

Greetings, dear Franciscan Family!

I pray this finds you well on this Passion of the Lord's Herald, John the Baptist!

*"Praise be to you my Lord, with all your creatures,"* prayed Francis of Assisi, well before the **Season of Creation** began. With this simple but profound prayer, he has encouraged believers of many generations to recognize creation as the fruit of God's eternal Love.

The **Season of Creation (#SOC)** is an annual celebration of prayer and action for our common home. We listen and respond to the cry of creation as one Christian community.

The **Season of Creation** is a period that brings together the entire Christian community worldwide to pray and take action for the care of the environment. **It begins on September 1<sup>st</sup> with the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation and ends on October 4<sup>th</sup> with the feast of St. Francis of Assisi.** It was established by Ecumenical Patriarch Dimitrios I, in 1989, when he proclaimed September 1<sup>st</sup> as the Orthodox Day of Prayer for Creation. Years later, the World Council of Churches (WCC) extended the celebration to October 4<sup>th</sup>, the day on which St. Francis of Assisi, patron saint of the environment, is celebrated. For his part, in 2015 Pope Francis made the Season of Creation official for the Roman Catholic Church.

This year's theme is "[Listen to the Voice of Creation.](#)"

The Psalmist declares, *"The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims God's handiwork. Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge their voice is not heard; yet their voice goes out through all the Earth, and their words to the end of the world."* (19: 1-4) Creation never ceases to proclaim, but do we listen?

During the pandemic, many have become familiar with the concept of being muted in conversations. Many voices are muted in public discourse around climate change and the ethics of Earth-keeping. These are voices of those who suffer the impacts of climate change. (From the Invitation for Season of Creation)

Please use this Season of Creation to **PRAY, REFLECT, LISTEN TO THE VOICE OF CREATION, and ADVOCATE.** Remember, the poor, the vulnerable, and the marginalized are those who are most affected by the ravages of environmental degradation. Taking action during this Season is living out our Catholic faith and Franciscan call. Will you, like John the Baptist, be a voice crying out for creation?

Attached please find my annual prayers for the **Season of Care for Creation** based on St. Francis' own Canticle of Creation and the prayer from Laudato Si'. Also the **Season of Creation Celebration Guide** is attached for your convenience. I have also added Mother Cabrini Regional JPIC Animator, Michael Huck's "**What If**" **Goals for Caring for Creation**, which is a wonderful resource to use with your families, fraternities, and faith communities.

On **August 31st at 2pm Eastern, 11am Pacific**, [join the Missionary Society of St. Columban](#) for a prayer service to celebrate the beginning of the Season of Creation.

For more information and resources, please visit the [Season of Creation website](#). Please share this email with your communities.

Thank you for your love and care of our Sister Mother Earth and to one another. May the Lord continue to give you peace. Wishing you blessings of peace and all good!

**[Carolyn D. Townes, OFS](#)** National Animator, Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation