



ROMAN CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF SUVA

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SEASON OF CREATION GUIDE

SEP 1ST - OCT 4TH 2020

JUBILLE FOR EARTH

The season of creation is the time of the year when the world’s 2.2 billion Christians are invited to pray and care for creation. It runs annually from September 1st through October 4th, the feast of Saint Francis of Assisi, the patron saint for Ecology.

The Season of Creation unites the global Christian family around one shared purpose, to protect our Common Home. It also provides flexibility in celebrating prayer services and engaging in a variety of actions to care for creation.

Pope Francis reminded us that the season of creation is a time:

- To renew our relationship with our creator and all creation through repenting, repairing, and rejoicing together.
- We join our sisters and brothers in ecumenical family in prayer and action for our common home.
- Amid crises such as Covid-19 that have shaken the world, we’re awakened to the urgent need to heal relationship with creation and each other.
- Of restoration and hope, a jubilee for our Earth, that requires radically new ways of living with creation.

The Archdiocese of Suva joins the Ecumenical Movement to celebrate Season of Creation with the 2020 theme “Jubilee for Earth.” SeasonofCreation.org. We have prepared a guide for celebrating the Season of Creation in parishes, small Christian communities and schools.

Our Common home needs rest so to help her recover from the damages we humans have done to her. For this very reason the Archdiocese of Suva is fully supporting the Ecumenical Movement to celebrate Season of Creation with the 2020 theme “Jubilee for Earth.”

SeasonofCreation.org.

Date	Activity
<p>September 1: Creation Day/World Day of Prayer for Creation Creation Day, also called the World Day of Prayer for Creation, opens the Season each year. Pope Francis, Patriarch Bartholomew, the World Council of Churches, and many other leaders have called the faithful to celebrate this day. SeasonofCreation.org.</p>	<p>Activity: Ecumenical & Interfaith prayer service organized at Sacred Heart Cathedral, Suva, 7pm. Advisable if parishes can also organize their own ecumenical services. Guide of the service added. seasonofCreation.org.</p>
<p>September 4: First Friday Mass “Laudato si” Mass & lesson plan for Primary and Secondary Catholic Education</p>	<p>Activity: This activity is organized at school level. A guide has been prepared for schools to celebrate season of creation.</p>
<p>September 12: Youth Program.</p>	<p>Activity: Organize Youth Pilgrimage in the three regions. A guide has been prepared for youths for this program.</p>

Date	Activity
<p>September 21: International Coastal Cleanup Day</p> <p>For over 30 years, communities have come together to remove rubbish from coastlines and waterways including ponds, lakes, and rivers. Together, these volunteers remove and catalogue mountains of litter every year. The Archdiocese of Suva is inviting our church communities to collaborate with the global communities in the cleaning up campaign. To learn more, please visit the Ocean Conservancy</p>	<p>Activity 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coastal and Riverside Cleaning up to be organized in Parishes on the 19th of September, which is a Saturday to allow many people to participate in it. • Tree and mangrove plantings in parishes • Open the cleaning up campaign with the Prayer of the Season of Creation 2020. (Attached) SeasonofCreation.org. <p>Activity 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 19th Sept- Evening sessions on the awareness on the importance of creation with the communities of Dawasamu and Votua, where mineral extraction works are taking places at the expense of creation/environment. • 20th Sep- Ecumenical prayer services with Ocean/ Creation at the beach front in Dawasamu and Votua using the guide of the service added. SeasonofCreation.org.
<p>September 27: River Sunday/ Celebrating the Gift of Water</p>	<p>Activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parishes to celebrate Mass with the Sunday theme; “The Gift of Water in Creation”

Ecological Way of the Cross.

Parishes to celebrate the way of the cross at every Friday at 6pm during the season of creation Month, 4th; 11th; 18th; 25th, using the Environmental Station of the Cross guide by Cindy Krum added below.

Organize small Christian Communities Bible Sharing on the theme ‘Season of Creation.’

Daily reflections during the Month of Creation

Date	Activity
1st- 5th September	The importance of Creation (Interconnectedness; Story of Creation; Theory of balance; Biodiversity)
7th- 11th September	The Integral Ecological Crisis (The causes of the loss interconnectedness; The causes of loss in Biodiversity;)
14th – 19th September	Solution (Ecological Conversion; Indigenous wisdom)
21st – 26th September	The gift of water to creation.
28th Sept- 3rd Oct	The life and gift of St Francis to Creation.
<p>October 4th <i>Closing of Season of Creation. St Francis of Assisi feast day.</i></p> <p>Many traditions view St. Francis as an inspiration and guide for those who protect creation. October 4 is his feast day and the last day in the Season of Creation.</p>	Mass celebrations organized in parishes for the closing of the ‘Season of Creation.’

