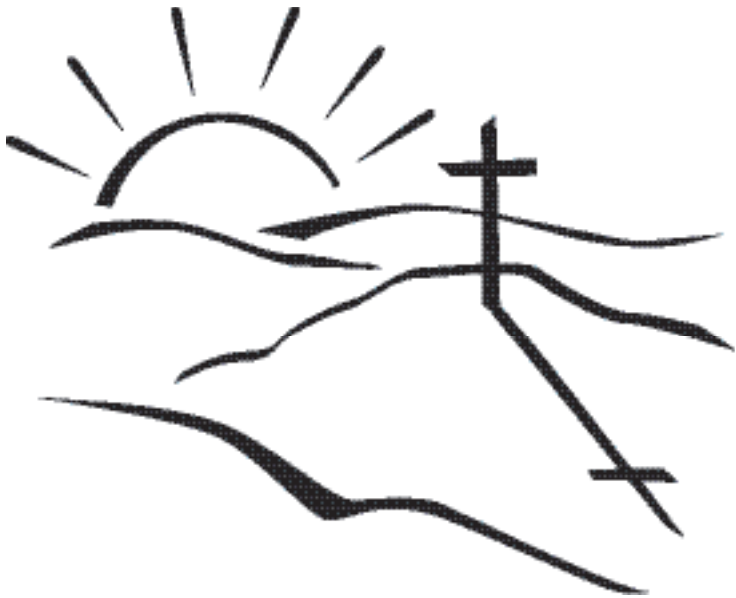


Stations of the Cross with All of Creation



a publication of the
Intercommunity Peace & Justice Center

Care for Creation

In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis says:

“In this Encyclical, I would like to enter into dialogue with all people about our common home.” (3)

“It is my hope that this Encyclical Letter, which is now added to the body of the Church’s social teaching, can help us to acknowledge the appeal, immensity and urgency of the challenge we face.” (15)

Pope Francis addresses concern for the environment as the common concern of all, “one of the principal challenges facing humanity in our day.” (25)

“[The creation accounts in Genesis] suggest that human life is grounded in three fundamental and closely intertwined relationships: with God, with our neighbor and with the earth itself. According to the Bible, these three vital relationships have been broken, both outwardly and within us. This rupture is sin.” (66)

“I am interested in how such a [Christian] spirituality can motivate us to a more passionate concern for the protection of our world.” (216)

“The universe unfolds in God, who fills it completely. Hence, there is a mystical meaning to be found in a leaf, in a mountain trail, in a dewdrop, in a poor person’s face.” (233)

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Artwork by Thomas Allsopp

Scripture: New Revised Standard Version

Praying the Stations With All of Creation

In Parish and Community

- ☞ Contact your parish to arrange for these Stations to be used at one of the times that your parish schedules the Lenten Stations of the Cross for all parishioners.
- ☞ Use one of the Stations for prayer and reflection at a parish committee or staff meeting.
- ☞ Participate in a public witness of the Stations, going in procession to various sites related to the environment.
- ☞ Provide the Stations to small faith or post renew groups.
- ☞ Reflect on or pray one or more of the Stations in RCIA, adult, or religious education sessions.

As Individuals

- ☞ Include one or more Stations in your family prayer in concert with an environmental action.
- ☞ Use the Stations for your own personal prayer and reflection.
- ☞ Consider inviting the people with whom you work to join you in an activity or service project to benefit the environment.

Ritual Suggestions

- ☞ It is recommended that you create a ritual with the Stations that includes soft instrumental music and ample quiet reflection, and not read all of the text aloud.
- ☞ Invite those gathered to share carrying the cross or an image of Earth as you process to each Station.
- ☞ Consider including an environmental action meaningful to your family or community.

First Station: Jesus is Condemned to Death

Environmental Destruction

Reader I

We experience the heartlessness and injustice of Jesus' condemnation, he who has done no wrong.

