



Web of Life

We are part of a single,
wondrously complex
web of life
that is woven by God.

Reflections for each Sunday
during the Season of Creation:
Year C, 2019

Because the Divine could not express itself
in any single being,
the Divine created the great multiplicity of beings
so that the perfection lacking to one
would be supplied by the others.
Thus the whole universe together
participates in and manifests the Divine
more than any single being.

Thomas Aquinas



1st September - 22nd Sunday of Ordinary Time

Ecclesiasticus 3:17-20, 28-29; Hebrews 12:18-19,22-24;
Luke 14:1, 7-14

This year the theme for the Season of Creation is
"The Web of Life".

The most vulnerable among us are suffering most deeply
as this web of life begins to unravel.

As we begin the Season of Creation, Luke reminds us that ALL are invited to the banquet and gives us advice on how to live according to Jesus' vision of a good and just society. Jesus urges us to invite the poor, the lame and the blind to this banquet. In fact he encourages us to turn the world's values upside down by reaching out with loving intent to the least in our society! In this way we are imitating the God we sing of in our psalm today:

Father of the orphan, defender of the widow ...

*God gives the lonely a home to live in;
he leads prisoners forth into freedom.*

This week:

- 🌍 Let us consider those on the margins, including those most at risk from climate change, and
- 🌍 Let us commit ourselves to working towards a world where all are seated at the banquet.



8th September – 23rd Sunday of Ordinary Time
Wisdom 9:13-18; Philemon 9-10, 12-17; Luke 14:25-33

Luke says:

And indeed, which of you here, intending to build a tower, would not first sit down and work out the cost ...

Do we consider the cost to our earth and its peoples of many projects undertaken by the big multi-national companies? Deforestation continues to damage the Amazon. The growth of agri-business (primarily for export), with the support of government policy, means deforestation is virtually unhindered. Profit is the goal and this comes at the cost of human life and the destruction of the ecosystem. Many of the world's resources are being plundered because of a short-sighted approach to the economy and what Pope Francis calls the "modern myth" of unlimited material progress. Profit is allowed to override wider considerations about the common good and the effect on the world's ecosystems. We read in the Book of Wisdom:

*Grant us your wisdom and send your Holy Spirit from above ...
that the paths of those on earth may be straightened and all
humanity taught what pleases you.*

This week:

- 🌍 **Let us consider the 'cost' of some of our daily practices:**
One small example - can we remove single-use plastics from our lives?
- 🌍 **Buy a reusable water bottle and reusable coffee cup. Say NO to plastic straws and food wrapping.**



15th September – 24th Sunday of Ordinary Time
Exodus 32:7-11, 13-14; 1 Timothy 1:12-17; Luke 15:1-32

The emphasis today is on God's patience, forgiveness and mercy. In the Gospel reading Luke describes the Lost Son as one who 'came to his senses'. Admittedly, he had reached rock bottom before this moment occurred!

Like the Lost Son let us pray that as a *global community* we might '*come to our senses*' and take the actions

that are necessary to change the course of climate change.

As individual Marists, communities and Congregation we are called to lead by example and show our commitment to care for the earth. And, as stated in Exodus, God's promise remains:

*...and this land which I promised I will give to your descendants,
and it shall be their heritage forever.*

Remember the question posed in Laudato Sí (160)?

What kind of world do we want to leave to those who come after us, to children who are now growing up?

This week:

- 🌍 **Can we encourage ourselves and others to make small changes around our homes and our neighbourhoods?**
- 🌍 **Is there some action we can take on as a group ... an action that might lead others to ask: "Why are you doing this?"**

Ideally, in a world of great prosperity ALL should be enjoying its fruits. The denunciations listed by Amos today have an unpleasantly familiar ring -

*Listen to this, you who trample on the needy and try to suppress
the poor of the country... who buy up the poor
for money and the needy for a pair of sandals' ...
who sell and market and raise prices
and give wrong measures.*

Not much has changed! We live in a world where hundreds of millions live at appalling and totally unacceptable levels of poverty, deprivation, malnutrition and starvation. Every few seconds, someone dies of hunger, mostly children. In today's Gospel, Luke reminds us in strong terms:

You cannot be the slave both of God and of money.

And in Laudato Sí (66), we read:

*Human life is grounded in three fundamental and closely
intertwined relationships: with God, with our neighbour
and with the earth itself.*

There is no mention of money here!

This week we ask:

- 🌍 **Do we recognize that our relationships with God, with others and with Creation are closely interdependent?**
- 🌍 **In our communities, if we haven't already done so, let's have a discussion about lifestyle from an environmental point of view.**

Amos and Luke remind us that to ignore poverty and injustice brings consequences. We are called to live our faith in our daily lives in right relationship with the poor and in working towards justice in our world.

We are now called to listen urgently to the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor and to reflect on the injustices caused by the climate crisis. Climate breakdown may not be fully experienced on our own doorstep yet, but the fact remains that millions of people are suffering worldwide because of this crisis through drought, sea level rise and a breakdown of the earth's ecological systems.

In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis writes that we must hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.

*Hear the cry of those devastated
by Hurricanes Harvey and Maria;
hear the cries of the coral reefs and
those precious ecosystems
that are suffering from
coral bleaching and dying;*

*hear the cries of the Marshall Islanders
who are seeing their homes washed away...
and so many more cries around the world.*



We commit to:

- **Pray for and with creation**
- **Live more simply**
- **Advocate to protect our common home**

A Prayer from Eco-congregations

England and Wales

Our Father, who art in heaven...

*You are also at home in the air, the soil,
the forests and the oceans,*

Hallowed be your name...

by the care we take of your creation,

Your kingdom come...

all that you see is good,

Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven...

Your will to till and care, to be stewards of all of creation.

Give us this day our daily bread...

that all may have sufficient to live life in all its fullness

Forgive us our trespasses...

*our greed, our exploitation, our lack of concern
for other species and future generations,*

As we forgive those who trespass against us...

by reconciliation with justice and peace,

Lead us not into temptation...

the temptation to equate dominion with exploitation,

But deliver us from evil...

the evil of destroying your gift of creation,

For yours is the kingdom...

Yours, Lord, not ours,

Amen.