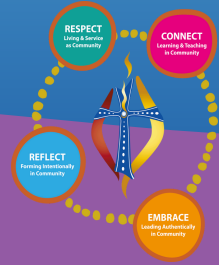


# Family Prayer

## Season of Creations



### Speaking to Country

This prayer was written on Gimuy Walubara Yidinji country. The lands, seas, skies and waterways of the region now known as Cairns, were, are and always will be those of the Yidinji people. I pay my respects to the elders past and present. CEDC endeavours to honour their wisdom and ways in our relationships with country, people and all that the world has to offer.

You too, are invited to pause for a moment. (breath)

To consider the country beneath your feet; the lands and waterways on which you live. The skies and seas which you visit and travel over and upon. (breath)

You are invited to honour, in your own way, the people who have called this place home for millennia. (breath)

### Context: Seasons of Creation

Ecological awareness and guardianship of creation is central to teachings in ecumenical churches as the Season of Creation is celebrated throughout September. Through a deeper engagement with creation towards ecological conversion, we can be drawn into a personal and communal vocation as “protectors of God’s handiwork” [1]. Understanding our relationship with God, to one another and to creation is critical in bringing about God’s plan in this world [2] to protect creation (both human and non-human life) from harm and exploitation.

### Scripture

#### A reading from the Gospel attributed to Luke

*Luke 2:1-7*

#### The Birth of Jesus

2 In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. 2 This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. 3 All went to their own towns to be registered. 4 Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. 5 He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. 6 While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. 7 And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.



*Figure 1 The Nativity, 1925, Arthur Joseph Gaskin, (1862-1928/British) . Fine Art. Britannica ImageQuest, Encyclopædia Britannica, 25 May 2016. [quest.eb.com/images/107\\_3349657](https://quest.eb.com/images/107_3349657). Accessed 5 Sept 2024.*

The Gospel of the Lord

**Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ**



**Catholic Education**  
Diocese of Cairns

*Learning with Faith and Vision*



Figure 2: The Night Spectacular at the Tower of David Jerusalem Museum. Photograph by M. Gaul taken 5 July 2023. Used with Permission.

## Reflection

### by Maureen Gaul - Leader formation

***“And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth and laid him in a manger.”  
(Luke 2:7a)***

The birth story of Jesus, as it appears in the Gospel according to Luke, is a creation narrative that begins an “ecological symphony” [3]. It is a theological narrative that reveals the action and love of God through the annunciation and birth of Jesus [4], and not a chronological account. Written for a Greco-Roman audience – lovers of God but removed from the Galilean Jesus [5] – Luke the Evangelist sought to inspire his audience to virtuous living through his eloquent penmanship on the story of Jesus as ‘Earth’s Child’.

In the opening chapters, where the parallel birth stories of John the Baptist and Jesus portray the powerful role of the expectant mothers, a maternal theme is established. The imagery is fructive. And while listeners would, no doubt, visualise literal representations of these narratives, believers are enticed into a deeper engagement with the text to ponder the theological and Christological underpinnings presented.

There are both maternal and material [6] elements to Jesus’ birth story - Mary, his Mother in dialogue with God, and the natural world materials that ‘held’ him as an infant. The bands of cloth - a gift of the earth - that wrap Jesus, signify that Jesus is surrounded by Earth’s gifts; the stone manger – another product of the earth into which he was placed – is a theological statement on Jesus as a child of the Earth [7]. Hence, the birth of Jesus is seen as a communion between heaven and earth, and a New Testament Creation story.

It is important to embrace opportunities within our spheres of influence to enact social and economic change and advocate for the protection of the environment [8], affirmed with the understanding that the essence of God [9] is contained within all of creation. In addition to this, Christians can discern how the Gospels are speaking into their lives today, since they are divinely inspired and sacred texts oriented to shaping and transforming [10] for fullness of life.

In Luke's Gospel, there is centrality around the themes of conversion – economic, political and ecological, as well as theological, [11] which are still relevant for today's audiences.

