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Peace with Creation: Season of Creation 2025 Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

The theme for this year's Season of Creation is “Peace with Creation”. The Season of Creation is an ecumenical initiative that takes place annually from September 1, the World Day of Prayer for Creation, to October 4, the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, the Patron Saint of Creation. The Biblical base for the theme, “Peace with Creation”, comes from Isaiah 32:14-18. During the Season of Creation, we join together as sisters and brothers of a universal family celebrating in prayer and action how to renew our appreciation, our commitment, conversion and our care and activities to protect and bring new life to Mother Earth, our Common Home. The Season is in the spirit of truth a time to do a heart-filled assessment of the situation of Mother Earth which is suffering many abuses and misuses by we humans. The Season of Creation is a source of strength and communion encouraging us to truly hope and act justly with all of creation. To begin in a deep spirit of heartfelt gratitude, we thank our loving God for the beautiful gift of all creation.

Pope Francis had designated the first day of the Season of Creation, September 1st, as the World Day of Prayer for Creation,

calling every person living on this planet to pray and to care for our shared Earth. To aide us in our prayer, Pope Leo XIV recently approved and offered the new Holy Mass for the Care of Creation. In his Homily, Pope Leo shared, “On this beautiful day, I would begin by asking everyone, including myself, to take stock of what we are celebrating here amid the beauty of what might be called the ‘cathedral’ of nature, with so many plants and elements of creation that have brought us together to celebrate the Eucharist, which means to give thanks to the Lord.” Pope Leo continued, “Our Mission to care for creation, to foster peace and reconciliation, is Jesus’ own mission, the mission that the Lord entrust to us.” In April 2025, Pope Francis announced that “Seeds of Peace and Hope” is the theme of this year’s World Day of Prayer. The metaphor of Seeds indicates there is a long-time commitment, while expressing hope that the Seeds of Peace may have a date when they may emerge in new life across all continents, as we pray and work for peace. This day reminds us of the strong connection between war and the degradation of our planet, which is seen in the waste of resources due to destruction and violence. The World Day of Prayer is another opportunity for us to connect with our Creator, God, and allow the Lord to redefine our relationship with the environment: from one of consumption and control and abuse, to one of care and protection.

This year is the 10th anniversary of Pope's Francis encyclical, "Laudato Si", in which he calls Mother Earth, our Common Home, that we will pass onto the next generations. The Laudato Si movement tells us that the Season of Creation is an annual remembrance of Christians and many other denominations to pray, listen and respond in action together to the Cry of Creation. In this Season the ecumenical family around the world unites to listen and to show more care of our Common Home. Mother Earth, with millions of her children and with all kinds of creatures, cries out because of our destructive actions causing Climate Crisis, loss of biodiversity and human suffering in so many ways. Of the many human sufferings, I mention here one of the worst and urgent, which is global hunger. The 2025 Global Network Against Food Crisis Report reveals a sharp rise in global hunger. Over 295 million people now face severe food insecurity, an increase of 14 million from the previous year. This huge global number of hungry people is almost equivalent to the total US population which is about 342 million. This alarming increase in global hunger reflects a deepening crisis largely driven by conflict, climate-related disasters and economic shocks. But the Season of Creation calls us, guided by the Holy Spirit, to change our negative manner of acting and teaches us that hope is present in the waiting and working together to promote peace for a better future in our Common Home. To hope in a Biblical sense does not

mean standing still and quiet, but rather together in payer, groaning, crying and actively striving and working for new life amid the failures and struggles. Creation and all of us are called to worship our Creator, working together for a future of active hope expressed in our care and action. When we as a world-wide family work together with Creation, the first fruits of the Seeds of Peace will be born. The Biblical text for this year's theme from the Prophet Isaiah 32:14-18 pictures the desolated Creation without peace because of the lack of justice and the broken relationship between God and humankind. This is the description of devastated cities and wastelands which eloquently stresses the fact that human destructive behavior has a negative impact on Earth. Our hope: Creation will find peace when justice is restored, and when we examine the true meaning of freedom. May we think of freedom, not as the right to do as we please but the opportunity to do what is right (from Peter Marshall). This means that we act, pray, change, and reconcile with Creation and Creator, and follow His laws, in unity, metanoia, conversion and solidarity.

The Catholic Climate Covenant points out how through the month-long celebration, we can come together in an annual ecumenical prayer to celebrate our Common Home.

How can I or my parish participate in the Season of Creation? Individuals and communities are invited to participate through prayer, sustainability projects and advocacy.

- Prayer: Host an ecumenical prayer gathering that unites all Christians and other denominations for the care of our common home. One option is to host an interactive Feast of St. Francis program, found annually at catholicclimatecovenant.org
- Sustainability: Lead cleanup or carbon-reduction projects that help all of creation thrive (such as improving energy efficiency).
- Advocacy: Raise your voice for climate justice by participating in or leading an ongoing campaign that supports our common home.

To aide us in participating in this month-long celebration, the Season of Creation offers many other prayers and workshop resources (<https://seasonofcreation.org/resources/>).

Creation in many ways is crying out in suffering. As children of God our Father, and our Creator, living together in our Common Home, we acknowledge the urgent call of this cry to take action, responding on the basis of faith. The Season of Creation is a prayerful moment to recognize our strength and resources that we share in communion with one another, encouraging us to truly hope and act with creation. Creation will find peace when justice is restored. From our loving Creator with have inherited a Garden, we must not leave a dessert for our children.

The US Catholic Bishops reminds us that “As individuals, as institutions, as people, we need a change of heart to preserve and protect the planet for our children and for generations yet unborn.” The Bishops continue to urge celebrants and liturgy committees to incorporate these elements for promoting justice and peace into our prayer and worship that emphasize our responsibility to protect all of God’s creation and to organize prayerful celebrations of creations, like on feast days when honoring St. Francis and St. Isidore, and on many other days of prayer for creation. I add here that we especially need to come together in prayer and action when we celebrate the two great days of creation – World Water Day and World Earth Day. Guided by the great Spirit, all people can ecumenically cooperate as instruments of God for the care of Creation according to their culture, religious background, political system, experience, involvement and talents. Pope Francis has called us to ask the assistance of the Holy Spirit to seek to live “a life that becomes a song of love for God, for humanity, with and for creation, and that finds its fullness in holiness.”