of nothingness, shaped the earth from the breath of your words. You carved the cliffs, and lochs, and valleys. You filled our world with the heathers, and grasses, and sweet smelling flowers. You gave us the trees.



You measured each thing, and declared it all good. You know the height of the tallest mountain, and depth of the deepest sea. You know our exact place in this Universe. Your love surrounds it all.

You created men and women to be the trustees of all your creation. You have asked us to care for it, and love it, just as you love us. Because you are our Creator, you always surround us with your endless love. Help us to be thankful today, and to share the love you give us in your Creation with all we see today. Amen.