

Season of Creation: Week 5

The Common Good

Some facts

- Climate change disproportionately affects Low and Middle Income countries, adding to existing vulnerabilities and restricting development. It is those nations who often have to face the severe consequences from rising temperatures, and extreme weather events like droughts and floods.
- Warmer temperatures could expose as many as one billion people to deadly infectious diseases – The World Health Organization estimates that an additional 250,000 each year could die of diseases including malaria.
- Deforestation often driven by agriculture, logging and mining can force indigenous communities from their ancestral lands, threaten their livelihoods and way of life. Those who try to defend their forests can face violence, intimidation and even murder.
- 735 million people worldwide face hunger on a daily basis – the way we grow, produce and distribute food is broken. It harms our earth, keeps people in poverty and is controlled by a few big businesses.
- Globally, over 50 million people are trapped in modern slavery. In UK alone, experts believe there are over 100,000 victims.

It's not all bad news

- Most Supermarkets offer Fair trade options for several items
- In our own parish our teas and coffees after Mass are now all Fair Trade, and we support the Fair Trade initiative with our monthly purchases.
- Shared Interest Foundation is an example of groups who work with producers in poorer countries who need support to grow, ultimately alleviating poverty by helping people to trade and earn a living.
- In UK there is a strong network of Food banks to help those in need.
- A number of small traders particularly look to source their products sustainably, and support local indigenous communities.

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What Can I do?

Most importantly, all of us can pray. Please continue to pray the Novena, and:

A prayer for our earth

All powerful God, you are present in the 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 your 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.

And if you would like to do something more practically:

- If you haven't already done so, watch "The Letter" inspired by Pope Francis' 2015 encyclical letter, or watch it again
- If you have BBC Iplayer, watch "The Tea Trail with Simon Reeves" It is a thought-provoking report on the true "cost" of our daily cuppa!
- Buy Fair Trade – Teas, coffee, sugar, chocolate, bananas and many other sustainably produced foodstuff are widely available
- Don't buy cheap, throw away clothing -most have been produced by underpaid workers in poor countries. Better still, make use of charity shops.
- Support Foodbanks and organisations helping those who need our help
- Consider changing your bank to one which only invests in ethical and sustainable products. Eg Starling or Co-operative bank

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