

# LIVING FAITH

## TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

October 3, 2021



### THE GOSPEL TODAY

Mark 10:2-12

Some Pharisees came, and to test him they asked,

'Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?'

He answered them, 'What did Moses command you?'

They said, 'Moses allowed a man to write a certificate of dismissal and to divorce her.'

But Jesus said to them, 'Because of your hardness of heart he wrote this commandment for you.

But from the beginning of creation, "God made them male and female."

"For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." So they are no longer two, but one flesh.

Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.'

Then in the house the disciples asked him again about this matter. He said to them,

'Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her;

and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery.'

### TAKING THE GOSPEL HOME

My Mom, who is not a born-Catholic, had eight siblings and my Dad had four. Of those 14 people, 13 married – and all but one of them stayed married to the same person. Divorce was something movie stars did. In the next generation (my own), there have been divorces in the 11 of the 12 families.

A huge change has happened in our society around marriage and its permanence. As part of the society, Catholics, of course, are in the same boat as everyone else. One way the Catholic church has tried to respond to this change in attitude and practice has been the requirement that couples have some formal marriage preparation prior to their wedding. We all know that has not been very effective – and it does not at all address those who decide to forego a wedding in the first place, those who divorce and wish to re-marry, or same-sex couples who feel called to marriage.

The Catholic People of God clearly need to give fresh thought to our theology of sexuality and marriage. While upholding the Scriptural vision and ideal of marriage and its permanence, we also need to respond with pastoral compassion to the real people and the real situations that exist in our church. We are in a dilemma that will not likely be resolved by teachings or regulations. People of faith striving to make life-giving choices about marriage and in marriage will play a major role.... "Till death do us part!" It is often impossible, but it is the ideal that Jesus Christ gives us for Christian marriage. With God's grace and our effort and decision it might not be such an impossible ideal.

### TALKING WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS

- What does the Christian ideal of marriage tell us about God and God's relationship to us?
- What is the experience of marriage in your extended family?
- What was your initial (gut) reaction to the words of Jesus in today's gospel?
- As you talk about and reflect on the words of Jesus in the gospel, do you get any new insights? Do you see aspects of marriage and/or divorce that hadn't occurred to you before?

Fr. David Louch C.Ss.R

## Bishops of Canada apologize to the Indigenous Peoples

The Catholic Bishops of Canada, gathered in Plenary September 20th to 24th, took the opportunity to affirm and acknowledge to the Indigenous Peoples the suffering experienced in Canada's Indian Residential Schools. They acknowledged the grave abuses that were committed by some members of the Catholic community; physical, psychological, emotional, spiritual, cultural and sexual. They also sorrowfully acknowledged the historical and ongoing trauma and the legacy of suffering and challenges faced by Indigenous Peoples that continue to this day. The full Statement of Apology can be found on our Archdiocesan website at [www.rcsj.org](http://www.rcsj.org) and further information can be found on the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops website: [www.cccb.ca](http://www.cccb.ca).

## Feast of St. Francis of Assisi , October 4

St. Francis was born at Assisi in 1182. After a care free youth, he turned his back on inherited wealth and committed himself to God. Like many early saints, he lived a very simple life of poverty, and in so doing, gained a reputation of being the friend of animals. He established the rule of St Francis, which exists today as the Order of St. Francis, or the Franciscans. He died in 1226, aged 44



### A Family Prayer for Blessing of Your Pet:

Dearest God, Heavenly Father, maker of all living creatures, we ask you to bless [N.], who brings so much joy into our lives. By the power of Your love, may he/she continue to bring happiness. May we always praise You

### **BLESSING OF ANIMALS for a Parish or Community Group**

Almighty and everlasting God, Creator of all things and giver of all life, let your blessing be upon all these animals. May our relationships with them mirror your love, and our care for them be an example of your bountiful mercy. Grant the animals health and peace. Strengthen us to love and care for them as we strive to imitate the love of Jesus Christ our Lord and God's servant Francis. Amen.

