

PRIMARY PRAYER SERVICE FOR THE SEASON OF CREATION



We invite you to use this resource to celebrate the Season of Creation (1st Sept until 4th Oct), with your students. This Prayer service may be freely adapted for your setting.

Preparation: *Please prepare a prayer space for students to gather, in a circle or at the central point. Within the prayer space have either a number of small pots or one large pot filled with soil for students to plant seeds, enough seeds for those present and a watering can.*

Opening song

Suggestions: *Ancient Legacy* (Andrew Chinn, Rise Up) *Cosmic Hymn of Praise* (Michael Mangan, Setting Hearts on Fire) *Act Justly* (John Burland, God Loves Me)

(As a song is played, a student brings forward or places into the prayer space the seeds, which students will later plant.)

Acknowledgement of Country

Reader one: As we gather together on the lands of the (insert name of Australian First Nations Peoples), we acknowledge the traditional owners, and pay respect to Elders past and present. We thank them for their care of the land, sky and waters, and all living things that live on and within them.

Opening prayer

Leader: We begin in the name of the +Father, and of the +Son, and of the +Holy Spirit. Amen

Loving God,
You created us to live with the birds of the air,
animals of the land and sea, trees, flowers,
plants and our brothers and sisters around the
world. Open our minds, touch our hearts and
guide us in ways of care and concern for all
you have gifted us.

We ask this in your name,
Amen.

Call of repentance

Leader: From the rising sun to the smallest of creatures, all of the earth is good. Yet, we see how our world is not being taken care of. In many countries, water is no longer safe to drink, forests are being cut down and there is not enough food to eat. Let us listen to the story of Bute and Burre, a husband and wife from Africa, who like millions of others, do not have enough food to eat.

Reader two: Communities across eastern Africa are facing hunger caused by conflict such as the war in Ukraine, rising food prices and one of the worst droughts in 40 years.

Bute is a village elder living in southern Ethiopia with his wife, Burre. They have experienced many droughts, but this one is by far the worst they have seen in their lifetime.

Reader three: Bute explained, “We used to have lots of milk and meat to eat, and now we have almost nothing. We feel very sad and frustrated. The life we used to live and enjoy is completely gone.”

Reader two: During the last three years, Ethiopia has had very little rain. This has meant that farmers have been unable to grow enough crops for food or to feed their animals. Most people living in Bute and Burre’s community need help from organisations like Caritas in order to survive.

Reader three: Bute said, “Before we could survive by ourselves with our livestock, but now we are completely dependent on aid. If it wasn’t for Caritas you wouldn’t find anybody around here.”

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Reader two: With your support, Caritas Australia is working with Caritas Ethiopia to provide urgent food and emergency water to these communities.

Reader four: In Pope Francis' message for the *World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation*, he writes about how we can listen to the voice of creation, like a song that is thanking God. But at the same time, we can hear the cry of the earth as it is being hurt and destroyed,

Leader: We have played a part in harming the earth and our neighbours, and we ask God's forgiveness. Let us think about some ways that we haven't looked after God's creation.

Silent reflection

Hymn: Morning Has Broken (Eleanor Farjeon, *As One Voice* Vol.1) or other quiet reflective music.

Gospel Reading: Mt (13: 1-3; 31-33)

Leader: A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

That same day, Jesus left the house and sat by the lakeside, but such large crowds gathered round him that he got into a boat and sat there. The people all stood on the shore, and he told them many things in parables.

He put another parable before them, 'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed which a man took and sowed in his field. It is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the biggest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air can come and shelter in its branches.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection

Leader: A mustard seed is small enough to hold in the palm of your hand and yet Jesus tells us that this precious little seed is like the kingdom of heaven. We ask God to open our eyes to the wonders of creation, and we offer our hearts in hope that all things may live and grow.

As a sign of this wonder, we will all now plant a seed and as a class over the coming weeks, we will water it, care for it and watch it grow.

