

# JUBILEE FOR THE EARTH

## Introduction

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Each year from September 1<sup>st</sup> to October 4<sup>th</sup>, the Christian family celebrates the good gift of creation. This global celebration began in 1989 with the Ecumenical Patriarchate's recognition of the day of prayer for Creation. During the Season of Creation, we unite as one family in Christ, the Christian family, to spend time in prayer, considering ways to inhabit our common home sustainably, and lifting our voices in the public sphere. This is a summary of the *Jubilee for Earth* celebration guide. To find the whole guide go to: [seasonofcreation.org/](http://seasonofcreation.org/)

## Jubilee for the Earth



*And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year and you shall proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you: you shall return every one of you, to your property and every one of you to your family (Leviticus 25:10).*

Jubilee is a just and sustainable balance between social, economic and ecological realities. When one variable is exploited to maximize growth of another, the whole system will eventually suffer. The year of jubilee marked the start of universal redemption. Jubilee involved the release from indebtedness, when injustices of the past fifty years were to be restored. Jubilee is a time of rest for the land from constant exploitation, to restore ecosystems and people.

## Ideas to Celebrate the Season of Creation

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### Prayer and worship

- Host an ecumenical prayer service: Connect with Christians outside of your denomination or network
- Integrate creation into Sunday liturgies / Bible Study: Encourage your pastor/priest to preach a sermon on creation
- Hold a Prayer Service Outside: You might like to consider a site of environmental significance. If it is a place of great natural beauty, the focus would be on giving thanks to God and committing ourselves to protecting the site and others
- Organize a Creation Walk or Pilgrimage

## Practical Action

- Hold a sustainability event: Clean local waterways, grow a tree, plant a garden
- Encourage sustainable living: Reduce your carbon footprint
- Pledge to put your beliefs and values into practice by reducing your personal carbon emissions at [www.livingthechange.net](http://www.livingthechange.net)
- Information and resources for the activities above can be found on the website: [www.livingthechange.net](http://www.livingthechange.net) or at [info@livingthechange.net](mailto:info@livingthechange.net)
- Making sustainable changes on an institutional level: Thoughtful management of green spaces can help absorb carbon from the environment, promote local biodiversity, and even create space for community gardening
- Practice the Roadmap for Congregations, Communities and Churches for an Economy of Life and Ecological Justice: Invite your congregations, communities and churches to discuss and practice the 5-step WCC (World Council of Churches) program to change the way we deal with the economy and our ecological surroundings. Information and resources for the Roadmap activities can be found on the WCC website: <https://www.oikoumene.org/>

## Advocacy: Participate in campaigns that call for restoration

*Speak up for the poor and see that they get justice (Proverbs 31:9)*

- **Call for a debt jubilee:** All external debt due in 2020 to be cancelled in recognition of the severe impacts of the health, social and economic crises faced by countries as a result of COVID-19
- **Bail out people not polluters** Stimulus packages post COVID-19 must invest in people and decent jobs, with a focus on the most vulnerable people and the planet
- Adopt **more ambitious national targets** to reduce emissions by the end of 2020
- We support the U.N. call to **safeguard 30% of Earth as protected habitats by 2030** in order to stem the alarming rate of biodiversity loss.
- Uphold the human **right to food, clean drinking water and safe sanitation.**
- Commit to a rapid **reduction in single use plastics**, and rush for national bans, promoting a circular economy
- We support the implementation of the **Sustainable Development Goals** at local and international levels



## Organize an event as a Faith Community

- Cycling/marathon races, youth led sports activities, church services and vigils, clean-up exercises, tree planting exercises, artistic exercises (poetry, photography, painting) all to raise awareness of climate injustice – invite community leaders, representatives of government and businesses to participate
- Organize artistic (poetry, photography, painting, etc.) competitions to show post- COVID 19 changes in your community and envision a more just future
- Use the Season of Creation to discuss how your church can reduce its carbon footprint

## Global calendar of events

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September 1: Creation Day/World Day of Prayer for Creation



September 21: International Coastal Cleanup Day



October 4: St. Francis Day

## Join us on social media

Join the global community by using the #SeasonOfCreation hashtag on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. Hashtag posts will appear on [www.seasonofcreation.org](http://www.seasonofcreation.org)



**SEASON OF  
CREATION**



The Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, marking the celebration the 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of *Laudato Si'*, has made available resources to promote the care for the earth and care for the poor. One initiative they are promoting is *Season of Creation – September 1, 2020 – October 4, 2020*.

Consider promoting the themes of care for the earth and care for the poor during the Sunday liturgies. To encourage integration of the themes of integral ecology and creation into Sunday liturgies, Season of Creation working with the Dicastery, has provided the following ideas and resources<sup>1</sup>:

Date	Text <sup>2</sup>	Theme
6 September, 2020 23 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time	1st Reading: Ezekiel 33:7-9 2nd Reading: Rom 13:8-10 Gospel: Matt 18:15-20	<i>The Greatest Commandment, Love your Neighbour</i> <a href="#">(Notes on the Readings)</a>
13 September, 2020 24 <sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time	1st Reading: Sirach 27:30-28:7 2nd Reading: Rom 14:7-9 Gospel: Matt 18:21-35	<i>Protecting the Commons</i> <a href="#">(Notes on the Readings)</a>
20 September, 2020 25 <sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time	1st Reading: Isaiah 55:6-9 2nd Reading: Phil 1:20-24, 27 Gospel: Matt 20:1-16	<i>There is Enough for our Need, not our Greed</i> <a href="#">(Notes on the Readings)</a>
27 September, 2020	1st Reading: Ezekiel 18:25-28 2nd Reading: Phil 2:1-11 Gospel: Matt 21:23-32	<i>The Gift of Water</i> <a href="#">(Notes on the Readings)</a>
4 October, 2020 Feast of St. Francis	1st Reading: Isaiah 5:1-7 2nd Reading: Phil 4:6-9 Gospel: Matthew 11:25-30	<i>The Creation Spirituality</i>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Season Of Creation. *Jubilee for the Earth – 2020 Celebration Guide*. 2020. Available for download from the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development website (<http://www.humandevlopment.va/en/news/let-us-unite-in-the-celebration-of-the-season-of-creation.html>).

<sup>2</sup> Please note this is an ecumenical document. While the Gospel readings are common to all Christian churches who are part of this initiative, this is not true of the Psalms and, in some cases, the first reading.