“God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.”

“Foster a deepening of our spirituality and a new consciousness of our identity as Good Shepherd... which enlivens our desire to ‘shepherd’ God’s creation.” (Excerpt of the Direction Statement 29th Congregational Chapter of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, July 2009)

We prepare the prayer room with flowers and plants and sit in a circle around three candles. We clarify, who will say the different texts. For the beginning, we choose a song, which expresses our joy about God’s creation.

1. We light the first candle for God, Creator, who has ignited the light in the cosmos and has breathed life into Creation.
2. We light the second candle for Jesus Christ. Through him, everything has been created; he has promised us life in its fullness.
3. We light the third candle for the Holy Spirit, who inflames our faith and gives us courage, to stand up for the integrity of God’s creation.

“God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.” (Gen.1.31)

The biblical texts indicate a Creator God, who is a lover of life. “You love everything, which exists, and do not loathe anything of all that you have created; for if you would have hated something, you would not have created it.” (Wisdom 11.24)

In Psalm 104.24 the Psalmist gives thanks, saying: “Lord, you have made so many things! How wise you were when you made all of them! The earth is full of your creatures.”

In Genesis 2.15 it is said: “The Lord God put the man in the Garden of Eden. He put him there to work its ground and to take care of it.”

God has given us a beautiful living space on our earth, so that we may take care of it responsibly. Today, more and more people realise how much we have failed in this role and endangered this living space. We enrich ourselves greedily, using creation for our profit. But even if we do not want to do so, we hazard the damage in favour of our personal needs.

We stand appalled at this unrestrained exploitation, which is the consequence of our behaviour. Because a single act, which one of us does, as well as a single renouncement which one of us makes, results in a chain of different consequences and implications, worldwide.

What can WE do? Think about it and share the possibilities, which you have in your situation, with the others present.
On April 22nd, we commemorate MOTHER EARTH International Day, defined by the United Nations.

“Good Shepherd understands that reconciliation with our earth is reconciliation with ourselves and with our Creator, calling for a new consciousness, a new identity, centred on the kinship of all creation and the implementation of Human Rights for all. Such consciousness requires a shift from a history of hierarchical exploitation to an ethic of right relationship that seeks reconciliation among all living creatures, with future generations in mind.” (Excerpt of Good Shepherd Position Paper on Ecology, page 14, GSJPO 2011)

We are called to change
- from a focus on material goods to holistic well-being;
- from excess to sufficiency;
- from exclusion to inclusion;
- from competition to cooperation;
- from pursuing privilege to serving the common good;
- from the pre-eminence of humanity to reverence for all life. (A Call to Integrate Faith, Ecology and the Global Economy).

After a short time of reflection we formulate, inspired by the texts, our intercessional prayers, and close with the OUR FATHER.

**FINAL PRAYER:**

*And there is HOPE:* By Alexander Lohner; MISEREOR
*Translation: MISEREOR*

The human sin you call climate change has turned Mother Earth into a desert of dust, the sun that dispels the dark into a searing oven, and the water that refreshes and gives life into an unpredictable torrent.

And yet this place is still home to man and beast, to me, Pukas, a young girl, who dreams of one day being a teacher, having happy children, living in a country with a turbulent past.

A gentle wind that should bring relief, often takes my breath away but never my hope.

For I believe that God will not allow His Creation to be torn from His grasp that He through His earth through His sun through His light through His air and through all His elements will – despite all this – go on feeding our famished love and quenching our parched desires.

Submitted by the JP-Team of the Province Germany / Albania