



## Season of Creation 2022

### LISTEN TO THE VOICE OF CREATION

#### Engage your local ecology through this Earth Examen

*(Adapted for use over the four weeks of the  
Season of Creation)*

An examen is a way of beholding an object or being in prayerful wonder. Through questions, you are invited to reflect on God's presence and the goodness of that which you behold. During this Season of Creation, consider contemplating a part of your local ecology. Familiarize yourself with the theme. Prepare by taking time to consider how you can best open your senses to listen to the voices that praise God, and draw our hearts to God's presence in that place of contemplation. This is an exercise that you can choose to do alone, or with a group.

The Federation Ecology Committee has designed the examen to be prayed over the four weeks of the Season of Creation (or at any time of your choosing). As always follow your heart to allow this offering to draw you into a deeper relationship with creation.

**Pick a natural place to contemplate.** A forest. A river. A city street with a natural area. An urban park. A farmer's field. A hilltop. A garden.

**Find a comfortable place to rest in or near this place.**

**Enter into prayer in whatever way is natural to you.** Invite Holy Wisdom to open the eyes of your heart. When you are ready, reflect on the following questions...

## Earth Examen Week 1

**Become aware of God's presence in a natural place that you are contemplating.**



Open your eyes (or close them) and open the eyes of your heart

How is God present in this place? How does all the life you see exist in God's spirit?

**Reflect on the ecological cycles of this place with gratitude for all that it provides.**

Is this a watershed that filters water? Is this a deciduous forest that fixes nutrients? Is this a meadow or field that fixes nitrogen? Is this a green space that absorbs CO<sub>2</sub> and cleans the air?

**Listen for the voices that speak in this place,**

Fill your lungs with breath. Be attentive to what you feel (the air, grass, sand, soil, sun, rain) on your skin.

**Closing Prayer:**

For all that this place provides to nurture you and all that belong to this place, let a feeling of gratitude fill you.

## Earth Examen Week 2

**Become aware of God's presence in a natural place that you are contemplating**

Open your eyes (or close them) and open the eyes of your heart

**Reflect on the ecological cycles of this place with gratitude for all that it provides**

How do you feel knowing that you, earthling, belong to this place, are made of the same carbon, breathe the same air, are nurtured by the same cycles and life processes, and are enlivened by the same Spirit of the Creator?

**Listen for the voices that speak in this place,**

Open your ears to listen to the voices of creation in this place. Who are they? What do you hear them saying?



**Closing Prayer:**

For all that this place provides to nurture you and all that belong to this place, let a feeling of gratitude fill you.

## Earth Examen Week 3

**Become aware of God's presence in a natural place that you are contemplating**

Open your eyes (or close them) and open the eyes of your heart

**Reflect on the ecological cycles of this place with gratitude for all that it provides**

How do you feel knowing that the Holy Spirit has filled this place for geological ages, with every plant, animal, organism and mineral that has called this place home in the deep past, makes its home here with you now, and will live here with creatures in this place in the future?



**Listen for the voices that speak in this place,**

Who is missing or lost from this place?

What does their absence tell you?

**Consider the fragility of your sacred space**

What niches and diversity must be protected to maintain the health of this habitat? How do you feel when you consider the fragility of life that depends on the health of this place?

**Closing Prayer:**

For all that this place provides to nurture you and all that belong to this place, let a feeling of gratitude fill you.

## Earth Examen Week 4

**Become aware of God's presence in a natural place that you are contemplating**

Open your eyes (or close them) and open the eyes of your heart

**Reflect on the ecological cycles of this place with gratitude for all that it provides**

What plants, animals, microbes and minerals are sheltered here? How do they serve the whole earth in their being?



**Listen for the voices that speak in this place,**

Listen for the voices that speak in this place, and pay attention to what you feel as you contemplate the health of this site.

**Consider the fragility of your sacred natural place(s)**

What stresses threaten the balance of this particular ecosystem and could drive your co-creatures from their home in this place?

**Closing Prayer:** We pray for sacred balance in these ecosystems. Increase our awareness of our effect on this balance and give us the courage to act with justice as we hear the voice of creation. And always, we are filled with gratitude for belonging to this place – to all of creation.