



## DIOCESE OF HARRISBURG

## OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

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August 28, 2025

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

On September 1, our Church will observe the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation. This is a time when we are invited to reflect deeply on our sacred responsibility toward the Earth, the precious gift entrusted to us by our Creator. This year's theme, "Seeds of Peace and Hope," calls us to nurture a future where harmony between humanity and creation flourishes.

Catholic social teaching reminds us that caring for creation is not optional; it is a moral imperative rooted in the dignity of every person and the interconnectedness of all life. Pope Francis, in his landmark encyclical *Laudato Si'*, powerfully calls us to recognize the "cry of the earth and the cry of the poor" as one. We cannot separate the health of our planet from the well-being of the most vulnerable among us.

In early June, Pope Leo authorized a new "Mass for the Care of Creation," saying during his first celebration of this Mass in early July that "...we should pray for the conversion of the many people, inside and outside of the Church, who do not yet recognize the urgent need to care for our common home."<sup>1</sup> The Holy Father added in a message for the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation that, "Environmental justice – implicitly proclaimed by the prophets – can no longer be regarded as an abstract concept or a distant goal. It is an urgent need that involves much more than simply protecting the environment. For it is a matter of justice – social, economic and human. For believers it is also a duty born of faith, since the universe reflects the face of Jesus Christ, in whom all things were created and redeemed. In a world where the most vulnerable of our brothers and sisters are the first to suffer the devastating effects of climate change, deforestation and pollution, care for creation becomes an expression of our faith and humanity."<sup>2</sup>

In our daily lives, we are the sowers of these seeds of peace and hope that demonstrate a visible expression of our faith. Each act of care, respect, and stewardship for creation, and especially for our brothers and sisters most in need, nurtures peace and hope in a world often tainted by division and despair. We are entrusted as stewards of creation, not its owners, called to protect this sacred home for present and future generations.

May this day renew our commitment to care for creation with love and courage. Let us take concrete steps, such as reducing waste, conserving energy, and advocating for policies that protect our environment. May the seeds we plant today blossom into a world abundantly filled with peace, justice, and hope.

Sincerely in Christ,

+ Timothy C. Senior

Most Reverend Timothy C. Senior  
Bishop of Harrisburg

<sup>1</sup> McLellan, Justin, "Pope prays for conversion of those resisting climate action at new Mass," *Catholic News Service*, <https://www.usccb.org/news/2025/pope-prays-conversion-those-resisting-climate-action-new-mass> (accessed July 10, 2025).

<sup>2</sup> Leo, "Message of the Holy Father for the tenth World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation," *Vatican*, <https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2025/07/02/250702e.html> (accessed July 10, 2025).