Reader II

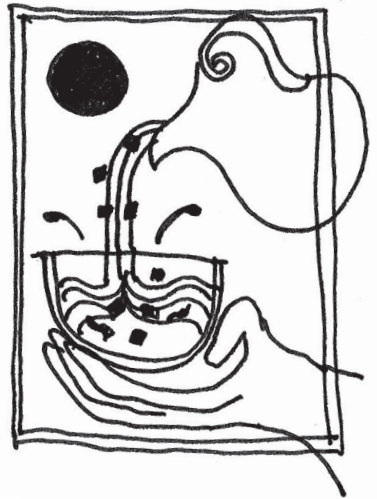
The pace of environmental destruction is increasing; natural resources are depleted; toxics are polluting our environment; animals and plants are becoming extinct; and people are being poisoned.

Isaiah 24:4-5

“Earth dries up and withers, the world languishes and withers; the heavens languish together with Earth. Earth lies polluted under its inhabitants; for they have transgressed laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant.”

The Cross in All of Creation

As God cares for all of creation, we are called into a loving relationship with all. In alienating ourselves from Earth we separate ourselves from God and one another. We are called to reconciliation with all of creation.



Reflection

When do I experience being estranged from nature?

Second Station: Jesus Takes up the Cross

Our Role in Earth's Devastation

Reader I

We experience through Jesus his disappointment, pain, weariness and suffering.

Reader II

Our human role in Earth's devastation has become an urgent question, unique to our place in history. The fate of Earth is in our hands.

Mark 14: 37-38

“He came and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, ‘Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep awake one hour? Keep awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial.’”

The Cross in All of Creation

“Regrettably, many efforts to seek concrete solutions to the environmental crisis have proved ineffective, not only because of powerful opposition, but also because of a more general lack of interest. Obstructionist attitudes, even on the part of believers, can range from denial of the problem to indifference, nonchalant resignation or blind confidence in technical solutions. We require a new and universal solidarity.”

—*Laudato Si'*, paragraph 14

“On the one hand, we gaze in wonder at the world; on the other hand, we are wasting the world. These are signs of our Earth's times and should be filled with meaning for people of faith. But the odd thing is that, with some notable exceptions, many religious people and the church as a whole are curiously silent about the Earth. We are like the disciples asleep in the garden of Gethsemane while Earth undergoes its passion and death.”

—Elizabeth A. Johnson, CSJ, *Passion for God, Passion for the Earth*

Reflection

How have I become like a disciple asleep in the garden of Gethsemane?

Third Station: Jesus Falls the First Time Most Vulnerable First to Collapse

Reader I

Jesus was in agony and prayed to be given strength to endure his suffering.

Reader II

Caring for God's creation and working for justice with people who are poor are inseparable missions in today's world.

Proverbs 31:8-9

“Speak out for those who cannot speak, for the rights of all the destitute. Speak out, judge righteously, and defend the rights of the poor and needy.”

The Cross in All of Creation

“Many of the poor live in areas particularly affected by phenomena related to warming, and their means of subsistence are largely dependent on natural reserves and ecosystemic services such as agriculture, fishing and forestry. They have no other financial activities or resources which can enable them to adapt to climate change or to face natural disasters. There has been a tragic rise in the number of migrants seeking to flee from the growing poverty caused by environmental degradation.”

—*Laudato Si'*, paragraph 25

The decision of a major U.S. garment corporation to produce jeans in Lesotho, Africa promised to boost the economy of one of the world's poorest nations. Before long, tons of dangerous waste was being dumped into municipal landfills where child rag pickers fight for scraps among denim, needles, razors and harmful chemicals. The dumps are always on fire spewing toxic chemicals into the air, and the river, which is used for cooking water and bathing, has turned blue and is full of chemical effluent.

Reflection

How do my lifestyle choices affect those who are the most vulnerable?

Fourth Station: Jesus Meets His Mother Earth as Mother

Reader I

From the beginning, Mary shared the life of her son, including the awakening to his call and the dangers of speaking against oppression and injustice.

Reader II

“Praised be You, God, through our Sister, Mother Earth, who sustains and governs us, and who produces various fruit with colored flowers and herbs.”

