

# Seasons of Creation

## Acknowledgement of Country

As I take time to contemplate the wonders of our world, I become still. I feel my feet within my shoes, my shoes on the ground. I become aware of the sounds and the smells that fill the air that I breathe. I then listen to my breath, coming into my body, sustaining me, gifting me with life. Present to the now, I acknowledge the First Nations peoples on the lands on which my feet rest. I acknowledge the First Nations elders; past, present and emerging. I commit to listening to their wisdom. I commit to being a person of reconciliation. I acknowledge that the waterways, seas and lands that I may walk and cross, was, is and always will be the land, seas and waterways of the First Nations peoples of the space we now call Australia.

## Context and Reflection: Heaven's Poetry to us

Robyn Chambers

Consultant Formation, Cairns Catholic Education Services

In the beginning, God brought everything into being... night and day, sky, land and waters, sun, stars, trees and plants, and every living thing; a world of order, harmony and beauty. And *'God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good'* (Genesis 1:31) God then placed it in the hands of humans.

Caring for creation has always been an important part of Christian living, from the beginning and throughout history. Pope Francis said, "Creation is not a property, which we can rule over at will; or, even less, is the property of only a few: Creation is a gift, it is a wonderful gift that God has given us, so that we care for it and we use it for the benefit of all, always with great respect and gratitude." And since the promulgation of Pope Francis' encyclical letter, [Laudato Si: On the Care for our Common Home](#), many people have become better informed about the [Catholic Social Teaching](#) that advocates caring for creation and the environment.

The Season of Creation has had a special significance for the Catholic Church since Pope Francis established 1 September as an annual "World Day of Prayer" for the care of Creation encouraging the Catholic community around the world to pray for our common home. However, September 1 was first proclaimed as a day of prayer for creation in 1989 by Ecumenical Patriarch Dimitrios I of the Orthodox church; September 1 being the day that the church commemorates how God created the world. The celebration was then extended to October 4, the feast day of the patron saint of Ecology, the beloved St Francis of Assisi by the World Council of Churches who were instrumental in proclaiming this time a [`season'](#).

The Season of Creation is an opportunity for Christian communities to unite for a common purpose. But it won't just be Christians who have their focus on creation during this time. In September this year, Jewish believers will be celebrating the high holy day of Rosh Hashanah which commemorates the day the world was created. Muslims too have a deep concern regarding care of the Earth. The Prophet Muhammad told his followers that they would be rewarded by God for doing so. He said, "If any Muslim plants any plant and a human being or an animal eats of it, he will be rewarded as if he had given that much in charity." (Sahih Al-Bukhari, 8:41)

The Season of Creation this year has as its theme: "Jubilee for the Earth: New Rhythms, New Hope" and as the [Holy Father says](#), in the Scriptures, "Jubilee is a sacred time to remember, return, rest, restore, and rejoice". It's time to put this intent fairly back on all our shoulders, and maybe COVID has been a wakeup call to remind us to stop, look and listen, to cultivate, care, protect and preserve, to remember, return, rest, restore, and rejoice, to put our focus back on healing; remembering that care of creation includes us too.

"It's no ordinary world  
A diamond in the universe  
[Heaven's poetry to us](#)" (Paul McCartney)

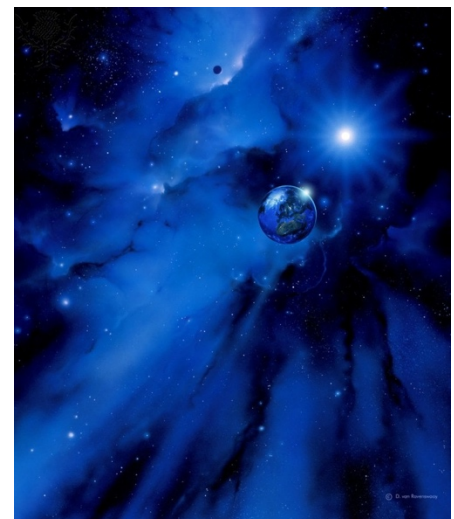


Figure 1 Earth, Sun and Moon. Photography. Britannica ImageQuest, Encyclopædia Britannica, 25 May 2016.

## Prayer: Seasons of Creation 2020 Prayer

Creator of Life,

At Your word, the Earth brought forth plants yielding seed and trees of every kind bearing fruit.

In your Wisdom, you granted a Sabbath; a blessed time to rest in gratitude for all that you have given.

But these days our living pushes the planet beyond its limits.

During this Season of Creation, we ask you to grant us courage to observe a Sabbath for our planet.

Strengthen us with the faith to trust in your providence.

In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.



Figure 2 Seasons of Creation Resources: [Downloaded 16 September 2020](#)

## Action

Over the next few weeks, join other Christian communities and world traditions to pray and reflect on how we can better care for creation. Here are some articles, reflections, activities and prayers that you might find useful:

- [Seasons of Creation](#)
  - o This is a comprehensive resource of prayers and activities for the season
- ["Lens on Creation"](#)
  - o An examination of the world through the lens of a camera and faith
- [Jubilee for the Earth](#)
  - o A podcast on Biodiversity and our Sacred Story
- [A Catholic Season of Creation– Sundays of September \(Year A, 2020\)](#)
  - o An online Catholic liturgical resource for Celebrating a Catholic Season of Creation during September. "A Catholic Season of Creation" resource explores the Sunday scripture readings to help us find the voice of the earth as the voice of the Holy Spirit.
- [Catholic Earthcare Convocation](#)
  - o Catholic Earthcare is a place and platform where the many, diverse voices within our church community come together, in dialogue, to help and co-create our shared future. Sessions are designed to appeal to a wide range of audiences: eco-warriors, theologians interested in the spheres of our world across which sustainability operates, faith-inspired youth, and those wanting to answer our call for action – to care for creation.
- Suggestions by **Lawrie Hallinan**:
  - o **Reflect**
    - Engage with one of the [Global Catholic Climate Movement prayers](#)
    - Complete the 6 module (1-2 hour) [online Laudato si' course](#)
    - Be challenged by a [Season of Creation webinar](#)
    - Read Kevin Treston's [Parable of the Good Samaritan from an ecological perspective](#)
  - o **Justice**
    - Plant a tree
    - [Adopt a more sustainable lifestyle](#) as an individual/family
    - Sign and promote [the Catholic Climate Petition](#)
    - Join an advocacy group, such as [Australian Religious Response to Climate Change](#)
    - Write to your local MP seeking more sustainable policies and for a just transition for coal communities.



Figure 3 Seasons of Creation Resources: [Downloaded 16 September 2020](#)