

Catholic Season of Creation

An online resource for priests, parish and school liturgy coordinators, and interested related groups to help implement *Laudato Si'*.

The Columban Mission Institute's Centre for Peace, Ecology and Justice created this resource called a 'Catholic Season of Creation' for the Sundays in September 2016 Year C.

A Catholic Season for Creation, is a free download from the website of St Columban Mission Society.
See: www.columban.org.au

The resource can help believers face the 21st century ecological challenges since Sunday worship is the common way Catholics are led to consciously know and experience God.



Image: Charles Rue

DOWNLOAD NOW!

**Humbly take
our place**

**1st Sunday
23C**

**Reconcile
the world**

**2nd Sunday
24C**

Loving Embrace

**3rd Sunday
25C**

Respect

**4th Sunday
26C**

Why Donate?

Preparing Mission Resources is part of our ongoing work of mission awareness raising. We see this work as an important part of the Columban Society's service to the Mission of the Church here in Australia. We would be grateful for your donation to help towards continuing this service.

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A Catholic Season of Creation

Humbly take our place

1st Sunday

23C Sunday Ordinary Time

To your eyes a thousand years are like yesterday Ps 89

We believe:

God made the world and upholds it.

Read the Lectionary Ecologically

(Wis 9; Ps 89; Philemon 9; Lk 14)

*humble in the face of God's wisdom
who can know the intentions of God?
hard for us to work out what is on earth
granted Wisdom and sent your Holy Spirit
make us know the shortness of our life
You have been our refuge in every age
better than a slave - a dear brother
teach us your laws
if you do not carry your cross you cannot be my disciple
started to build and was unable to finish*

to commit a crime against the natural world is a sin against ourselves and a sin against God.

#8 Laudato Si'

Greeting

Earth is humble. Patiently over billions of years it has made life to spring forth and its cycles uphold human life. The soil, plants, oceans and very air we breathe are gifts of Earth evolved and tested over eons. Today's Readings invite us to remember that our life and the gifts of Earth spring from God. We are invited to build our lives and care for Earth, attentive to the Wisdom of God's Spirit.

***"ecosystems" ...
have an intrinsic value ...
Each organism,
as a creature of God,
is good and admirable
in itself.***

#140 Laudato Si'

Prayers of the Faithful

1. Like a loving parent, you our God have formed us from Earth. In humility may we remember that we are dust but called to be your children, not slaves.
2. God in whom justice and mercy meet, draw us into circles of life where we love our sisters and brothers and the earth itself, rejoicing in our common home.
3. God of Creation, you are the source of all reality. Guide us to truthfully assess environmental plans and their consequences, abiding by the wise principle of precaution.
4. God as Father, your Son Jesus showed us the way of the Cross. Strengthen us to willingly carry the cross of changing our lifestyle and grow in our love for all Creation.



Image: Charles Rue

Dismissal

Today's celebration of the Eucharist has not only invited us to take a more humble stance in life but also given us the courage to do so. The wisdom of God guides us to see the reality of the planet where we live but also commit ourselves to help make it a place ordered according to God.

Season of Creation

Inserting a Season of Creation into the Catholic Liturgical Year during September is one way to structurally help implement the vision of Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si'*. As a pastoral initiative a new four week long liturgical season would help believers face the 21st century ecological challenge. Sunday worship is the common way Catholics are led to consciously know and experience God and a September schema would assist them.



Image: Charles Rue

*science and religion,
with their distinctive
approaches ...
can enter into an
intense dialogue
fruitful for both.*

#62 Laudato Si'



Image: Charles Rue

Mysticism

Ecological conversion adds a new dimension to Christian mysticism. Becoming aware that Earth underpins all life leads to humility before God's first gift. It helps cultivate habits of patient reflection in preparing to make life choices. The Good News gets better. goo.gl/YBxjMt

Creation Covenants

God's 'Covenant with Noah' can be called the 'Forgotten Covenant'. Gen 9.9-10. God made an everlasting promise to the human race in Noah's descendants and with every living creature never to again to destroy Earth. God gave the rainbow as the sign of this promise. It is a unilateral covenant, no conditions, based solely on God's own faithfulness. God is faithful in every age. Lk 1.68-75 (cf. Si 44.19; Is 54.9; Rm 11.29).

