



A Mighty River
Amos 5: 24

Let Justice and Peace Flow

Season of Creation 2023



Sisters of Mercy
of Newfoundland

September 1, 2023

WELCOME TO SEASON OF CREATION

"Let Justice and Peace Flow" is the theme chosen for Season of Creation 2023, the ecumenical celebration we hold each year from September 1, World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, to October 4th, the feast of St. Francis of Assisi.

The prophet Amos cries out, "But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never failing stream!" (Amos 5: 24), and so we are called to join the river of justice and peace, to take up climate and ecological justice, and to speak out with and for communities most impacted by climate injustice and the loss of biodiversity. Season of Creation Guide 2023 - <https://seasonofcreation.org/resources/>

A brief introductory video: <https://www.sistersofmercynf.org/preparing-for-the-season-of-creation>
(1:52min.)



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September 2, 2023



INVITATION

Prophet Isaiah proclaims "Listen carefully, I am about to do a new thing, now it will spring forth; will you not be aware of it? I will even put a road in the wilderness, rivers in the desert." (Isaiah 43: 19) We are invited to join the river of justice and peace on behalf of all Creation and to converge our individual identities, of name, family or faith community, in this greater movement for justice, just like tributaries come together to form a mighty river. *S of Guide 2023*

Let us join the mighty river by transforming our hearts. This is essential for any other transformation to occur; it is that "ecological conversion" ...: the renewal of our relationship with creation so that we no longer see it as an object to be exploited but cherish it instead as a sacred gift from our Creator. *Pope Francis, Message for S of C 2023*



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September 3, 2023

SEASON OF CREATION OPENING PRAYER

You called human beings to till and keep your garden. You placed us into right relationship with each creature, but we failed to listen to the cries of the Earth and the cries of the most vulnerable. We broke with the flowing communion of love and sinned against you by not safeguarding the conditions for life.

We lament the loss of our fellow species and their habitats, we grieve the loss of human cultures, along with the lives and livelihoods that have been displaced or perished, and we ache at the sight of an economy of death, war and violence that we have inflicted on ourselves and on the Earth. *S of C Guide 2023*





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September 4, 2023

GOD'S DESIRE

The evocative image used by Amos speaks to us of what God desires. God wants justice to reign; it is as essential to our life as God's children made in his likeness as water is essential for our physical survival. This justice must flow forth wherever it is needed, neither remaining hidden deep beneath the ground nor vanishing like water that evaporates before it can bring sustenance.

God wants everyone to strive to be just in every situation, to live according to his laws and thus to enable life to flourish. When we "seek first the kingdom of God" (Mt 6:33), maintaining a right relationship with God, humanity and nature, then justice and peace can flow like a never-failing stream of pure water, nourishing humanity and all creatures. Pope Francis, *Message for S of C 2023*





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September 5, 2023

CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL JUSTICE

Prophet Amos cries out “But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!” (Amos 5: 24) and so we are called to join the river of justice and peace, to take up climate and ecological justice, and to speak out with and for communities most impacted by climate injustice and the loss of biodiversity. *S of C Guide 2023*





September 6, 2023

LOSS OF BIODIVERSITY

Biodiversity is being lost at a rate not seen since the last mass extinction. The hope of keeping average temperature increases to 1.5 degrees Celsius is fading. The world humans have known, enjoyed and celebrated is changing rapidly beyond repair.

The futures of young people are threatened by the cascading impacts of the loss of biodiversity and a changing climate. Industrialization, colonisation and the extraction and consumption of resources have created great wealth, unequally distributed. Powerful Global North nations have grown wealthy at the expense of Global South nations and Indigenous and subsistence communities. *S of C Guide 2023*





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September 7, 2023

PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN PEOPLE AND EARTH

Those Indigenous communities that recognize the sacredness of natural elements and so live as an embodiment of an interconnected way of life, expressing a partnership between people and the life of the Earth, have much to teach the rest of the world...Today's climate and ecological emergency hurts the most vulnerable, many living in the least wealthy nations, who have contributed the fewest emissions.

Indigenous peoples make up five percent of the world's population and protect nearly 80 percent of the world's remaining biodiversity. *S of C Guide 2023*





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September 8, 2023

A FOUR DIRECTION PRAYER

Let us turn our hearts to the West
From there the Thunders bring us cleansing rain
Creator God, heal us and our relatives

Let us turn our hearts to the North
Winter comes to us from there and calls us to rest
Creator God, restore our strength



Let us turn our hearts to the East
The morning Sun begins each day there
Creator God awaken us and help us to walk with a renewed life

Let us turn our hearts to the South
Where the warm winds come from to give us comfort and joy
Creator God soothe our aching souls....

