

Creation Celebration

Theme: "A Home for All"

Renewing the Oikos of God

Mathur

The celebration of the season of creation was a golden opportunity given to us to renew our relationship with our creator and all creation. It is a season when we pray and act together as Christian family for our common home. The community met in the 1st week of September to discuss and plan the method of executing the celebration on Season of creation 2021. In order to enhance and enlighten ourselves how to proceed with the celebration we sought the help of the materials provided in the websites and decided to take up three projects as a community.

- ◆ Prayer service for the season of creation
- ◆ A creation walk
- ◆ A pilgrimage to a significant ecological site



Prayer service for the season of creation

This year's logo for the season of creation is – "Abraham's Tent" symbolizing a home for all. It is a call to practice care of creation as an act of radical hospitality, safeguarding a place for all creatures in our common home, the household (oikos) of God. We pitched "Abraham's Tent" in the garden space as a sign of hospitality for all beings who are excluded. Among these people are humans, the planet people, the four legged, flying and swimming people, rock people, star people and more, were brought into the Tent to pray with us.

The prayer session started with an introduction about the significance of Abraham's Tent and God's call to each human being to keep our garden that honour the dignity of each creature and conserve their place in the abundance of life on earth. A hymn was sung in which all creatures praise and thank God the creator of all things. The word of God from Genesis Ch. 1 reminded us that God created all things on earth and heaven and found that everything was good. The congregation thanked God for the earth, the creator and the strength of all creatures. The Holy Spirit, who renews the world, calls us to care for this creation. Psalm 84 was recited to re-affirm that the earth is the Lord's and all that is in it. We in unison sang a hymn that praises God as creator.

St. Francis of Assisi reminds us that our common home is like a sister with whom we share our life and a beautiful mother who opens her arms to embrace us. This sister now cries out because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed the

universe. We concluded the prayer service by asking God's blessings to enlighten us by his spirit that renews the face of the earth and safeguards "a home for all".



A creation walk: (Ecological Rosary)

We organised an ecological Rosary on 27th of September 2021. The sisters went in a procession, holding the statue of our lady, singing hymns and reciting the rosary during in the campus. The varieties of fruit-bearing trees, huge green shady trees are an attraction to many. The multi-coloured flowers, bushes, varieties of birds and butterflies and the cool breeze greeted us as we walked along singing the praises of God, our creator. Being in close proximity with nature, we enjoyed the walk and experienced peace and serenity and the blessings of our blessed Mother. We could feel the loving presence of God in every being in nature and thanked God for his bountiful blessings.

A pilgrimage to a significant ecological site



Malai Matha shrine, a popular pilgrim centre, 18 KM away from Mathur, was chosen as the ecological site for meditation. The shrine is built on the top of a huge rock surrounded by vast forest area crowned with rows of mountains. It had deep fissures displaying man's greediness and selfishness. It stood tall and sturdy withstanding the lashings of rain, hail and storm, thunder and lightning for hundreds of years. In the calm, serene atmosphere we sat and meditated for some time. This meditation helped us to realise the ever abiding presence of God in us and His constant and unconditional love for us. When calamity overtakes us like a storm, when disaster sweeps over us like a whirlwind when distress and trouble overwhelms us, God our creator sustains and strengthens us to stand firm and unaffected.

On the eve of the last day of the celebration of creation month, we had an enlightening, enriching and empowering session of prayer service. Each sister was invited to share her insights and experience of the celebration of creation particularly with regard to the three projects which the community had undertaken.

We realized that the experience of God Almighty being present in every species of nature and giving a home to each one was awe-inspiring. We became aware of the fact that the greediness and selfishness of human beings have exploited and devastated the rich resources of Nature. It has created a great disparity between man and man, displaced families, caused insecurity and conflict. We have repeatedly failed to understand 'the creation that waits with eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed' (Rom. 8:19).