Ecumenical Prayer Service for the Season of Creation: Jubilee for the Earth

Opening prayer

Begin your service by lighting a candle, and setting the space with other natural items that represent the agriculture or wilderness of your local ecology, and open by praying:

We gather in the name of the Triune God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer of the Earth and all its creatures!

Praise be to the Holy Trinity! God is sound and life, Creator of the Universe, Source of all life, whom the angels sing; wondrous Light of all mysteries known or unknown to humankind, and life that lives in all. (Hildegard of Bingen, 13th Century)

Opening sentences

One: We gather in the image of the Creator

Many: who is a community of love.

One: We gather in the name of the Redeemer

Many: who reconciles all of creation.

One: We gather in the presence of the Life Giver

Many: who inspires new life and renews it.

Song

Sing a hymn that praises God as Creator. If possible, find a hymn that is shared by all participating traditions.

Psalm 104

One: Bless the Lord, O my Soul!

Many: All creatures look to you to give them their food at the proper time. When you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things.

One: You have made the moon to mark the seasons; the sun knows it is time for setting. You make darkness, and it is night, when all the animals of the forest come creeping out.

Many: All creatures look to you to give them their food at the proper time. When you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things.

One: The lions roar for their prey and seek their food from God; The sun rises, and they steal away; they return and lie down in their dens. Then people go out to their work, to their labor until evening.

Many: All creatures look to you to give them their food at the proper time. When you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things.

One: From your lofty abode you water the mountains; You make springs gush forth in the valleys; they flow between the hills, giving drink to every wild animal;

Many: All creatures look to you to give them their food at the proper time. When you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things.

One: You cause the grass to grow for the cattle, and plants for people to use, to bring forth food from the Earth, wine to gladden the human heart, oil to make the face shine, and bread to strengthen the human heart.

Many: All creatures look to you to give them their food at the proper time. When you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things.

One: The Earth is satisfied with the fruit of your work.

Many: All creatures look to you to give them their food at the proper time. When you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things.

All: May the glory of the Lord endure forever!

Confession (based on Leviticus 25.1-25)

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. Our demand for growth, and an endless cycle of production and consumption are exhausting our world. The forests are leached, the topsoil erodes, the fields fail, the deserts advance, the seas acidify, the storms intensify. Humans and animals are forced to flee in search of security. We have not allowed the land to observe a Sabbath, and the Earth is struggling to renew. And so we confess. God of mercy and justice,

One: You tell us the land must rest, free from the burden of production.

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

One: You call us to pause from sowing, pruning, and reaping in ways that destroy the soil.

Many: We confess our vicious consumption of food and energy.

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

Many: We confess our lack of trust 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 tell us that the land must not be sold permanently, because the land is Yours, and everything in it.

Many: We confess to thinking of creation as given, instead of a gift.

One: You call us to leave enough fruit on the vine and in the fields to feed our neighbours, animals, and replenish the Earth.

Many: We confess our failure to share what we receive from the Earth.

One: You call us to fairness and justice.

Many: We confess our lack of faith, not loving you with our whole heart and strength and mind, or our human and non-human neighbours 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.

(adapted from the Lutheran World Federation)

Reading of Scripture followed by preaching or participatory reflections

See the thematic readings offered below in this resource, or locally designate a text that reflects the particular context of your prayer service. Suggested scriptures are on the Season of Creation website.

Song

Sing a hymn that praises the biodiversity of creation. If possible, find a hymn that is shared by all participating traditions.

Profession of faith

One: We belong to the Creator in whose image we are all made.

Many: In God we are breathing, in God we are living, in God we share the life of all creation.

One: We belong to Jesus Christ, the true icon of God and of humanity.

Many: In him God is breathing, in him God is living, through him we are reconciled.

One: We belong to the Holy Spirit, who gives us new life and strengthens our faith.

Many: In the Spirit love is breathing, in the Spirit truth is living, the breath of God always moves us.

One: We belong to the Holy Trinity, who is one in all and Three-in-One.

Many: In God we are all made, in Christ we are all saved, in the Spirit we are all united.

(Per Harling)

Offering and offertory prayer

You may want to have an offering, perhaps to collect money for a particular project or ministry that contributes to ecological restoration, or an aspect of climate justice, or you may want to showcase local plants, animals from your area as a way to raise awareness of the rest your local habitats need.