(Students are invited to come forward and plant a seed in the soil)

Quiet music plays

Prayers of the Faithful

Leader: In Pope Francis' letter *Laudato Si'*, he urges us all to take care of the earth and each other. To help us do this, seven *Laudato Si'* Goals have been set. Let us reflect on these goals together as we listen to the prayers of the faithful.

Reader five: We pray that we listen to the **cry of the earth**, so that we always think about how we can take better care of the environment. Lord hear us.

All: Lord hear our prayer

Reader six: We pray for compassion to listen to the **cry of the poor**, so that we can think about how our choices affect everyone in our world, including our brother and sister Bute and Burre. Lord hear us.

All: Lord hear our prayer

Reader Seven: We pray for businesses, that they will be sustainable, ethical and fair in all that they do. Lord hear us.

All: Lord hear our prayer

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Reader eight: We pray that we will live simply and take great care not to waste precious resources. Lord hear us.

All: Lord hear our prayer

Reader nine: We pray that we will continue to learn about ways to best care for creation and for our brothers and sisters around the world. Lord hear us.

All: Lord hear our prayer

Reader ten: We pray that we will always remember to live in wonder and awe of creation, and give thanks and praise to God each day. Lord hear us.

All: Lord hear our prayer

Reader eleven: We pray for the courage to help our communities take action at the local, regional, national and international level. Lord hear us.

All: Lord hear our prayer

Leader: In Jesus' name we pray,

All: Amen.

Act of Commitment

Leader: We think of the beauty of creation that surrounds us each day. We also think of all who live in eastern Africa, as well as all those who are facing the effects of climate change. Let us commit to protecting our common home, so that we can all experience the beauty of creation.

Now, as a sign of commitment, we water our seeds as a sign that we will care and protect them.

(Invite a student to come forward and water the seeds on the students' behalf.)

Final Prayer and Blessing

Leader: Lord, allow our eyes to see the beauty of creation in flowers, creatures, forests, and cities. Allow our ears to listen to those in need.

Allow our voices to speak out for justice when we see the earth and people mistreated.

Allow our hands to care for the earth.

Allow our feet to take your message out to the world.

We ask this in Your name.

Amen

Leader: Through the blessing of the +Father, the +Son and the +Holy Spirit, may we go forth with joy to care for creation.

All: Amen.

Closing song

Suggestions: *I am the River* (Andrew Chinn, Many Roads, One Journey) *Raise Your Voice for Justice* (John Burland, Move! Pray! Celebrate!) *Make a Little Difference* (Michael Mangan, Setting Hearts on Fire)

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Learn more about the issue of climate justice through the stories of communities profoundly impacted by climate change [here](#). You can also download our Caring for Creation resources below.



[Primary Resource](#)



[Secondary Resource](#)



[Parish Resource](#)

Act: As part of your renewed commitment to care for creation, we invite you and your community to join with Caritas Australia in taking a stand to fight against policies that contribute to climate change. By combining our efforts, we can achieve a future where everyone has a safer climate. To find out what you can do, [join our mailing list](#).

Catholic Earthcare Australia

Participate in Catholic Earthcare Australia's action through the Season of Creation

Learn more at:

catholicearthcare.org.au/act4ourcommonhome

Complete the Season of Creation Bingo

<https://catholicearthcare.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/EarthcareBingoSoC2022.pdf>

Submit an entry to the Season of Creation Schools' Art Competition

**SEASON OF CREATION
SCHOOLS' ART COMPETITION**

Be inspired by *Laudato Si'* and create a piece of Art!
Either as an individual or as a group, respond to one or both of these quotes from Pope Francis:
"Nature is God's Art" and/or "Everything is a caress from God" *

Anything from a sketch, a sculpture or a painting, the choice is yours!

Take a photo or scan of your artwork and email it to gwen.michener@caritas.org.au (to be shared on the Catholic Earthcare Facebook page) by the 5 September 2022.

We invite our Facebook viewers to like the art pieces.
The artwork with the most likes will win an Earthcare Game!

*Laudato Si' n80 and n84

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