

OFFICIAL

Mass for the Care of Creation

Every year, the Catholic Church joins all Christians in the worldwide celebration of the Season of Creation. This Season begins on 1st September, the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, and ends on 4th October, the Feast of St Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of Ecology.

An Ecumenical Steering Committee suggests a theme for each year, and the theme this time is “**Living Water**” inspired by the Scripture passage Ezekiel 47:1-12. This is an invitation for us to recognize and conserve the precious gift of water. It also invites us to immerse our lives more deeply in the love of Jesus, the source of Living Water.

One important moment during this season is the celebration of the Mass for the Care of Creation. The formulary and readings for the Mass were promulgated on 8th June 2025 by the Dicastery for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments. In a circular dated 6th August 2026, the President of the CCBI, Cardinal Filipe Neri Ferrao, has requested that all dioceses and parishes celebrate the **Mass for the Care of Creation** on the **Third Sunday of September**, which this year falls on **20th September 2026**.

I request all our parishes and institutions to hold this celebration on Sunday, 20th September 2026. The Commission for Liturgy will send you the required material for this Mass, while the Office for Environment will send details about other events organized across the whole Season of Creation. May our celebration of these events deepen our commitment to conserve water. May it also lead us to find joy and refreshment at the fount of living water - Our Lord Jesus Christ.

August 21, 2026

✠ John Rodrigues
Archbishop of Bombay



PASTORAL LETTER FOR THE SEASON OF CREATION 2026

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

The Season of Creation brings several opportunities this year – peace, ecumenism, formation and a plenary indulgence.

We begin the Season of Creation on **September 1** (a Feast of Creation in some denominations), observed as the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation in the Catholic Church. In his message, **Pope Leo XIV** states: “We are called to allow our hearts to be renewed, so that we might seek peace and care for Creation.” We will end the Season on **October 4, the Feast of St Francis of Assisi**, whose 800th centenary of Transitus is this year. His love for Creation went hand-in-hand with being a peacemaker, especially during the Fifth Crusade, where he engaged in dialogue to bring about mutual understanding. In these times of unrest, uncertainty, and conflict, let us closely heed the Holy Father’s call, and let our hearts undergo an ecological conversion. Thus transformed, may our care for Creation efforts also enable us to be peacemakers, reinforcing our identity as children of God (cf. Matthew 5:9).

The ecumenical Season of Creation Steering Committee has chosen **Living Water** as the 2026 theme. Drawn from the vision of hope set amid loss and exile in Ezekiel 47:1-12 (specifically vv. 9, 12), the prophet describes living water flowing from God’s sanctuary that restores land, renews water, and lets life flourish again. Contemplation, hope and healing begin in the Temple – the place for worship, prayer and sacrifice – which in our times is the Church and its community of believers (cf. *Ephesians* 2:19-22). May our Season of Creation initiatives also involve the wider Christian community, extending the bringing of living water to all people of goodwill.

Mindful of pastoral considerations around the Marian Nativity Novena, the Bishops of India decided to hold the **World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation on the Third Sunday of September**. It is to be celebrated with the **Mass for the Care of Creation** instead of the usual Sunday in Ordinary Time. The guidelines and directives from the Conference of Catholic Bishops of India (CCBI) have been put together with a liturgy prepared by the Archdiocesan Office for Environment, and will be circulated by the Commission for Liturgy. May these Eucharistic celebrations in our Archdiocese of Bombay bring about better formation on how care for Creation is not an added concern, but a faithful response to the truth of the Gospel. In a few parishes and communities, a thematic contemplative display will be set up from this Mass till the end of the Season.

In this Year of Saint Francis of Assisi, Archbishop John Rodrigues designated **Our Lady of Fatima Church, Kirol, Vidyavihar**, as a special pilgrim centre where baptised faithful may obtain a plenary indulgence under the usual conditions of Confession, Holy Communion and praying for the Pope’s intentions. While the indulgence may be sought up to January 10, 2027, I encourage that we visit during the parish Feast Mass on October 4.

The **Archdiocesan Office for Environment (AOE)**, with several collaborators, has prepared the Season of Creation programme for the Archdiocese of Bombay:

1. Join the AOE in participating in the global online Opening Prayer service on September 1 at 6:30 p.m. (link available on seasonofcreation.org).
2. The third Saturday of September is International Coastal Cleanup Day. Thus, the September 19-20 weekend provides opportunity for both action and contemplation in the Franciscan spirit. The AOE is organising a youth event in collaboration with Don Bosco Youth Services, Mumbai; more information will be made available via social media.
3. In addition to all parishes, the Mass for the Care of Creation will be celebrated on September 20 at 7:30 a.m. at the Basilica of Our Lady of the Mount, Bandra.
4. The fourth Sunday of September is World Rivers Day. On September 27, the youth participating in the September 19 event will bring their experience to complete the *Living Water Flows* contemplative display at the Shrine of Don Bosco’s Madonna, Matunga, ending with Mass at 6:30 p.m.
5. In collaboration with the Commission for Ecumenism and the generous support of the Parish Priest, an ecumenical prayer service will be held on Wednesday, September 30 from 5 p.m. to 6:45 p.m. at St John the Evangelist Church, Marol. Details will be made available on the AOE website (www.aosebombay.org).
6. Through the gracious invitation of the Parish Priest, we end the Season of Creation by celebrating together during the 10:30 a.m. parish Feast Mass on October 4 at Our Lady of Fatima Church, Kirol. To coordinate the participation of parish groups and individuals, please contact the AOE.

The global online Closing Prayer service begins streaming at 6:30 p.m. (link on seasonofcreation.org)

Let us wholeheartedly take up Pope Leo XIV's exhortation in his September 1 message: *to cherish the earth that sustains the gift of life, and become collaborators in God's work of renewal, so that the peace of Christ may reign over all of Creation.*

May the Season of Creation inspire us in the Archdiocese of Bombay to become channels of living water.

Blessings and prayers,



Bishop Allwyn D'Silva

Auxiliary Bishop Emeritus of Bombay

Bishop In-Charge of the Social Apostolate and the Archdiocesan Office for Environment

Parishes, religious houses and institutions are requested to kindly share their Season of Creation initiatives with the Archdiocesan Office for Environment, Mumbai.

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