



SEASON OF CREATION 2021:

Restoring Our Common Home through Tree Planting

'All of us can cooperate as instruments of God for the care of creation, each according to his or her own culture, experience, involvements and talents.' (*Laudato Si'*, 14)

INTRODUCTION

In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis urges us to listen to *the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor*. We are more than aware that our world is facing a devastating biodiversity crisis as well as a climate crisis. During this Season of Creation, we are inviting your parish and diocese to plant a native Irish Tree or Fruit Tree as a symbolic action, declaring our commitment to care more deeply for God's Creation.

We are delighted to have the expertise and support of **The Easy Treesie Project**. Easy Treesie has a goal of planting a million trees in Ireland by 2023. This is part of the global initiative to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and is also part of the **UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration** (2021-2030) plan to restore a trillion trees worldwide. If achieved, this would reduce global temperatures by 1 degree Celsius and play an important part of a solution to the ecological crisis while we work to decarbonise our economy. The Easy Treesie project, working together with Crann, Trees for Ireland and the Tree Council of Ireland presented its 100,000th sapling to President Michael D. Higgins on National Tree Day (October 7th) in 2020.



PROJECT INVITATION

For the Season of Creation, we would encourage each diocese and parish to plant a native Irish Tree on church grounds in time for this year's National Tree Day on October 7th.

Thanks to guidance and support from Easy Treesie, we suggest the following steps:

- 1) Buy your native Irish tree from a local nursery. You can see a full list of trees here: <https://www.treecouncil.ie/eannanilamhnanativeirishtreetrails>
- 2) Please follow these recommended planting guidelines: https://crann.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/crann_abc_of_planting_trees.pdf
- 3) Make it a special moment in the Season of Creation, for example on the World Day of Prayer for Creation (September 1st) or on the Feast of St Francis (October 4th).
- 4) You may also wish to make a donation to plant a tree in another part of Ireland and you can do so via CRANN <https://crann.ie/> or through An Tairseach Eco-Spirituality Centre: <https://antairseach.ie/tree-sponsorship/>
- 5) Please add your tree to the United Nations Environment Project tree counter here: <https://a.plant-for-the-planet.org/treemapper>
- 6) Parishioners / schools may also wish to restore trees to their local landscape, and we would encourage parishes to continue with the national mass-planting efforts of bare root saplings which will run from All Saints' Day until Easter. Such trees are usually ordered in early autumn and generally cost roughly €1 each including delivery from your local nurseries or from <https://www.treesontheland.com>. More details of the project are on www.easytreesie.com.

If you require any advice, please do contact Orla Farrell, Project Coordinator of Easy Treesie by emailing easytreesie@gmail.com. The *Laudato Si'* Working Group would also love to hear about your tree planting efforts this Season of Creation and you can contact us through jane.mellett@trocaire.org

'Saint Therese of Lisieux invites us to practise the little way of love, not to miss out on a kind word, a smile or any small gesture which sows peace and friendship.' (*Laudato Si'*, 230)

'The universe unfolds in God, who fills it completely. Hence, there is a mystical meaning to be found in a leaf, in a mountain trail, in a dewdrop, in a poor person's face. The ideal is not only to pass from the exterior to the interior to discover the action of God in the soul, but also to discover God in all things.' (*Laudato Si'*, 233)

PRAYERS FOR TREE PLANTING

Tree Planting Prayer in Honour of *Laudato Si'*¹

God of Wonder, as we gather together to bless the earth and celebrate the potential of the tree before us, we pray that it may serve as a living witness to our commitment to heal our common home through long-lasting, bold changes. Grant us the courage to continue to take this stand for the sake of the goodness of your creation, and the inspiration and delight it provides us. Through Christ, your Son, our Lord:

*The trees of the LORD are well watered,
the cedars of Lebanon that he planted.
There the birds make their nests;
the stork has its home in the junipers.* (Psalm 104)

Creator Spirit, bless this soil and the nutrients it holds. May the life teeming within it spring forth. We honour your cyclical creation and pray for the humility to revere and respect this soil for the nourishment it provides. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

1. For the full liturgy please see <https://catholicclimatecovenant.org/resource/tree-planting-service-and-prayer>



A short prayer service for planting a tree²

Almighty God, without you nothing is strong, nothing is holy, from the birth of creation, your breath, the breath of life has been in all living things. You care for all life, animals of the sea and land, birds of the air, plants of the garden and the trees of the forest and field all clap their hands in praise of their maker, sustainer, redeemer. We come before you today in humility and meekness seeking your blessing in the life of this tree which is planted for this Season of Creation.

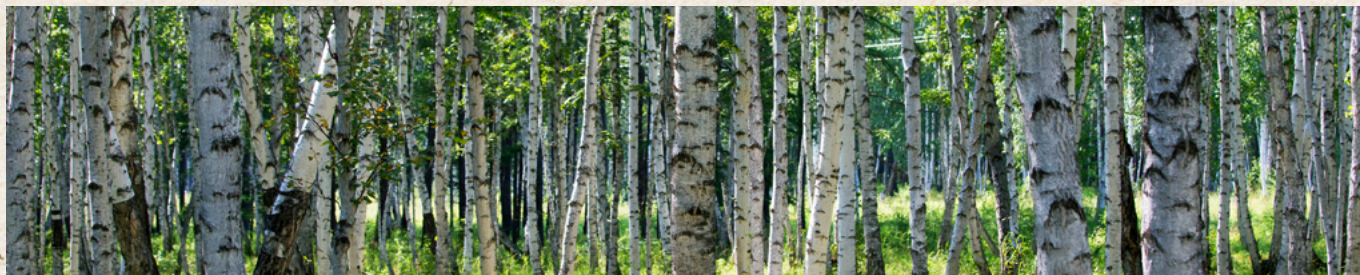
May this tree take root in this soil, drawing from it water and nutrients so it may grow and blossom, bringing beauty in flower and leaf, offering shelter to birds and insects, enriching this place with its presence and life.

May this tree's presence in this place speak to all who see it of the power and the life of the world revealed through Jesus Christ our Lord.

As a carpenter's son Jesus went to death on a cross, formed from a tree that has become for us the tree of life. May it bring hope and assurance of renewal and restoration. Amen.

2. Adapted from <http://www.kirkyard.net/additional-reasources/liturgy-for-the-dedication-of-a-tree/>





A Reading from Revelation 22

'Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life. It was as clear as glass and came from the throne of God and of the Lamb. It runs down the centre of the street in the city. On each side of the river was the tree of life. It gives twelve different kinds of fruit. It gives this fruit twelve times a year, new fruit each month. Its leaves are used to heal the nations.'

Trees are symbols of life and healing throughout the bible, from the tree of life in Genesis to revelation bringing healing for the nations bringing fruit each month. So, we plant this tree for the glory of God a reminder that in life or death, nothing can separate us from the love of God revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord.

And now we dedicate ourselves to the service of God, to flourish and grow in this place so that, by our words and actions, love will take root, blossom and grow in our lives, sustained in and through the love you give each one of us.

Final Blessing

Go in the knowledge that the tree of life brings healing to the nations; healing which is for you, through the grace and peace of Christ, and may the blessing of our Creator God, our brother Jesus and the Holy Spirit be with you and all those you love this day and forevermore. Amen.



The *Laudato Si'* Goals

Pope Francis has announced seven *Laudato Si'* Goals to be achieved over the next seven years by parishes, dioceses, schools and families. Your Tree Planting initiative will help your parish or diocese to achieve these goals. You can find out more at www.laudatosiactionplatform.org