Pope Francis, in his recent Message for the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, urges the faithful to "hope and act with Creation"[12] for "newness of life in Christ" through a "new spirit of coexistence among people, based on universal fraternity and Christian peace".[13]

This walking together to protect creation originates in the Christian belief that "we were created in the image of God who is Jesus Christ, and, as a result, are "representatives" of creation in Christ himself." [14] As parts within the whole of creation, we too can become involved in the "process of new birth" that seeks transformation through liberation[15] and look to Jesus as our model and guide to be Earth's Children for a future of peace, love and justice.

## Prayer

Prayer for Creation: [Caritas Parish Resource](#)

God of all creation,  
Thank you for the gift of our lives  
and for the world in which we live.  
We thank you for the warmth of the sun in winter,  
and a cool breeze in summer.  
We thank you for the great diversity of life,  
which fills us with wonder and reminds us that we too  
are creatures.  
We pray that we will grow in respect for all life,  
and for the Earth itself.  
That we will use your gifts with gentleness and wisdom,  
not with greed and selfishness.  
We pray that our minds and hearts will lead us to an  
active hope,  
as we respond to the cry of the Earth and the cry of the  
poor in our time.  
May our hope transform humanity,  
to take bold action to protect our world.  
At this time of Pentecost  
may we call on the Holy Spirit to kindle in us the fire of  
God's love  
and renew the face of the Earth.  
May we all be part of that renewal.  
We ask this in Jesus' name.  
Amen.

## Call to Action

**You might like to spend time in prayer and reflection using any or all of these resources**

- The **Season of Creation Devotional** app (free on Apple and Google)
- Liturgy Brisbane's ["The Cosmic Song of 'Laudato Si' - Theological Insights and Liturgical Implications"](#)
- CAFOD's [Season of Creation](#) resources

**If you are feeling inspired for further information and/or action, you may like:**

- [The Australian Climate Case](#) - be informed about the legal challenge by two Torres Strait Islanders defending their communities from climate change
- Australian Catholic Bishop's [Social Justice Statement 2021-22 "Cry of the Earth Cry of the Poor"](#)
- [The Letter](#) - The Pope, the Environmental Crisis and Frontline Leaders - The Letter: Laudato Si Film.
- [Catholic EarthCare](#) community and video [Laudato Si - An Urgent Appeal for Action](#)



## References

- [1] Meave Heaney [\*The Cosmic Song of 'Laudato Si' – Theological Insights and Liturgical\*](#) Implications (Liturgy Brisbane (Liturgy Brisbane, September 2015 edition of Liturgy News)
- [2] Alice Carwardine "[What is Integral Ecology?](#)" (Australian Catholics Education Hub Article 6th May 2020 in AC+ resources for exploring First Nations perspectives Viewed 28th May 2023)
- [3] Michael Trainor About Earth's Child: An Ecological Listening to the Gospel of Luke (Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2012) p. 23
- [4] Michael Trainor About Earth's Child: An Ecological Listening to the Gospel of Luke. p. 23
- [5] Michael Trainor The Gospel of Luke (ACU, 2024).
- [6] Michael Trainor The Gospel of Luke (ACU, 2024).
- [7] Michael Trainor The Gospel of Luke (ACU, 2024).
- [8] Michael Trainor About Earth's Child: An Ecological Listening to the Gospel of Luke. p. 29
- [9] Michael Trainor The Gospel of Luke (ACU, 2024).
- [10] Michael Trainor About Earth's Child: An Ecological Listening to the Gospel of Luke. p. 23
- [11] Michael Trainor About Earth's Child: An Ecological Listening to the Gospel of Luke. p. 37
- [12] Pope Francis [\*Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation 1st September 2024 Hope and Act with Creation.\*](#) (2024) Accessed 3rd September 2024. Copyright © Dicastery of Communications.
- [13] Pope Francis [\*Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation 1st September 2024 Hope and Act with Creation.\*](#) (2024) [3]
- [14] Pope Francis [\*Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation 1st September 2024 Hope and Act with Creation.\*](#) (2024) [8]
- [15] Pope Francis [\*Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation 1st September 2024 Hope and Act with Creation.\*](#) (2024) [3]



### Parish Resource