Prayers

One: We pray in thanksgiving for Mother Earth in whom all life is rooted, Brother Sun whose energy radiates life, Sister Water who nurtures and revives us, and co-creatures with whom we live, and for whom we are called to till and keep this garden.

Many: enlighten our hearts and remain with your world.

One: All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe in the smallest of your creatures. You embrace with 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. Creative Spirit,

Many: enlighten our hearts and remain with your world.

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. Creative Spirit,

Many: enlighten our hearts and remain with your world.

One: 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. Creative Spirit,

Many: enlighten our hearts and remain with your world.

One: In the wake of the COVID-19 global pandemic, hear our cries of compassion, and heal our world and all creatures. Inspire our hearts with a holy imagination, to rise, freed from the demands to produce and consume to imagine a just, sustainable way of living, where all have enough, and all may be restored.

Many: enlighten our hearts and remain with your world.

One: During this Season of Creation, grant us courage to observe a Sabbath for our planet. Strengthen us with the faith to trust in your providence. Inspire us with the creativity to share what we have been given. Teach us to be satisfied with enough. And as we proclaim a Jubilee for the Earth, send Your Holy Spirit to renew the face of the ground.

Many: enlighten our hearts and remain with your world.

One: We thank you for being with us each day. Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love and peace. Creative Spirit,

Many: enlighten our hearts and remain with your world. Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy Name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on Earth as it is in Heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Benediction

May God who established the dance of creation,

Who marveled at the lilies of the field,

Who transforms chaos to order, Lead us to transform our lives and the Church

To reflect God's glory in creation.

(CTBI Eco-Congregation Programme)

Season of Creation 2020 Prayer

Creator of Life,

At Your word, the Earth brought forth plants yielding seed and trees of every kind bearing fruit. The rivers, mountains, minerals, seas and forests sustained life. The eyes of all looked to You to satisfy the needs of every living thing. And throughout time the Earth has sustained life. Through the planetary cycles of days and seasons, renewal and growth, you open your hand to give creatures our food in the proper time.

In your Wisdom, you granted a Sabbath; a blessed time to rest in gratitude for all that you have given; a time to liberate ourselves from vicious consumption; a time to allow the land and all creatures to rest from the burden of production. But these days our living pushes the planet beyond its limits. Our demands for growth, and our never-ending cycle of production and consumption are exhausting our world. The forests are leached, the topsoil erodes, the fields fail, the deserts advance, the seas acidify, the storms intensify. We have not allowed the land to observe her Sabbath, and the Earth is struggling to be renewed.

During this Season of Creation, we ask you to grant us courage to observe a Sabbath

for our planet. Strengthen us with the faith to trust in your providence. Inspire us with the creativity to share what we have been given. Teach us to be satisfied with enough. And as we proclaim a Jubilee for the Earth, send Your Holy Spirit to renew the face of creation.

In the name of the One who came to proclaim good news to all creation, Jesus
Amen.

**COVER LETTER FOR
An Environmental Stations of the Cross**

© Holly Lyman Antolini

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I am delighted to offer this liturgy, planned for the people of St. Brendan-the-Navigator Episcopal Church in 1993 and amended for use again in 1994, for general use through the Earth Ministry website. This service is designed to be held outdoors, either on the Fifth Sunday in Lent, or on Passion Sunday itself, but could be done any time in Lent or Holy Week. In Maine, we have consistently held it in snowy and muddy conditions, so although the clergy have always vested formally in cassock, surplice, and red stole, and acolytes and crucifer also have vested, snow boots and heavy coats have been the order of the day for everyone! Weather conditions here in the Northeast have also necessitated doing much of the preparation for the service indoors and only working at the actual outdoor Stations briefly before the service begins. In other, more temperate climates, the whole preparation could potentially be done ON SITE, enabling a much greater sensitivity to the suggestiveness of the specific environment of each site.

You will note that I have simplified the service by extracting only the biblically based Stations from the more elaborate version of the Stations of the Cross, which contains several extra-biblical sites. This permits time to expand each Station more fully. I have relied heavily on the inspiration and work of others in shaping each Station, and especially upon the Stations of the Cross services designed by Henri Nouwen and Matthew Fox (as mentioned in the text).

