

SEASON OF CREATION: WEEK 2



The Burning Bush Ex 3:1-12

*"I have heard their cry...I know their sufferings...
Come, now! I will send you...I will be with you"
(Ex 3: 1-12)*

Pope Francis Calls Us To Action Laudato Si #180

There are no uniform recipes, because each country or region has its own problems and limitations.

- New forms of cooperation and community organization can be encouraged in order to defend the interests of small producers and preserve local ecosystems from destruction. Truly, much can be done!

Listen to the Voice of Creation SEASON OF CREATION 2022

Faith leaders' invitation to join the Season of Creation

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

This year the Seasons of Creation is united around the theme, 'Listen to the Voice of Creation.'

The Psalmist declares, "The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims God's handiwork. Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge...**their voice is not heard**; yet their voice goes out through all the Earth, and their words to the end of the world." (19: 1-4)

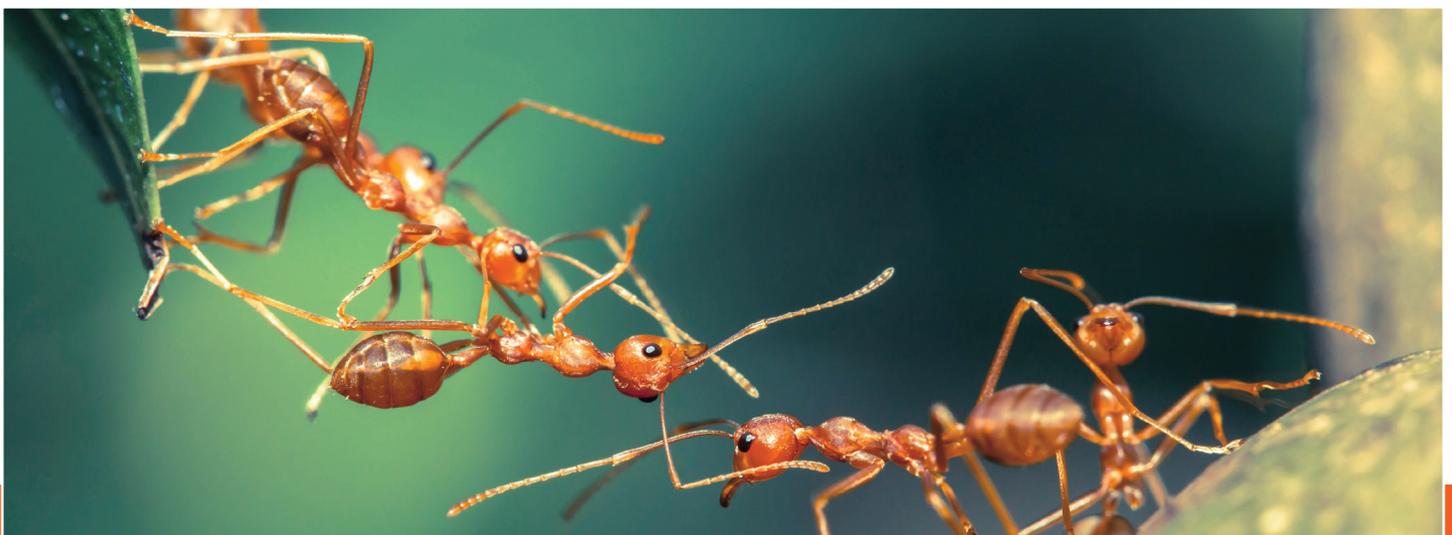
During the Season of Creation, our common prayer and action can help us listen for the voices of those who are silenced. In prayer we lament the individuals, communities, species, and ecosystems who are lost, and those whose livelihoods are threatened by habitat loss and climate change. In prayer we centre the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor.

In God's grace,

Members of the Season of Creation Advisory Committee

*"As stewards of God's creation, we are called to make
the earth a beautiful garden for the human family."*

- Pope Francis





Flora and Fauna

Barbara Kinnane (St Peter & Paul's Catholic Parish, Kiama and Animator, Laudato Si Movement)

The account of the burning bush, the symbol for the Season of Creation 2022, reveals the voice of God speaking to Moses from within this bush. This fire, that called out to Moses as he was tending his flock on Mt. Horeb, did not consume or destroy the bush; nor did it threaten the wellbeing of the animals that Moses was caring for. It was this aspect of the fire that drew Moses closer so that he was gifted with God's revelation. The flames of the burning bush revealed God's life sustaining presence. This was a holy fire affirming that God heard the cries of the suffering. This symbol calls us to listen to the voice of creation where God's presence may be discerned.

Today, the prevalence of unnatural fires are a sign of the devastating effects that climate change has had on our planet. Creation cries out as forests crackle and animals flee. Land misuse and climate change have led to the destruction of habitats and the disintegration of ecosystems. The State of the Environment Report 2021 aims to show us the full national picture of the health of our environment. It is a confronting record of our enormous failure to care for Australian flora and fauna. Australia has lost more mammal species to extinction than any other continent. Just this year, koalas were officially recognised as endangered in Queensland, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory. Australia is one of the global hotspots of deforestation with 7.7 million hectares of the habitat of threatened species cleared in the period 2000-2017. The Murray-Darling fell to its lowest water level on record in 2019.

At a recent trip to Taronga Zoo, I was made aware of the dreadful impact of feral horses on the native flora and fauna in the Kosciuszko National Park. This spoke to me of the deep interconnection of all aspects of creation, and the enormous capability of humanity to act in a role of stewardship or to be a source of environmental destruction. As Pope Francis reminds us in *Laudato Si*: 'When we speak of the 'environment', what we really mean is a relationship existing between nature and the society which lives in it. Nature cannot be regarded as something separate from ourselves or as a mere setting in which we live' (Chapter 4:139).

Moses was told to remove his sandals, for he was standing on holy ground in God's presence. May this symbol move us to remove the "sandals" of our unsustainable lifestyles and the barriers of apathy and self concern which disconnect us from Creation and our Creator.

Hope for Creation Prayer

Ben Thurley

For every good gift in creation, for all of creation's diversity and dignity and glory:

We give you thanks. (Repeated by all: after the reader)

For threatened species and habitats, for all creatures on the brink:

We ask your grace and protection.

For seeking to live without limits, and failing to see how our lives affect all in the community of creation:

We ask your forgiveness and correction.

For the beauty and diversity of the family of faith:

We give you thanks.

For all those who struggle and are weary, who suffer and are oppressed:

We ask your grace and protection.

For the indifference or ignorance or busyness that stops us responding with mercy and justice to our brothers and sisters in need:

We ask your forgiveness and correction.

For every opportunity to do good, to share abundantly, and to live more in tune with your whole-hearted hospitality:

We give you thanks.

When we are worn down, tired out, or broken apart by the weight of our own struggles and failures:

We ask your grace and protection.

For the times we do not heed your call to walk the road of discipleship with your Son, Jesus:

We ask your forgiveness and correction.

Lord Jesus Christ, God our Loving Father, Holy Spirit, through grace you have given us eternal comfort and hope. Comfort our hearts and strengthen them in every good work and every good word. Amen.

