



SEASON OF CREATION WALK

*Contemplating
God in Nature*



st ignatius church
green
movement
caring for our common home

Preamble

Welcome to this Season of Creation walk! This year's theme is 'Let Justice and Peace Flow'. The following message from Pope Francis captures the essence of this theme.

“God wants justice to reign; it is as essential to our life as God’s children made in his likeness as water is essential for our physical survival. This justice must flow forth wherever it is needed, neither remaining hidden deep beneath the ground nor vanishing like water that evaporates before it can bring sustenance. God wants everyone to strive to be just in every situation, to live according to his laws and thus to enable life to flourish. When we “seek first the kingdom of God” (Mt 6:33), maintaining a right relationship with God, humanity and nature, then justice and peace can flow like a never-failing stream of pure water, nourishing humanity and all creatures.

During this Season of Creation, let us dwell on those heartbeats: our own and those of our mothers and grandmothers, the heartbeat of creation and the heartbeat of God. Today they do not beat in harmony; they are not harmonized in justice and peace. Too many of our brothers and sisters are prevented from drinking from that mighty river. Let us heed our call to stand with the victims of environmental and climate injustice, and to put an end to the senseless war against creation.”

In this walk, we invite you to contemplate creation and Linger, Listen and Love.

Linger

Walk or look around you slowly. Notice if any part of creation attracts your attention – a cloud, a tree, a flower, etc. Allow yourself to linger, to pause at whatever attracts your attention and be present to what is there. Use your senses to take in the wonder of this creation or creature:
the colors, shapes, smells, textures, etc.

Listen

What might this sound be trying to tell you? What might God be saying to you through this element of creation? Perhaps ask a question. Then listen. Just be open to what might arise.

Love

As you walk, find ways to offer love to God, by giving thanks, offering a prayer to God for this encounter, praising God, etc. Find a way to acknowledge the gift you have received and your desire to give something in return.

During the walk, there will be 2 rest stops with guided Scripture readings. You may choose to do one or both of them. Take time to reflect meditatively on the Word of God. May God bless your walk.



Opening Prayer

Heavenly Father

From your communion of love, life sprung forth like a mighty river and the whole cosmos came into being.

On this Earth of overflowing love, the Word was made flesh and went forth with the life-giving waters of peace and justice for all.

You called human beings to till and keep your garden. You placed us into right relationship with each creature, but we failed to listen to the cries of the Earth and the cries of the most vulnerable. We broke with the flowing communion of love and sinned against you by not safeguarding the conditions for life.

Open our ears to your creative, reconciling and sustaining Word that calls to us through the book of Scripture and the book of creation. Bless us once again with your life-giving waters so that the Creator Spirit may let justice and peace flow in our hearts and overflow into all creation.

Open our hearts to receive the living waters of God's justice and peace, and to share it with our suffering brothers and sisters, all creatures around us, and all creation.

Bless us to walk together with all people of good will so that the many streams of the living waters of God's justice and peace may become a mighty river all over the Earth.

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

Amen



Nature Stop 1



Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and enkindle in us the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and we shall be recreated, and You shall renew the face of the earth.

O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful through the ages, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may grow truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations.

Through Christ our Lord, Amen

[Read the Gospel passage slowly twice. As you read, imagine yourself in the scene. Note any words or phrases that particularly strike you.]

Gospel Reading (John 4: 7-14)

A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." His disciples had gone into the town to buy food. The Samaritan woman said to him, "How can you, a Jew, ask me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink?" (For Jews use nothing in common with Samaritans.)

Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God and who is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."

The woman said to him, "Sir, you do not even have a bucket and the well is deep; where then can you get this living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us this well and drank from it himself with his children and his flocks?"

Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again; but whoever drinks the water I shall give will never thirst; the water I shall give will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."



Meditation and Reflection

- Were there any words or phrases that resonated within me? Why?

- Are there any parts of the Gospel passage that relate to my walk experience so far?

- How does the Gospel passage apply to my current situation(s) in life?

- What is God trying to tell me in this moment?

- Is there a word or phrase that captures what I have learnt from this reflection?

Lord Jesus, let my heart beat as one with you. Amen.

Nature Stop 2

Dear Lord, Open my mind and heart to receive your Word. Amen

[As before, read the Gospel passage slowly twice. As you read, imagine yourself in the scene. Note any words or phrases that particularly strike you.]

Gospel Reading (Mathew 6:25-34)



“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?

Look at the birds in the sky; they do not sow or reap, they gather nothing into barns, yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are not you more important than they?

Can any of you by worrying add a single moment to your life-span?

Why are you anxious about clothes? Learn from the way the wild flowers grow. They do not work or spin.

But I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was clothed like one of them.

If God so clothes the grass of the field, which grows today and is thrown into the oven tomorrow, will he not much more provide for you, O you of little faith?

So do not worry and say, ‘What are we to eat?’ or ‘What are we to drink?’ or ‘What are we to wear?’

All these things the pagans seek. Your heavenly Father knows that you need them all.

But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given you besides.

Do not worry about tomorrow; tomorrow will take care of itself. Sufficient for a day is its own evil.”

Meditation and Reflection



- Were there any words or phrases that resonated within me? Why?

- Are there any parts of the Gospel passage that relate to my walk experience so far?

- How does the Gospel passage apply to my current situation(s) in life?

- What is God trying to tell me in this moment?

- Is there a word or phrase that captures what I have learnt/gained from this reflection?

Lord Jesus, let my heart beat as one with yours. Amen.

Closing Prayer

O Lord our God,

We thank You for the perfection with which You created our common home. For filling it with beauty, goodness and generosity. For looking at Your creation with love, because You reaffirmed that everything created was very good.

We thank You, Lord, for the trees, plants and flowers that speak to us through Your silence, for the song of the birds that in their diversity sing a beautiful melody to their Creator, for the air that gently caresses us.

We thank You for all the Universe that in constant movement renews, recreates and transforms itself, elevating our being to You and making us contemplate Your greatness, praising You for all that You have created, as Saint Francis and Saint Clare did.

We thank You Lord for so many men and women who throughout history have loved, guarded and cared for our common home, raising their voices as brave prophets, denouncing the injustice, misappropriation and exploitation of our sacred natural resources, accepting persecution and even martyrdom.

Help us to be good stewards of Your creation, and to understand how precious this gift is in our relationships with creatures, from the depths of the sea, to the heights of the mountains, from the currents of the air, to our brothers and sisters near and far, the elderly and children, and those who are yet to be born, making way once again to this immense miracle of love that is life.

Amen.