God is the source and loving sustainer of all that lives—of species endangered as well as those newly discovered and named. Called as we are to wisely care for this diverse and imperiled web of life, let us again offer ourselves as advocates and active stewards, being reverent and mindful toward all creation.

## St. Francis & the Animals

St. Francis, the patron saint of animals, is also famous for his relationship with God's creation. St.

Francis saw animals, and all of nature, as his brothers and sisters since they all have the same Creator. Since he recognized God's reflection in all creation, he therefore loved all fellow creatures, no matter how small.

*The tradition of displaying nativities at Christmas can be traced back to St. Francis*



Lord,  
make me an instrument of Your peace.  
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;  
where there is injury, pardon;  
where there is doubt, faith;  
where there is despair, hope;  
where there is darkness, light;  
where there is sadness, joy.

O, Divine Master,  
grant that I may not so much seek to  
be consoled as to console;  
to be understood as to understand;  
to be loved as to love;  
For it is in giving that we receive;  
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;  
it is in dying that we are born again to eternal life.

St. Francis of Assisi

## CANADIAN CATHOLIC ORGANIZATION FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE FALL CAMPAIGN



### As we end the Season of Creation, let's pray for social and environmental justice

The Season of Creation, which lasts from September 1 to October 4, is a time for the global Christian family to unite in prayer and action for the Earth, our shared home. This year, in the face of continuing environmental destruction, Development and Peace's **People and Planet First** campaign is seeking to ensure that Canada and Canadian corporations are not complicit in any violations of the rights of the people and the planet while operating abroad.

To learn more about the campaign and to pray and act for the preservation of Creation, visit Development and Peace's new website. There, you will find a multitude of resources to help you live the Season of Creation to the fullest and to mobilize for putting people and planet first. Especially take a look at [our compilation of prayers](#) celebrating the Earth and invoking its protection! Visit <https://devp.org/en> for more.

## HAVE YOU HEARD?

### THE 2023 SYNOD OF BISHOPS BEGINS HERE AND IN ROME IN OCTOBER



TO LEARN MORE, GO TO:  
<https://www.synod.va/en.html>

The XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops with the theme: **for a synodal Church: communion, participation and mission** commences in both the Vatican and in our Archdiocese this October.

Pope Francis has announced that the next Synod of Bishops, scheduled for October 2023, will not only be celebrated in the Vatican but in each diocese of the five continents of the world. This synod will follow a two-year process divided into three phases: diocesan, continental and universal. The synod will culminate with the assembly in October 2023 in Rome. On October 10<sup>th</sup> 2021 in Rome, Pope Francis will open this two-year synodal journey with a time for encounter and reflection, followed by a moment of prayer and the celebration of the Eucharist.

The official opening of the synod in each diocese will take place on Sunday October 17<sup>th</sup> 2021. In the Archdiocese of St. John's, Archbishop Peter Hundt will begin our synodal journey by presiding at a special 11:00 am Mass at the Cathedral-Basilica of St. John the Baptist, convening the local portion of the journey, announcing the steps that we will take on our journey, and inviting the participation of all. You may wish to attend this Mass at the Basilica, or join the livestream of the Mass at [www.thebasilica.net](http://www.thebasilica.net).

More information will follow in parish bulletins next week, and in the Archdiocesan weekly catechetical resource, *Living Faith*.

SEASON OF CREATION  
SEPTEMBER 1 – OCTOBER 4



# SEASON OF CREATION

The [Season of Creation](#) will end on 4 October, the Feast Day of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of ecology beloved by many Christian denominations.

As Pope Francis wrote in *Laudato Si'*: “I believe that Saint Francis is the example par excellence of care for the vulnerable and of an integral ecology lived out joyfully and authentically... He was particularly concerned for God’s creation and for the poor and outcast. He loved, and was deeply loved for his joy, his generous self-giving, his openheartedness. He was a mystic and a pilgrim who lived in simplicity and in wonderful harmony with God, with others, with nature and with himself. He shows us just how inseparable the bond is between concern for nature, justice for the poor, commitment to society, and interior peace” (LS 10).

## A PRAYER FOR OUR EARTH FROM LAUDATO SI'

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.  
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. Amen.



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