



STEWARDS OF OUR EARTH All of God's Creation

Social Justice Committee, Holy Cross Parish, Mt. Airy, September 15, 2024

To Hope and Act with Creation

Held annually beginning September 1 (the Day of Prayer for Creation) and ending October 4 (the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi), **the Season of Creation invites us to see the divine presence in all of creation.** This “time for creation” offers, in the words of Pope Francis, “individual believers and communities a fitting opportunity to reaffirm their personal vocation to be stewards of creation, to thank God for the wonderful handiwork which he has entrusted to our care, and to implore his help for the protection of creation as well as his pardon for the sins committed against the world in which we live.” (Pope Francis, Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, September 1, 2015)

Below are some ways to live out these three dimensions of Pope Francis' call, both as individuals and as a community.

1. Reaffirm Our Vocation as Stewards of Creation

As individuals and families: **Counteract the "Throwaway Culture."** In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis brings attention to our "throwaway culture," which "quickly reduces things to rubbish" (no. 22). In your daily life, try to identify the ways in which you can choose reusables, rather than disposables, such as coffee mugs, reusable bags, or cloth napkins, and **commit to making one change during this month.**

2. Thank God for His Wonderful Handiwork

As individuals and families: **Meal Prayer.** Before and after meals, say a short prayer of thanksgiving for the lifegiving food that sustains and nourishes us. Briefly consider how all nourishment ultimately comes from the earth and give thanks for all the human hands that helped bring this food to your table. May we recognize, as *Laudato Si'* has taught us, that **this "moment of blessing, however brief, reminds us of our dependence on God for life"** (no. 227).

As a community: **Eucharistic Adoration.** One of the most meaningful ways we give thanks as Christians is through the sacrament of the Eucharist, a word which means "thanksgiving." As *Laudato Si'* proclaims, **through the Eucharist, "the whole cosmos gives thanks to God"** (no. 236).

3. Implore God's Help and Ask His Pardon

As individuals and families: **Confession.** In calling for a deep "ecological conversion," Pope Francis has emphasized the importance of examining one's own conscience, of recognizing one's sins against creation, however great or small. Seeing the interconnectedness of our world leads to an understanding that **"[e]very violation of solidarity and civic friendship harms the environment,"** *Caritas in Veritate*, no. 51.

(All excerpts from: Justice, Peace and Human Development, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2017)

[See link to video of Archbishop Perez on the Season of Creation.](#)

Comments on this column may be directed to the Social Justice Committee at socialjustice@holycrossphl.org.