

PRAYER FOR 'LAUDATO SI' WEEK: WEDNESDAY AFTER ASCENSION

Introduction and opening prayer.

Despite our sins and the daunting challenges before us, we never lose heart. "The Creator does not abandon us; he never forsakes his loving plan or repents of having created us... for he has united himself definitively to our earth, and his love constantly impels us to find new ways forward." (*Laudato Si'*, 13; 245).

In a particular way, let us pray ...

"O God of the poor,
help us to rescue the abandoned
and forgotten of this earth,
who are so precious in your eyes...
God of love, show us our place in this world as channels of your love
for all the creatures of this earth" Amen. (*ibid.*, 246),

Scripture Reading and Prayer.

And God said, "let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters. And God made the expanse and separated the waters that were under the expanse from the waters that were above the expanse. And it was so. And God called the expanse Heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day. (Genesis 1:6-8)

Bless the Lord, all powers,
sing praise to him and highly exalt him forever.

Bless the Lord, sun and moon, sing praise to him and highly exalt him forever.

Bless the Lord, stars of heaven, sing praise to him and highly exalt him forever.

Bless the Lord, rain and dew, sing praise to him and highly exalt him forever.

Bless the Lord, all winds, sing praise to him and highly exalt him forever.

(Prayer of Azariah and his Companions, Daniel 3:61-65)



A reading from the Encyclical Letter *Caritas in Veritate* 'on integral human development in charity and truth.' Pope Benedict XVI, 29th June 2009.

The Church has a responsibility towards creation and she must assert this responsibility in the public sphere. In so doing, she must defend not only earth, water and air as gifts of creation that belong to everyone. She must above all protect humankind from self-destruction. There is need for what might be called a human ecology, correctly understood. The deterioration of nature is in fact closely connected to the culture that shapes human coexistence: when "human ecology" is respected within society, environmental ecology also benefits. Just as human virtues are interrelated, such that the weakening of one places others at risk, so the ecological system is based on respect for a plan that affects both the health of society and its good relationship with nature.

In order to protect nature, it is not enough to intervene with economic incentives or deterrents. These are important steps, however, if there is a lack of respect for the right to life and to a natural death, if human conception, gestation and birth are made artificial, if human embryos are sacrificed to research, the conscience of society ends up losing the concept of human ecology and, along with it, that of environmental ecology. It is contradictory to insist that future generations respect the natural environment when our educational systems and laws do not help them to respect themselves. The book of nature is one and indivisible: it takes in not only the environment but also life, sexuality, marriage, the family, social relations: in a word, integral human development. Our duties towards the environment are linked to our duties towards the human person, considered in himself and in relation to others. It would be wrong to uphold one set of duties while trampling on the other. Herein lies a grave contradiction in our mentality and practice today: one which demeans the person, disrupts the environment and damages society. N.51.



Closing Prayer

Loving God,
Creator of Heaven, Earth, and all therein contained. Open our minds and touch our hearts,
so that we can be part of Creation, your gift.

Be present to those in need in these difficult times, especially the poorest and most vulnerable.
Help us to show creative solidarity as we confront the consequences of the global pandemic.

Make us courageous in embracing the changes required to seek the common good.
Now more than ever, may we all feel interconnected and interdependent.

Enable us to succeed in listening and responding to the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor.
May their current sufferings become the birth-pangs of a more fraternal and sustainable world. We ask this through Christ our Lord, under the loving gaze of Mary, Help of Christians. AMEN.