



# Prayers for the Season of Creation-- 2022

## Introduction to the Season of Creation 2022

### Listen to the Voice of Creation

The burning bush is the Symbol for the Season of Creation 2022.

The prevalence of unnatural fires is a sign of the devastating effects that climate change has on the most vulnerable of our planet. Creation cries out as forests crackle, animals flee, and people are forced to migrate due to the first of injustice that we have caused. On the contrary the burning bush of Moses was not consumed nor destroyed. The flame of the Spirit reveals God's presence and affirms that God hears the cry of all who suffer.

May this symbol remind us to take off our sandals, contemplate our connection to holy ground, listen for the voice of creation and be filled with God's healing love that sustains our common home.

The Season Celebration begins September 1, the World Day of Care for Creation, and ends October 4, the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of ecology.

### 2022 Season of Creation Prayer (prayed September 3 & 4)

Creator of All,

From your communion of love your Word went forth to create a symphony of life that sings your praise. By your Holy Wisdom you made the Earth to bring forth a diversity of creatures who praise you in their being. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they reveal knowledge.

You called human beings to till and keep your garden. You placed us into right relationships with each creature so that we could listen to their voices, and learn how to safeguard the conditions for life. But we turn in on ourselves and away from our co-creatures.

We lament the loss of our fellow species and their habitats that will never speak again. We grieve the loss of human cultures, along with the lives and livelihoods that have been displaced or perished. Creation cries out as forests crackle, and animals alike flee the fires of injustice that we have lit by our unwillingness to listen.

In this Season of Creation, we pray that you would call to us, as from the burning bush, with the sustaining fire of your Spirit. Breathe upon us. Open our ears and move our hearts. Turn us from our inward gaze. Teach us to contemplate your creation, and listen for the voice of each creature declaring your glory. Give us hearts to listen for the good news of your promise to renew the face of the Earth. Enlighten us with the grace to follow the Way of Christ as we learn to walk lightly upon this holy ground. Fill us with the hope to quench the fires of injustice with the light of your healing love that sustains our common home. In the name of the One who came to proclaim good news to all creation, Jesus Christ. Amen.

### An Earth Examen—September 3

An examen is a way of beholding an object or being in prayerful wonder. Through questions, you are invited to reflect on God's presence and the goodness of that which you behold. Prepare by taking time to consider how you can best open your senses to listen to the voices that praise God, and draw our hearts to God's presence in that place of contemplation. This is an exercise that you can choose to do alone, or with a group. Pick a natural or agricultural place to contemplate. Become aware of God's presence.

**1. How is God present in this place?** How does all the life you see exist in God's spirit? How do you feel knowing that the Holy Spirit has filled this place for geological ages, with every plant, animal, organism and mineral that has called this place home in the deep past, makes its home here with you now, and will live here with creatures in this place in the future? How do you feel knowing that you, earthling, belong to this place, are made of the same carbon, breathe the same air, are nurtured by the same cycles and life processes, and are enlivened by the same Spirit of the Creator?

**2. Reflect on the ecological cycles of this place with gratitude for all that it provides.**

What nutrient cycles are supported by this place? Is this a watershed that filters water? Is this a rainforest (tropical or deciduous) that fixes nutrients? Is this a meadow or field that fixes nitrogen? Is this a green space that absorbs CO<sub>2</sub> and cleans the air? What plants, animals, microbes and minerals are sheltered here? How do they serve the whole earth in their being? For all that this place provides to nurture you and all that belong to this place, let a feeling of gratitude fill you.

**3. Listen for the voices that speak in this place**

Fill your lungs with breath. Be attentive to what you feel (the air, grass, sand, soil, sun, rain) on your skin. Open your eyes (or close them and open the eyes of your heart). Open your ears to listen to the voices of creation in this place. Who are they? What do you hear them saying? Who is missing or lost from this place? What does their absence tell you?

**4. Choose one feature of the site and pray for it, its rest and its renewal.**

When you consider the ways that this place is under stress, what does it need for rest, restoration and renewal? What needs to be conserved for this site to heal itself? What features need to be reclaimed? What creatures need to be restored to their rightful home here so that their voice can be heard? Pray for this site, and the wisdom to care for it.

**5. What can you do to ease the stress or heal this site?**

Based on your examen, how do you identify with this place? What have you discerned is required to care for this place? Whose voice from among this place will you seek to amplify? What will be your act of compassion to promote rest for this common home?

### A Blessing for Mother Earth – September 8

We **bless Mother Earth** in its infinite abundance and stunning beauty, the wealth of its fauna and flora, the infinite subtlety of its growth and survival mechanisms and its mission of supporting the human race. We **bless** it in its ability to protect itself against the chemical and physical abuses of which it is a victim. Amen.

### Patriot Day Prayer—September 11

Dear Loving Creator, We pause to remember the great losses and courageous acts all in time of violence and war. We lift up those who are affected -- families of all who have lost their lives: police officers, firemen, first responders, soldiers and all who were involved. We pray for the light of Christ to flood the hearts of people everywhere. We believe You desire to redeem Your creation, and we trust that beauty will continue to come from the ashes of those dark days. *Surround us with peace, give us compassion for one another in all of life's circumstances, and instill in us the courage to let LOVE guide the way. Amen*

### Blessing of Animals—October 1&2

St Francis of Assisi is more than a statue in your garden. He is remembered for his generosity to the poor, his willingness to minister to the lepers, and for his love for animals and nature. He is the Catholic Church's patron saint of animals and the environment. And so, we continue the tradition of blessing the animals:

*Blessed are you Creator God, maker of all living creatures.*

*You called forth fish in the sea, birds in the air, and animals on the land.*

*You inspired St. Francis to call all of them his brothers and sisters.*

*We ask you to bless this animal.*

*By the power of your love, enable it to live according to your plan.*

*May we always praise you for all your beauty in creation.*

*Blessed are you, Lord our God, in all your creatures! Amen.*

Another Action involving the whole family:

Consider donating pet food or gently used blankets and towels to the local animal shelter around this time of the year. The Feast of St. Francis of Assisi provides an opportunity to teach children about endangered or abused animals and what we can do to help.