—St. Francis of Assisi

Romans 8:22

“We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains.”

The Cross in All of Creation

“In our way of life...with every decision we make, we always keep in mind the Seventh Generation of children to come...When we walk upon Mother Earth, we always plant our feet carefully because we know that the faces of future generations are looking up at us from beneath the ground. We never forget them.”

—Oren Lyons, Faithkeeper of the Onondaga Nation

Reflection

How do I keep in mind future generations in my use of Earth’s resources?

Fifth Station: Simon is Recruited to Help Jesus Live Simply So Others May Simply Live

Reader I

Simon is pressed into helping Jesus carry the cross.

Reader II

Our modern lifestyle puts a heavy burden on Earth.

1 Corinthians 12:24-26

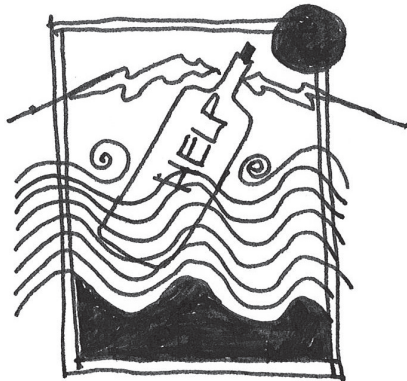
“But God has so arranged the body, each one of them as God chose. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.”

The Cross in All of Creation

The true cost of living the modern lifestyle is not measured by what we pay at the cash register. Rather it is measured by what we do to the rivers, valleys, oceans and land. Whatever we do to Earth we do to ourselves and the most vulnerable among us.

Reflection

How could I/we simplify as a family, community or parish for the sake of our entire Earth community?



Sixth Station: Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus

How Do We Wipe the Face of Earth?

Reader I

In spite of the anger and rejection of Jesus by the crowd, Veronica was strong and courageous enough to minister to Jesus with gentleness and compassion.

Reader II

“If we learn to love Earth, we will find labyrinths, gardens, fountains, and precious jewels! A whole new world will open itself to us. We will discover what it means to be truly alive.”

—Teresa of Avila

Genesis 1:28

“God blessed them and said, ‘Bear fruit, increase your numbers, and fill the earth, and be responsible for it! Watch over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and all the living things on Earth!’”

The Cross in All of Creation

“Creatures tend towards God, and in turn it is proper to every living being to tend towards other beings. The human person grows more, matures more and is sanctified more to the extent that he or she enters into relationships, going out of themselves to live in communion with God, with others and with all creatures. Everything is interconnected, and this invites us to develop a spirituality of that global solidarity which flows from the mystery of the Trinity.”

—*Laudato Si'*, paragraph 240

A community of 100 citizens of Stelle, Illinois practices sustainable living in its use of solar energy, community gardening, farming and cooperative utility plants. Their commitment to conservation is an example of compassionate care of Earth.

Reflection

What wonders of creation inspire me to compassionate care of Earth and her people?

Seventh Station: Jesus Falls a Second Time

The Extinction of Species

Reader I

In the face of violence and derision, Jesus falls again.

Reader II

In the last quarter of the 20th Century, twenty percent of all living species have become extinct. Places have had to change their official trees, animals or flowers. There are no chestnuts on Chestnut Lane, no caribou in Caribou, Maine, no ice in Iceland.

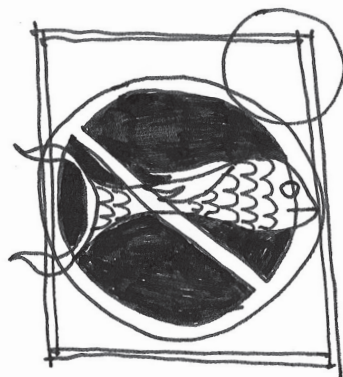
Psalm 50:10-11

“For every animal of the forest is mine, beasts by the thousands on my mountains. I know every bird of the heavens; the creatures of the field belong to me.”

