



## **DICASTERY FOR PROMOTING INTEGRAL HUMAN DEVELOPMENT**

### **Press Conference: World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation (September 1, 2022)**

Pope Francis' message for this World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation begins the month-long Season of Creation beginning on September 1. It calls us "to cultivate our ecological conversion" and practice "an ecological spirituality" which acknowledges that we are "not disconnected from the rest of creatures but joined in a splendid universal communion." When we reach this deep awareness we become attentive to the sweet song rising from the luxurious diversity of creation. But we can also hear the cry of anguish from our sister, Mother Earth who cries out from the abuses and destruction which we inflict on her. This in turn deeply affects the lives of poor people, indigenous people, the young and the elderly. Our vocation is to be protectors of God's handiwork and so we hear the call to repent and modify our lifestyle. In addition Pope Francis reminds us that Cop27 (the Conference on Climate Change) and Cop15 (the Summit on Biodiversity) offer us an opportunity to advocate together for lasting change and for the development of models of consumption and production that respect creation and the integral development of all peoples.

The members of the International Union of Superiors General participate each year in the Season of Creation, using the guide for times of prayer and reflection, and for promoting action. This year's theme "Listen to the Voice of Creation" requires a type of deep listening that is often absent today. This listening is more than just hearing. It is contemplation which opens us to hear the many voices of creation, to be nurtured by its beauty and abundance and to be disturbed by its disfiguration and destruction. As we listen deeply we too feel called like Pope Francis, to cry out and say "in the name of God...stop destroying forests, wetlands, mountains...stop polluting and poisoning food and people." As religious sisters we commit ourselves during this Season of Creation to pray for conversion of heart (during our liturgies and prayers) to advocate for change (through our symbolic acts) and to raise awareness through our congregational ministries. During this Season of Creation we join the worldwide community in embracing our vocation to care for our common home. We will intensify our efforts, through deliberate and enduring initiatives to make known the ancient wisdom of the jubilee in relation to the earth: remember, return, rest and restore.

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