

2023 Season of Creation

Let Us Irrigate Life

Reflection Three: September 3-9

“Love, overflowing with small gestures of mutual care, is also civic and political, and it makes itself felt in every action that seeks to build a better world” ~Laudato Si #231

READ: Third part of Pope Francis' letter for the 2023 Season of Creation (backside)

REFLECT: Pope Francis does not mince words in calling us to put an end to war upon creation. Our calling is to stand with victims of this war, both human and other-than-human.

Justice and peace cannot flow when so many bodies of water are drying up. Yes, our human societies are *that* linked to the natural world! Greed and selfishness, on the part of individuals and industry, are wreaking havoc on Earth's water cycle.

Creation's heartbeat works in cycles ... we Westerners think and act *linearly*. Can we align our hearts with the way that Earth functions ... and live cyclically?

ACT: This week go outside - near a stream, brook or small river - and just be. Ponder the flow of that water and where it merges with other streams or rivers. How does this increase provide for creatures and habitats downstream? What are some novel ways you can irrigate (and not deplete) “the life of our marvelous planet and our human family”?

PRAY: Ezekial 47: 1 – 12

“... reducing water consumption, planting trees, reusing ... all of these reflect a generous and worthy creativity which brings out the best in human beings.” ~Laudato Si #211

Resources for September 3-9

Pope Francis' letter for the 2023 Season of Creation (Excerpt 3 of 8)

3 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.

The effects of this war can be seen in the many rivers that are drying up. Benedict XVI once observed that: “the external deserts in the world are growing, because the internal deserts have become so vast” **(2)**. Consumerist greed, fueled by selfish hearts, is disrupting the planet’s water cycle. The unrestrained burning of fossil fuels and the destruction of forests are pushing temperatures higher and leading to massive droughts. Alarming water shortages increasingly affect both small rural communities and large metropolises. Moreover, predatory industries are depleting and polluting our freshwater sources through extreme practices such as fracking for oil and gas extraction, unchecked mega-mining projects, and intensive animal farming. “Sister Water,” in the words of Saint Francis of Assisi, is pillaged and turned into “a commodity subject to the laws of the market” (Laudato Si’, 30).

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 marvelous 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.

[2] Homily for the Solemn Inauguration of the Petrine Ministry, 24 April 2005.

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