The Cross in All of Creation

“When these living beings, these magnificent plants and animals, go extinct, they never come back again. We are killing birth itself, wiping out the future of our fellow creatures who took millions of years to evolve. We live in a time of a great dying off.”

—Elizabeth A. Johnson, CSJ, *Passion for God, Passion for the Earth.*



Reflection

What in nature that is precious to me is in danger of “dying off?”

Eighth Station: Women of Jerusalem Weep Weeping Water

Reader I

We read that women beat their breasts and lamented over Jesus.

Reader II

The wondrous cycle of Earth's life giving water unites all of creation. Disregard for water conservation is threatening life in every corner of the globe; parched deserts and cities, destroyed wetlands, contaminated waterways, and dying children and animals. 2.5 billion people in the world lack access to safe water and basic sanitation.

Jeremiah 9:10

“Take up weeping and wailing for the mountains, and a lamentation for the pastures of the wilderness, because they are laid to waste.”

The Cross in All of Creation

“Even as the quality of available water is constantly diminishing, in some places there is a growing tendency, despite its scarcity, to privatize this resource, turning it into a commodity subject to the laws of the market. *Yet access to safe drinking water is a basic and universal human right, since it is essential to human survival, and, as such, is a condition for the exercise of other human rights.* Our world has a grave social debt towards the poor who lack access to drinking water.”

—*Laudato Si'*, paragraph 30

A combination of corrosive river water and outdated lead pipes caused tap water in Flint, Michigan to be contaminated with high levels of lead. Residents had to have bottled water shipped in. Pipes have been replaced, and lead levels have been reduced, but the health effects persist, especially for children. Lead exposure lowers IQ levels, creating cognitive and behavioral issues for children in the future. Says Flint pediatrician Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha, who helped expose the water crisis: “It’s known as a silent pediatric epidemic. It’s something that we see years if not decades after exposure to lead.”

—*www.npr.org*

Reflection

What causes me to weep about our water crisis?

Ninth Station: Jesus Falls a Third Time Gasping for Air

Reader I

Jesus' body and spirit were being broken, yet he struggled to continue his march.

Reader II

Earth's atmosphere is gasping for breath, choked by contamination and pollution. In the U.S. alone, over 40 percent of the population is exposed to unhealthy levels of air pollution. Worldwide, almost 4 million people die annually because of unhealthy levels of pollution in the air they breathe.

Job 33:4

"The spirit of God has made me, and the breath of God gives me life."

The Cross in All of Creation

"Some forms of pollution are part of people's daily experience. Exposure to atmospheric pollution produces a broad spectrum of health hazards, especially for the poor, and causes millions of premature deaths. People take sick, for example, from breathing high levels of smoke from fuels used in cooking or heating. There is also pollution that affects everyone, caused by transport, industrial fumes, substances which contribute to the acidification of soil and water, fertilizers, insecticides, fungicides, herbicides and agro-toxins in general.

—*Laudato Si'*, paragraph 20

"My name is RaJohnna Jackson and I am 6 years old. I have trouble breathing all the time. When I am sleeping I have to use a breathing machine and the doctors are surprised I can't get better. I live in Mossville and it has big plants that spit fire and toxins. I see lots of sick people, and I ask my mother 'why?'" Mossville, Louisiana is surrounded by 14 industrial facilities including the largest concentration of vinyl production facilities, an oil refinery, a coal-fired power plant, and several petrochemical manufacturers.

—Industrial Sources of Dioxin Poisoning in Mossville, LA

Reflection

What one action could I take to breathe new life and hope into Earth?

Tenth Station: Jesus is Stripped of His Garments

Deforestation

Reader I

The last vestige of dignity is taken away from Jesus. He is totally demeaned and vulnerable.