Following Fox's leading, we originally celebrated this service only after teams of congregation members had spent a couple of hours together in small groups, each taking responsibility for a particular Station. Working with the materials contained in this service design, they read the materials aloud, meditated silently for several minutes as a group, shared gut-level responses to the materials to each other, and then buckled down to amend/supplement/adapt the materials according to their own inspiration. Some groups made substantive changes and expansions; others simply choreographed their use of the existing materials. At the conclusion of the two-hour "station creation" time, we gathered all our materials and went to the outdoor venue (a long dirt road winding through spruce and fir woods to end with the final Station on the rocky shore of Penobscot Bay, Maine), allowing a brief time for teams to orient themselves to their specific sites along the road before gathering at the head of the road for the service to begin. Although we could have gathered back at the church following the service for hot cider, we found that people were so deeply affected by the mood of the service that cheery fellowship did not seem the order of the day, and instead we simply retrieved our materials and departed in silence at the service's end.

If you choose not to take the time for your teams actually to construct their own Stations, you CAN use this service simply "as is," merely assigning the teams to each Station. I've included a paragraph of introduction and directions on the succeeding page, which we used on such an occasion. You will quickly note that some of the stations have allusions that are so topical as to be out-of-date, or not applicable to YOUR specific environment.

Since an "Environmental Stations of the Cross" should be as evocative as possible of the issues in your particular locale, you will probably need to adapt the particulars as you see fit. Although I ask you not to

publish this service anywhere without my permission, I encourage you to reproduce it for use in worship as you see fit.

May you find this as powerful an experience of worship as we have.

Holly Lyman Antolini

INTRODUCTION

OFFICIANT:

Today we gather to participate in a service of the Stations of the Cross. This type of service dates back as far as the 4th century, when early pilgrims to the Holy Land used to commemorate the Crucifixion of our Savior Jesus Christ in Holy Week by processing to pray at the actual spots where, as best they knew, Jesus' Passion took place. In so doing, they brought the Passion of Jesus to life in their own lives and times. We have much to celebrate in our lives and faith, but we also have much to grieve. The commemoration of Christ's Passion is our opportunity each year to take stock of the many ways we have broken covenant with God and have acted selfishly, seeking to secure our own power and material advantage at the expense of the well-being, not just of our fellow humans, but of the whole of creation. It is our opportunity to own that we have neglected our responsibility as stewards, lovers, and nurturers of God's creation. It is our opportunity to admit, as Harvey Cox tells us, that as the corporate, international elite whose false ideology is one of growth, comfort, and limitless consumption for everyone, we, the 5 billion of the world's most advantaged people bear a unique responsibility for the alarming crisis of the global environment. As Matthew Fox says, in the suffering of the Earth and its creatures, we have crucified Divinity in our midst.

Today we will retrace Christ's steps, by re-enacting the biblical record of his Passion in nine "Stations." Each station will commemorate a biblically attested stage in Christ's journey to crucifixion. But we will also bring the frame of Christ's crucifixion into our own time and set it more inclusively, so that each station will also commemorate a significant breaking of our covenant with the entire family of God's creation, human and non-human, animate and inanimate. Each station is outdoors, to enable the trees, the plants, the rocks, the soil, the sea, and the wind to help teach us of these broken relationships. Each station will offer prayer for the healing of the dreadful rifts in our covenant with God and all that God has made.

In praying each station, it is our hope that we may find the courage and the power to become agents of healing throughout our world, as the prophet Isaiah promised:

"They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastation of many generations... for as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations."

(Isaiah 61: 4, 11)

ENVIRONMENTAL STATIONS OF THE CROSS

OFFICIANT:

OPENING DEVOTION (AT THE HEAD OF THE ROAD)

In the name of the One, Undivided Trinity, Creator, Redeemer & Sustainer. AMEN.

In the words our Savior taught us, we now pray:

Our God in heaven, hallowed be your Name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

OFFICIANT:

MEDITATION - ADAPTED FROM HENRI NOUWEN'S STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Today, we walk with Jesus. Jesus walked, and he still does. Jesus walks from village to village, and, as he walks, he meets the poor. He meets the beggars, the blind, the sick, the mourners, and those who have lost hope. He remains very close to the earth. He feels the heat of the day and the cold of the night. He knows about the grass that withers and fades, the rocky soil, the thorny bushes, the barren trees, the flowers in the fields, and the rich harvest. He knows because he walks so much and feels in his own body the harshness and the vitality of the seasons. He feels the thinning of the ozone layer, the stripping of the soil structure, the mourning of the trees in acid rain, the wailing of the porpoises and dolphins, the condors and frogs, the tigers and rhinoceroses as their habitats dwindle, their compatriots die, and they are left alone. He listens attentively to those with whom he walks, and he speaks to them with the authority of a true companion on the road. He is stern, yet very merciful, direct yet very gentle, demanding yet very forgiving, probing yet very respectful. He cuts deep, but with the hands of a healer; he separates, but only to let grow; he repudiates, but always to make affirmation possible. Jesus is deeply connected to the earth on which he walks. He observes the forces of nature; he learns from them, teaches about them, and reveals that the God of Creation is the Same God who sent him to announce good news to the poor, sight to the blind, and freedom to the prisoners.

