

Why Celebrate Creation?



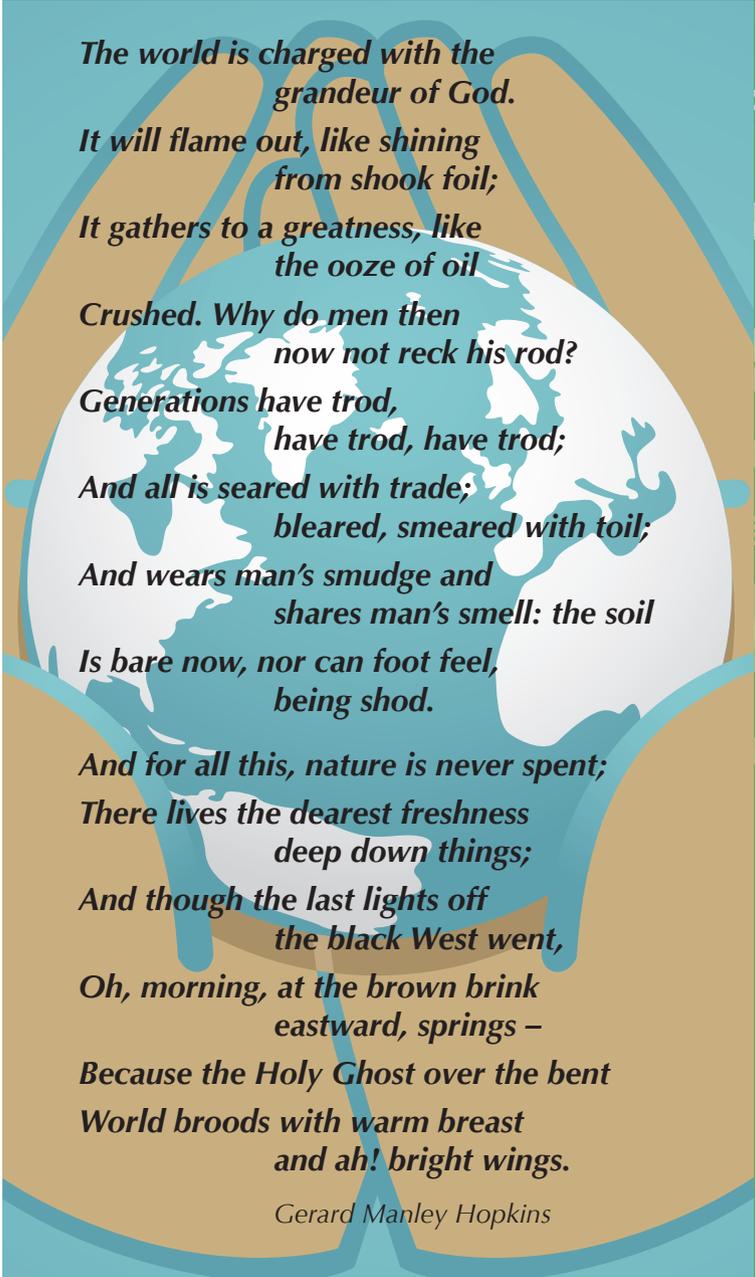
Everyone cares about the planet. Few of us live as if we did. Some of us try to pretend there is nothing wrong. Most of us are too busy or too weak to change our lives.

The Catholic tradition celebrates the goodness of creation, and has always called us to live simply and unselfishly, to seek the truth about the world and to love our fellow-creatures. Together, as a Church, we can make a difference to our individual and our parish lives.



Celebrating Creation allows us, as individuals, parishes and schools, to:

- experience the natural world;
- reflect on our treatment of nature;
- develop understanding of the wisdom embodied in our own tradition;
- explore the issues with those of other faiths.



*The world is charged with the
grandeur of God.
It will flame out, like shining
from shook foil;
It gathers to a greatness, like
the ooze of oil
Crushed. Why do men then
now not reck his rod?
Generations have trod,
have trod, have trod;
And all is seared with trade;
bleared, smeared with toil;
And wears man's smudge and
shares man's smell: the soil
Is bare now, nor can foot feel,
being shod.

And for all this, nature is never spent;
There lives the dearest freshness
deep down things;
And though the last lights off
the black West went,
Oh, morning, at the brown brink
eastward, springs –
Because the Holy Ghost over the bent
World broods with warm breast
and ah! bright wings.*

Gerard Manley Hopkins



The Church has a responsibility towards creation, and she must assert this responsibility in the public sphere. In so doing, she must defend not only earth, air and water as gifts of creation that belong to everyone. She must above all protect mankind from self-destruction.

*Benedict XVI,
Caritas in Veritate 51*

God the Creator

I believe in one God the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth.
(Nicene Creed)

And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good.
(Genesis 1.31)

In Him all things were created, in heaven and on earth. *(Colossians 1.16)*

When you send forth your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the earth. *(Psalm 104.30)*

Bless the Lord, you whales and all creatures that move in the waters...
Bless the Lord, all birds of the air...
Bless the Lord, all beasts and cattle,
(Benedicite)

Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them.
(Matthew 6.26)

Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. *(Psalm 150.6)*

? **What do Christians think?** See:
http://www.secondspring.co.uk/economy/ecology_environment_sustainability.html
<http://www.christian-ecology.org.uk>

God's own world

The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof. *(Psalm 24.1)*

The average Briton's "carbon footprint" is around 10 tonnes of carbon dioxide a year. If you fly a lot it could be much more. The average person in Malawi has a carbon footprint of 0.1 tonnes a year. The planet can handle an average of around 1 tonne a year.



Waste less food

- leave **land** for the hungry!



Use less water

- leave **drink** for the thirsty.



Spend less money

- leave **wealth** for the poor.



Burn less fuel

- leave **hope** for those at risk.

? **Climate change sceptic?** See:
<http://www.skepticalscience.com>
Care for wildlife? See:
<http://www.wwf.org.uk>

God's call to us

You cannot serve both God and Mammon. *(Matthew 6.24)*

Our nature requires no more than will satisfy its needs; we sin only when we desire more than this. What leads us to sin a lot are things that stimulate our desires, such as fancy food or fashion.
(Thomas Aquinas Summa Theologiae 2.2.142.3)

The dramatic threat of ecological breakdown is teaching us the extent to which greed and selfishness - both individual and collective - are contrary to the order of creation, an order which is characterised by mutual dependence.
(John Paul II, World Day of Peace, 1990)

The way humanity treats the environment influences the way it treats itself, and vice versa. This invites contemporary society to a serious review of its lifestyle, which, in many parts of the world is prone to hedonism and consumerism. *(Benedict XVI, Caritas in Veritate 51)*

? **Want to live simply?** See:
<http://www.cafod.org.uk/resources/worship/livesimply>
Reduce your carbon footprint? See:
<http://www.operationnoah.org>