We invoked the Holy Spirit to guide and lead us in our resolve to care for our common home (Oikos) and to love and safeguard the dignity of God's creation that He has graciously bestowed on us. We also interceded to the Holy Spirit for an awareness of God's presence in each one of us so that we may love sincerely our sisters in the community and those whom we meet especially the marginalised and neglected with the same compassionate and unconditional love, so that everyone is valued, respected and loved as brothers and sisters of God's family.

Sr. Marietta, Mathur

Aya Nagar

The community at Aya Nagar celebrated the 'Season of Creation' on 5th of October based on the theme – "A Home for All - Renewing the Oikos of God". During the Holy Hour, we raised our hearts to God in thanksgiving for creating our planet to be a home for all. We specially reflected on the bountiful gifts that we receive from the earth. It was also an invitation for us to become aware of our interconnectedness with all living beings. We realized that as stewards of creation we have a great responsibility to take care of God's wonderful handiwork.



At the end of the prayer we implored God to enlighten us with the grace to respond to His covenant and call to care for our 'Common Home'. We asked God to help us to remain partners in tilling and keeping the earth, and safeguarding a home for all.

Sr. Jessy Kurian, Aya Nagar

Jaipur

The Jaipur community joined the global community to celebrate the integral web of relationship that sustains the wellbeing of the earth. The Oikos of God “the beloved community,” a community, in which all the members are equal. The prayer was in the midst of the plants and pots in the house garden. After the prayer we planted a few saplings.



The

prayer started with a hymn thanking and praising the Lord of all creation. This year's Logo for the season of creation is Abraham's Tent, symbolizing “A Home for all.” A Tent would likely be open on multiple sides, so that anyone passing by would feel welcome. It was a reminder for us that our homes should be open to shelter the homeless, refugees and all who are on the move. A tent is also a sign of simplicity and hospitality.

The celebration calls us to take radical action to care for the whole created world and to share resources equally with all the living beings. It challenged us to continue to provide a welcoming space for all.

Sr. Juliet Lakra, Jaipur

Kathalguri

The month of September is a fitting time to celebrate and thank God for the season of creation. It brings us relief from profuse sweating and fanning ourselves. Since it is rainy season, we witness lush green trees, paddy fields and grass, all bathed from waters above. The beauty of Assam is marvellous during this time. Kathalguri community dedicated whole of this sacred month in adoration and praise for the Creator and the wonders of creation. We had half an hour of adoration every day.

On 4th of October we had special prayers. The theme of the prayer was based on the reading from 1 king 17: 16, “the jar of meal was not emptied and the jug of oil never failed”, according to the word of the Lord that He spoke through the prophet Elijah. From the beginning of history, human beings have been blessed with natural resources and like the jug of oil and jar of meal it is not devoid of resources necessary for human existence even today.

The first hour of adoration, we thanked God for the abundant and generous gifts of creation. We read Gen: Ch. 1, the story of creation and reflected upon it. As a gesture of our responsibility to be co-creators with God, we drew a picture together as a community (sisters, hostel girls and a helper). The

chart was placed beside the altar and we went in turns and drew as we were inspired. At the end, like the Creator who rested and admired the creation of his hands, we too admired our drawing which exhibited our reflection on creation. That reminded us that we are co-creators with God. We were reminded of our responsibility as stewards to take care of the creation.

Sr. Shweta Jaspal, Kathalguri

Kauli

A home has been always a place of gathering, shelter and sanctuary. A home is a place where love resides and memories are created. A home plays a vital role in everyone's life. A home is where the heart is, and it is open to for all its members. These well-known expressions indicate that a home is both desirable and exists in the mind's eye as much as a particular physical location. Keeping all these expressions in our minds, the sisters at Ashadeep Kauli Community started our creation prayer on 26th September at 5pm. A teacher staying in our hostel and our maid too joined us in prayer. The theme "HOME FOR ALL" itself was a great invitation for prayer service to connect with mother earth.



