

September 2024

PRAYING WITH *the Holy Father*

Monthly Intention Lesson Plan developed for
Middle School and High School Students



Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network
UNITED STATES | CANADA APOSTLESHIP OF PRAYER

Produced for the [Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network](#)

in collaboration with [St. Joseph Ministries](#)

IN HONOREM PRINCIPIS APOSTOLICI V. B.

September 2024

For the Cry of the Earth

Opening Prayer

- Begin with the Sign of the Cross
- Prayer: The Daily Offering



Father, here I am. I know you are always with me. I place my heart in the Heart of your Son, Jesus, who gives Himself to us in the Eucharist each day. May your Holy Spirit make me His friend and apostle, available for His mission of compassion. Take, Lord and receive all of my prayers, works, joys, and sufferings this day -all I am and possess- in communion with my brothers and sisters in the Pope's prayer network. With Mother Mary, I pray for the mission of the Church, for our bishops, and for the Pope's intention this month. Amen.

Introduce Intention

The Intention

- For September, the Holy Father invites us to pray with him for the cry of the earth.
- We pray that each one of us will hear and take to heart the cry of the Earth and of victims of natural disasters and climactic change, and that all will undertake to personally care for the world in which we live.

The Pope Video

- If time allows, watch the Pope Video produced for this month.
- The video is available at <https://thepopevideo.org/>

Sacred Scripture

- Read Genesis 1:1-31 or 1 Corinthians 10:26

Note: Invite one of your students to read the scripture entry.

Reflection

by Ryan Grusenski - Catholic Ecology Center Board Member

Four years ago my friend and I decided to start keeping honey bees in my backyard. So that spring we welcomed 100,000 heads of “livestock” onto my small patch of land in a suburb of Milwaukee.

In the evenings as I lay myself down to bed after I have completed some bee-keeping work, which usually involves slowly and carefully removing and examining small pieces of their hive-home looking for signs of health and checking the work of the queen and all her attendants, I have the sensation of buzzing bees flying by my ears. My head is overwhelmed by the bustling business of my “sister bees.” After a number of hours working among these ladies, you cannot “unhear” the buzzing.

Pope Francis’ intention this month invites us first to hear. This suggests that we all this month have to stop our own minds and mouths from running on and on and listen. Like the honey bees, the gift of our created world buzzes with the creativity of our Lord. After time, our Lord becomes impossible to “unhear” in and through His creation. This month our effort is to tune into the sounds of creation and in so doing to find our Lord hard at work.

Like any skill, we can improve our listening skills to hear the hints our Lord is leaving us. As it is with our ears, so it is with our souls. Our Lord asks Elijah the prophet to listen and only reveals Himself in a “tiny whispering sound.” Saint Paul goes as far to say that “all creation is groaning in labor pains”. What is creation groaning about? Saint Paul has an answer for us. Creation is waiting for “the revelation of the children of God.”

The “children of God”? That’s us! This month pray firstly then, as the Holy Father’s petition suggests, to hear and then discern something to eagerly undertake. Find a local hiking trail, make a small change to reduce the waste you produce, or support a local program that educates the youth on the environment and their place in it.

What is it that the Lord is asking you to take to heart regarding this gift of the created world? Consider the tireless work of the honey bee, then take up your own noble work to care for creation.

Saint Connection

St. Francis of Assisi is a model of humility, love for creation, and service to others. Share his life, particularly his deep commitment to poverty, peace, and living the Gospel message.

- Advocated for simplicity, care for the poor, and reverence for all of God's creation.
- Known for his prayer, "Lord, make me an instrument of your peace."
- Renounced wealth and worldly power to embrace a life of poverty and humility, becoming a beloved saint and an example of radical faith and devotion to Christ.

Discussion

Encourage students to reflect on how care of the world impacts communities. Allow them to share their thoughts aloud.

- How often do you reflect on how you care for the gift of the world that has been given to us by God?
- In what ways can you bring others into what you are doing to care for the world?

Extension Activities:

- Organize a service project, such as a campus, parish cleanup or a recycling drive.

Closing Prayer

- Prayer:

Pray the [Canticle of the Sun](#) by St. Francis of Assisi

- End with the Sign of the Cross.