

Conference of Catholic Bishops of India
UPDATED GENERAL DIRECTIVES FOR DIOCESES AND PARISHES IN INDIA
ON THE CELEBRATION OF THE “MISSA PRO CUSTODIA CREATIONIS”
(Mass for the Care of Creation)

Introduction

Following the publication of *Laudato Si'* in 2015, Pope Francis established 1st September as the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, in which we are invited to “rediscover in our own rich spiritual patrimony the deepest motivations for our concern for the care of creation.” Together with other Churches, he also extended the days of prayer for the care of creation by introducing the Season of Creation (September 1 to October 4), that is, up to the feast of St Francis of Assisi.

On 3rd July 2025, the Dicastery for the Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, with the approval of Pope Leo XIV, promulgated a new formulary, “Mass for the Care of Creation” to be inserted among the *Masses for Various Needs and Occasions* of the Roman Missal. This Mass is apt for use on 1st September or on the following Sunday. This year, in January, however, mindful of the pastoral considerations around the Novena for Feast of the Nativity of Mother Mary, the Conference of Catholic Bishops of India (CCBI), decided to hold the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation on the **Third Sunday of September**, maintaining its connection with the Season of Creation, following the provision of GIRM nn. 373 and 374.

The updated Directives for the celebration of the Mass for the Care of Creation on 20 September 2026 are given below.

1. The formulary and readings in English (awaiting *confirmatio* from the Holy See) prepared by the CCBI Liturgical Commission shall be used *ad experimentum*, instead of the usual Sunday in Ordinary Time.
2. In the Roman Missal, Mass for the Care of Creation is to be placed at the end of Masses and Prayers for Various Needs and Occasions.
3. We encourage dioceses, parishes and communities to treat this observance as a national liturgical priority in support of the global movement for integral ecology and synodal renewal. Bishops are encouraged to issue pastoral letters to this effect in their dioceses.
4. This directive would be superseded if the Holy See formally approves “Feast of Creation in Christ” in the liturgical calendar and places it on a particular day.

Below are **some ideas and pastoral resources** to support the Eucharistic celebration:

1. Hold the service outdoors, in the “Cathedral of Creation”, if at all possible (as Pope Leo did and explained when celebrating the first Creation Mass with the new formulary at Borgo *Laudato Si* in Castel Gandolfo).
2. Since it is rainy season in some parts of India, when the Mass is organised in the church, a green atmosphere can be created by involving children or youth to set up an artistic “Creation Scene”.
3. Before the Mass begins, contextualise its importance, using the papal message for the day. Include Creation-related hymns throughout the service.
4. During the Penitential Act, either the creation theme can be acknowledged by focusing each invocation on the Lord’s work; or express lament for the destruction of God’s creation and repentance for our “ecological sins”
5. For the homily, priests are encouraged to include references to themes as 1) the distinction between “Creation as God’s act of creation” and “Creation as the fruit of the creative act” (2) the themes of the lectionary readings (3) Sunday’s dual symbolism as the “day of both Creation and Resurrection”, (4) the Season of Creation.
6. Before the recitation of the Creed, bring attention to the Nicene Creed’s proclamation of the Trinity as Creator – “the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth”, Christ “through [whom] all things were made”, and the Holy Spirit, “the giver of life”.
7. During the Prayers of the Faithful, prioritise Creation-related prayers. The Pope’s Prayer Intention for September 2026 on Water of Life may be inserted.
8. For the Liturgy of the Eucharist, use Eucharistic Prayer IV which includes the Preface. Alternatively, the Preface for Sundays in Ordinary Time No. 5 (“Creation”) combined with Eucharistic Prayer No. 3 or No. 2, given their creation related content may be used.
9. Bring Creation into the celebration through other gestures; bring symbols from nature alongside bread and wine during the offertory, for example, fruits, saplings etc.
10. After Mass, a closing prayer may be recited: either from one of those composed by Pope Francis in *Laudato Si’* or the Season of Creation 2026.

Consider using the websites WorldDayCreation.com and seasonofcreation.org for more background, resources and ideas.