*the ecological
movement ... thanks
to their efforts,
environmental
questions have
increasingly found a
place on public
agendas.*

#166 Laudato Si'

Earth Champions

Rosemary Ruether and other eco-theologians have forged a marriage between ecological insights and faith. In Australia the Mercy Sisters run two environmental centres, Rahamin and Earth Link, for ecological learning and formation. Their mission outreach works from the experience of local communities to become a resource to share with the wider church. goo.gl/NyBLrg

Hymn

How Great Thou Art

Ecological Insight

U-Tube clips on the evolution of cosmos show the gradual flowering of life on Earth. Scientists love the story of Earth unfolding. Looking with the eyes of faith, the clips lead believers to fall in love with Earth, respect scientists and accept with praise the reality of evolution in the Cosmos. An attitude of humility seeks to learn what it says about the Earth Community, its detail and complexity. Human knowledge advances in a spirit of dialogue that benefits both science and religion.

Local Culture

Through their stories people grow a sense of belonging within their physical environment and its time rhythms, becoming more a part of the Earth community. Many newer Australians follow Aboriginal people in a tradition of story-telling. "Marked by the laughing of the kookaburra, sunset was one of the most pleasant times of day. The fire would be lit, the food prepared, and while the food was cooling the children would be listening to the storyteller" Francis Bodkin *D'harawal*, 2013 *Envirobook*, Sussex Inlet NSW.

*The moon drained white by day
lifts from the hill
where the old pear tree fallen in
storm springs up in blossom still.*
Judith Wright *Later Spring*
goo.gl/YKWuFC

Raining on the Rock John Williamson

What can I do?

- Read Pope Francis' encyclical on Earth as our Common Home.
- Prepare some points to help explain the encyclical to others.

A Catholic Season of Creation

Reconcile the world

2nd Sunday

24 C Sunday Ordinary Time

My sacrifice is a contrite spirit Ps 50

We believe:

All matter is transformed in Christ.

Read the Lectionary Ecologically

Ex 31; Ps 50; 1 Tim 1; Lk 15

*dignity distinguishes the poor in spirit
your people whom you brought
out of Egypt*

by your own self you swear

I will rise and go to my father

wash me more and more

from my guilt

Jesus came into the world

to save sinners

in Christ you reconcile the

world to yourself

he welcomes sinners and

eats with them

celebrate ... he was lost and is found.



Image: Charles Rue

***ecological conversion
... offering ourselves to
God 'as a living
sacrifice'.***

#220 Laudato Si'

Greeting

Both to be forgiven and to forgive are graces of God. We start by recognizing that we have sinned. We draw down the mercy of God who time and time again has relented as we zig zag our path through life. The natural world itself is the first revelation of God's mercy and it too has often forgiven human follies. Being forgiven by Earth itself invites us to change our ways.

***Our relationship with the
environment can never
be isolated from our
relationship with others
and with God.***

#119 Laudato Si'

Prayers of the Faithful

1. God of Mercy, you are like the forgiving father of the prodigal son. Help us to bury our pride and take the initiative in seeking reconciliation with others.
2. God, in your son Jesus you have reconciled the world to yourself. Forgiven, lead us to change our business practices and laws to stop ecological abuse of your earth.
3. God of Mercy, you were with your people on their migration out of Egypt. In our day be with migrant people forced to flee ecological collapse in their homelands.
4. Jesus taught that it was right to celebrate the prodigal son come to life. Creator God, may we celebrate the new environmental social teaching of Pope Francis.

