

*CARMELITES reflect on SEASONS OF CREATION
Week 1 - 6th September 2020*



Most High, all powerful, good Lord God,
to you belong praise, glory,
honour and all blessing.
Be praised, my Lord, for all your creation.
Saint Francis of Assisi

“As never before in history, common destiny beckons us to seek a new beginning ... Let ours be a time remembered for the awakening of a new reverence for life, the firm resolve to achieve sustainability, the quickening of the struggle for justice and peace, and the joyful celebration of life.”

From the Earth Charter, in *Laudato si'*, #207

Liturgical seasons invite us to reflect, pray, and practice different aspects of our faith. The *Season of Creation* is a time for intentional reflection, prayer, and practice on care for our common home. While the *Season of Creation* is marked on the calendar from September 1 – October 4, we are called through each person’s ecological conversion to carry the prayer, reflections, and practice of this season into our everyday lives all throughout the year.

2020 is an historic moment in the world and in the Church. The global health pandemic, COVID-19, presents the world with an extraordinary illumination of injustice, disease, isolation and systemic breakdown. In contrast, 2020 also marks the 5th anniversary of *Laudato si'* and the *Laudato si'* Special Anniversary Year which concludes in May 2021 (*Laudato si'*

Week). This will issue in the *Laudato si'* decade of integral healing.

The theme for the 2020 Season of Creation is **JUBILEE FOR THE EARTH**. The climate emergency is seen to be the result of interlocking forces of greed, inequality and destruction of God’s creation. Jubilee brings together prophetic themes of justice, restitution and care of the earth:

- a time to renounce overconsumption at the cost of the Earth and those who are poor;
- a time when those who have consumed the most make restitution to those who have suffered the most;
- a time of rest for the land from constant exploitation, to restore ecosystems and communities.

POPE FRANCIS INVITES US TO JOIN SEASONS OF CREATION 2020

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tbK5l8OcjJg>

Saint Francis, faithful to Scripture, invites us to see nature as a magnificent book in which God speaks to us and grants us a glimpse of his infinite beauty and goodness. *Pope Francis Laudato Si* #12

CONTEMPLATING SCRIPTURE ECOLOGICALLY

(Ezek 33:7-9; Ps 94; Rm 13:8-10; Mt 18:15-20)
God speaks to us in many ways in the liturgy; the readings, the prayers, the silences and the music.
On this 1st Sunday of the Season of Creation,
God calls us to accept our prophetic responsibility in love, to invite each other to conversion and care for creation in these times of ecological crisis.

WHAT ACTION CAN WE TAKE or WHAT CAN WE DO?



TOTO OLITA, Lay Carmelite in Perth, is currently undertaking research at Curtin University in Western Australia to improve return on investment in agribusiness. Toto is part of the Economics Foundation project at the Centre for Crop and

Disease Management, applying economic modelling to disease management practices to determine financial benefits to growers when managing fungicide resistance issues. Toto is looking forward to contributing to this global industry and help provide Australian growers with economically sound information and options so that they can make informed decisions when managing crop diseases. Plant diseases cause significant economic damage with a global estimate of \$220 billion losses annually according to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

Toto spent the past few years at the University of Western Australia (UWA) as a PhD candidate specialising in Environmental Economics. Her research focused on the potential benefits of using insurance as an incentive for landholders to adopt

more environmentally sustainable farming practices in a risky environment. During her Masters studies at Curtin University, Toto undertook a research project that investigated factors contributing to the homelessness crisis in Australia and suggested ways housing shortage can be managed.

"I believe in inclusion, fairness, global collaboration, community empowerment, sustainable development, social justice and the preservation and protection of our environment," Toto said, adding that the challenges we face as a globe demand collaborative action.

PRAYERFUL MEDITATION THROUGH MUSIC

(songs contributed by Antonietta Skelton Lay Carmelite from Perth)

"Look At The World" by John Rutter
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Gpdc5Mjjq8>

"All The ends of the Earth" by Bob Dufford
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BINRq2peDE>

GENERAL INTERCESSIONS

We pray that we may grow in consciousness of the great gift of creation and all of its elements ...

Lord hear us.

We pray that we may deepen our gratitude for nature's rich Web of Life within which we live and that we may grow in openness to wiser and more just ways of caring for it and sharing it...

Lord hear us

We pray that we may take up our prophetic responsibility in this time of crisis, to speak God's Truth to each other and to call each other into conversion, to ways of living within creation wisely, sustainably, justly, and reverently. **Lord hear us ...**

Creator of Life,

At Your word, the Earth brought forth plants yielding seed and trees of every kind bearing fruit.

The rivers, mountains, minerals, seas and forests sustained life.

The eyes of all looked to You to satisfy the needs of every living thing.

And throughout time the Earth has sustained life.

Through the planetary cycles of days and seasons, renewal and growth,
you open your hand to give creatures our food in the proper time.

During this Season of Creation,

we ask you to grant us courage to observe a Sabbath for our planet.

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