

Eco-7 Steps Bible Sharing



Season of Creation Prayer 2020

Creator of Life,

At your word, the Earth brought forth plants yielding seed and trees of every kind bearing fruit. The rivers, mountains, minerals, seas, and forests sustained life. The eyes of all looked to You to satisfy the needs of every living thing. And throughout time the Earth has sustained life. Through the planetary cycles of days and seasons, renewal and growth, you open your hand to give creatures our food in the proper time

In your Wisdom, you granted a Sabbath; a blessed time to rest in gratitude for all that you have given; a time to liberate ourselves from vicious consumptions; a time to allow the land and all creatures to rest from the burden of production. But these days our living pushes the planet beyond its limits. Our demands for growth, and our never-ending cycle of production and consumption are exhausting our world. The forests are leached, the topsoil erodes, the fields fail, the deserts advance, the seas acidify, the storms intensify. We have not allowed the land to observe her Sabbath, and the Earth is struggling.

During this Season of Creation, we ask you to grant us courage to observe a Sabbath for our planet. Strengthen us with faith to trust in your providence. Inspire us with the creativity to share what we have been given. Teach us to be satisfied with enough. As we proclaim a Jubilee for the Earth, send Your Holy Spirit to renew the face of creation.

In the name of the One who came to proclaim the good news to all, Jesus Christ. AMEN.

September 6 (23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time) Earth Sunday

Psalm 94

First Reading: Ezekiel 33: 7-9

Second Reading: Romans 13: 8-10

Gospel Reading: Matthew 18: 15-20

“Listen to his voice, harden not your hearts.”



It is a day to celebrate God's creation. When God created the world, God blessed it and called it "very good" (Gen 1: 2-31). God is revealed through the beauty, power, abundance, and mystery of the natural world. Through wind and flame, water and wilderness, creatures and seasons, God continually present and active in the world.

The earth and all that is in it belongs to God (Ps 24:1). As Christians, we are called to celebrate and care for creation. Cultivating and caring for the land is central to God's first mission for humanity (Gen 2:15). Just as ancient stewards managed the household resources of their master, we must wisely manage the abundant resources of God's earth.

The health of humanity is linked to the health of environment. The present coronavirus pandemic is a global health crisis that has affected every country around the world. The changing of climate is one factor to consider in the spread of virus. It is urgent to keep sounding the climate emergency alarm and work towards the care for our common home.

Today's readings call us to open our hearts to God and listen to His voice—the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor. When you hear his voice, harden not your hearts, exclaimed the psalmist. Jesus in the gospel invites us to live in harmony with others and recognize our need for fraternal correction because none is perfect and without fault.

Step 1: Invite the Lord

Call to Worship (adapted from St. Francis' Canticle of Creatures)

Leader 1: We praise you God, for Brother Sun, who brings the day.

All: *Thank you for giving us light through him. We praise you.*

Leader 2: We praise you God, for Sister Moon and the Stars. In heaven

All: *You have formed them, bright, and precious, and beautiful. We praise you.*

Leader 1: We praise you God, for Brother Wind, and for Air, for Cloud, and

All: *Clear, and all the weather, by which you give your creatures nourishment. We praise you.*

Leader 2: We praise you God, for Sister Water. She is useful, and humble,

All: *And precious, and pure. We praise you.*

Leader 1: We praise you God for Brother Fire, by whom you light up

All: *The night. How handsome he is, how happy, how powerful and strong! We praise you.*

Leader 2: We praise you God, for our Sister, Mother Earth, who nourishes and governs us, and produces wonderful fruits, flowers and herbs. With all the creatures of your Creation, we praise you!

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Loving Creator, we come to you in awe of the works of your hands. The roaring thunder and crashing seas remind us of our need for humility. Like Adam and Eve, in our desire to taste the good life, we overstep the boundaries you have placed on your Creation. We are sorry. Teach us to be humble, Lord. Focus our minds on your work; till and keep the Creation, helping it to flourish and sustain life. Amen.

Step 2: Listening to the Lord

Gospel Reading: Matthew 18: 15-20

Step 3: Gazing upon the Lord

Step 4: God speaks to us in Silence

Step 5: Sharing our Faith

Step 6: Faith and Action

Suggested task for the week: ***CARBON FAST***

Step 7 The Word of God and Prayer make you holy

Season of Creation Prayer 2020

September 13 (24th Sunday in Ordinary Time)

Ecological Migrants Sunday

Psalm 102

First Reading: Sirach 27: 30—28:7

Second Reading: Romans 14: 7-9

Gospel Reading: Matthew 18: 21-35

“The Lord is kind and merciful.”



