



LET JUSTICE AND PEACE FLOW



Season of Creation
September 01-October 04, 2023

A landscape featuring a tree with bare branches on the left and green foliage on the right, set against a bright sky with a sunburst effect and several colorful butterflies (pink, purple, blue) flying. The foreground is a field of green grass.

Introduction

Dear sisters and brothers, we celebrate the Season of Creation (SC) as an ecumenical initiative to reflect, meditate, pray, and act together for our ecological conversion; thus, we nourish our commitment for environmental and social justice that drive us to the true peace and harmony with our human family, with the creation, and with God. The theme selected is “Let justice and peace flow” as mighty river in our hearts and all creational community.

This year also we are celebrating the 60th anniversary of the Encyclical letter “Pacem in Terris” (1963), a gift by Pope John XXIII to all human of good will, who are committed with peace and justice, and 75th anniversary of Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948). All these historical initiatives are part of our pilgrimage pursuing the true justice and peace, the God’s Kingdom.

Initial Prayer

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.

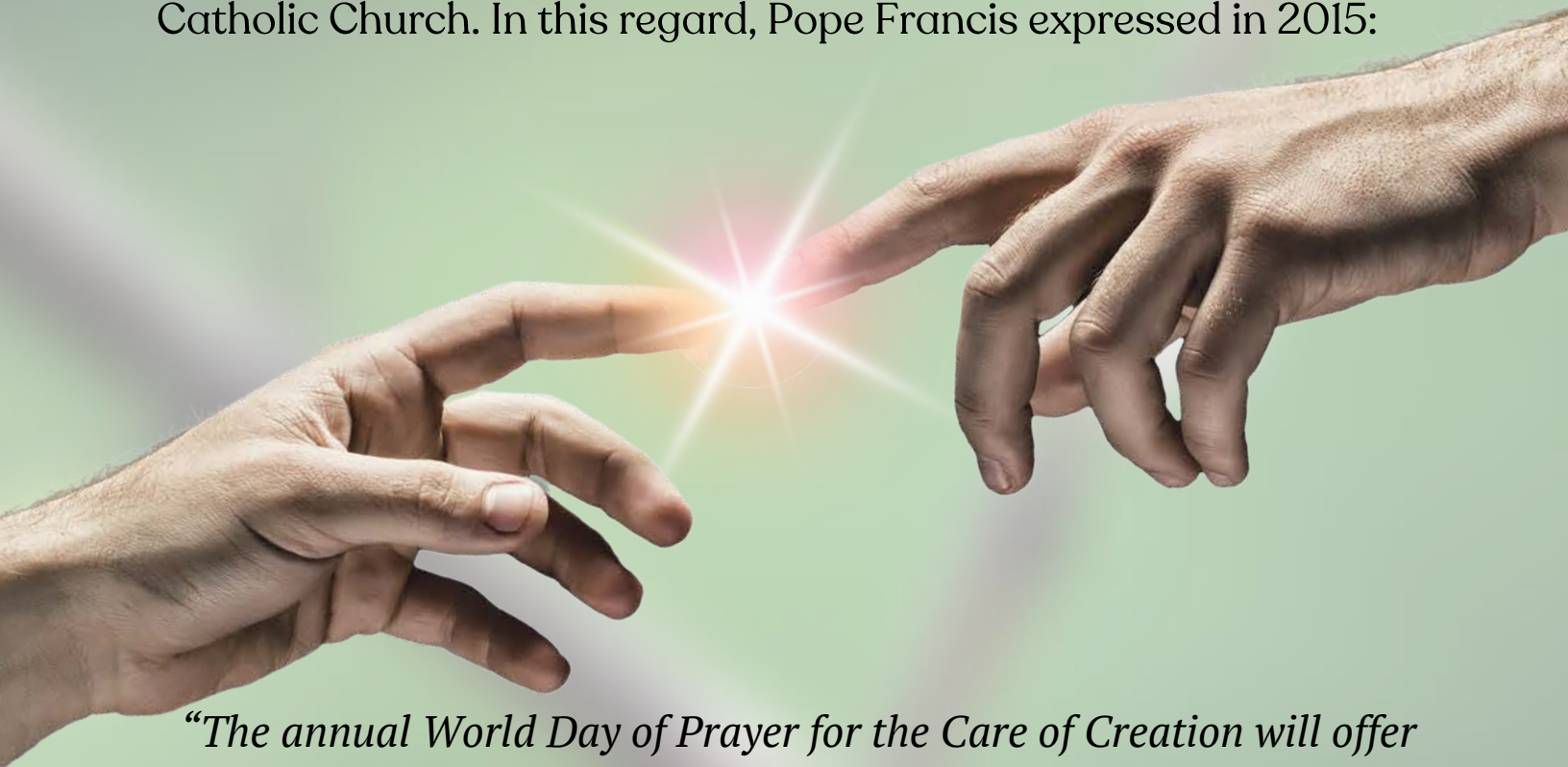
O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth, so precious in your eyes.

Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love and peace. Amen



Short History of Season of Creation

In 1989 Ecumenical Patriarch Dimitros I proclaimed September 01 as the Orthodox Day of Prayer for Creation. Subsequently, the World Council of Churches (WCC) extended the celebration until October 4, the feast day of St. Francis of Assisi. In turn, in 2015 Pope Francis made the Season of Creation official for the Roman Catholic Church. In this regard, Pope Francis expressed in 2015:



“The annual World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation will offer individual believers and communities a fitting opportunity to reaffirm their personal vocation to be stewards of creation, to thank God for the wonderful handiwork which he has entrusted to our care, and to implore his help for the protection of creation as well as his pardon for the sins committed against the world in which we live. The celebration of this Day, on the same date as the Orthodox Church, will be a valuable opportunity to bear witness to our growing communion with our Orthodox brothers and sisters.”



