

Mercy-ing Creation

Image: St. John's Bible Frontispiece.

Opening Prayer:

Prayer to the Holy Spirit
Come, O Holy Breath of God, poured out
'in the beginning'
be with us at this time of a climate
emergency and an ever-decreasing loss
of biodiversity.

Over the aeons the Spirit of God empow-
ered the universe to emerge,
enabled biological evolution to take
place, and inspired the unique advent of
the human endowed with the gift of
reflective self-consciousness.

The same Spirit of God authored the Incarnation
of the eternal Word of God in Jesus of Nazareth,
animated His disciples to go forth,
and established a new ecclesial community on the
day of Pentecost.

Be with us once again,
as you were in the past,
to heal our broken universe
so that we can see the face of the Creator God
in the wonders of creation. Amen.



**Take a few minutes to reflect on the image above, which depicts
God's creation of our planet over seven days, as found in Genesis 1 - 2:3**

Reading: Rm. 8, 14-17

For those who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you received a spirit of adoption, through which we cry, "Abba, Father!" The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God and joint heirs with Christ, if only we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

Short reflection: Take some time to read this a couple of times, contemplatively.

As the air we breathe fills the whole earth, so the Spirit of God, God's vital breath, is present in all of creation. God is present in nature through God's Spirit, and nature manifests God and praises God's glory. Nothing is hidden from God's gaze, from God's presence, from God's care. The air is that element that best expresses the divine way of being in creation ... and, in turn, as the air is unconfined, so God also escapes our will of possession and control. Are we going to let the air, a wonderful expression of the presence of God, become corrupted and hinder it from being the bellows that sustain life?

Prayer of Petition:

God of goodness, who sent Your Spirit to glide over the waters at the dawn of creation, send Your Spirit again to renew our spirits and make us discover Your presence and the harmony of all creation. We ask this through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen.



Image: Man's First Breath.

<http://doubtproof.files.wordpress.com>

Reflect on these words from Jean Adam rsm and Carolyn McWatters rsm.

"Mercying has a rhythm of breathing in, breathing out. Breathing in the mercy of
God for us, and breathing out the mercy of God to the world.

In our contemplative prayer we are being transformed into Mercy,
and it spills forth into our relationships with all creation."

(Prayer resource by Christine Convery, ISMAPNG Mercy Associates Network Facilitator NSW)

Let's consider what Pope Francis has to say in 'Laudate Deum'

- "To say that there is nothing to hope for would be suicidal, for it would mean exposing all humanity, especially the poorest, to the worst impacts of climate change." LD 53
- "I cannot deny that it is necessary to be honest and recognise that the most effective solutions will not come from the individual effort alone, but above all from major political decisions on the national and international level." LD 69
- "Efforts by households to reduce pollution and waste, and to consume with prudence, are creating a new culture." LD 71.

What is 'Laudate Deum' calling us to do?

For international politicians, the call from *Laudate Deum* is clear - at COP28, all efforts must be put towards policy that ceases the extraction of fossil fuels and at the same time facilitates the just transition to an economy based on renewable energies. This endeavour requires courage to break through the economic interests of fossil fuel extractors.

As individuals, in the lead up to the meeting, we can put pressure on our politicians to support this direction. We are also reminded that 'every little bit helps' (LD 70), so that in our own transition to the use of renewable energies and other essential lifestyle changes we are creating a culture of transformation.

(~ the above is taken from an article by Caritas Australia titled, *Explainer: Laudate Deum and the call for urgent climate action.*)



Image: Garden Design by Marko Pogacnik

Let us now pray a Prayer for the Grace of Conversion:

In my desire for reconciliation with creation, I ask God for forgiveness and the grace of ecological conversion. I acknowledge the ways in which I personally have chosen convenience, selfishness, and greed over ecological and social justice. I acknowledge the ways structures, patterns, and cultures of sin impact my life, the lives of people on the margins and the earth. Through my recognition of where I have fallen short in caring for creation and my brothers and sisters, and through God's mercy, I pray for a conversion of heart to amend my ways. I seek through my prayer and actions to reconcile myself with God, creation and humanity.

Small Reflection:

Conversion is not real or true if it does not have a direct impact on the care for our world. This impact is based on small actions that, multiplied by the constancy and conviction of many people, are capable of generating great changes. And these small actions, such as turning off an unnecessary light, are not very difficult to carry out. It is enough to start with one of them: then, the force of habit will make us acquire the practice and these actions will be carried out naturally and will increase in number, intensity and effectiveness.

Closing Prayer of Petition:

God of goodness, send your light so that transformed by it we may serve our brothers and sisters and the earth that welcomes us, offering ourselves to their full service through small daily actions capable of having an effective impact on them. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

In Catherine McAuley's words:

"If we love God, we will undoubtedly love our neighbour also; they are as cause and effect."

(~ the Prayers and Reflections used in this Prayer Resource are taken from the *Laudato Si' Movement Prayer Book*, pages 15, 89, 37 and 80, in this order as they appear above)

(Prayer Resource by Christine Convery, ISMAPNG Mercy Associates Network Facilitator NSW)