Ecological migrants or Environmental migrants are defined by the International Organizations for Migrants as persons or groups of persons who, for reasons of sudden or progressive changes in the environment that adversely affect their lives or living conditions, are obliged to have to leave their habitual homes, or choose to do so, either temporarily or permanently and who move either within their territory or abroad.

<https://climate.org/climate-migration-a-growing-global-crisis/>

According to the March 2018 report from World Bank, climate change, already a growing driver of migration, forcing families to flee water scarcity, crop failure and rising sea levels, may cause as many as 143 million people to be displaced by 2050. It covers three regions—Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, and Latin America—that are major ‘hot spots’ and account for 55% of the developing world’s population. People who are looking for viable places to live in involve the poorest people from the poorest countries moving in large numbers from rural regions to increasingly overburdened urban areas. Without prior planning, such dramatic swells of migration could lead to major disruption and instability, the report says.

Pope Francis clearly stated in his encyclical letter, “Laudato Si’”, our responsibility to our fellowmen calling us to respond. He said, “There has been a tragic rise in the number of migrants seeking to flee from the growing poverty caused by environmental degradation. Our lack of response to these tragedies involving our brothers and sisters point to the loss of that sense of responsibility to our fellow men and women which all civil society is founded.

As we come together to pray for these migrants, let us be empathetic to their plight of leaving their homelands because of extreme weather events like flooding, drought, and more effects of climate change. May we be kind and merciful to them and work on reducing our contribution to the destruction of environment and suffering of the people around us.

Step 1: Invite the Lord

Call to Worship (Psalm 100: 1-3)

Make a joyful noise to the Lord all the earth! Serve the Lord with gladness! Come into His presence with singing! Know that the Lord, He is God! It is He who made us, and we are His; we are His people, and the sheep of his pasture.

Step 2: Listening to the Lord

Gospel Reading: Matthew 18: 15-20

Step 3: Gazing upon the Lord

Step 4: God speaks to us in Silence

Step 5: Sharing our Faith

Step 6: Faith and Action

Suggested tasks for the week:

A. Review the ecological impact of your lifestyle

10 Daily Habits that are Killing the Environment

1. Leaving the Lights On
Turning the light off when you leave the room, even if you're only going for a few minutes, really does make a difference to the environment.
2. Boiling the Kettle
Many people guess the amount of water they need when they boil the kettle, and they end up boiling too much. Boiling a kettle usually uses a lot of power- enough to light a whole household – which also costs the householder money.
3. Eating Farmed Meat
If you're eating farmed meat, you're supporting an incredibly environmentally damaging industry. Many acres of rainforest are cleared to grow soy crops and grains to feed cattle, and overgrazing of cattle is a major reason for global soil depletion and source of climate pollution.
4. Commuting
The way we travel is one of the biggest environmental polluters in our lives but taking steps to reduce them will impact the environment, local pollution levels, and your health.
5. Wasting Paper
If we reused papers, we reduce the use of energy.
6. Leaving the Tap Running
Whether you're washing the dishes or brushing your teeth, leaving the tap running while you do so wastes a vast amount of water.

7. Sending Biodegradables to Landfill Sites

Stop throwing food peels, tea bags and other reusable items from the kitchen into the landfill bin, make compost instead. This small lifestyle change will drastically reduce your carbon footprint, the amount of waste your household produces, and the amount that you send to landfill sites. It also creates a rich compost that will benefit the soil in your garden or someone else's.

8. Using Plastic Bags

The plastic bags you bring home will end up in the ocean, or worse. Consider buying a tote or cloth bag instead and make a habit of keeping it in your pocket or bag.

9. Ignoring Plastic Packaging

Many of our lifestyle choices involve buying goods that may only be available in plastic packaging. One step you can take to counter this is to contact the product manufacturer and ask them directly whether they might consider reducing the amount of packaging they use. You can also check the recycling numbers on the products you buy that are packaged in plastic to see whether you can recycle them locally, and commit to buying only those products in future.

