



Preparing for the 2024 Season of Creation – *“To Hope & Act with Creation”*

Reflection #1: August 25 - 31

“We need only take a frank look at the facts to see that our common home is falling into serious disrepair. Hope would have us recognize that...we can always redirect our steps.”

(Laudato Si #61)

READ: 1st part of Pope Francis’ letter for the 2024 Season of Creation (*below*)



REFLECTION: **How did we come to have faith?** Pope Francis begins this Season with a basic question that prompts serious reflection. What is your response?

In examining the theme for this year’s Season of Creation, I’m struck by various parts of the phrase *“To Hope & Act with Creation”*. Throughout the next several weeks we’ll be pondering this theme along with each segment of Francis’ letter.

Three cheers for the Holy Spirit who gifts us with faith and evokes our creativity! During this Season, let us, along *with* Creation and our God of love, co-create a world of justice, a world at peace.

ACTION: The Season of Creation begins September 1 and continues through October 4. Procure and keep a Season of Creation journal. Ponder the implications of how truly hoping and acting *“with Creation”* might challenge, enhance and deepen your Christian calling.

“All it takes is one good person to restore hope!” (LS #71)

Resources for August 25 - 31

(Beginning of) **Pope Francis' letter for the 2024 Season of Creation** (Excerpt 1 of 9)

1st September 2024

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

"Hope and Act with Creation" is the theme of the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, to be held on 1 September 2024. The theme is drawn from Saint Paul's Letter to the Romans (8:19-25), where the Apostle explains what it means for us to live according to the Spirit and focuses on the sure hope of salvation that is born of faith, namely, newness of life in Christ.

1. Let us begin with a question, one perhaps without an immediately obvious answer. If we are truly believers, **how did we come to have faith?** It is not simply because we believe in something transcendent, beyond the power of reason, the unattainable mystery of a distant and remote God, invisible and unnameable. Rather, as Saint Paul tells us, it is because *the Holy Spirit dwells within us*. We are believers because the very love of God "has been poured into our hearts" (Rom 5:5) and the Spirit is now truly "the pledge of our inheritance" (Eph 1:14), constantly prompting us to strive for eternal goods, *according to the fullness of Jesus' authentic humanity*. The Spirit enables believers to be creative and pro-active in charity. He sends us forth on a great journey of spiritual freedom, yet one that does not eliminate the tension between the Spirit's way of thinking and that of the world, whose fruits are opposed to each other (cf. Gal 5:16-17). We know that the first fruit of the Spirit, which sums up all the others, is *love*. Led by the Holy Spirit, believers are children of God and can turn to him with the words "Abba, Father" (Rom 8:15), just as Jesus did. Moreover, they can do so with the freedom of those who no longer fall back into the fear of death, for *Jesus has risen from the dead*. This is our great hope: God's love has triumphed and continues to triumph over everything. Indeed, even in the face of physical death, future glory is already assured for those who live the new life of the Spirit. Nor does this hope disappoint, as was affirmed in the recent *Bull of Indiction* of the forthcoming Jubilee. [1]

[1] Cf. Bull of Indiction of the Ordinary Jubilee of the Year 2025 *Spes Non Confundit* (9 May 2024).

From <https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/cura-creato/documents/20240627-messaggio-giornata-curacreato.html>

Pray with Scripture: Paul's letter to the Romans 8: 19 - 25

Additional reading: Season of Creation website <https://seasonofcreation.org/>