



*If you want to cultivate peace,
protect creation.*

—Pope Benedict XVI, World Day of Peace Message, 2010.

A Prayer for the Season of Creation (September 1 – October 4, 2017)

Opening Song: *(Choose appropriate music, if desired.)*

Leader: Creator God, we praise you for the grandeur of the universe.

 We praise you for the gift of Earth.

 We praise you for the land, and we praise you for the seas.

 We praise you for the great miracle of teeming life on our prolific planet.

 We praise you for the cycle of growth and for the beauty of bursting blooms in
 springtime.

 We praise you for the green growth of summer and the holy harvest in the
 fall.

 We praise you for the infinity of different creatures on the land and in the sea,
 each unique in its own way, each fitting into the complex ecosystems you
 have gifted us with, each dependent on each other and the whole.

 We praise you, our Creator. Grace us with a sense of our responsibilities to
 preserve and protect your precious gift, this Garden, this Earth.

 We praise you, Creator God, and we offer you our hearts and hands for the
 preservation of all of creation. Amen.

— *From Prayer for the Environment, Education for Justice,*
www.educationforjustice.org

First Reading: “Creation...remains a kind of first revelation which speaks to us clearly of the
 Creator and which can lead us ever more deeply into the mystery of God’s
 love for us.”

— *Pope John Paul II, General Audience Address, Vatican City,*
30 January 2002

“The universe unfolds in God, who fills it completely. Hence, there is a
mystical meaning to be found in a leaf, in a mountain trail, in a dewdrop, in a

poor person's face.¹ To sense each creature singing the hymn of its existence is to live joyfully in God's love and hope.²"

— *Pope Francis, Laudato Si': On care for our common home, 24 May 2015*

Moment of Silent Reflection

Response: Psalm 104 (excerpt)

Side 1: Bless God, O my soul. How great you are, my God! You are clothed in majesty and splendor, wrapped in a robe of light.

Side 2: You spread the heavens out like a tent; you built your high walls upon the waters above. You fixed Earth on its foundations so that it cannot be moved; you cover it with the deep as with a robe, the waters enveloping the mountains.

Side 1: At your charge the waters took to flight; they fled at the sound of your thunder, pouring over the mountains, settling into the valleys, down to the place you made for them.

Side 2: You set a limit they must never cross, nor shall they flood the land again. You set springs gushing in ravines, flowing between the mountains, giving drink to wild animals, drawing the thirsty wild donkeys.

Side 1: O holy God, how many are the works you have created, arranging everything in wisdom. Earth is filled with creatures you have made: See the vast ocean teeming with countless creatures great and small.

Side 2: All creatures depend on you to give them food in due season. You give the food they eat; with generous hand, you fill them with good things.

— Adapted from *Translation from Psalms Anew* by Nancy Schreck, OSF, and Maureen Leach, OSF

Second Reading: As a human community we are coming belatedly to the conclusion that Earth is not just solely for human benefit and amusement. We are being challenged to acknowledge that all creatures have a legitimate claim to existence.

There is a growing sense that the fullness of divine energy and creativity manifests itself in virtually all forms of life — an insight traditionally nurtured by many aboriginal peoples, but largely bulldozed and buried in Western societies. To eradicate species wantonly is to contravene a fundamental mandate of our home — to love and respect life in all its richness and variety.

¹ Pope Francis. *Laudato Si': On care for our common home*. 24 May 2015. (Paragraph 223).

² *Ibid.*, (Paragraph 85, see Endnote 56).

The created world is characterized by this wondrous variety of living things woven together, a vibrant web of life. The future belongs to those who give the next generations reasons to hope.

—*Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, The Green Bible, pp. 69-71*

Silent Reflection

Suggested Reflection Questions: *(optional)*

1. How do you experience the universe unfolding in God? What mystical meanings do you find in creatures around you?
2. In what ways might you deepen your sense of the divine energy and creativity manifesting itself in all forms of life?

Shared Reflection: *(If desired)*

Closing Prayer: Creating God, in you everything on Earth and in the heavens is bound together in perfect harmony. If we lose the sweetness of the waters, we lose the life of the land. If we lose the life of the land, we lose the majesty of the forest. If we lose the majesty of the forest, we lose the purity of the air. If we lose the purity of the air, we lose the creatures of Earth.

Open our eyes to behold your creation. Create in us a new spirit of awareness of our place in your delicate balance; transform our hearts that we may reclaim our sense of awe and wonder. Quicken our understanding that we may acknowledge our responsibility and strengthen our resolve to work with you for the healing of your creation.

— *“The Web of Life,” from Earth and All the Stars, edited by Anne Rowthorn*

Closing Song: (Choose appropriate music, if desired.)



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/).