Reader II

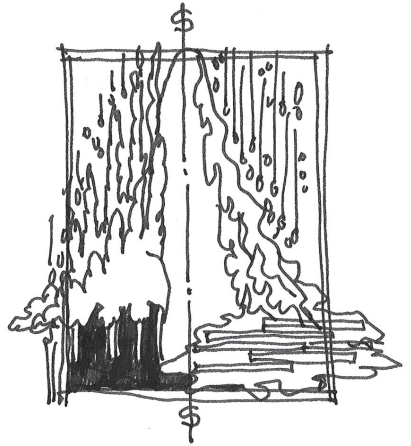
Almost half of the forests that once covered the Earth are gone. The acceleration of global deforestation leaves ecosystems vulnerable and degrades Earth's atmosphere.

Matthew 27: 28-29

"They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!"

The Cross in All of Creation

Dorothy Stang, a Sister of Notre Dame de Namur, went to Brazil in 1966 to be with the peasants as a spiritual guide and advocate. Her journey for justice ended on February 12, 2005 when she was murdered for working to save the Amazon rain forest from over logging and supporting poor farmers who were being driven from their land. She was laid to rest among her people under a mango tree with a promise of hope that they were not burying her but they were planting her, and her spirit of care for our Earth community would be part of them forever.



Reflection

How do I respond when I observe creation being degraded?

Eleventh Station: Jesus is Nailed to the Cross

Dependence on Fossil Fuels

Reader I

After having been tortured on his way to his death, Jesus is crucified, the worst form of execution in the Roman Empire.

Reader II

Fossil fuel dependence causes environmental devastation and fuels war and conflict.

2 Corinthians 12:9-10

“I am glad to be a living demonstration of Christ’s power. . . For when I am weak, then I am strong. The less I have, the more I depend on God.”

The Cross in All of Creation

“We know that technology based on the use of highly polluting fossil fuels—especially coal, but also oil and to a lesser degree gas—needs to be progressively replaced without delay. Until greater progress is made in developing widely accessible sources of renewable energy, it is legitimate to choose the lesser of two evils or to find short-term solutions...Politics and business have been slow to react in a way commensurate with the urgency of the challenges facing our world... There is reason to hope that humanity at the dawn of the twenty-first century will be remembered for having generously shouldered its grave responsibilities.”

—*Laudato Si'*, paragraph 165

Buried below the Boreal Forest of northern Alberta, Canada is one of the world’s largest oil deposits known as the tar sands. Extracting the oil comes at great environmental costs, including greenhouse gas emissions, toxic leaking, diversion and consumption of natural water resources, and habitat devastation. The Canadian Boreal Forest provides climate regulation and carbon storage for Earth. Its ecosystem is the breeding grounds for over 30% of North American birds.

Reflection

How can I decrease my dependence on fossil fuels?

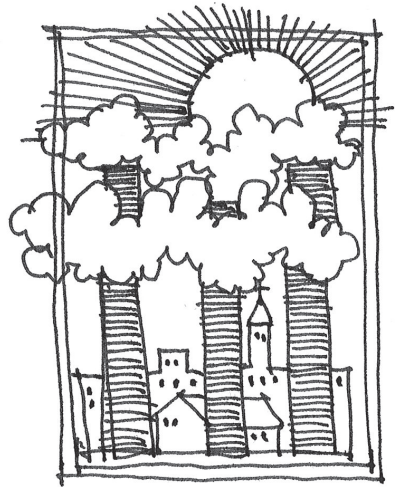
Twelfth Station: Jesus Dies on the Cross

Reader I

Luke tells us: “The sun was hidden and darkness came over the whole land until mid-afternoon; and at that time the curtain of the sanctuary was torn in two. Then Jesus gave a loud cry; ‘Abba, I commit my spirit into your hands.’ And after he said that, he gave up his spirit.”

Reader II

There are times when all seems lost, even to those of us who are the most optimistic. To whom and to what do we turn in these darkest of days?



Hosea 4:3

“Therefore the land mourns, and all who live in it languish; together with the wild animals and the birds of the air, even the fish of the sea are perishing.”

Silent Meditation

Thirteenth Station: Jesus is Taken Down Hope

Reader I

Joseph of Arimathea took the body of Jesus down from the cross and wrapped it in a clean linen sheet. Joseph, in spite of the violent mood surrounding him, was bold enough to ask for the body of his beloved friend.

