

## **Pope Francis: “The ones suffering most from the consequences of natural disasters are the poor”**

- In [The Pope Video](#) for September, **Pope Francis** invites us to pray for the care of the planet and to listen to “hear the pain of the millions of victims of environmental catastrophes.”
- In his video message, the **Pope** emphasizes that “the ones suffering most from the consequences of natural disasters are the poor,” and that it is necessary to “commit ourselves to the fight against poverty and the protection of nature.”
- The Earth “has a fever. It is sick,” **Pope Francis** says, and he asks for “responses that are not only ecological, but are also social, economic and political.”

(Vatican City, 30 August 2024) – Pope Francis’s prayer intention for September is **for the cry of the Earth, which “has a fever and is sick, just like anyone who’s sick.”** As part of the Season of Creation – that annual period of time in which the Church traditionally mobilizes itself to reflect on the care of our common home – it is a powerful call to “deal with the environmental crisis caused by humans.”

In his video message, produced by the [Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network](#), with the help of the [Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development](#), **Pope Francis** asks if we “**are listening” to the pain of the Earth**, to the pain of the “millions of victims of environmental catastrophes,” and asks humanity to respond not only with “**responses that are not only ecological, but are also social, economic and political.**”

### **Humanity and creation**

Hurricanes, wildfires, tsunamis, drought, melting glaciers: the cry of the Earth, can be heard more and more, as reported in the [The Pope Video](#) for September. The images accompanying Pope Francis’s words demonstrate the effects of the climate crisis on human beings: people fleeing environmental catastrophes, emigrants on the rise due to the effects of the climate, children forced to travel



**THE POPE VIDEO**  
Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network



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dozens of kilometres in search of a little water. “The ones suffering most from the consequences of natural disasters are the poor, those who are forced to leave their homes because of floods, heat waves or drought.”

Pope Francis’s concerns are being backed by reputable studies. According to the World Economic Forum, the **lowest income countries** produce one-tenth of emissions, yet they **are the most heavily affected by climate change**. It is estimated that by 2050, unchecked climate change might force more than 200 million people to migrate within their own countries, pushing up to 130 million people into poverty.

For **Pope Francis**, “the fight against poverty” and “the protection of nature” are two parallel paths that must be trodden in the same way by “changing our personal and community habits.” Humanity, the victim of the environmental crisis, can therefore also be the architect for change. And the images in **The Pope Video** demonstrate just that: from waste management to mobility, from agriculture to politics itself – there is so much to do and it all depends on us. For humanity’s destiny and the destiny of creation cannot be separated, as Pope Francis has reiterated during his Pontificate, first in his encyclical [Laudato si' \(2015\)](#) and later with his Apostolic Exhortation [Laudate Deum \(2023\)](#).

### **Hope and act with Creation**

These reflections are also in line with the Pope’s [message](#) for the **World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation 2024**, whose theme is “**Hope and act with Creation**,” inspired by the Letter to the Romans. “The protection of creation, then, 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,” the **Pope** reflects in his message. And he adds, “At stake is not only our earthly life in history, but also, and above all, our future in eternity.”

The **Season of Creation** – an initiative of the **Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development**, which promotes the celebration of life and the protection of God’s creation – begins on 1 September and ends on 4 October, the Feast of Saint Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of ecology.

It was precisely the **Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development** that collaborated on **The Pope Video** this month. Its Prefect, Cardinal Michael Czerny, says, “Creation is groaning. Its suffering is caused by humans who were originally its guardian and are now its subjugator, who ‘arrogantly places the Earth in a “dis-graced” condition, deprived of God’s grace.’” However, in his

Message for the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, the Holy Father invites us as Christians to hope and to act with Creation, which we could translate as 'living in Faith.' It's about listening to the Holy Spirit who is love, not only toward our neighbour, but also toward Creation which is the work of God and is, therefore, interconnected with humanity. Only by liberating the Earth from the condition of slavery to which we have subjected it can we liberate ourselves as well, anticipating the joy of our salvation in Christ.”

### **Hearing the cry of creation**

**Father Frédéric Fornos S.J.**, International Director of the **Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network**, reflects, “the Earth is crying. Along with the cry of the Earth, we also hear the cry of the victims of natural disasters and climate change which is most acutely and directly affecting the countries with fewer resources. Let’s not turn our heads; let’s not be indifferent. Recalling these last two years, let’s put names and faces to these calamities and tragedies experienced in many countries – the huge forest fires in Canada that devastated millions of acres and forced thousands of people to evacuate their homes; the devastating bushfires in Australia that killed millions of animals and destroyed their natural habitats; the catastrophic floods in Pakistan that submerged a third of the country, causing hundreds of deaths and millions of displaced persons; the flash floods in Germany and Belgium that claimed lives and destroyed infrastructure; the severe drought in the Amazon that threatens the unique biodiversity of that region; the heat waves in India that caused hundreds of deaths and created unsustainable living conditions for millions of people; the devastating hurricanes in the United States and the Caribbean that have caused massive destruction and loss of human life. The Earth is crying.

“Like a high-speed train forced to stop for a moment in the countryside, the pandemic could have been the time to listen, to take stock of where we were going, to redirect our societies, our lives, before it was too late, protecting our common home...but so many interests blinded us. Pope Francis invites us to pray, for only prayer can awaken our anesthetized hearts.”

Where can the video be seen?

- [Official website of The Pope Video](#)
- [YouTube channel of The Pope Video](#)
- [Facebook page of The Pope Video](#)
- [The Pope Video on Twitter/X](#)
- [The Pope Video on Instagram](#)



- [The Pope on Twitter/X Verified @Pontifex](#)
- [The Pope on Instagram Verified @Franciscus](#)

#### **About The Pope Video**

The Pope Video is an official global initiative with the purpose of disseminating the Holy Father's monthly prayer intentions. It is carried out by the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network (Apostleship of Prayer). **Since 2016, The Pope Video has had more than 228 million views across all the Vatican's social networks, and is translated into more than 23 languages, receiving press coverage in 114 countries.** The videos are produced and created by The Pope Video Prayer Network team, coordinated by Andrea Sarubbi, and distributed by La Machi Communication for Good Causes. The project is sponsored by [Vatican Media](#). More information: [The Pope Video](#)

#### **About the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network**

The Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network is a Vatican foundation, with the mission of mobilizing Catholics through prayer and action in response to the challenges facing humanity and the mission of the Church. These challenges are presented in the form of prayer intentions entrusted by the Pope to the entire Church. The foundation's mission is inscribed in the dynamic of the Heart of Jesus, a mission of compassion for the world. Founded in 1844 as the Apostleship of Prayer, it is present in 89 countries, and is made up of more than 22 million Catholics. It includes a youth branch, the Eucharistic Youth Movement (EYM). In December 2020, the Pope constituted this pontifical work as a Vatican Foundation and approved its new statutes. Its international director is Fr. Frédéric Fornos, SJ. For more information, visit: <https://www.popesprayer.va>

#### **About the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development**

The Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development was created on 17 August 2016. Beginning on 1 January 2017, the competences of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, the Pontifical Council Cor Unum and the Pontifical Council for Health Care Workers were combined in this Dicastery. The Dicastery promotes the integral development of the person in the light of the Gospel and the Church's social doctrine. Its sphere of expertise lies in the fields of social justice, the common good, peace, the safeguarding of all of Creation, human rights, health, migration and human trafficking, and expresses the Pope's solicitude for those who are suffering and in need. For more information: <https://www.humandevlopment.va/en.html>

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