Hence, the garden was beautifully arranged for prayer service and its scenic beauty filled everyone with the presence of the Almighty. An umbrella was placed in the garden as a symbol to the theme (Home for All) and we kept all the replicas of species from the creation, under it. An umbrella with round dome shape and open bottom meant that it is open to anyone and everything. It is a shelter for all. In addition, it protects safeguards all from heat, rain and storm.



Francis our Pope reminds us that we are fully connected with the cosmos and it makes us aware of our responsibility to care for it with great reverence. In order to replenish the depleting vegetation we planted new fruit bearing plants and flowering plants in the garden. We raised our hearts and minds to the Almighty to ask pardon and mercy for ill-treating the resources of the planet. We pledged to take care of our "Common Home" in whatever way we could.

Sr. Venus Kauli

Jeevodaya, Jammu

Earth is our common home

The earth is our common home,
It is a gift from God the Creator.
From birth until death
To live in harmony with Creation.

Lives are crying because it is not clean,
Earth is dying because it is not green,
With global warming it is in danger,
With dying trees and animals it's in sorrow.

Trees are precious for we need them,
Plant more trees and plan future,
Water is life giving, waste not it,
Make green today and green tomorrow.

There is something each of us can do,
Let's keep clean, green, and fresh always
Let's protect and safeguard it
It starts with God and starts with me.
(tune: one more step along the way...)

Sr. Annie Manickathan, Jammu



Goalpara

Remembering Gods "oikos" Goalpara community began the month-long celebration of creation on the 1st September, 2021 with a well-prepared prayer service with psalm 24:1 ringing in our hearts. The community joined the psalmist in proclaiming the Earth as the Lord's and all that is in it.



In all our prayer sessions, we actively prayed for relief from the climate crisis wreaking havoc on the habitats of millions of species and humans alike. The theme Oikos helped us to hope for a better relationship with nature that holds the very fabric of life together. It created in us the need to take up the

responsibility of caring for our Earth. We initiated a cleanup of our campus. On the eve of world environment day, Sr. Anita and Sr. Ajita planted trees saplings with help of tailoring student's and widows of our area.

Every prayer session reiterated in us that our place in this world is as channel of God's love for all the creatures of this Earth, for, not one of them is forgotten in His sight. We ended the celebration on 4th October with a meaningful gathering of prayer and singing. On that day we decorated our chapel with beautiful ornamental plants, flowers and fruits of our garden to commemorate the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron of ecology. This year's celebration, its preparation, hymns and our reflections during the prayer have certainly given us deeper connections with the nature and the creator.

Sr. Sherly Paul, Goalpara

Provincialate, Delhi

Contemplation and Action



Sangrur

Every year season of creation resounds like an echo of what God our creator has commanded us in the book of Genesis to “till it and care for it.” Hence, the Sangrur community participated in this Celebration of the Season of Creation with much enthusiasm and a sense of great responsibility.

Realizing the implications of this season, our prime concern in the apostolate is educating the young ones, youth in the school and adults in the Parish to become caretakers of our mother Earth. To infuse in them a sense of responsibility towards environment, various eco-friendly activities are conducted and we engaged ourselves actively in this campaign to play our role in replenishing our common home to its original beauty. These activities stimulate not only the intellect of the students but also make them active warriors of ecology.



Establishment of Eco Garden by Eco Club is a commendable initiative in this direction and since then the members of this club have been taking care of the Eco Garden.

A meaningful and contextual celebration of Earth Day and Environment Day through class assemblies gives an impetus to our students to understand their moral responsibility to be protectors and conservators of Mother Earth. As a community, besides meditating upon and praying in nature, we also soil our hands in taking care of and nurturing nature by spending some quality time in gardening, taking care of vegetables, flower plants, etc. and keep our surroundings neat, clean and green. We feel convinced that we all have been called to hear the cry of our Mother Earth and become its healers in our own little ways.

The celebration of season of creation helped us to be deeply in touch with the environment and our responsibility to care for it. It calls us forth to understand the difference between using and abusing the gifts and bounties of nature and make a conscious choice to save Mother Earth and in doing so save ourselves.

Sr. Rajam, Sangrur