

Reflection on our Planet

From *Laudate Dominum*, Pope Francis' 2023 encyclical

The Judaeo-Christian vision of the cosmos defends the unique and central value of the human being amid the marvellous concert of all God's creatures, but today we see ourselves forced to realize ... that human life is incomprehensible and unsustainable without other creatures. For, as part of the universe all of us are linked by unseen bonds and together form a kind of universal family, a sublime communion which fills us with a sacred, affectionate and humble respect.

This is not a product of our own will; its origin lies elsewhere, in the depths of our being, since God has joined us so closely to the world around us that we can feel the desertification of the soil almost as a physical ailment, and the extinction of a species as a painful disfigurement. Let us stop thinking, then, of human beings as autonomous, omnipotent and limitless, and begin to think of ourselves differently, in a humbler but more fruitful way.

I ask everyone to accompany me on this pilgrimage of reconciliation with the world that is our home and to help make it more beautiful, because that commitment has to do with our personal dignity and highest values.

Every little bit helps, and avoiding an increase of a tenth of a degree in the global temperature would already suffice to alleviate some suffering for many people. We need to realize that there are no lasting changes without cultural changes, and there are no cultural changes without personal changes. Thus efforts by households to reduce pollution and waste, and to consume with prudence, are creating a new culture.

July

Daily prayer

God of creation, the earth is yours and everything in it, but we act as if it belongs to us and that we are the master of it. Forgive our pride and greed that leads to a lack of care and to exploitation which has had such devastating consequences. Teach us to have respect for the crying needs of the earth and to grow in humility.

Daily response:
The Lord is my light and my salvation;
whom then shall I fear?

Intercessions for the month.

Week beginning 5 July As crops ripen and fruits form, we pray especially for communities round the world where crops are ruined because of drought or floods; all who teach farming, irrigation / drainage techniques; for farming projects in areas of poverty and poor soil.

Week beginning 12 July We give thanks for Nature Reserves in this diocese and we pray for the creatures living there – that their habitat may be protected. Also for the work of the Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust

Week beginning 19 July We pray for wisdom to know how to pray for the world at war in Ukraine, Iran, Palestine, Israel, Lebanon and the Persian Gulf, where the innocent, the powerless and the environment suffer more than the rich and powerful nations.

Week beginning 26 July World Nature Conservation Day is on 28 July. We pray for all creatures under threat of extinction; for scientists, teachers and all who work in the world of nature conservation; and for children and adults who volunteer in caring for the environment.

August

Daily prayer

God of creation, forgive us that so often we prefer to turn a blind eye to what is happening rather than face the reality of our struggling environment and our dependence on a healthy biodiversity. Give us courage to face what is happening and to be more alert and attentive, in order that ways can be found to protect our planet for future generations.

Daily response:
All creatures of our God and King,
Lift up your voice and with us sing. Alleluia, alleluia!

Intercessions for the month

Week beginning 2 August The HELIOS Exhibition is on at the Minster – the sun! Light and warmth are vital for life on earth. We pray for all who are working to prevent and reverse climate change, and for all who visit the exhibition to learn more about the sun.

Week beginning 9 August Pray for the St Clare's outdoor Eucharist, 12.15pm, Tuesday 11th, to honour the Minster's commitment to care for Creation. Also, we shall incorporate the weekly vigil for world peace.

Week beginning 16 August We pray for increased awareness that, as human beings, we have a duty to care for the earth; but our actions are causing overheating, with devastating results.

Weeks beginning 23 and 31 August In this school-holiday time we pray for people leading outdoor activities where children can learn about and enjoy nature. Pray too for artists and writers who inspire us to find out more about creation; also for composers.

September

Daily prayer:

God of creation, as we face an environmental crisis, energise and motivate us as individuals, the church and all those in positions of power. Challenge us to be responsible and to prioritise the need to act now in order to make possible restoration and healing. Remind us of our role as protectors and carers of this beautiful yet fragile world,

Daily response:

O Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.

Intercessions for the month

Week beginning 6 Sept We pray for churches round the Diocese engaged in conservation; for Robert Cleave, diocesan environment officer; and the preparations for the diocesan Eco-service in Southwell on Saturday.

Week beginning 13 Sept Today is Climate Sunday at the Minster. Pray for SMEAG, the Minster's Environmental Action group, and for the Potwell Dyke Grasslands Group, enhancing our environment here.

Week beginning 20 Sept Sept 1 to Oct 4 is 'Creation Season' in the world's churches. We pray for the Pope, bishops in the House of Lords, and all Christians who have a voice in politics to reinforce the spiritual and humanitarian need to protect Planet Earth.

Week beginning 27 Sept - 'World Rivers Day'. We pray for communities and animals suffering where river beds are dry; for responsible irrigation and reservoir projects; for all in the project to clean up the River Wye; and that we may all have a care for our local rivers.

The Southwell Minster Creation Prayer

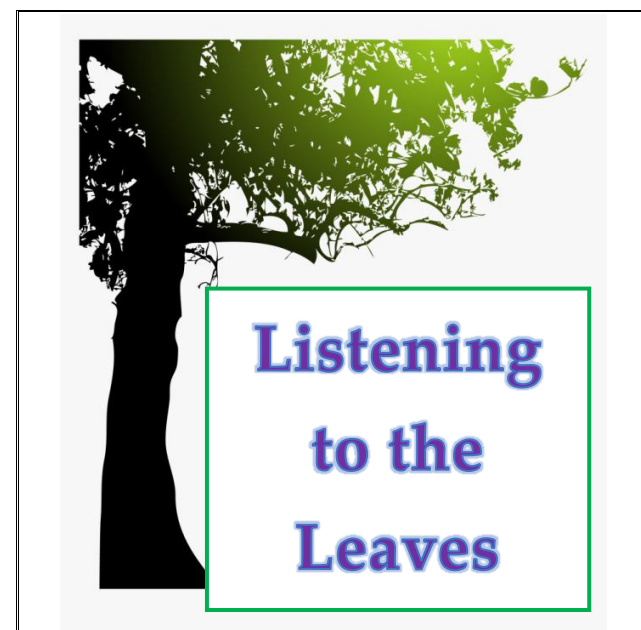
Gracious God, source of all life,
we praise you for the wonder and diversity
of the natural world, and we thank you
for the genius of the craftsmen who carved
the Chapter House leaves that speak to us still.
Open our hearts and minds to your guiding Spirit
that we may discern together
how best to cherish this good earth
and safeguard its resources.
As we listen to the leaves,
show us how to share in Creation's song
and rediscover our harmony in you,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen



Southwell Minster in partnership with A Rocha UK

Signposts for Action

1-30 Plastic Free July - fewer fruit/veg plastic bags
July 1-8 Net Zero Week – raising awareness
July 28 World Nature Conservation Day
August 10-16 National Allotments Week
11 August St Clare's Day, Minster's outdoor Eucharist
1 Sept – 4 Oct World Churches Creation Season
1-8 Sept World Zero Waste Week – recycle everything!
22 Sept World Car Free Day – use feet, bus, train, bike!
23-30 Sept World Recycle Week



**Prayers for the
Integrity of Creation**
July-September 2026