



Transition to Creation Time

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These last few months have been challenging for people around the world as we tried to get used to the 'new normal' and its vocabulary – Cocooning (living in hope of becoming a butterfly?), Sheltering (a positive for homeless people), Physical distancing (difficult in crowded accommodation) and so on.

In the initial months, stories were told about people who were becoming more aware of the gifts of creation and what nature has to offer:

- the wonderful birds' chorus at a time when singing in groups was discouraged
- the unfolding richness of spring flowers as businesses were closing down
- the planting of seeds and bulbs as people mourned the death of a loved one



When gardening shops reopened there were queues of avid enthusiasts ready to get down and dirty with the soil. Walking became a novelty for some, cycling a difficult balancing act for others. Dogs were over-walked and lawns super-mown. Best of all was the sight of families together out in the fresh air in what we didn't realise was our summer. Neighbours ensured that those who could not go out, were looked after, even cooking home dinners in addition to shopping. Can we channel this heightened awareness into action around climate change, the use of limited resources and the importance of looking after people with a need of one kind or another?

The Season of Creation or **Creation Time** is celebrated among Christians each year from 1 September to 4 October (Feast of Saint Francis of Assisi) in a spirit of prayer and care for our common home. What can we do to participate in this worldwide initiative of all the Christian Churches?



Let's do some research!!

Season of Creation – Irish Bishops' Conference is a compilation of rich and varied resources prepared by the Catholic Communications Office, the Bishops' Council for Justice and Peace, the Laudato Si' Working Group, Trócaire, and the Vatican's Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development. There are inspired reflections also from Bro. Richard Hendrick OFM Cap.

Look up www.litmus.dublindiocese.ie for sample prayer services on this topic inspired by *Laudato Si*. Archbishop Diarmuid Martin circulated to priests and parishes (1 September 2020) Pope Francis' Message for the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation & the Season of Creation. This can also be read on the website of the Irish Bishops' Conference – www.catholicbishops.ie



What does Pope Francis say?

'I am very pleased that the theme chosen by the ecumenical family for the celebration of the 2020 Season of Creation is *Jubilee for the Earth*, precisely in this year that marks the fiftieth anniversary of Earth Day.

In the Holy Scriptures, a Jubilee is a sacred time to remember, return, rest, restore, and rejoice.'

These five 'R' words would be an excellent framework for a prayer service or a series during the coming months.

Remember

We need constantly to remember that "everything is interconnected, and that genuine care for our own lives and our relationships with nature is inseparable from fraternity, justice and faithfulness to others" (LS, 70).



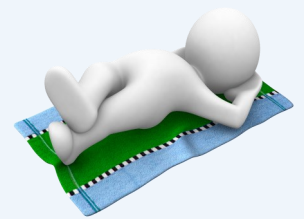
Return

'A Jubilee is a time to turn back in repentance. We have broken the bonds of our relationship with the Creator, with our fellow human beings, and with the rest of creation. We need to heal the damaged relationships that are essential to supporting us and the entire fabric of life.'



Rest

'In some ways, the current pandemic has led us to rediscover simpler and sustainable lifestyles. The crisis, in a sense, has given us a chance to develop new ways of living. Already we can see how the earth can recover if we allow it to rest: the air becomes cleaner, the waters clearer, and animals have returned to many places from where they had previously disappeared. The pandemic has brought us to a crossroads.'



Restore

'A Jubilee is a time to restore the original harmony of creation and to heal strained human relationships.' 'It invites us to re-establish equitable societal relationships, restoring their freedom and goods to all and forgiving one another's debts.' 'Biodiversity restoration is also crucially important in the context of unprecedented loss of species and degradation of ecosystems.' 'We must restore with justice in mind, ensuring that those who have lived on the land for generations can regain control over its usage.'



Rejoice

We also rejoice to see how the *Laudato Si'* Special Anniversary Year is inspiring many initiatives at local and global levels for the care of our common home and the poor. This year should lead to long-term action plans to practise integral ecology in our families, parishes and dioceses, religious orders, our schools and universities, our healthcare, business and agricultural institutions, and many others as well.



These five words offer inspiration for a group planning prayer accompanied by action.

Autumn wishes to all from G D P