

EUCHARIST OF THE CREATIONAL COMMUNITY



A Mass for Creation is a Eucharistic celebration with a special focus on celebrating God’s gift of creation. It follows the structure of a standard Catholic Mass, but enriches it with symbols and a setting that strengthen the biblical notion of prayer together with all creation. This way it invites the faithful to intentionally reflect on the connection between our faith and God’s creation. As stated in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, “In the Eucharistic sacrifice the whole of creation loved by God is presented to the Father through the death and the Resurrection of Christ” (n.1359).

There is no one way to celebrate a Mass for Creation. Laudato Si’ Circles and other communities throughout the world have found creative ways to lift up creation through word, song, art, dance, and symbolic gestures. Holding the mass in an outdoor setting or doing a reading from the “Book of Creation” have been especially important to enable intentional prayer with creation. Below are some suggestions, inspired by the experiences of local members of the Laudato Si’ Movement.

Introduction

We gather today as sisters and brothers created by God in communion with all of creation. As we prepare our minds and our hearts for our celebration today, let us remember the words of Pope Francis in his encyclical: “The Eucharist joins heaven and earth; it embraces and penetrates all creation” (LS 236). May we grow deeper in communion with heaven and all of creation through this Eucharistic celebration today.

Sign of the cross (Usual sign)

We are gathered here today in the name of the Creator Spirit of God who gives birth to the entire universe of creation in love, And in the name of the Word of God, spoken into the silence, giving shape and form to all creation, And in the name of the Wisdom of God, who weaves the evolving web of life, revealing her wisdom through the many different voices of creation. May the grace and peace of our Creator God, who places us in the midst of the vast and expanding Universe on this beautiful and fragile planet, be with you!

And with your spirit

Penitential Rite

Lord, you invite us into a communion of love with all of creation

Lord, have mercy

Christ, we are a people longing for the healing of the wounds of Mother Earth and our reconciliation with our fellow creatures

Christ have mercy

Lord, open our hearts so that we may hear the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor

Lord have mercy

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

“All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of your creatures. You embrace with your tenderness all that exists. Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty. Fill us with peace, that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one. O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth, so precious in your eyes” (LS 246). We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. Amen.



Reading from the Book of Nature

*Reading from the book of nature is a key moment of the Mass for Creation, particularly when it is held outdoors. As St Augustine, St Bonaventure, and so many others taught through Church history (including Pope Francis most recently in *Laudato Si'*), God wrote two sacred books: the book of Scripture and the book of nature. Both books communicate God's message to us. Reading from the book of nature often occurs before the usual readings from the Book of Scripture. Given this is new to most people, it is recommended that the presiding priest or another organizer introduce it with an invitation such as:*

In silence, we encourage you to contemplate the scene that surrounds us for 7 minutes (recalling the 7 days of creation). You can walk around, touch the plants, smell the flowers, and contemplate clouds, trees, and water as you immerse yourself in creation to “see nature as a magnificent book in which God speaks to us and grants us a glimpse of his infinite beauty and goodness” (LS 12).

Depending on the setting (i.e. if there is a lot of space or not) and on your preference, you can encourage the congregation to remain seated in silence or to stand up to walk around (or offer participants the option to choose).

If it is not possible to read from the book of nature before the other readings, consider including a similar meditation after the homily or as a meditation after Communion.

Otherwise

- LS 238, 239, 240

Suggestions for first reading:

- Creation narratives: Gn 1:1-2:3; Gn 2:4-25
- New Covenant: Gn 9:8-17
- The harmony of the creational community: Is 11:1-9
- Acts 11:1-10
- Rom 8:19-23

Other bible readings can be used too.

Responsorial Psalm

Incorporate symbols of creation into the procession. You can invite If you are having a special mass that allows some flexibility on the Scriptures, select a psalm that enables the community to join the singing of earth's creatures such as:

- Psalms 98, 104, 148, 150,
- Daniel 3: 56-88.

Gospel Reading

- Mk 16:14-20
- Mt 27:45-56
- Lk 9:28-36
- Jn 1:1-14; 15:1-11

Homily

Incorporate themes related to creation into the homily. See points for reflection for the homily found in the “Liturgical and Spiritual resources” section of the Season of Creation resources page or the reflections on this year's theme and symbol in the official celebration guide.