(Adapted from Diocese of Western North Carolina - *Anglican Indigenous Ministries*)



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September 9, 2023

HOPE NOT DESPAIR

We are presently more aware than ever of the link between fossil fuels, and violence and war. We can, however, dream and work for a world where each country produces the energy they need from God-given gifts of the sun and wind, rather than going to war for fossil fuels.

The urgency grows and we must make visible peace with Earth and on Earth, at the same time that justice calls us to repentance and a change of attitude and actions. As we join the river of justice and peace with others then hope is created instead of despair. Streams can rise in the desert. An economy of peace can be built instead of an economy based on conflict. *S of C Guide 2023*





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September 10, 2023

RIGHT RELATIONSHIPS

Our prayers, sermons and liturgies must call for justice not only for humans but for all creation. Justice, allied with peace, calls us to repent of our ecological sins and to change our attitudes and actions.

Righteousness demands that we live in peace, not conflict with our human neighbors, and building right relationships with all of creation. 'Peace' (shalom) involves not only the absence of conflict but positive, live-giving relationships with God, ourselves, our human neighbors, and all creation. *S of C Guide 2023*



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September 11, 2023

ACT NOW

The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has stated that acting now with greater urgency means that we will not miss our chance to create a more sustainable and just world. We can and we must prevent the worst from happening.

“Truly, much can be done” (ibid., 180), provided we come together like so many streams, brooks and rivulets, merging finally in a mighty river to irrigate the life of our marvellous planet and our human family for generations to come. So let us join hands and take bold steps to “Let Justice and Peace Flow” throughout our world. *Pope Francis, Message for SOC 2023*





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September 12, 2023

CALL TO REPENTANCE

Justice, allied with peace, calls us to repent of our ecological sins and to change our attitudes and actions. Righteousness demands that we live in peace, not conflict with our human neighbours, and building right relationships with all of creation.

We are invited to join the river of justice and peace on behalf of all creation and to converge our individual identities, of name, family or faith community, in this greater movement for justice, just like tributaries come together to form a mighty river. *S of C Guide 2023*





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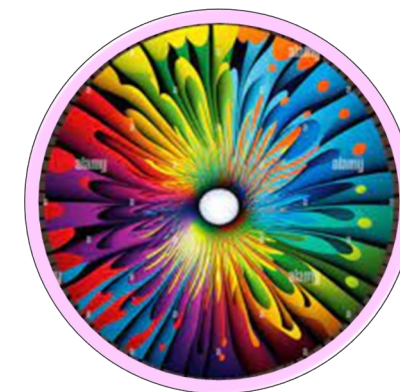


September 13, 2023

PRAYER FOR CREATION

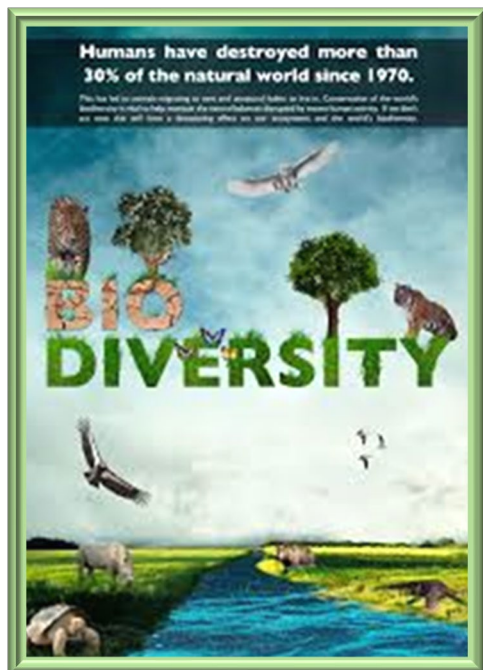
We thank You for Your many good gifts -
For the beauty of Creation and its rich and varied fruits.
For clean water and fresh air, for food and shelter, animals and plants.
Forgive us for the times we have taken the earth's resources for granted
and wasted what You have given us.
Transform our hearts and minds so that we would learn to care and share,
to touch the earth with gentleness and with love, respecting all living things.
We pray for all those who suffer as a result of our waste, greed and indifference,
and we pray that the day would come when everyone has enough food and clean water.
Help us to respect the rights of all people and all species
and help us to willingly share your gifts today and always. Amen.

