

Theme: Walking Together

Season of Creation explanation



September 1, 1989, was proclaimed as a day of prayer for creation for the Eastern Orthodox Church by the late Ecumenical Patriarch Dimitrios I. It was embraced by other Christian European churches in 2001 and by Pope Francis for the Roman Catholic Church in 2015. Today, many Christian churches celebrate the Season of Creation beginning September 1 and concluding with the feast of St Francis, October 4. (About the Season of Creation, www.seasonofcreation.org)

Pope Francis' encyclical Laudato Si has placed emphasis on the need to care for creation and has moved the ecumenical movement forward. This month, we join all people of good will in celebrating the [Season of Creation](#).

"In walking together, we follow the road of Jesus, who walked with friends on the roads around Jerusalem. As He traveled the byways of his community, Jesus invited us to encounter God through God's presence in creation. Whether by considering "the lilies of the field", or the "grains of the wheat that falls to the earth," the spiritual journey of following Jesus is closely tied to the everyday wonders of nature that He experienced in His earthly journey.

"This Season of Creation, we strive to more deeply understand the lesson Jesus taught us through creation, to more authentically honor our Creator, and to share fellowship with brothers and sisters along the way. As pilgrims together, we welcome the opportunity to awaken anew to the wonder of the Earth, our common home, and to protect the web of life it shelters." ([Season of Creation Guide, 2018](#))

Pope Francis: "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 of his creatures and which also unites us in fond affection with brother sun, sister moon, brother river and mother earth". ([Laudato Si # 92](#))

Let us pray:

Pilgrimage Blessing by Lisa Hershey Kutolowski

Leader: Dear Pilgrim,

As you go into the wilderness of the land and of your heart---

May you experience the ever-flowing grace of God's presence!

May you be immersed so fully in God's love that you learn to let go and swim!

May you engage deeply and radically with the natural world, as steward, co-creator, and friend!

May you drink anew from the divine source, the stream of living water!

And may you be transformed, may the stagnant waters of your spirit begin to flow,
and may all which is dead in you rise again!

God is here. The river awaits. Let the adventure begin. Amen

(from ["The River of Life Prayer Book for the Connecticut River Pilgrimage 2017"](#))

Suggested Opening Song: Flow River, Flow ([Bob Hurd, 1986](#))

Prayer: May God who created all creation, who established it upon the waters, wash us anew in the living waters of new birth as we walk together and do our part to reverence the earth, the sacred ground of our existence. May God give us strength for the journey as we join our brothers and sisters throughout the world in this **Season of Creation**.

Reading from Scripture:



The Story of Creation

Genesis 1:1-21

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth....

RESPONSE: Litany for the Four Directions *Written by Jay C. Rochelle, 1990*

Leader: Let us give thanks for the East, for the ancient hills and valleys and streams without end, for the green Atlantic from the reaches of Maine to the Florida Keys, for larch and hemlock, for black bear and mountain trout, for cardinals and eastern bluebirds.

Response: We bless you, O God, for the east.

Leader: Let us give thanks for the West, for soaring mountains and searing deserts, for waters roaring into the Pacific Ocean, for Columbia River salmon, snow buntings and western meadowlarks, for ponderosa and Jeffrey pine, for the mists of the Oregon coast and for the Olympic peninsula:

Response: We bless you, O God, for the west.

Leader: Let us give thanks for the North, for the bright band of prairie and wheat fields stretching across the land, for the Jayhawk and the loon, for the badlands of the Dakotas and the lakes of Minnesota, for northern pike and steel eye, for winding two-land blacktops in the heart of Wyoming.

Response: We bless you, O God, for the North

Leader: Let us give thanks for the South, for the broad Mississippi delta and the great Smokey Mountains, for the bayous of Louisiana, for magnolia trees, for kiskadee and egret, for catfish and parrotfish and for the cotton and the colors on the sands and strands of the southland:

Response: We bless you, O God, for the South



Tree Planted at Assembly

From Pope Francis: “Care for nature is part of a lifestyle which includes the capacity for living together and communion. Jesus reminded us that we have God as our common Father and that this makes us brothers and sisters. Fraternal love can only be gratuitous, it can never be a means of repaying others for what they have done or will do for us. That is why it is possible to love our enemies. This same gratuitousness inspires us to love and accept the wind, the sun and the clouds, even though we cannot control them. In this sense, we can speak of a “universal fraternity”. ([Laudato Si # 228,](#))

Intentions: **Response:** O God, enlighten our hearts and remain with Your world.

Leader: We pray in thanksgiving for Mother earth in whom all life is rooted, for Brother Sun whose energy radiates life, for Sister Water who nurtures and revives us, and all creatures with whom we live and for whom we are called to till and keep this garden. **Response**

Leader: O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth, so precious in your eyes. Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it, that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction. **Response**

Leader: Pour out your love upon us that we may protect life and beauty. Fill us with peace that we may live and

work as brother and sister to renew the face of the earth in this season of creation.

(Adapted from **Ecumenical Prayer Service for Season of Creation**, <http://seasonofcreation.org/guide/>)

Reflection/Faith Sharing Questions:

In this pilgrimage season of Creation, in what ways can you “deeply and radically engage the natural world as steward, co-creator, and friend”?

How can you support (walk with) our brothers and sisters affected by wildfires, drought, flooding of coastal regions, hurricanes, volcanic eruptions, earthquakes and other natural disasters?

Prayer of Pope Francis

Father, we praise You with all Your creatures.
They came forth from Your all-powerful hand:
They are Yours, filled with Your presence and Your tender love
Praise be to You!



Son of God, Jesus, through You all things were made.
You were formed in the womb of Mary our Mother,
You became part of this earth, and You gazed upon this world with human eyes.
Today You are alive in every creature in Your risen glory.
Praise be to You!

Holy Spirit, by Your light, You guide this world toward the Father’s love
and accompany creation as it groans in travail.
You also dwell in our hearts and You inspire us to do what is good.
Praise be to You!

Triune Lord, wondrous community of infinite love,
teach us to contemplate You in the beauty of the universe, for all things speak of You. Awaken our praise and
thankfulness for every being that You have made. Give us
the grace to feel profoundly joined to everything that is.

God of love, show us our place in this world as channels
of Your love for all creatures of this earth,
for not one of them is forgotten in Your sight. Enlighten
those who possess power and money [us] that they [we]
may avoid the sin of indifference, that they [we] may love
the common good, advance the weak, and care for this
world in which we live.



The poor and the earth are crying out O Lord, seize us with
Your power and light, help us to protect all life, to prepare for a better future, for the coming of Your kingdom of
justice, peace, love and beauty. Praise be to You! Amen. (**Laudato Si # 246**)

Suggested Final Hymn: We are Companions on the Journey (**Carey Landry, 1985**)

Possible Additional Actions:

Pray daily during this Season of Creation for those most affected by climate change: the poor, climate refugees, victims of hurricanes, fires, volcanic eruptions, the underdeveloped countries, etc.

Reduce your use of plastics: Walk with the next generation to reduce the use of plastics. Check out their website: <https://onelessstraw.org/>

From September 12-14, local leaders (governors, mayors, heads of corporations, clergy), from around the country will meet in San Francisco to address the climate crisis. On Sept 8, join a **Rise Up group** or start a local march to encourage and demand they take action. The march can be as simple as in your neighborhood, around the block or at city hall, etc. View the following Facebook video for more information:

<https://www.facebook.com/350.org/videos/10156754251927708/>

Sept 15 is International Coastal Cleanup Day. If you live by the ocean, by a lake, river, or other body of water spend some time removing trash from it so the creatures that call it home have a healthier place to live.

Oct 4: The Feast of St Francis. Celebrate all that is right with God's creation.

Pray and reflect upon the **Canticle of the Creatures**.

Further information:

<http://seasonofcreation.org>

<http://seasonofcreation.org/2018/06/15/season-of-creation-supported-across-christian-traditions/>

<http://livelaudatosi.org/ways-live-pledge/>

<https://www.reuters.com/subjects/natural-disasters>

<https://franciscanaction.org/issues/climate-justice>