The Word of God

*But let justice roll on like a
river, righteousness like a
never-failing stream!
(Amos 5:24)*

*[The prayer leader invites to
keep a moment of silence]*

CHURCH TEACHING

The Synod of Bishops on “Justice in the World” in 1971 declares:

*The uncertainty of history and the painful convergences in the ascending path of the human community direct us to sacred history; there God has revealed himself to us, and made known to us, as it is brought progressively to realization, his plan of liberation and salvation which is once and for all fulfilled in the Paschal Mystery of Christ. **Action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appear to us as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel, or, in other words, of the Church's mission for the redemption of the human race and its liberation from every oppressive situation (JW 6).***

[The prayer leader invites to keep a moment of silence]



CLARETIAN SOURCES

The main causes of injustice that Fr. Claret discovered, in his own time, are namely the love of riches (market and selfish accumulation), the love of honor (competing for power and rule the world) and the love of sensual pleasure (consumerism or throwaway culture) are still drying the heart of the present society.



Seeing that our Lord, out of sheer good will and no merit on my part, was calling me to stem the torrent of corruption and cure the ills of a moribund society, I thought that I should dedicate myself to studying and gaining a thorough knowledge of the maladies of this social body. I did so, in fact, and found that this world is nothing but the love of riches, the love of honor, and the love of sensual pleasure. The human race has always been bent on this threefold lust, but in our day the thirst for material things is drying up the heart and bowels of modern societies (Aut 357).

[The prayer leader invites to keep a moment of silence]



SHORT REFLECTION

Life is like river's waters that incessantly flows to the deep oceans. This flow of life in the present time as well as in the future is being threatened by our human egoistic personal and collective decisions and actions. Furthermore, the biodiversity extinction is accelerating because the misused of the technology and science, the egoistic motivations and accumulation of the wealth in few hands.

The historical debt against poor and developing countries by so-called developed countries, and ecological debt by human community, especially by overexploitation of multinational companies have to be resolved to allow justice and peace flow. The positive decisions taken at COP27 in making wealthier nations realize their moral duty to provide for financing for loss and damage needs to be fulfilled, this may happen only if the Global South maintain unity.

As pope Francis in his message for Season Creation 2023 invites, “Too many of our brothers and sisters are prevented from drinking from that mighty river. Let us heed our call to stand with the victims of environmental and climate injustice, and to put an end to the senseless war against creation” (Message of Francis, 2023).

INTERCESSORY PRAYERS



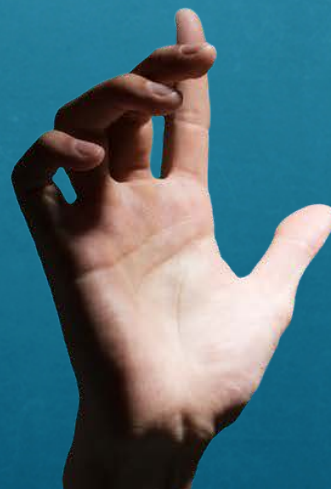
*Our response to each prayer is:
May justice and peace flow in
our creational community.*

God, author of all creation, inspire in our hearts, minds and hands love to all creatures, honest discernment to decide and promote justice and peace, and peaceful actions to contribute actively to your unfolding action in our universe.

Jesus, lover of life, may your Spirit continue transforming our lifestyle, as part of our ecological conversion, to grow as integral humans, in communion with ourselves, with the creation and with your beloved Father/Mother (LS 240)

May the yearly celebration of Season of Creation re-strengths our common actions that led flow justice and peace in our present context.

We pray for our groups and movements who are committed to work for environmental and social justice, may the light of Jesus and many martyrs for justice and peace reaffirm and guide us every moment.





ACTIONS

Above mentioned message pope Francis suggests four levels of commitment. “How can we contribute to the mighty river of justice and peace in this Season of Creation? What can we, particularly as Christian communities, do to heal our common home so that it can once again teem with life? We must do this by resolving to transform our hearts, our lifestyles, and the public policies ruling our societies. As well as he added the commitment of synodality that draws the church to build communion in the difference.

1

Re-read the Scripture, our congregational charism, and other sources with eco-social eyes (not only focused in human – God relationship).

2

Personally, and as community contemplate the beauty of God-Trinity in its creation (non-humans and humans).

3

Commit ourselves to advocate for justice in favor of the poor and the environment being part of inter-institutional actions against systematic injustice and violence.

4

To use digital platforms and mass media to denounce injustice without falling into fake-news.

5

Study, reflect and make the Socio-Ecological teaching of the church be part of our language, decisions and actions.

6

Let us review what means, in our context, to be image and likeness of God, if it is not fully integrated to whole creation.

FINAL PRAYER

Let us, then, pray with all fervor for this peace which our divine Redeemer came to bring us.

May God of life banish from the heart of humans whatever might endanger justice and peace.

May He transform all men and women into witnesses of truth, justice and brotherly and sisterly love.

May He illumine with His light the minds of rulers, so that, besides caring for the proper material welfare of their peoples, they may also guarantee them the fairest gift of justice and peace, Amen.

(John XXIII, Pacem in Terris # 171)

[More materials you can find in <https://seasonofcreation.org>]