Opening Hymn

Father in my life I see...
Jesus in my life I see...
Spirit in my life I see...

CHANT THE KYRIE

Kyrie eleison (3 times), Christe eleison (3 times), Kyrie eleison (3 times).

Follow the processional cross to the first station.

FIRST STATION - JESUS IS CONDEMNED TO DEATH.

OFFICIANT:

As soon as it was morning, the chief priests, with the elders and scribes, and the whole council, held a consultation; and they bound Jesus and led him away and delivered him to Pilate. And they all condemned him and said, "He deserves to die." When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgement seat at a place called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha. Then he handed Jesus over to them to be crucified.

A moment of silence.

The theme for this station is Oppression

Oppression means to press down; to weigh heavily on the spirit and the senses; to feel mentally, physically, emotionally weighed down, bound, constricted.

Examples of oppressions are: racism, anti-semitism, classism, homophobia, ageism, sexism, ableism, sizeism, speciesism.

When we prepare to repent of our sins of oppression, we ask ourselves: What diminishing lies have each of us been taught about others?

In the 20th century, we can name an appalling litany of oppressed peoples. Just to begin: Jews in Nazi Germany; Armenians and Azerbaijanis' relations with each other; people of color in the U.S.; Tibetans in China; Mayan Indians in Central America; Ethnic cleansing in Bosnia; Palestinian peoples denied rights in the Occupied Territories of Israel; Kurds in Iraq; Cambodians in Vietnam; Catholics vs Protestants in Northern Ireland; Tyrannical regimes' treatment of their populations the world over.

LET US PRAY.

Almighty God, whose most dear Child did not enter joy before suffering pain, and did not enter glory before being crucified: Mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may with your people everywhere who suffer oppression and are deprived of freedom, find it none other than the way of life and peace; through Jesus Christ your Child, our God. Amen

Continue to next station, chanting the KYRIE.

SECOND STATION - JESUS TAKES UP HIS CROSS.

OFFICIANT:

Jesus went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called the place of a skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha. Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. Like a lamb he was led to the slaughter; and like a sheep that before its shearers is mute, so he opened not his mouth. Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing.

A moment of silence.

The theme for the next station is: Mistreatment & Extinction of Animals

"We are in a syndrome of accelerated extinction. This extinction event is like none previously recorded. It is the first one generated by a species' arrogance." (Timothy C. Weiskel, director of the Harvard Seminar on Environmental Values at Harvard Divinity School and a research fellow at the Center for Science and International Affairs at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government.)

"And what purpose is worth the death of a species?" (Theodore Roszak, *The Voice of the Earth*.)

Smithsonian Institution magazine reported last year that frog species the world over were disappearing at a vastly accelerated rate, and no one can explain why, what's causing them to die out so rapidly.

All around the globe, there is massive habitat destruction, the main culprit in the loss of species. In Southern California, we desperately hold on to the coastal grassland habitat of the Pacific Pocket Mouse and the Gnat Catcher bird, in the face of condominium development. Here on Deer Isle, we face the effects of over-fishing, the dread possibility that we will so deplete the populations of scallops, cod, and flounder that they will not be able to replace themselves.

LET US PRAY.

Almighty God, whose beloved Child willingly endured the agony and shame of the cross for our redemption: Give us courage to extend our compassion and commitment to suffering and dying animals,

and to take up our cross and follow the Christ; who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

Continue to next station, chanting the KYRIE.

THIRD STATION - THE CROSS IS LAID ON SIMON OF CYRENE.

OFFICIANT:

As they led Jesus away, they came upon a man of Cyrene, Simon by name, who was coming in from the country, and laid on him the cross to carry It behind Jesus. "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

A moment of silence.

The theme for the next station is: Disconnection from the Web of Creation

"Once again, I learn the central ecological truth: that all things big and small are members one of another in the biospheric web. Now that I know, I feel Implicated in a great wrong... ambushed by distressing news... Involved in sins of self-indulgence." Theodore Roszak, The Voice of Earth.

"Whatever befalls the earth befalls the children of the earth. Man did not weave the web of life. He is merely a strand in it
Whatever he does to the web,
He does to himself."
Chief Seattle, 1854

LET US PRAY.

Heavenly God, whose blessed Child came not to be served but to serve: Bless all who, following in his steps, give themselves to the service of others; that with wisdom, patience, and courage, they may minister in his Name to the suffering, the friendless, and the needy, whether animal, plant, or mineral, for we are all bound together In the great web of life, for the love of the One who gave up life itself for us, your Child our Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Continue to next station, chanting the KYRIE.

FOURTH STATION - JESUS MEETS THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM.

OFFICIANT:

There followed after Jesus a great multitude of the people, and among them were women who bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning to them said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children."

A moment of silence.

The theme for the next station is: Overpopulation & the Suffering of Children

Where do we see the effects of overpopulation, the dread specter of children suffering from war, starvation, poverty? Bosnia; Somalia, the Sudan, Mozambique; Belfast, Ireland; Bangladeshi children; urban street children In India and El Salvador, Thailand, Rumania, Hong Kong, San Salvador, Lima, Rio De

Janeiro, St. Louis, New York, and on and on and on.

"Children are the fastest growing segment of the U.S. population living below the poverty line... 143 million poor children in U.S.; 5 million go hungry; 8 million lack health care of any kind." "The slow, chronic violence of poverty takes an American child's life every 53 minutes; guns kill a child every 3 hours and 30 children (a classroom full) every 2 days."

Marion Wright Edelman, the Children's Defense Fund

LET US PRAY:

Teach your faithful people, O God, to mourn the sins of which it is guilty, and to repent and forsake them; that, by your pardoning grace, the results of our iniquities may not be visited upon our children and our children's children; through Jesus Christ our God. Amen.

Continue to next station, chanting the KYRIE.

FIFTH STATION - JESUS IS STRIPPED OF HIS GARMENTS.

OFFICIANT:

When they came to a place called Golgotha (which means the place of a skull), they offered him wine to drink, mingled with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. And they divided his garments among them by casting lots. This was to fulfill the scripture which says, "They divided my garments among them; they cast lots for my clothing."

A moment of silence.

The theme for the next station is: Depletion of Natural Resources/Mishandling of Waste

Where do we witness the devastating depletion of our resources? Strip mining; deforestation; soil depletion through use of chemical fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides and defoliants; overfishing and overgrazing. Around us are piled literal mountains of garbage in urban areas: they are testimony to the growing crisis in waste management. So are our rural expenses for trucking garbage to "transfer stations," as our dumps become environmental liabilities.

The economic juggernaut roars on: wasteful commercial packaging of products in order to make them attractive to consumers; planned obsolescence of machinery in order to induce us to buy more and more and more.

Leaking 50-year-old nuclear waste storage tanks in northern Washington State and rusting tanks at the Love Canal are only two particularly frightening manifestations of the problem. Even here on the coast of Maine, smaller amounts of contaminants leach into the water table from ordinary dumps, mixing into we know not what lethal chemical partnership.

We continue to overconsume fossil fuels and handle them carelessly despite knowing that they are limited in quantity. Our lack of stewardship is dramatized in oil spills like the burning Bosphorus Strait and the continuing disaster on the coast of Alaska.

We willfully ignore the Four Laws of Nature: 1) There is no waste in nature. 2) Everything is connected. 3) There is no such place as "away" (as in, "just throw it away!"). And 4) The Earth has limits.

LET US PRAY:

O God, whose blessed Child our Savior, body whipped and face spit upon, still gave up his clothes and finally his life for us: Give us grace to realize how we appropriate your gifts without prudence and discard them without care, piling up want and sufferings for the future time. Grant us instead to accept less in the present time, confident of the glory that shall be revealed; through Jesus Christ our God. Amen

Continue to next station, chanting the KYRIE.

SIXTH STATION - JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS.

OFFICIANT:

When they came to the place which is called the Skull, there they crucified him; and with him they crucified two criminals, one on the right, the other on the left, and Jesus between them. And the scripture was fulfilled which says, "He was numbered with the transgressors."

A moment of silence.

The theme of the next station is: War & Nuclear War

A landscape of horror unfolds around the globe: Iraqi oil fields burning; Bosnian cities starving; feuding warlords in Liberia; Somalia; the Sudan; Ethiopia; Sri Lanka; ethnic conflict in Armenia, Georgia & Azerbaijan; civil war in Mexico, Israel, Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Peru, all across Africa.

Closer to home, a different sort of conflict, nonetheless destructive: drug wars across international boundaries, infesting our cities' streets, corrupting our children and our Impoverished families with crack.