Fiona Murdoch, Eco-Congregation Ireland





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September 14, 2023

GLOBAL JUSTICE

We must also recognise that as we need a mighty movement of justice, individual actions are no longer enough. Justice also includes paying historic debts. At a global level, nations with power and wealth have a duty to deal justly and honestly with communities that suffer most from the climate and ecological crises. They have not dealt righteously with their less wealthy neighbours in global forums.

They have not fulfilled their promises of financing the losses and damages that vulnerable communities are suffering from, or funding necessary biodiversity initiatives in less wealthy nations, nor have they made the necessary sacrifices to stay below 1.5 degrees Celsius global warming. *s of c 2023*



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September 15, 2023

TRANSFORMING OUR LIFESTYLE

Let us add to the flow of this mighty river by transforming our lifestyles. Starting from grateful wonder at the Creator and his creation, let us repent of our “ecological sins”, as my brother, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, has urged. These sins harm the world of nature and our fellow men and women. With the help of God’s grace, let us adopt lifestyles marked by less waste and unnecessary consumption, especially where the processes of production are toxic and unsustainable.

Let us be as mindful as we can about our habits and economic decisions so that all can thrive – our fellow men and women wherever they may be, and future generations as well. Let us cooperate in God’s ongoing creation through positive choices: using resources with moderation and a joyful sobriety, disposing and recycling waste, and making greater use of available products and services that are environmentally and socially responsible. *Pope Francis, Message for SOC 2023*





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MIA FOCUS

September 16, 2023



ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION

- Ecological abuse and the effects of catastrophic climate change on people and the planet
- Fossil Fuel Extraction
- Garbage & Pollution
- Mining & Frackling
- Oceans
- Sustainable Living
- Violations Against Human Rights
- Defenders
- Water

DISPLACEMENT OF PERSONS

- Asylum seekers
- Family Violence
- Homelessness
- Human Trafficking
- Mental Illness- Dementia
- Migration
- Refugees
- Violation of Indigenous People's territorial rights





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September 17, 2023

LISTENING TO JOB

But ask the animals, and they will teach you,
or the birds in the sky, and they will tell you;
or speak to the earth, and it will teach you,
or let the fish in the sea inform you.

Which of all these does not know
that the hand of the Lord has done this?
In God's hand is the life of every creature
and the breath of all humankind. *Job 12:7-10*





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September 18, 2023

CIRCLE PRAYER

Circle us Lord.

Circle the poor with your justice,
Circle the violent with you peace,
Circle the broken with your wholeness.

Circle us Lord.

Circle us with the wonder of your love,
With the beauty of your creating,
With the glory of your presence.

Circle us Lord.

One in three, three in One,
Circle us with the joy of your abiding.

Christine Sine



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September 19, 2023

WISDOM OF EARTH

We tune our lives to the wisdom of earth
It is deep prayer, this listening to her cries, as Spirit's sighs, too deep for words.
Unborn generations call to us from the future: What did you do when
the planet could no longer bear your foolishness and began to break?
The cardinal's whistle, once joy's message, is now a haunting lament
for the dwindling chorus of songbirds.
The topsoil - living organism and not lowly dirt — clears its thinning, chemical-burned voice,
and speaks out for the biotic kingdom teeming within this dark body.
The willow drops her long arms around our shoulders and brushes us with grace,
whispering that it's not too late.
It falls to us, Wisdom's pupils, to turn this dirge into a dance of the cosmos.
Let those with ears to hear, rise up!

Bruce Sanquin, *If Darwin Prayed* Adapted





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September 20, 2023

RADICAL AMAZEMENT

We are participants in a grand unfolding of life that is eons old. What makes human beings unique, but not better than the rest of creation, is our capacity for self-reflection, a quality of consciousness that allows us to know that we know. It appears that only humankind has this capacity.

We alone can comprehend the unity that is at the core of the cosmos. We alone can be radically amazed at the work of creation. What we as human beings envision, what we dream and desire, what we hope for and work towards-all of it affects the universe, all of it has its impact on earth and on every creature that is. Our gift of consciousness is both amazing and demanding. Judy Cannato





September 21, 2023

RENEWING THE FACE OF EARTH

In the same way that a river gives life to all kinds of animal and plant life, a synodal Church must give life by sowing justice and peace in every place it reaches.

