

RITUAL FOR THE SEASON OF CREATION 2019

Theme: Web of Life



©Tree of Hope for a Broken World: Mary Southard

...the flames can be seen as a symbol of global warming that generates droughts, extreme storms, extinction of species, rising sea levels and other phenomena.

...at the bottom of the painting the roots descend into the ground while its leafy branches lean into a pastel blue-green stream of leaves that swirl upward into space.

The swirl gradually tapers into the shape of a hand that gently touches earth below the North Pole...the tree is *us*, you and me, and all of us together rooted in earth our common home.

This tree surrenders its leaves- its insights, energies and actions-into the sweeping current of the Spirit-Wind that gathers them all and shapes them into a gentle, healing touch that cools and blesses Earth...We are called to become one in compassion with the broken world and the Tree of Hope we find there.” James Neafsey April 2019 (in Mary Southard Art)

Background:

The Season of Creation is celebrated between September 1st and October 4th each year. October 4th is the feast of St Francis of Assisi. Each week there is a different theme named.

For many years now Catholics have been invited to participate in this ecumenical initiative. This year Cardinal Turkson has written to all parishes and asked for a commitment to this season. There is an urgent need for people to link this season with *Laudato Si*.

Yes, it is true, according to the latest United Nations report that over a million species are becoming extinct. Yes, it is true that every fourth breath every person takes in the whole world is dependent on the Amazon. Yes, it is true that every third breath that we take is dependent on the ocean. We are not separate from; we are all interconnected and interdependent.

In preparing a ritual for this Season I have considered the fact that we all live in different time zones, seasons and hemispheres. Please feel free to adapt and change what I am offering to suit your needs.

The ritual can be done alone or with others. Mary Southard's beautiful painting "Tree of Hope for a Broken World" is offered as a visual for contemplation and reflection. It is copyright and we have signed an agreement to use the image on this website and when you gather.

Carolyn McDade has given written permission to use the refrain of "This Tough Spun Web" in the ritual.

Preparation:

There is an invitation in the ritual to name species threatened by extinction in your local area and also in other countries different from yours. Some research before the ritual will be beneficial.

Suggested songs and YouTube

These are only suggestions and you may make your own song and YouTube choices.

Themes:

- September 1st Oceans;**
- September 8th Flora and Fauna;**
- September 15th Storms;**
- September 22nd Animals;**
- October 4th Francis of Assisi.**

Song Choices:

Consciousness Waking; Could it Be? In the name of all that is; Earth Community by Jan Novotka; available on Apple Music and Spotify.

Peace on Earth Songs of Universal Worship by Circle of Friends; All Shall Be Well in Blessings of the Universe by Earth Mama. She Who Hears the Cries of the World in She Carries Me by Jennifer Berezan. May all Beings by One Love Devotional Chant.

YouTube Choices:

CNN <https://youtu.be/ksGAiREBQTW>
CNN <https://youtu.be/HbEzyQ4Rapo>
DW News <https://youtu.be/9XA7CmhMEt4>
PBS <https://youtu.be/b8iNhxxPzkg>
CBC <https://youtu.be/AOY01YqCYCY>
BBC <https://youtu.be/nho73BtDQtE>
FRANCE 24 <https://youtu.be/ht7bikcflok>
5 NEWS <https://youtu.be/g3OrGpCfzVk>

Invitation:

Place your left hand out in front of you and imagine it holds the pain and loss of nearly a million species. During the Season of Creation, we will lament, mourn and grieve this tragedy. Place your right hand out in front of you and imagine that it holds active hope for a sustainable future. During The season of Creation, we will be invited to a spirit of ecological conversion and actively hope for solutions.

You are free to use Mary Southard's image in your ritual and if so add used with permission.

Pope Francis offered an Earth Prayer to the world at the time of publishing Laudato Si. I have adapted the prayer to include lament and hope for the millions of species affected by 'our way of life.'

Proposed Ritual adapted each week using song and YouTube.

Begin with 3 minutes contemplative silence.

Song or YouTube of your choice

Presider: Gather with the Great Spirit of God, present in the whole universe and in the smallest of creatures; and with whom all that exists is embraced in tenderness.

All: **We give thanks Great Spirit of God**

Presider: We have the power to protect life and beauty because we are already endowed with Love.

All: **For this gift we are grateful.**

(Each person is invited to name at least three near extinct species from your own country)

All: **We mourn, we lament, we grieve, and we hope.**

All: **This circle opening now with deepened faith, our lives to birth a living dawn; as love renewed turns in our common way, creating hope we carry on.** Carolyn McDade (used with permission)

Presider: Gifted with Peace we are inspired to live as sisters and brothers harming no one.
All: **Harming no one.**

Presider: Sacred Presence of God within draws us to take a stand for the abandoned and forgotten of this world.

All: **For this we are grateful.**

(Each person is invited to name at least three near extinct species from another country)

All: We mourn, we lament, we grieve, and we hope.

All: This circle opening now with deepened faith, our lives to birth a living dawn; as love renewed turns in our common way, creating hope we carry on. Carolyn McDade (used with permission)

Presider: We are inspired to protect the world and not prey on it, sow beauty not pollution and destruction.

All: **Respecting all that is as sacred.**

Presider: We accept vulnerability and limitation within ourselves and forgive the hearts of those who look only for gain at the expense of the poor and the earth.

All: **We give thanks for vulnerability and limitation.**

(Each person is invited to name at least three near extinct species from their local habitat)

All: **We mourn, we lament, we grieve, and we hope.**

All: This circle opening now with deepened faith, our lives to birth a living dawn; as love renewed turns in our common way, creating hope we carry on. Carolyn McDade (used with permission)

Presider: An infinite light awakens our desire to discover the worth of each thing, be filled with awe wonder and contemplation, to recognise that we are profoundly united with every creature.

All: **For this gift we give thanks.**

Presider: Great Spirit of God for being with us each day we give thanks.

All: **Great Spirit of God for being with us each day we give thanks.**

Presider: We are encouraged to persist in our struggle for justice, love and peace.

All: **We are encouraged to persist.**

Conclude with one minute of contemplative silence.