Then, lurking in the back of our consciousness always, is the threat of nuclear proliferation: who's next, North Korea? Iraq? And the big question mark: the fate of Russia and Eastern Europe and Its massive nuclear arsenal in this time of transition and uncertainty and Instability. Not to mention the "economics" of war: saving Kuwait's oil fields and letting "ethnic cleansing" proliferate in the mountains of Bosnia and Croatia, letting tyranny decimate folk in Tibet. And our own unwillingness to face the closing of American bases and the deceleration of American weapons manufacture, for fear of the economic consequences to our own local folk. And still we go on, even in this "new world order," with the testing of nuclear weapons and the generation of nuclear waste which must be stored, we know not how (and definitely not in OUR backyard!).

"As long as you do it to the least of these my children, you do it to me," said Jesus in Matt. 25:40. And Jeremiah decried "crying 'Peace, peace!' when there IS no peace!"

LET US PRAY:

Jesus Christ, you stretched out your arms of love on the hard wood of the cross that everyone might come within the reach of your saving embrace: So clothe us in your Spirit that we, reaching forth our hands in love, may bring those who do not know you to the knowledge and love of you; for the honor of your Name. Amen.

Continue to the next station, chanting the KYRIE.

SEVENTH STATION - JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS.

OFFICIANT:

Jesus on the cross said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." When Jesus saw his mother, and the disciple whom he loved standing near, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold your son!" Then he said to the disciple, "Behold your mother!" And when Jesus had received the vinegar, he said, "It is finished!" And then, crying with a loud voice, he said, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." And he bowed his head, and handed over his spirit.

A moment of silence.

The theme for the next station is:

Desecration of the four Elements: Earth, Air, Fire & Water

Pass around a globe with each prayer response.

In our hands is the fate of Mother Earth's purity and welfare. How do we pollute you, Mother Earth? Let us count the ways:

The desertification of farm land.

Response: Lord, have mercy!

Acid rain, oil spills, chemical dumps.

Response: Christ, have mercy!

Depletion of the ozone layer.

Response: Lord, have mercy!

Radioactive pollution: Chernobyl, Three Mile Island.

Response: Christ, have mercy!

Pollution of lakes, rivers, oceans, with our own rivers in Maine rife with dioxin from the paper mills.

Response: Lord, have mercy!

"The earth dries up and withers, the world languishes and withers; the heavens languish together with the earth. The earth lies polluted under its inhabitants; for they have transgressed laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant." Isaiah 24:4-5

LET US PRAY:

O God, who for our redemption gave your only-begotten Child to the death of the cross, and by that Child's glorious resurrection delivered us from the power of our enemy: Grant us so to die daily to the destruction of our air, water, fire and earth, that we may evermore live in the purity of creation and the joy of resurrection; through Jesus Christ who lives and reigns now and forever. Amen.

Continue to the next station, chanting the KYRIE.

EIGHTH STATION - THE BODY OF JESUS IS PLACED IN THE ARMS OF HIS MOTHER.

OFFICIANT:

All you who pass by, behold and see if there is any sorrow like my sorrow. My eyes are spent with weeping; my soul is in tumult; my heart is poured out in grief because of the downfall of my people. "Do not call me Naomi (which means Pleasant), call me Mara (which means Bitter); for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me."

A moment of silence.

The theme of the next station is: Abuse

Abuse proliferates in all aspects of human relationship, physical, emotional, sexual, ritual. It occurs in the most intimate of relations, and in the most Institutional. It takes place in all cultures around the world. It involves the objectification and exploitation of women, of children, of men, of animals.

Those who have endured abuse, even if they escape the abuse itself, live in a prison of shame: "Women in recovery from abuse led us in... prayer, announcing that a force that tried to separate us from Creation and our deepest selves" and that temporarily committed soul-murder would no longer hold sway over them. Mention was made of abuse that had "harvested shame." Amidst a chant about sadness and crying and screaming came the pledge to "throw down the shackles of shame." Some of the leaders had their faces painted for a skit depicting a mother abusing her child with questions like, "Why can't you be just like everybody else?" and the child answering, "Just love me."

Matthew Fox, Creation Spirituality.

The child Cosette, placed in the care of abusive innkeepers in Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*, fed on bread crusts and made to sweep floors, sings in the musical version of the story:

There is a castle on a cloud, I like to go there in my sleep; aren't any floors for me to sweep, not in my castle on a cloud. There is a room that's full of toys; there are a hundred boys and girls; nobody shouts or talks too loud, not in my castle on a cloud.

