

LITURGY FOR JUSTICE SUNDAY - 24 AUGUST 2025

CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF INDIA OFFICE OF JUSTICE, PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT

Readings as per 21st Sunday in Ordinary Time - Year C:

Is 66: 18-21, Heb 12: 5-7, 11-13 & Lk 13: 22-30

Introduction:

The Church today celebrates Justice Sunday, the theme being, “A Call for Climate Justice and the Common Home: Ecological conversion, transformation and resistance to false solutions’. This was the theme of the message from the Catholic Episcopal Conferences and Councils of Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean on the occasion of Cop30. We pray that we may grow in awareness to take care of our Mother Earth. Please stand and welcome our celebrant as we take our Entrance Hymn.

Prayers of the Faithful:

Celebrant:

On this Justice Sunday we bring our petitions to the Lord, praying that the Lord of all creation may enlighten and help us all. *Response: Lord hear our prayer.*

We pray for Our Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV, Bishops, priests and religious that they may keep up their commitment to protect Mother earth by influencing policies for a better environment.

We pray for our local leaders, that they may see the folly of development, where natural resources are depleted and cannot be replaced.

We pray for Equity, Justice and Protection. Equity where Rich nations pay their ecological debt with fair climate finance without further indebting the Global South. Protection- where we may be able to defend indigenous peoples, ecosystems and impoverished communities.

We pray that our parish communities may prioritise people’s well-being and ensure conditions for sustainable life on the planet.

Celebrant:

God Our Heavenly Father, along with our prayers we bring to you our wounded earth, asking you to restore it to its original beauty and splendour. We make this prayer through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

Reflections for Homily:

The salvation of our God who is revealed in the Bible is not just for a few. It is open to everyone. This is the great lesson taught by the readings for this Sunday. Jesus says, “Make an effort to enter through the narrow door, for many, I tell you, will try to enter but will not succeed” (v. 24). With these words, Jesus makes it clear that it is not a question of numbers, but it is a question of going through the right passage now. This passage is for everyone but it is narrow.

Today we celebrate Justice Sunday. The theme of this celebration is “**A CALL FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE AND THE COMMON HOME: ECOLOGICAL CONVERSION, TRANSFORMATION AND RESISTANCE TO FALSE SOLUTIONS.**” The passage is narrow when we reflect on the urgency and vastness of the climate crisis and our half-hearted response as individual and as a community.

Asia is warming faster than the global average and was hardest hit by climate disasters in 2023 (WMO, 2023). Faith-based groups across Asia and around the world are seeking ways to effectively influence the upcoming Conference of the Parties (COP 30) on climate change in Brazil this November.

The Papal Encyclical *Laudato Si'* - On Our Common Home, a faith-based and integral ecology document on the environment and sustainable development, opens by invoking Saint Francis of Assisi's canticle. It treats our common home (Earth) as a sister with whom we share our lives and as a mother who opens her arms in embrace, saying our sister, Mother Earth sustains and governs us.

A Message from The Catholic Episcopal Conferences And Councils Of Africa, Asia, Latin America and The Caribbean on the Occasion of Cop30 (Conference of Parties) which will be held in November 2025 in Brazil states:

“Inspired by both *Laudato Si'* by Pope Francis and Pope Leo XIV's call to live an integral ecology with justice, we call for a profound ecological conversion.

Ten years since the publication of *Laudato Si'* and the signing of the Paris Agreement, the countries of the world have not responded with the necessary urgency. The Church will not remain silent. We will continue to raise our voice alongside science, civil society, and all people.

The climate crisis is an urgent reality, with global warming reaching 1.55°C in 2024. It is not just a technical problem: *it is an existential issue of justice, dignity and care for our common home.*

The Churches of Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, in an intercontinental alliance which strengthens our prophetic voice and promotes cooperation among peoples of the Global South, call upon all people of good will to embark on a path of ecological conversion, inspired by the spirituality of care, “Buen Vivir” (*Querida Amazonia*, 8) and “happy sobriety” (*Laudato Si'*, 223) proposed by Pope Francis.

Hence, inspired both by the legacy of Pope Francis and by Pope Leo XIV's call to live an integral ecology with justice, peace and prophetic courage, we affirm: our Churches of the Global South are not merely witnesses to pain, but seeds of a new future. May the Spirit grant us the unity, boldness and tenderness necessary to continue weaving together the Kingdom of God on this wounded Earth.”

The narrow door is clearly restrictive not in reference to people but in terms of the “right” to be saved. Salvation does not come by a mere physical closeness to Jesus (Vv. 26-27) but by a conversion especially an ecological conversion.

Most Rev. Gerald Isaac Lobo, Bishop of Udupi and Chairman

Most Rev. Jaya Rao Polimera, Bishop of Eluru and Member Bishop

Most Rev. Mar Jose Pulickal, Bishop of Kanjirapally and Member Bishop