In this Season of Creation, as followers of Christ on our shared synodal journey, let us live, work and pray that our common home will teem with life once again. May the Holy Spirit once more hover over the waters and guide our efforts to “renew the face of the earth” (cf. Ps 104:30). Pope Francis, *Message SOC 2023*

This Season of Creation will be an opportunity to pray, reflect and act together as the People of God for our common home. Like tributaries joining forces to become a mighty river, the ecumenical family will come together on a synodal path of care for our common home through justice and peace.

Sr. Alessandra Smerilli, Secretary of the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development





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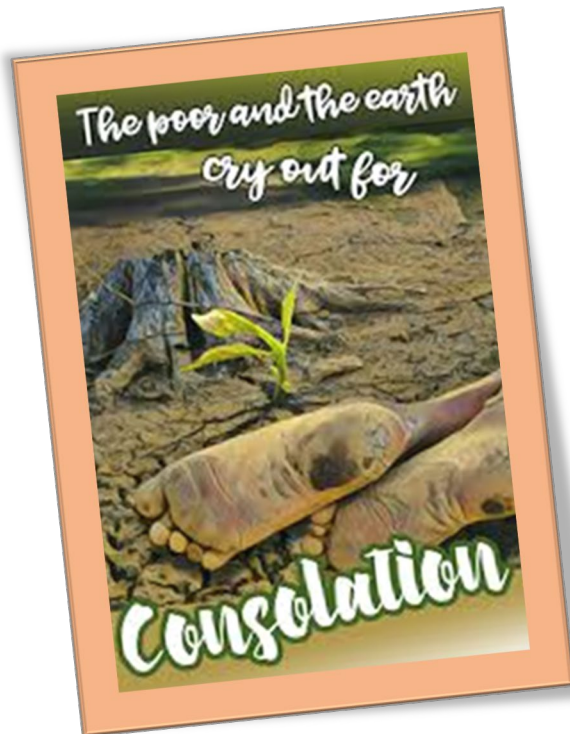
September 22, 2023

AN INCARNATIONAL WORLD



Divine love is at the core of creation - from the panorama of oceans and milky ways, to the length of an ant's leg. And that love is urging everything to risk, to move forward, to trust... We know all about this because of the unexplored mystery of the Incarnation, the very core and hinge of our faith.

The presence of the incarnate Word fills everything with God's very being. It graces nature, it consecrates time, it divinizes humanity, it blesses every effort for good. God is present in the entire cosmos, from the tiniest particle of matter to the infinity of space. The whole world is incarnational. 'Through him, with him in him' everything, every person, all that happens, is created, sustained and sanctified. Daniel O'Leary, *An Astonishing Secret*



September 23, 2023

OUR COMMON CALL

We live in very turbulent and troubling times as we continue to struggle for world peace and the reconciliation and unity of all creation. We are surrounded by war, violence, climate challenges and unjust systems that continue to dehumanise and oppress people around the globe. Christians are urged to join with God in the ever-flowing river for justice and peace in the world. Rev. Prof. Dr Jerry Pillay, General Secretary, World Council of Churches



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September 24, 2023

MERCING

O God, your very being is MERCY.
Send your spirit to mold us more and more
to your likeness.
Make us beacons of hope in a world fractured
by violence and division,
bearers of love and mercy in all our interactions
with our sisters and brothers, with Mother Earth
and with all your creation.

May the MERCY You are shine through us
to soften, to soothe, to encourage,
to comfort, to unite,
that through You we may help heal our wounded world
and contribute to the building of a new creation,
characterized by justice, compassion and peace.
Bless us as we commit ourselves once again to
mercying together into the future,
a future that You hold in your hands. Amen.

Adapted... Sisters of Mercy of the Americas





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September 25, 2023



NEW RELATIONSHIPS

Human beings must feel that they are sons and daughters of the rainbow, those who translate this divine covenant with all the beings existing and living, with new relationships of kindness, compassion, cosmic solidarity, and deep reverence for the mystery that each one bears and reveals. The cry of the earth and the cry of the poor are one.

Leonardo Boff



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September 26, 2023

INTERCONNECTEDNESS

We see quite clearly that what happens to the non-human happens to the human. What happens to the outer world happens to the inner world. If the outer world is diminished in its grandeur, then the emotional, imaginative, intellectual and spiritual life of the human is diminished or extinguished.

