



A Mighty River
Amos 5: 24

Let Justice and Peace Flow

Season of Creation 2023

SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH OF CARONDELET

Prayer Journal 2023

INTRODUCTION

We invite you to use this prayer journal to explore the spiritual call to ecological conversion. Inside, you will find prayers, a short communal prayer service, inspirational quotes, a reflection and suggested questions for you to ponder. May this prayer journal help you go deeper, journey farther and respond boldly and creatively to the call to care for Creation.



“The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has stated that acting now with greater urgency means that we will not miss our chance to create a more sustainable and just world. We can and we must prevent the worst from happening. “Truly, much can be done” (ibid., 180), provided we come together like so many streams, brooks and rivulets, merging finally in a mighty river to irrigate the life of our marvellous planet and our human family for generations to come. So let us join hands and take bold steps to “Let Justice and Peace Flow” throughout our world.”

Pope Francis, Message for 2023 World Day of Prayer for Care of Creation

Too Good to Waste

も
っ
た
い
な
い

In the Japanese language, the word “mottainai” means “too good to waste.” Recently in Japan, there has been a resurgence of interest about the Japanese sense of recycling during the Edo Period from 1603-1868 and what it has to say to modern-day Japan and the whole world about the waste we produce and what we do with it.

According to the organization Japan for Sustainability (JFS), “Edo is the former name for what is now Tokyo. During most of the Edo Period, Japan was closed off to the world, suffered no invasion from the outside, and had virtually no exchange with other countries. For the most part, it was a peaceful period, with almost no war inside the country, and marked a remarkable time of development in the economy and culture of Japan.”

During the Edo Period, approximately 30 million people lived in this area that is now modern-day Tokyo. Although not wealthy, the people of the Edo Period made do with the limited goods and resources they had available. Everything was a valuable resource, and as it reached its end of life as one product, it was saved and either repaired to extend its life or turned into another product. Nothing went to waste.

Today, Japan depends on imports for most of its energy, food and timber. It also has concerns about its current burden on landfills, pollution of waterways with litter and the dangerous toxic chemical emissions from incinerators.

JFS tells us, “Japan in the Edo Period could serve as one model of a sustainable society. The basis of its sustained economy and cultural development was not mass production and mass consumption for convenience, as we see in modern society, but rather the full utilization of limited resources. It is certain that many things have changed today, but perhaps there are some hints for a sustainable future if we look at the past.”

In our consumer driven society, new is preferred and planned obsolescence is accepted. We act as if there are not real limits on the resources or the impact that consuming those resources is having on the planet. In these times, the tinker and the repair workers have been phased out, whereas in the Edo Period, there were many specialized traders and craftsmen. When there was a resource to be reused, a new group of workers formed to do something with that resource.

READ MORE:

[“Japan's Sustainable Society in the Edo Period \(1603-1867\)”](#),
Japan for Sustainability





For an End to Waste

Let us pray for an end to the
Waste and desecration of God's creation
For access to the fruits of creation
To be shared equally among all people
And for communities and nations to find sustenance
In the fruits of the earth and the water God has given us.
Almighty God, you created the world and gave it
Into our care so that, in obedience to you,
We might serve all people:
Inspire us to use the riches of creation with wisdom,
and to ensure that their blessings are shared by all;
That, trusting in your bounty, all people may be
Empowered to seek freedom from poverty, famine, and oppression.

from the [Jesuit Resources through Xavier University](#)



COMMUNAL PRAYER SERVICE

Video

[Seven Billion Dreams. One Planet. Consume with Care.](#) from UN Environment Programme (YouTube)



Reading from *Laudato Si'*

Many things have to change course, but it is we human beings above all who need to change. We lack an awareness of our common origin, of our mutual belonging, and of a future to be shared with everyone. This basic awareness would enable the development of new convictions, attitudes and forms of life. A great cultural, spiritual and educational challenge stands before us, and it will demand that we set out on the long path of renewal (202).

Pause for silent reflection

Prayer

Adapted from the Lutheran World Federation

We praise you God, for the Earth that sustains life. Through the planetary cycles of days and seasons, renewal and growth, you open your hand to give all creatures our food in the proper time. In your Wisdom you gave a Sabbath for the land to rest. But these days our living pushes the planet beyond its limits.

One: God of mercy and justice, you tell us the land must rest, free from the burden of production.

Many: We recognize our demand that the earth produce beyond its limits, and our bondage to desire more.

One: You assure us that we can be filled from the yield of the land.

Many: Help us believe that we can thrive within the Earth's limits.

One: You affirm that our security is found in enough.

Many: We confess our lack of courage to resist the myth of endless growth.

One: You call us to fairness and justice.

Many: We seek ecological conversion, loving you with our whole heart and strength and mind, and our human and non-human neighbors as ourselves.

One: Turn us from fear and mistrust,

Many: and free us to imagine a life reconciled to the Earth and all creatures, through the Good News of Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray.

One: The Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God (Romans 8:26–27).

Many: Amen.

Sharing

Pope Francis calls us to set out on the long path of renewal, a new awareness of our global citizenship shared with human and non-human neighbors. Our planet, a gift from God, is “too good to waste.” During the Season of Creation, we join with those of different faiths to seek the ecological conversion of heart required to live sustainably. What changes is *Laudato Si'* calling you to make?

Closing Prayer

God of Creation, we pray that we may become more attentive to the Cry of the Earth. Renew in us a love for creation. Help us to rediscover our vocation as caretakers of our common home and one another. Amen.

Closing Song

[Chasing Coral](#) | “Tell Me How Long” ft. Kristen Bell
Netflix (YouTube)





“I credit my grandmother for teaching me to love and respect food. She taught me how to waste nothing, to make sure I used every bit of the chicken and boil the bones till no flavor could be extracted from them”

Marcus Samuelsson



Reflection question

How are we called to live our vocation as protectors of God’s handiwork?



“Listening to these anguished cries [of the Earth and of the Poor], we must repent and modify our lifestyles and destructive systems. From its very first pages, the Gospel calls us to “repent, because the kingdom of heaven has come near” (Mt 3:2); it summons us to a new relationship with God, and also entails a different relationship with others and with creation. The present state of decay of our common home merits the same attention as other global challenges such as grave health crises and wars. “Living our vocation to be protectors of God’s handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience” (Laudato Si’, 217).”

Pope Francis, 2022 message for World Day of Care for Creation