There is a lady all in white, holds me and sings a lullaby; she's nice to see and she's soft to touch; she says, "Cosette, I love you very much!" I know a place where no one's lost; I know a place where no one cries; crying at all is not allowed, not in my castle on a cloud.

Cosette's Song from Les Misérables.

LET US PRAY:

Beloved Jesus Christ, by your death you took away the sting of death: Grant to us your servants so to follow in faith where you have led the way, that we may take away the sting of the living death of abuse in all those who suffer such dire humiliation, that they and we may live as your children and your likeness, for your tender mercies' sake. Amen.

Continue on to next station, chanting the KYRIE.

NINTH STATION - JESUS IS LAID IN THE TOMB.

OFFICIANT:

When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who also was a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. And Joseph took the body, and wrapped it in a clean linen shroud, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock; and he rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb.

A moment of silence.

The theme of the next station is: Death of the Earth

At the end of the road, on the shore rocks, an earth flag is laid out and heavy stones laid upon it, like the rock at Jesus' tomb, with the processional cross held beside it. A death knell is beaten on a deep-voiced

drum as the readings are read.

"The heavens grow thin like smoke, the earth wears out like a garment, and Its Inhabitants die like flies."
Isaiah 51:6

"We live In an imbalance, degrading the planet without the capacity to hear Its cries of anguish and anger."

Theodore Roszak, The Voice of the Earth.

At Matthew Fox's environmental Stations of the Cross, "A man dressed in a hooded outfit was beating the ground itself with a large fir branch, scourging the Earth. He addressed us and told us he destroys what he does not understand. The whipping brought back memories of Jesus' being scourged at the pillar... then participants took a map of the Earth and nailed its four comers to a cross and erected the cross on the top of the sand dune as the wind howled through us. With the nailing to the cross, the pounding echoing along the beach, the... memory of Jesus crucified awakened. Participants wailed-- even those who had never heard of this medieval prayer (the Stations of the Cross) imbibed the message. The walling was spontaneous. Silence followed..."

Matthew Fox, Creation Spirituality.

"It seems as if humankind is at war with the natural world. The good news and the bad news is that we are winning. The tragedy is that by winning, we lose." Timothy Weiskel

"For those who want to save their life will lose It, and those who lose their life for the sake of the gospel, will save It" Matthew 16: 25

A long period of silence follows, as the drum continues to toll solemnly for several minutes. Then total silence.

LET US PRAY:

O God, your blessed Child was laid In a tomb In a garden, and rested on the Sabbath day: Grant that we who are buried with your Child In the dark emptiness of the dominion of sin and death may be delivered Into the light of the resurrection and become the co-creators of your eternal and joyous realm of compassion, where Christ lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

All chant the TRISAGION again, three times:

Holy God,

Holy and Mighty, Holy Immortal One, Have mercy upon us.

FINAL MEDITATION

Adapted from Henri Nouwen's Stations of the Cross.

OFFICIANT:

Beloved Jesus,

You were once condemned; you are still being condemned You once carried your cross; you are still carrying your cross. You once died; you are dying still. You once rose from the dead; you are still rising from the dead, in all that you have made.

We look at you, and you open our eyes to the ways in which your passion, death, and resurrection are happening among us every day, in all of your creation, not just in the human realm. But within us there is a deep fear of looking at our own world and its desecration. You say to us: "Do not be afraid to look, to touch, to heal, to comfort, and to console." We listen to your voice, and, as we enter more deeply into the

painful, but also hope-filled lives of our fellow beings, human and non-human, animate and inanimate, we know that we enter more deeply into your heart. Our fears, dear Savior, of opening our eyes to your suffering creation are deeply rooted in our own anxious hearts. We are not sure that we are truly loved and safely held, and so we keep my distance from other creatures' fear-filled lives. But again you say: "Do not be afraid to let me look at your wounded heart, to embrace you, to heal you, to comfort and console you... because I love you with a love that knows no bounds and poses no contradictions."

Thank you, Jesus – God -- for speaking to us. We do so desire to let you heal our wounded hearts and, from there, to reach out to others close by and far away, In all realms of creation, across the whole web of life. We know, Savior, that you are gentle and humble of heart and that you call out:

"Come to me, you who labor and are overburdened, who try too hard and worry too much, and I will give you rest."

As your passion, death, and resurrection continue in history around the whole globe, give us the hope, the courage, and the confidence to let your heart unite our hearts with the hearts of all your suffering creation, and so become for us the divine source of new life. Amen.

Cantor chants the final KYRIE. We depart in silence.