

Laudato Si in Action

A Time to Return

We are in the midst of the Season of Creation, where Christians all over the world celebrate creation, God's gift to us all.

This week I'd like to share another section of Pope Francis' Season of Creation message:

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.

A Jubilee is a time to return to God our loving Creator. We cannot live in harmony with creation if we are not at peace with the Creator who is the source and origin of all things. As Pope Benedict observed, “the brutal consumption of creation begins where God is missing, where matter has become simply material for us, where we ourselves are the ultimate measure, where everything is simply our property”.

The Jubilee season calls us to think once again of our fellow human beings, especially the poor and the most vulnerable. We are asked to re-appropriate God's original and loving plan of creation as a common heritage, a banquet which all of our brothers and sisters share in a spirit of conviviality, not in competitive scramble but in joyful fellowship, supporting and protecting one another. A Jubilee is a time for setting free the oppressed and all those shackled in the fetters of various forms of modern slavery, including trafficking in persons and child labour.

We also need once more to listen to the land itself, which Scripture calls adamah, the soil from which man, Adam, was made. Today we hear the voice of creation admonishing us to return to our rightful place in the natural created order – to remember that we are part of this interconnected web of life, not its masters. The disintegration of biodiversity, spiraling climate disasters, and unjust impact of the current pandemic on the poor and vulnerable: all these are a wakeup call in the face of our rampant greed and consumption.

Particularly during this Season of Creation, may we be attentive to the rhythms of this created world. For the world was made to communicate the glory of God, to help us to discover in its beauty the Lord of all, and to return to him. The earth from which we were made is thus a place of prayer and meditation. “Let us awaken our God-given aesthetic and contemplative sense”. The capacity to wonder and to contemplate is something that we can learn especially from our indigenous brothers and sisters, who live in harmony with the land and its multiple forms of life.

The full text of the Holy Father's message can be found here:

<https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2020/09/01/200901a.html>

Working together, we can help take care of our common home.

Paul Litwin