Prayers of the Faithful

· Creator God, as we celebrate the (Laudato Si Week), teach us to see your footprints in the beauty of creation. Help us to listen to the voice of creation, inspire us to respect the rights of all people, and all living species to share in your gifts today and to be always mindful of those who come after us. **Creator God, Hear Our Prayer**

· God of all life, we give you thanks for the gift of Earth, our common home. At this time, many people, the oceans, and the ecosystems of the earth are struggling to survive. Help us to change our ways and guide us to live a life of simplicity and inclusivity, making the needs of others and the worship of you our ultimate concern. **Creator God, Hear Our Prayer**

· At this time in human history, we are mindful that the survival of our planet and the well-being of humanity is threatened. Let us pray that global agreements to reduce our impact on the planet and to care for the poor will be honoured by governments throughout the world. Give courage to world leaders to prioritize the wellbeing of our planet and make crucial decisions for the benefit of the entire Earth community. **Creator God, Hear Our Prayer**

· Let us pray for each other that we may live the vision and values of Pope Francis' encyclical letter, *Laudato Si'*, *On Care for our Common Home*. In particular we pray for greater attention to social justice, climate justice, and intergenerational justice. **Creator God, Hear Our Prayer**

· Lord, we pray that we may gain a deeper appreciation of the beauty and diversity of all that you have created. As we journey through our Synodal process, help us to also listen to the voice of creation, to acknowledge how deeply interconnected we are with each other and with the natural world. **Creator God, Hear Our Prayer**

· Lord, in the spirit of the call of your Son, Jesus, to follow Him by renouncing ourselves, may we resolve to curb all harmful consumerism, waste, and pollution and instead build harmonious relationships with each other and the natural world. We pray for wise stewardship of our investments away from fossil fuels and a commitment to building renewable energy systems so that we will better share the gifts of creation. **Creator God, Hear Our Prayer**

You may also invite the faithful to spontaneously offer their own prayers related to creation.

Offertory

Include symbols of creation such as a basket of food or flowers from people's gardens, or invite children to present animals or an animal craft, perhaps focused on endangered animals (this could be previously created during catechesis). On this occasion, it is important to be attentive to the bread and wine that are brought to the table. Perhaps a member of the community might make the bread so that it is truly "the fruit of the earth and the work of human hands." (Hosts are most often manufactured by machines.)

Host a second collection for solar panels for the church or for sustainability initiatives of the parish Laudato Si' group/creation care team (for example, the collection could be used to buy reusable tableware to avoid the use of single-use plastics). Or collect donations for an environmental group such as the Laudato Si' Movement.

Prayer over the gifts

(Inspired by LS 236)

God-Trinity, the creation, your loving work that came forth from your heart turns to you in a blessed adoration in this bread of life and vine of joy. Through Christ our Lord. Amen

Preface

Common Preface III

Praise to God for the creation and restoration of the human race.

Eucharistic Prayer

We suggest Eucharistic Prayer III or IV which has a cosmic setting and works well for Masses for Creation.

Meditation after Communion

Consider incorporating liturgical dance that acknowledges the land, oceans, rivers, sky, plants, animals, and the elements. The dance could be performed after communion, as it is common in Masses celebrated in rural communities in Latin America or Africa.

Prayer After Communion

God of all goodness, you have fed us with these sacramental gifts. “Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it, that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction. Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain at the expense of the poor and the earth. Teach us to discover the worth of each thing, to be filled with awe and contemplation, to recognize that we are profoundly united with every creature as we journey towards your infinite light. We thank you for being with us each day. Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love and peace.” We ask this in the name of Jesus, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

Final Blessing

As we go forth, walking in the light of Christ, savior of the whole cosmos, we give thanks for the way we are held and nurtured by our common home of creation. Amen

Nourished by bread and wine, body and blood of Christ, may our hearts be fixed as steadfast pilgrims on a journey towards healing and reconciliation between the human and non-human natural world. Amen

May our gratitude lead us to live humbly and walk with care and respect for all that God has created. The blessings pour down to you, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen

