

PRAYER

'Living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience.' (Laudato Si', 217)

A PRAYER FOR OUR EARTH

All powerful God, you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of your creatures. Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty. 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. Amen. (Laudato Si', 246)

A PRAYER BEFORE MEALS

Loving God, we ask you to bless this food which comes to us through the work of many people, from the sowing of seeds in the earth, to our table here today. Help us to always care for your beautiful creation. Amen.

As you splash water on your face three times, repeat this prayer.

God of Life – thank you for this water
Christ of Love – thank you for this water
Spirit of Peace – thank you for this water



We are invited to listen to creation's call. What is God saying to us through the Book of Nature? Spend more time, with awareness, evoking the senses, contemplating God's love for us through creation. Can we allow nature to be a teacher, a friend, a channel of God's love?

The Next Steps at Home, in your Parish and Local Community

- 'It cannot be emphasised enough how everything is interconnected.' (Laudato Si', 138)
- Reflect on your relationship with God's creation through an ecological examination of conscience
 - Look up the Laudato Si' Goals and see how your parish might achieve them:
www.laudatosiactionplatform.org
 - Plant an indigenous tree or shrub in the garden
 - Organise a blessing of pets for the Feast of St Francis of Assisi on 4 October
 - Set up a 'Care for Creation' group in your parish. Read the Encyclical Laudato Si' together
 - Work on joint ecological plans and projects with other faith communities, schools, youth groups, community groups in your neighbourhood
 - September is the month of Spring. Go wild! Cultivate some wildflowers



The biblical texts in Genesis (2:15) are to be read in their context, recognizing that they tell us to "till and keep" the garden of the world. "Tilling refers to cultivating, ploughing or working, while "keeping" means caring, protecting, overseeing and preserving. This implies a relationship of mutual responsibility between human beings and nature.' (Laudato Si', 67)

Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.' (Exodus 3:5)



LISTEN TO THE VOICE OF CREATION

'I have heard their cry ... I know their sufferings ... Come, now! I will send you ... I will be with you.'
(Exodus 3:1-12)

SEASON OF CREATION
1 September–4 October 2022

HEALTHY SOIL

'God has joined us so closely to the world around us that we can feel the desertification of the soil almost as a physical ailment, and the extinction of a species as a painful disfigurement.'
(Evangelii Gaudium, 215)

A healthy soil is necessary to ensure both present and future good harvests.
A healthy soil will provide a protection against extremes in temperature and rainfall – reducing the impact of extreme weather conditions.
A healthy soil will also be able to maintain high productivity as well as environmental protection.
There are no negative consequences on the ecosystem from having a healthy soil.

Present situation:

- When soil is not looked after it loses its ability to support plant life, becomes contaminated or destroyed.
- Climate change, excessive flood or fire damage, over grazing, deforestation and industrial activity causes loss of good soil.

The difference between soil and dirt:

Soil is alive with living organisms such as worms, fungi, insects, bacteria, and organic matter. It supports life, making it the perfect planting medium.

Dirt is made up of sand, silt, and clay, and it may be rocky. It has none of the minerals, nutrients, or living organisms found in soil. It is not an organized ecosystem.



CLEAN WATER

Clean water is essential for good health and well-being. In fact, each person on Earth requires between 20 and 50 litres of safe water a day for drinking, cooking, and basic hygiene.

The human body is made up of approximately 60 percent water. This essential resource assists in many crucial bodily functions, ranging from maintenance of body temperature to the transportation of nutrients.

Did you know?

97.5% of water on earth is salt water. 2.5% is fresh water. This 2.5% sustains life on earth. Of this 2.5% of fresh water, 70% is used in agriculture, 22% in industrial settings and only 8% for domestic consumption. The demand for freshwater has increased and continues to increase dramatically.

Present situation:

- Unfortunately, many people in developed nations take clean water for granted. Currently, 14 African countries suffer from water stress and about 40 percent of Sub-Saharan Africa does not have access to clean water.
- People living in communities with little to no access to clean water are often forced to drink contaminated water or buy filtered water, which is beyond their financial means.
- Poor hygiene practices due to a lack of water significantly increases the risk of contamination and the spread of disease.



HEALTHY SOIL: WHAT CAN WE DO?

- Grow soil-saving plants, deep rooted to help with water runoff and soil erosion.
- Make a compost heap in your garden
- Avoid using harmful insecticides and weedkillers.
- Avoid digging and compacting the soil. Rather use your garden fork to aerate the soil.
- Be proactive and BUILD the health of your soil by adding organic matter to your soil. your soil health layering organic matter on top of your soil.
- Grow a herb garden in small containers.

HELPING TO KEEP OUR WATER CLEAN

Simply by going about your daily routines— we might be unknowingly contributing to the pollution of our already struggling waterways. Some suggestions:

- Never flush nondegradable products down the toilet.
- Don't let paint, used oil, chemical cleaners, or other questionable household products go down the drain. The water that goes down our drains will eventually flow into streams, lakes and waterways.
- Pick up your pets' waste.
- Organise a beach or river clean-up with your parish, friends or neighbourhood.
- Dispose of medical waste responsibly. Never throw expired medication down the toilet.
- Try to avoid using plastic containers.
- Keep vehicles from leaking: oil and other fluids leak from motor vehicles and end up in the local water table, or running off into rivers and streams.