Reader II

Despite the challenge, there are many people in the world today courageously taking action to renew their covenant with Earth.

Deuteronomy 8:7-11

“Our God is bringing us into a good land. All will be satisfied.”

The Cross in All of Creation

“Human beings, while capable of the worst, are also capable of rising above themselves, choosing again what is good, and making a new start, despite their mental and social conditioning. We are able to take an honest look at ourselves, to acknowledge our deep dissatisfaction, and to embark on new paths to authentic freedoms. I appeal to everyone throughout the world not to forget this dignity which is ours.”

—*Laudato Si'*, paragraph 205

“We shall awaken from our dullness and rise vigorously toward justice. If we fall in love with creation deeper and deeper, we will respond to its endangerment with passion.”

—Hildegard of Bingen

Reflection

How am I a sign of hope for the renewal of Earth?

Fourteenth Station: Jesus is Buried

Buried Seeds

Reader I

Joseph of Arimathea laid Jesus in his own tomb which had been hewn from a formation of rock.

Reader II

We wait with eager anticipation for the coming of a sustainable future for all of creation.

Matthew 13: 31-32

“The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.”

The Cross in All of Creation

“As the bread and wine are transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ for our nourishment, we are challenged to promote this harmony between humans and the rest of creation by the way we live our lives.”

—*The Cry of the Earth*, Irish Catholic Bishops, 2009



Reflection

What seeds am I sowing in my family, work and community to ensure a sustainable future for all of creation?

Fifteenth Station: The Resurrection

New Earth

Reader I

Mary Magdalen came to Jesus' tomb on Sunday morning to offer respect to the dead. To her wondrous surprise, the tomb was empty and her Teacher was calling her by name! Mary Magdalene, who must have experienced profound grief, perhaps remorse, was now offered hope and new life.

Revelation 21: 1

"Then I saw a new heaven and a new Earth; for the first heaven and the first Earth had passed away."

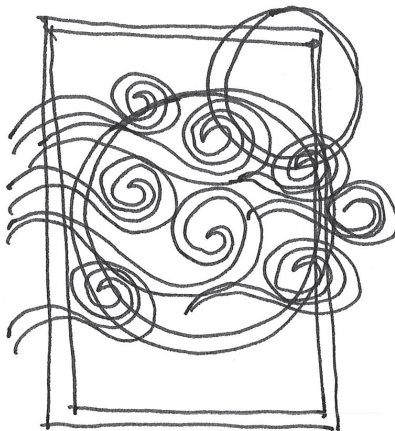
The Cross in All of Creation

"Another world is not only possible, she is on her way. On a quiet day I can hear her breathing."

—Arundhati Roy

Reflection

Where do I hear a new world breathing a sign of hope?



Care for Creation

Pope Benedict XVI's 2010 Message for the World Day of Peace, *If You Want to Cultivate Peace, Protect Creation*, follows a long tradition of Church teaching on our responsibility to care for creation.

“The Church has a responsibility towards creation, and she considers it her duty to exercise that responsibility in public life, in order to protect earth, water, and air as gifts of God the Creator meant for everyone, and above all to save [humanity] from the danger of self-destruction.” (#12)

“Can we remain indifferent before the problems associated with such realities as climate change, desertification, the deterioration and loss of productivity in vast agricultural areas, the pollution of rivers and aquifers, the loss of biodiversity, the increase of natural catastrophes and the deforestation of equatorial and tropical regions? ... Can we remain impassive in the face of the actual and potential conflicts involving access to natural resources? All these are issues with a profound impact on the exercise of human rights, such as the right to life, food, health and development.” (#4)

“Seeing creation as God's gift to humanity helps us understand our vocation and worth as human beings...Contemplating the beauty of creation inspires us to recognize the love of the Creator.” (#2)



Intercommunity Peace & Justice Center a collaborative venture of

Adrian Dominican Sisters • Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace

Jesuits West • Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia

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