

# **Summary of Pope Francis's Message for the World Day of Creation, September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024.**

(Issued by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales)

## **'Hope and Act with Creation'**

The Day's theme this year is "Hope and Act with Creation," drawn from Saint Paul's Letter to the Romans (8:19-25), in which the Apostle explains what it means for us to live according to the Spirit, and focuses on the sure hope of salvation that is born of faith, namely, the newness of life in Christ.

The message signed by Pope Francis on June 27 is broken up into nine sections, which all highlight our responsibility to take care of our Common Home. It stresses that, as Christians called to live in faith and charity, caring for the environment is "a task to be undertaken freely, in obedience to Jesus' commandment of love."

## **Enslaved through no fault of its own**

"Creation itself, like humanity, was enslaved, albeit through no fault of its own," the Pope laments, observing that it "finds itself unable to fulfil the lasting meaning and purpose for which it was designed."

The environment, the Pope decries, "is subject to dissolution and death, aggravated by the human abuse of nature." Yet, at the same time, he reassures, "the salvation of humanity in Christ is a sure hope also for creation, for, 'the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God.'"

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## **We must be vigilant and willing to change**

"In our hopeful and persevering expectation of the glorious return of Jesus," Pope Francis notes, "the Holy Spirit keeps us, the community of believers, vigilant."

The Spirit, he reassures, "continually guides us and calls us to conversion, to a change in lifestyle in order to resist the degradation of our environment and to engagement in that social critique, which is above all a witness to the real possibility of change."

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## **Urgent to set ethical limits on AI**

The Holy Father goes on to explain that hoping and acting with creation means joining forces and walking together with all men and women of good will. In this way, we can help to rethink, “among other things, the question of human power, its meaning and its limits.”

In this context, the Pope says, “there is an urgent need to set ethical limits on the development of artificial intelligence, since its capacity for calculation and simulation could be used for domination over humanity and nature, instead of being harnessed for the service of peace and integral development,” as he quoted his 2024 Message for the World Day of Peace.

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## **Devastating effects of war**

The Pope decries how much evil there is in the world.

“Why so much injustice, so many fratricidal wars that kill children, destroy cities, pollute the environment and leave mother earth violated and devastated?” the Pope questions, as he suggested that “the entire universe and every creature therein groans and yearns impatiently for its present condition to be overcome and its original state to be restored.”

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## **No! to possessing, manipulating and dominating nature**

“To claim the right to possess and dominate nature, manipulating it at will,” he underscores, “represents a form of idolatry, a Promethean version of man who, intoxicated by his technocratic power, arrogantly places the earth in a “dis-graced” condition, deprived of God’s grace.”

Creation, the Pope recalls, is “not static or closed in on itself,” but is “continuously drawn towards its future.”

Protecting creation, the Holy Father explains, “is not only an ethical issue, but one that is eminently theological, for it is the point where the mystery of man and the mystery of God intersect.”

We are free, he notes, “precisely because we were created in the image of God who is Jesus Christ, and, as a result, are “representatives” of creation in Christ Himself.”

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### **Our future in eternity is at stake**

The Pope says that creation awaits “the revelation of the children of God” as it suffers “as in the pangs of childbirth.”

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### **Children of God can offer meaningful impact**

The Pope encourages the faithful to remember their identity as “children of the Father,” suggesting that we are empowered to effectuate concrete change amid living holy lives.

In this way, the message concludes, “our lives can become a song of love for God, for humanity, with and for creation, and find their fullness in holiness.”

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Source: [Vaticannews.va](http://Vaticannews.va)