

Adapted from the World Council of Churches

A CULTURE OF RELATIONSHIPS THAT HEALS OUR “THROWAWAY” CULTURE

MORNING PRAYER – Season of Creation, Week I

Earth Sounds *concluded with Gong (3x)*

Introduction

In the Canticle from the Book of Daniel, all of creation is called upon to praise the Lord. Caring for creation does not mean “dominating” the world we live in, but caring for it as God the Father cares for His creation. Jesus words from the Gospel – “Do not worry about tomorrow; tomorrow will take care of itself” – do not imply a lack of concern for the future. ***They say, do not worry about your future, but worry about the future of those who come after you.*** (*Fr. Raniero Cantalamessa, OFM Cap., Preacher of the Pontifical Household*)

As we hope to forge a relationship of mutual caring with creation, we turn our backs from our wasteful tendencies and excesses and pray: “May your blessing act in us, O Lord, and transform us with your renewing power, so that we might be wholly disposed to the service of what is good.” (*Pope Francis*)

Call to Prayer

Leader: Morning has broken, inviting a creation that groans to healing and praise!

All: **We gather to greet the new day by praising God.**

Leader: God created us for relationship with God, one another, and the earth.

All: **Let us honor those relationships today and every day.**

Leader: We seek to care for Sister-Mother Earth, to heal rather than wound, to treasure rather than discard

All: **Let us honor those relationships today and every day.**

Leader: May we commit to new ways of honoring the Father’s Creation as a means of sharing Jesus’ transforming Love,

All: **And let us seek God’s grace, justice and mercy for all.**

Hymn: Lord of the Universe/BlueGreen Planet – ML III #496

Psalmist: Creator God, we give you thanks for the great abundance and nourishment that you provide us through your Creation and through your great love.

Leader: As we come together to worship you, reveal to us ways we can honor you and your created world.

All: Heal our hunger for things that do not last.
Teach us to take enough, as well as give back to the earth, so that all may live from Your generosity and that no one shall go in want.

Song: Hear My Cry – ML III #469

Scripture Reading: (*John 10:11-18.27-28*)

I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep.

The hired man, since he is not the shepherd and the sheep do not belong to him, abandons the sheep as soon as he sees a wolf coming, and runs away, and then the wolf attacks and scatters the sheep; he runs away because he is only a hired man and has no concern for the sheep.

I am the good shepherd; I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for my sheep.

And there are other sheep I have that are not of this fold, and I must lead these too. They too will listen to my voice, and there will be only one flock, one shepherd.

The Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again.

No one takes it from me; I lay it down of my own free will, and as I have power to lay it down, so I have power to take it up again; and this is the command I have received from my Father.

The sheep that belong to me listen to my voice; I know them and they follow me.

I give them eternal life; they will never be lost and no one will ever steal them from my hand.

Responsive Reflection through Psalm 23

Psalmist: The Lord is my shepherd

All: I shall not want
Word of comfort, Alleluia, bring us hope now!

Reader 1: In this world, there is such great want. Many live in need and want because others live based on great greed. Still others find that their basic physical needs are more than sufficiently met, yet a huge void of want remains. What does it mean to declare God as the shepherd who cares for us and for all to the point that needs and wants are all addressed?

Psalmist: The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.

All: Green pastures and still waters provided; souls restored.
Word of healing, Alleluia, heal our sorrow!

Silence

Psalmist: Though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil

All: for you are with me.

Reader 2: Jesus' resurrection teaches us that death does not have the final word and therefore is not something that must be feared. The psalmist does not deny the reality of evil or death nor their capacity to cause pain. The God of Life created life and has dominion over death. This same God is with us—in suffering, in want, in death, and in life. In our work and in our living, as we proceed through the darkest valleys, what postures shall we take, what steps shall we make that give witness to our call to be pilgrims who move forward without fear or indeed in spite of it?

Psalmist: With rod and staff

All: fear is banished—only comfort remains.
Word of mercy, Alleluia, live among us!

Silence

Psalmist: You prepare a table for me in the presence of my foes;

All: you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Reader 1: If fear is the first response to the threats of the dark valleys, retaliation and revenge are natural responses to wrong, offense, and oppression. Yet when in the presence of a table

of God's grace and goodness bountiful and overflowing, these impulses are short-circuited, leaving space and grace for fellowship, truth, reconciliation, and a new start marked by forgiveness and peace. Can we see grace abounding and overflowing, leaving space for God's peace?

Psalmist: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me

All: They chase after me every day, all the days.
Word of gladness, Alleluia, fill our hearts now!

Psalmist: I shall dwell in the house of the Lord my whole life long.

All: We are pilgrims journeying toward this house...our eternal home. Word of power, Alleluia, live within us!

Canticle of Zechariah: ML III #427

Intercessions

God of life, we pray for those in different countries who long for green pastures and quiet streams. God who provides, provide for those for whom daily bread is a challenge and for those who are displaced and long for home. Lord in your mercy: **All: Hear our prayer.**

God of Creation, we pray for strength and wisdom to be good stewards. Forgive us for the ways in which we contribute to the disfigurement and destruction of your Creation. Lord in your mercy: **Hear our prayer.**

God of providence, transform us, that we may place the welfare of the earth and your people before our fleeting desires. Grant us divine wisdom and embolden us to replace systems of destruction and wasteful consumption with systems of justice and sustainability. Lord in your mercy: **Hear our prayer.**

Our Father..... Prayer and Blessing:

L: May the boldness of God's Spirit transform us,
may the gentleness of the Great Shepherd lead us,
And may the gifts of God's Spirit equip us
and send us forth into the world and all creation
Who lives and reigns in every created being,
one God forever and ever. **Amen.**

Marian Hymn: Mary Mother of the Earth – ML # 486