10. Flushing the Toilet

This is not the easiest habit to change, although the use of compost toilets is on the rise worldwide. However, flushing your toilet just once or twice less a week will make a difference to how much water your household uses (diluted urine is purported to be safe and excellent liquid fertiliser), and adding a brick to your toilet cistern will reduce the amount of water the toilet uses with each flush.

This may all seem overwhelming but remember, taking small steps to change daily habits will significantly reduce your carbon footprint. The question that remains is –which habit will you tackle first?

www.onegreenplanet.org

B. Grow herbs and vegetables at homes

C. Visit a local community garden

Step 7 The Word of God and Prayer make you holy

Good and gracious God,

We ask that you provide special protection for all families, particularly those who must leave their ancestral homes because the land can no longer sustain the members of the community. Be with them in their hardships as they move in search of a better life

Help us to remember the suffering of all migrant families and to open our hearts so that we may provide hospitality to our sisters and brothers in search of refuge. Give us the courage to welcome every stranger as Christ in our midst. We ask this in your name. Amen.

(©2017 The Catholic Health Association of the United States)

September 20 (25th Sunday in Ordinary Time)

Biodiversity Sunday

Psalm 144

First Reading: Isaiah 55: 6-9

Second Reading: Phil 1: 20c-24, 27a

Gospel Reading: Matthew 20: 1-16a

“Near to all who call.”



God created an abundant Creation, filled with glorious creatures both large and small. As stewards of God's creation, we are called to protect all life, to keep and care for the garden. The blessing of fruitfulness is given to all of Creation in Genesis, and it is our duty to ensure that all life is allowed the opportunity of fruitfulness. The Creator blessed the Earth so that all creatures will prosper with great abundance and diversity. The protection of biodiversity, or the diversity of all life, is an essential part of our role as stewards of Creation.

God's creatures are valuable not because of their usefulness to us but of their essentials to our well-being. They, too, are valuable for each other—the trees are valuable as places for birds to nest and the mountains are valuable as places of refuge. Where are the birds to nest if we remove the trees? Most importantly, they are valuable because they are simply created by God.

The parable in the gospel tells us that God is the landowner; we are the labourers in his vineyard. What a great privilege for us to be called by Him to work in His vineyard!

As Christians, we are called to preserve and promote biodiversity and protect the endangered species under our care. Together with St. Francis we exclaim, “All praise to you, O Lord, for all these brother and sister creatures.”

(www.nccecojustice.org)

Step 1: Invite the Lord

Call to Worship

How many are your works, O Lord! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures. Be exalted, O God, above the heavens, and let your glory be over all the Earth; for all that is in the heavens and on the Earth is yours; yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as head above all (adapted from Psalm 104, 108, and 1 Chronicles 29).

Step 2: Listening to the Lord

Gospel Reading: Matthew 20: 1-16a

Step 3: Gazing upon the Lord

Step 4: God speaks to us in Silence

Step 5: Sharing our Faith

Step 6: Faith and Action

Suggested tasks for the week:

10 Ways to Protect the Environment during the COVID-19 Pandemic

1. Eliminate plastic water bottles and take the **#TapWaterChallenge**;
2. Support your local businesses and reduce your carbon footprint by buying local products;
3. Reduce your meat consumption to protect the planet and be more healthy;
4. Plant native or acclimatized plants in your yard to promote biodiversity;
5. Reduce your electric bill and your energy consumption by unplugging your unused electronics;
6. Improve your home infrastructure by diverting rainwater away from your storm and sewer systems;
7. Review the chemicals in the cleaning products in your home to protect our waterways.
8. Avoid clogging our sewer systems by not flushing disinfecting wipes (even those labeled as flushable) down the toilet.
9. Avoid idling your car for more than 60 seconds.
10. Donate to, volunteer for or become a member of a local environmental organization.

Step 7 The Word of God and Prayer make you holy

Prayer of Thanks

Leader: Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice, let the sea roar, and all that fills it; let the field exult, and everything in it. Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy before the Lord.

*All: **The Earth is the Lord's and all that is in it.***

Leader: Yonder is the sea, great and wide, creeping things innumerable are there, living things both small and great.

*All: **The Earth is the Lord's and all that is in it.***

Leader: The trees of the Lord are watered abundantly, the cedars of Lebanon that he planted. In them the birds build their nests; the stork has its home in the fir trees. (Psalm 104: 16-17)

*All: **The Earth is the Lord's and all that is in it.***

Leader: You make springs gush forth in the valleys; they flow between the hills, giving drink to every wild animal.

*All: **The Earth is the Lord's and all that is in it.***

Leader: You have made the moon to mark the seasons; the sun known its time for setting. O Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures. (Psalm 104: 24) I will sing to the Lord as long as I live; for all that is in the heavens and on the earth is yours; yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as head above all. Give praise to the Lord. Amen.

(Adapted from Ps 24, 96, 104, and 1 Chronicles 29)

September 27 (26th Sunday in Ordinary Time)

Ocean Sunday (God-given integrity)

Psalm 24

First Reading: Ezekiel 18: 25-28

Second Reading: Phil 2: 1-11 or 2: 1-5

Gospel Reading: Matthew 21: 28- 32

“Remember your mercies, Lord.”



The oceans, teeming with sea life, vibrant coral communities, and vast beauty, are part of God’s treasured creation. When God created the oceans, God declared them ‘good’. As God’s children and people of the ocean, we receive the ocean’s bounty on our tables and experience its beauty as we participate in recreation activities. As God’s stewards, we are called not only to enjoy the oceans, but also to care for them as a sacred gift from God. As we are people of God, we are to maintain the bounty of the ocean’s waters and the integrity of oceanic systems that support an abundance of life and an untold wealth of beauty.

(www.nccecojustice.org/realstoriesgreatgreen.html)

Our oceans are in trouble. Nearly 300 million tons of plastics are produced each year to make bags, bottles, packages, and other commodities for people all over the world but only ten per cent of this plastic is properly recycled and reused. The rest ends up as waste in landfills or as litter in our natural environment, where it leaches dangerous chemicals into the nearby soil and water, endangering humans and wildlife alike. Plastic pollution not only affects our waters and marine life, but also the food chain and overall health. Many organizations are mobilizing institutions and citizens across the globe about a new level of consciousness about plastic pollution and a paradigm shift. The world must perceive plastics not only as an environmental challenge of global proportions but also a symbol of the values that need to change in order to build a more sustainable and just world.

(Excerpt taken from Catholic Climate Covenant)

As people of the ocean, our immediate action to save our home is urgent.

Step 1: Invite the Lord

Call to Worship

*Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise God in the heights above.
Praise God, all God's heavenly hosts.
Praise the Creator of sun and moon, praise God, all you shining stars.
Praise the Lord, you highest heavens, and you waters above the skies.
Let them praise the name of the Lord, for the Lord commanded and they were created.
God set them in place for ever and ever; God gave a decree that will never pass away.
Praise the Lord from the earth, you great sea creatures and all ocean depths.
(based on Psalm 148)*

Step 2: Listening to the Lord

Gospel Reading: Matthew 21: 28-32

Step 3: Gazing upon the Lord

Step 4: God speaks to us in Silence

Step 5: Sharing our Faith

Step 6: Faith and Action

Suggested task for the week:

Take action to protect God's Oceans

1. Recycle or dispose of trash properly.
Every year, millions of pounds of trash degrade habitat and can strangle, poison, or otherwise harm ocean wildlife.
2. Reduce your energy consumption.
Air pollution particles created from power plants and automobiles fall into the ocean in raindrops, polluting the water with excess nitrogen and contaminating fish with toxic mercury.
3. Reduce the use of pesticides and fertilizers.
Runoff from lawns, farms, streets, parking lots, and construction sites is a major source of ocean pollution. This runoff—containing silt, nitrogen, and phosphorous—robs ocean waters of light and oxygen, and is especially harmful to coral reef ecosystems. In the bays and estuaries near populated areas, chemicals including fertilizers contribute to “dead zones” where nothing can live. Eliminate the runoff from lawns, farms, streets, parking lots, and construction sites as a major source of ocean pollution.
4. Enjoy Responsible Recreation
Ocean lovers spend a lot of time on, in, and under the water—swimming, boating, fishing, diving, and enjoying the beach. These activities are often the most direct contact we have with ocean life, so how you engage in them determines whether your impact is negative or positive.

Step 7 The Word of God and Prayer make you holy

Gracious God, your amazing love extends through all time and space, to all parts of your creation, which you created and called good. You made a covenant with Noah and his family, putting a rainbow in the sky to symbolize your promise of love and blessing to every living creature, and to all successive generations. You made a covenant with Abraham and Sarah, blessing them and their descendants throughout the generations. You made a covenant with Moses and the Israelite people to all generations, giving them the 10 commandments and challenging them to choose life. In Jesus, you invite us to enter into a new covenant, in communion with all who seek to be faithful to you.