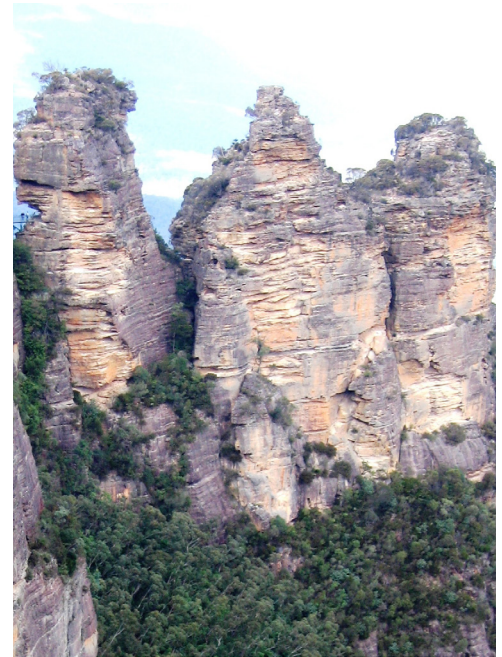


Image: Charles Rue

Dismissal

In this Eucharist we have remembered and given thanks for the graces of being forgiven and having the power to forgive. We can go forth with confidence to bring the good news of reconciliation with others and within the world where we live.

Season of Creation

The Church's liturgical seasons evolved gradually. They draw on nature's four seasons to provide time frames linked to winter, spring, summer and autumn. The seasons remind us that humanity is part of the planet community. Onto these frames Jewish accounts of salvation history and Christian remembrances was grafted. Vatican II's liturgical reform is a model of what has grown in modern times so that introducing a new Season of Creation to remember God's creative acts would be in an evolutionary line.

Mysticism

By mixing their contemplative and active lives, many saints grew as leaders of reconciliation. Saints Columbanus and Catherine of Sienna actively challenged Popes and kings alike to better serve their peoples. Today, many activists make the link between peace, social justice and ecological justice. They welcome the spiritual tone of the environmental encyclical on Care for Earth as our Common Home. It grounds their activism.

Creation Covenants

Jesus shows he is familiar with the love of God expressed in the workings of the natural world. Jesus saw his Father's 'Covenant with Natural World' in the lilies of the field and even the sparrow. Jesus saw himself as the grain of wheat that dies so that it might yield a hundred fold. Mk 4.1-9,13-20. He said he was like a hen gathering her chicks under her wing. God's loving covenant extends to all creation – God, humans and Earth in a loving communion as Pope Francis expressed it.

Earth Champions

Saint Hildegard of Bingen led a Rhine River monastery in the middle ages. She formed the nuns to celebrate a verdant God in poetry and song, and practice herbal medicine. The commitment of female environmental leaders in Australia often grew from the values Sisters and Catholic schools imbued in them when young. goo.gl/pNd2Zc

Hymn

Make me an instrument of your peace.

Everything is related, and we human beings are united as brothers and sisters on a wonderful pilgrimage, woven together by the love God has for each creature.

#92 Laudato Si'

Ecological Insight

Ecological processes work methodically. Nature tests new emergences over eons and sometimes dramatically with asteroid showers and volcanic action. Large scale geological upheavals and life extinctions are integral to its methods. From cosmic events to the birth of Earth and diverse life forms, nature has developed its own time scales. The first to challenge nature's time scale are modern humans. Their actions may even derail nature's processes and force a new epoch.

Creation is the order of love. God's love is the fundamental moving force in all created things.

#77 Laudato Si'



Image: Evansville Interfaith Community Alliance



Image: Charles Rue

Local Culture

Land helps form people. The Murray-Darling River Basin is a large geological area in the interior of southeastern Australia, one seventh of the Australian land mass, twice the size of France. Over millennia it has nourished Aborigines and foreign settlers, helping mould their cultures.

The Basin is largely flat, receives limited rainfall and depends on flows from mountains in its eastern rim. Its rich soils helped form four states and many agricultural based towns. But river flows and towns are under environmental threat from excessive use of water by industrial scale farming and the mining sector. goo.gl/iOPswL

*It is your land of smiles: the wattle
Scatters its pollen on the doubting
heart;
The flowers are wide awake; the air
gives ease.*

James McAuley *Terra Australis*
goo.gl/wycP1C

Murray River songs
goo.gl/rF3nQP

What can I do?

- Find out what happening ecologically with your local council
- Send leaders a letter about your local ecological concerns

A Catholic Season of Creation

Loving Embrace

3rd Sunday

25 C Sunday Ordinary Time

The Lord lifts up the poor. Ps 112

We believe:

Love God and love neighbour.

Read the Lectionary Ecologically

(Amos 8; Ps 112; 1 Tim 2; Lk 16)

*guide creation according to your law of love
the perfection of justice is found in your love
listen you who trample on needy ...
suppress poor
saying we can buy up the poor for money,
prayers offered for everyone - especially authorities
Christ Jesus who sacrificed himself been named as herald and apostle – telling the truth
trusted in little things
can be trusted in great
cannot be a slave of both God and money*

ecological conversion whereby the effects of their encounter with Jesus Christ become evident in their relationship with the world around them.

#217 Laudato Si'

Greeting

Today's Readings tell us that God holds us always in a loving embrace. God's embrace guides our lives with teachings and protects the poor from the unscrupulous. Jesus sacrificed himself as an example and gives us the power to do the same. Warned by God, we can overcome the lure of money to embrace what is true and good even in little things.

The ultimate destiny of the universe is in the fullness of God.

#83 Laudato Si'

Prayers of the Faithful

1. Creator God, you embrace us with your love. May we embrace Earth and its peoples with a love that heals, celebrating transformation for good.
2. Jesus sacrificed himself to open to us a true way. May our plans be not just for the benefit of those close to us or an elite but embrace all peoples on Earth.
3. Jesus taught that we cannot serve God and be a slave of money. May our business plans not suppress the poor but deal honestly with employees and Earth's gift of resources.
4. Father God, your son Jesus had to deal with the authorities of his day. We pray that government laws are fair and preferentially embrace the disadvantaged with compassion.



Image: Charles Rue

Dismissal

In this celebration of the Eucharist we have experienced the loving embrace of God as individuals and as a community. We have been fortified to reach out in compassion to others and Earth itself as mother, even to the point of willing self-sacrifice. This is the Good News.

Season of Creation

Catholics in all nations are caught up in an environmental crisis. Celebrating a season of creation is one way to help believers find God in this crisis. It would tell an expanded new story of a Creator God, a cosmic story witnessing to a near fourteen billion years unfolding Reign of God. It would open believers to both appreciate the modern insights of the ecological sciences and better find the voice of Earth in the Scriptures.



Image: Charles Rue

*a sense of deep communion
with the rest of nature
cannot be real if our hearts
lack tenderness, compassion
and concern for our
fellow human beings.*

#91 Laudato Si'



Image: Charles Rue

Mysticism

St Francis willingly embraced sister poverty. In giving away his possessions, embracing the poor and the leper, he inspired others to follow his gentle way. In our day, the 1987 Brundtland Report invites us to allocate Earth's gifts fairly and not rob future generations of resources allocated for their sustenance. A spirituality of love and justice would have us cooperate to grow ecologically sustainable development. goo.gl/sAKfBx

Creation Covenants

When Jesus died the earth shook and the temple curtain was torn. Mk 15.33-38. The earth itself is caught up in the saving acts of Jesus. Ps 22.1. An 'Apocalyptic Covenant' of calamity and dark days is part of Scriptural warnings. Mt 24; Mk 15. Pain is a part of transformation and Resurrection, a part of God writing with crooked lines given in the pattern of the Universe.

*we are agreed today
that the earth is
essentially a shared
inheritance, whose fruits
are meant to benefit
everyone.*

#93 Laudato Si'

Earth Champions

Many Religious take St Francis of Assisi as their patron so to combine faith in Christ with care for Earth. Internationally they are active at the UN and the Vatican. Locally they organize to help implement the vision of Pope Francis' Care for Earth as our Common Home promoting integral ecology that joins God, humanity and all Earth creatures in one communion. goo.gl/00aGRH

Hymn

Like a Shepherd that feeds his flock

Ecological Insight

Ecological scientists and environmental activists are often accused of neglecting people. This is a rash charge. Many fully support the insight that to care for the earth is to care for the poor. The sustainable use of water and oceans, agricultural land and forests is the only way to protect the rights of vulnerable people and future generations. Scientists call for long term planning rather than short term profits.

Local Culture

In waves of migration to Australia, women have often suffered greater hardship than men as they bore the brunt of nurturing and educating. Lawson's story 'The Drover's Wife' depicts a woman left alone with the children because her husband is away working. While waiting to catch a snake under her house, the wife of the title recalls her life - flood, fire, and drought - the hardships she has experienced that have changed her utterly from the girl she once was. goo.gl/ydYVEr

*The better times have shrunk to
single days.*

*Isolated and dry, they rattle in a
cupped hand*

*Like the seeds of the present,
Like brown rice.*

Margaret Scott *Family Portrait*
goo.gl/u4CZAs

Mama's Song – Carrie Underwood

What can I do?

- Give a copy of the Pope's Laudato Si' to a friend
- How are your school catechists teaching Laudato Si'

A Catholic Season of Creation

Respect

4th Sunday

26 C Sunday Ordinary Time

It is the Lord who keeps faith forever
Ps 145

We believe:
Honour your father and mother.

Read the Lectionary Ecologically

(Amos 6; Ps 145; I Tim 6; Lk 16)

*revealed the beauty of your power
power of this love be in our hearts
woe to those ensconced so snugly
the Lord sets prisoners free
the Lord protects the stranger
aim to be saintly
filled with faith and love, patient
and gentle
Jesus was rich but became poor
not be convinced even if someone
rise from the dead*



Image: Charles Rue

***whatever is fragile,
like the environment, is
defenceless before the
interests of a deified
market, which becomes
the only rule.***

#56 Laudato Si'

Greeting

Fear of the Lord is a traditional way of saying, respect God. We might imagine ourselves to be self-sufficient and be smug in our achievements. In reality, it is God who has set us free, protects us and sets us on the path to be good people and saints. God fills us with faith, love and hope. In humility we respect God's gift of our life and the gifts of Earth that surround us.

***Each creature possesses its
own particular goodness
and perfection.***

#69 Laudato Si'

Prayers of the Faithful

1. Creator God, all the gifts we enjoy spring from you. Strengthen your gifts of faith and love in us so we can become the saints you want us to be.
2. Jesus, you taught the people parables about pride. Help us know when to change tack, to choose what leads to true joy for us and the total Earth community.
3. Jesus, you call us to be disciples in our times. By living the lives you have called us to - our vocation - may we be faithful witnesses to the Good News.
4. Creator God, in your Son you took on the frailties of human nature. When we disagree with others may we always act with respect and patience.