Without the soaring birds, the great forests, the sounds and coloration of insects, the free-flowing streams, the flowering fields, the sight of clouds by day and the stars at night, we become impoverished in all that makes us human. Thomas Berry





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September 27, 2023

RELATIONSHIP OF PEOPLE AND EARTH

There are communities we can learn from that have traditionally cultivated right relationships with creation. The Gwich'in are an Indigenous people (First Nation in Canada) whose traditional area crosses the Yukon/ Alaska border. The caribou calving grounds located in Alaska's Arctic Refuge near the Canadian border are considered sacred by the Gwich'in and known to them as "the place where life began." The relationship between the caribou and the Gwich'in expresses a partnership between people and the life of earth.

Sadly, this area is now threatened by the sale of oil drilling rights in the Arctic Refuge. All communities have the potential to rejoice in being part of the web of life. Joining the river of peace and justice can lead us to right relations. *S of C Guide 2023*





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September 28, 2023

CALL TO INTERIOR CONVERSION

For this reason, the ecological crisis is also a summons to profound interior conversion. It must be said that some committed and prayerful Christians, with the excuse of realism and pragmatism, tend to ridicule expressions of concern for the environment. Others are passive; they choose not to change their habits and thus become inconsistent.

So what they all need is an “ecological conversion”, whereby the effects of their encounter with Jesus Christ become evident in their relationship with the world around them. Living our vocation to be protectors of God’s handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience. *Laudato’ Si, #117*





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September 29, 2023

PRAYER OF REPENTANCE

God of hope and healing
May your Rivers of Righteousness
Wash away our apathy, our greed and selfishness
and reveal the deep relationships You created for us with all creation.
Nourish us with the water of life that restores, turning deserts of despair into oases of hope.
May the waves of Your embrace transform us back into guardians of Your creation.
May the currents of Your justice carry us to Your lagoon of peace
Where all creation may enjoy Life in abundance
We pray in the name of the one who came so that the whole cosmos may have everlasting life,
Jesus the Christ, Amen.

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September 30, 2023

ACT TOGETHER NOW

There has never before been a time, in the history of human existence, when we have so gravely threatened not only our own existence, but that of the rest of the living world. But it's not too late to act, if we do it now, if we do it together.

Bishop Olivia Graham, Diocese of Reading, Church of England





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October 1, 2023

IT IS POSSIBLE

it is possible
to become so one
with Earth
that every flower
perfumes the soul,
every snowflake
sends icy softness
dancing through veins,
every drop of rain
trickles down vessels
of the heart,

every cloud in the sky
sails along
songlines of the spirit,
every earthquake
rumbles in the gut,
every tide of the sea
moves in and out of self,
it is possible
to become one
with Earth

just as it is possible
to become one
with all people,
their pain, my pain,
their joy, my joy,
their struggle and delight
an echo of my own.

it is possible to become one.
it is possible. Joyce Rupp

All things are
possible with God.

Mark 10:27
godnewsalert.org





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October 2, 2023

RESPECT FOR DIGNITY AND RIGHTS OF ALL

We are in front of a global scandal of around one billion — one billion people who still suffer from hunger today. We cannot look the other way and pretend this does not exist. The food available in the world is enough to feed everyone. Therefore, dear brothers and sisters, I invite you to make space in your heart for this emergency of respecting the God-given rights of everyone to have access to adequate food.

We share what we have in Christian charity with those who face numerous obstacles to satisfy such a basic need. At the same time, we promote authentic cooperation with the poor so that through the fruits of their and our work they can live a dignified life.

Pope Francis *CAMPAIGN AGAINST GLOBAL HUNGER - CARITAS INTERNATIONALIS*





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October 3, 2023

EMPOWERMENT

Being converted to the Earth in its hour of suffering places us in resonant cooperation with the deepest reality of creation, the Creator Spirit... instead of living as thoughtless or greedy exploiters we are empowered to become sisters and brothers, friends and lovers, gardeners and stewards, advocates and poets, priests and prophets, colleagues and fellow dancers, co-creators and children of the world that gives us life.

Elizabeth A. Johnson



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October 4, 2023

SEASON OF CREATION CLOSING PRAYER

Open our ears to your creative, reconciling and sustaining Word that calls to us through the book of Scripture and the book of creation. Bless us once again with your life-giving waters so that the Creator Spirit may let justice and peace flow in our hearts and overflow into all creation.

Open our hearts to receive the living waters of God's justice and peace, and to share it with our suffering brothers and sisters, all creatures around us, and all creation.

Bless us to walk together with all people of good will so that the many streams of the living waters of God's justice and peace may become a mighty river all over the Earth.

In the name of the One who came to proclaim good news to all creation, Jesus Christ. Amen.

S of C Guide 2023

