

Honoring Creation

Greetings!

During the summer months, we have enjoyed freshly picked strawberries, blueberries, and melons. The colors and taste of these fruits have delighted our family members.

The fruits of the season have been only one of the pleasures creation has brought us. We have listened to the chirping of the birds in the morning and the hooting of the owls in the evening.

We need to be careful not to take for granted the creation that God has given us. At a young age, children should be assured of their responsibility to care for creation. To instill this in your children, you might want to talk to them about their favorite birds and why they are attracted to them. Do they like their color? Have they watched them care for their young?

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Continue to discuss creation by asking about their favorite cat, dog, or other animal. Later, talk about the landscapes, mountains, hills, and waterways. How would they feel if these treasures were not available?

In the first chapter of Genesis, we hear of what God created each day. The separation of darkness and light on the first day. The separation of the water above and below the dome on the second day. The separation of the sea from the dry land on



the third day. On each day, as the Creator brings the astonishing variety, abundance, and beauty of our world into existence, the goodness of the handiwork is noted. You can almost feel the cosmic smile and pride in the day's astonishing accomplishment.

Genesis reminds us that all of this creation is good in God's eyes, and it is precious. Given to us on the sixth day to protect and conserve, use, and manage, the world has literally been ours for the taking. Our task is to relate to it with the same pride, care, and creativity expected of God's stewards. Pope Francis is reminding us of this in *Laudato si* (Praised be), his encyclical on the environment. The name of the encyclical is taken from an introductory phrase in St. Francis of Assisi's song, "Canticle of Creatures." Search for that song on the Internet and pray it with your children.

As the fall wraps its arms around us, take time to get out and enjoy the creation around you. But don't only watch the trees change and appreciate the birds in migration, think of ways your family can care for creation. Go on the Internet and read the pope's encyclical and take his words seriously.

Talk as a family about what each member cherishes about this wonderful world we've been given. Share the things we are learning about critical issues, such as climate change, pollution, recycling, or the use and abuse of natural resources. Consider becoming part of or starting a service project in your parish

focused on care of creation. Just as each one of us is precious in God's sight, so is all God has given us in the astonishing creation that surrounds us.