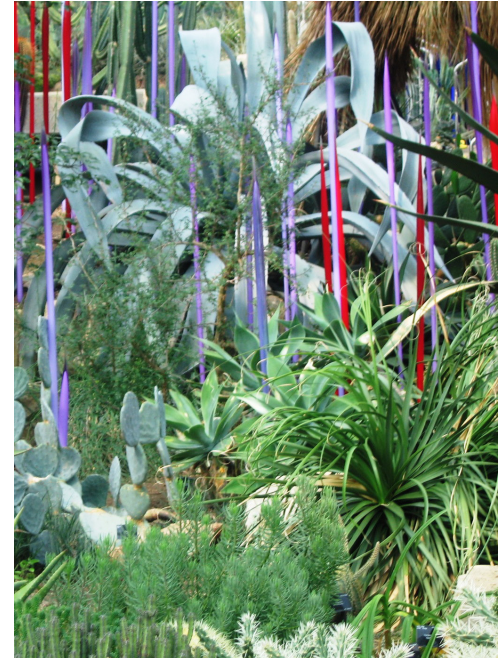


Image: Charles Rue

Dismissal

In the celebration of this Eucharist we have been nourished by God to live the lives you want us to live. We have been given both teachings and the power to live with respect for the people close to us and the total Earth community surrounding us. Let us live the Good News.

Season of Creation

In 2013 Pope Francis exhorted pastors to better promote mission by addressing real life issues in the Eucharistic assembly, *taking on the smell of the sheep*. Humanity faces an ecological crisis and needs spiritual help to do so. In 2015 he explicitly asked that pastors be prepared from their seminary days to address ecological conversion; and that it be done in a systematic way. Pastors can benefit from a Season of Creation framework, a systematic schema, to nurture Catholic communities in the ecological dimension of their faith.

Mysticism

In Jesus the spiritual and material worlds are united. We remember the Incarnation every time we celebrate the Sacraments by using material objects to mediate the spiritual. Passed on as traditional wisdom, the followers of nature religions respect the spiritual dimension of the universe and look for fulfilment by being linked to its mystery. This way of belonging on Earth can be a revolutionary reminder to people imbued with a materialistic mind-set.

Creation Covenants

A mustard seed sprouts and the yeast multiplies Lk 13.18-21. God's 'Covenant of Evolution' revealed in Earth formation was reinforced socially under the Holy Spirit as church communities evolved across nations. Acts 10.34-36; Acts 16.9-10. The Spirit challenged first Peter and then Paul to accept this evolution in God's revelation. However, the heart of the Church has grown course in some eras, become self-satisfied and refused to evolve. Acts 28.26-27.



Image: Charles Rue

The nobility of the human vocation to participate responsibly in God's creative action

#131 Laudato Si'

Earth Champions

Teachers in Catholic Schools – Sisters, Brothers and Lay – instil in students a love for the environment. They foster skills and inspire the value of care for all God's creation. The diocese of Townsville backs teachers locally with a dedicated centre for the environment. It forms teachers to teach their own students. Teachers learn and grow through their teaching. goo.gl/9RaoP7



Image: Charles Rue

Hymn

Rock of Ages

Ecological Insight

The method of science must be respected. Sadly, some mistaken past theologies and ideological stands against science have brought religion into disrepute. Pope Francis in *Laudato Si'* has apologized for this and thanked environmental activists (LC 200). He calls for renewed dialogue from which both sides can benefit in the pursuit of truth. This begins with respect for Earth's own integrity.

a mistaken understanding of our own [faith] principles has at times led us to justify mistreating nature.

#200 Laudato Si'

Local Culture

The idea that Stone Age hunters could have helped cause the Late Pleistocene mega-fauna extinctions in parts of Australia seems incredible. One result was increased fire in uneaten growth and the increase in fire resistant species. Population growth affecting eco-system change in modern times is a hot debate in Australian as it can cause biodiversity loss and increased pollution. Respect for the land, its processes and species calls for changes in cultural values. goo.gl/aCc96H

*Nature was never friendly,
her ways
Severed me and serious poets
should never be severed,
Should lovers be,
namers of colours,
shapes and plants?
Fay Zwicky Identity
goo.gl/KQCFOX*

*Pave paradise and put up a parking
lot, Big Yellow Taxi, Joni Mitchell*

What can I do?

- Send a 'thank-you' letter to a scientist
- Explore the aims of the IPCC or CSIRO