As people of faith, we are called into covenant. Your covenant of faithfulness and love extends to the whole creation. We pray for the healing of the earth, that present and future generations may enjoy the fruits of creation, and continue to glorify and praise you.

(National Council of Churches)

October 4 (27th Sunday in Ordinary Time)

Ecological Vocation Sunday

Isaiah 6

First Reading: Isaiah 5: 1-7

Second Reading: Philippians 4: 6-9

Gospel Reading: Matthew 21: 33-43

“Here Am I, Send Me.”

Mission Month



Ecological Vocation Sunday is observed to remember our responsibilities as stewards of God's creation.

(www.eficor.org/ecosunday)

Our world and everything in it belongs to God. It has been entrusted to us, human beings, and to all living things that inhabit this land. Our practices that caused ecological crisis are also a call for us to acknowledge our ecological sins. It includes not only our destructive behavior but also the things that we have failed to do to care for our common home. We are called for a total conversion of heart and turn away from our indifferences and selfishness.

Each one of us has received the vocation to care for our fellow creatures on this planet. This mission that God entrusted to us lead us to realize that we are part of the earth community. We are totally interdependent and interrelated to one another. Our vocation springs from the love of God for us and for the rest of his creations.

During this difficult time brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, people across the world experience suffering from illness, fear, isolation, hunger, and poverty. We are called and challenged to be responsible with everyone and the rest of God's creation. The present situation calls to bare witness the love and compassion of God in the midst of suffering and uncertainties. May we have the courage to respond to God's question: *Whom shall I send? Here I am, Lord, send me!*

Step 1: Invite the Lord

Call to Worship

Here I Am, Lord (John Michael Talbot)

I, the Lord of sea and sky
I have heard my people cry
All who dwell in dark and sin
My hand will save

I who made the stars of night
I will make their darkness bright
Who will bear my light to them?
Whom shall I send?

Refrain:

Here I am, Lord
Is it I, Lord?
I have heard You calling in the night
I will go, Lord
If You lead me
I will hold Your people in my heart

Step 2: Listening to the Lord

Gospel Reading: Matthew 21: 33-43

Step 3: Gazing upon the Lord

Step 4: God speaks to us in Silence

Step 5: Sharing our Faith

Step 6: Faith and Action

Suggested task for the week:

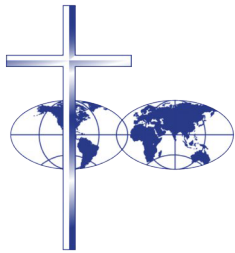
1. Make a prayer list. Pray for the missionaries and for all those people affected by the current pandemic. Choose a time when the family/community will gather specifically to pray for them.
2. Missions Weekend. Plan for one mission activity to do as a family or community.
3. Sacrifice for missions. Lead your family to give up a certain item (soft drinks, videos bingeing, top-up, etc) for the entire month of October and give the money you would have spent on it to the mission envelop.
4. Provide comfort and hope. Read the local newspaper to discover people who have had a tragic loss due to fire, flooding, death, etc. Determine with your family/community ways that you can provide comfort and hope as you minister to these people.
5. Grocery shopping. Grocery shop for an elderly person who cannot drive to the store.
6. Family workday. Lead your family to have a workday for an elderly person in your neighborhood who may need help with yard work or other chores.
7. Cook for the hungry. Check out the feeding locations in your city or town to see if you can help buy supplies, prepare meals, or do cleanup.

Step 7 The Word of God and Prayer make you holy

Father God, during these days of darkness and distress, use us mightily to offer hope to others and point them to the hope found in Your Son. A child was given and that child walked this earth and was on the cross to take the weight of our sins on Himself. He paid the price for our sins and the sins of the whole world. The world is aching for hope and salvation. Use us to point others to Truth. Turn hardened hearts to You. Bring revival to our nation and the nations of the world. Fill our hearts to overflowing as we look to You instead of the ways of this world. Comfort those in need and heal those in sickness and distress. Through our actions and words, our desire is for You to be glorified. In the name of Jesus, Amen.

(<https://thechurchofthecross.net/here-i-am-lord-send-me/>)

Compiled by:



Missionary Society of St Columban – Oceania
Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation

