



**CELEBRATING CREATION DAY AND CREATION TIME**  
(A Pastoral Statement of the CBCP Permanent Council)

1. Today, September 1, in many parts of the world Christian churches are celebrating “Creation Day.” They have also set the period from this day to October 4 (the Feastday of St. Francis of Assisi) or the Sunday after October 4 as “Creation Time.” We wish to introduce this period to our Catholic faithful and acknowledge “Creation”, that priceless gift of the Almighty and Loving Creator who has made us into his own image and likeness.

2. In our landmark Pastoral Letter on Ecology, “What is Happening to Our Beautiful Land” (January 29, 1988), we said: “At this point in the history of our country it is crucial that people motivated by religious faith develop a deep appreciation for the fragility of our islands’ life-systems and take steps to defend the Earth. “It is a matter of life and death” (see Pastoral Letters, 1945-1995, p. 663). This is why today we thank the many Christian churches that celebrate Creation Day and Creation Time, in order to offer “prayers and supplications to the Maker of all, both as thanksgiving for the great gift of creation and as petition for its protection and salvation” (*Ecumenical Patriarch Dimitrios I of Constantinople; it was his call in 1999 that set off this ecumenical celebration*).

3. Our pastoral letter of 1988 reminded us of our responsibility to preserve and promote the integrity of creation in the face of the planetary ecological crisis. The life of God’s creation is “the ultimate pro-life issue”. We have been made “stewards” of this divine creation. We know that all humanity continues to fail in this regard as ecological destruction and degradation continues without abating. Since the publication of our pastoral letter many places in our country have been hit hard by flashfloods causing great destruction to human lives and property. Such destruction is attributable to wanton deforestation. Even today mining explorations and inadequately tested agricultural and seed technology involving genetically modified organisms could pose new threats to the environment and to human lives.

4. Therefore, the Church calls us to conversion regarding ecological concerns. In order to undergo this conversion, individual dioceses, parishes, basic ecclesial communities, schools, religious congregations and various other church and church related groups have initiated over the last several years various ecological education programs, environmental protection activities, and sustainable development projects. We welcome ecumenical initiatives in ecological advocacy in order preserve and promote God’s irreplaceable gift of Creation.

5. During this special period of “Creation Time” we urge as we have done in our 1988 pastoral letter that “our different liturgies celebrate the beauty and pain of our world, our connectedness to the natural world and the on-going struggle for social justice” (*Ibid.*, p. 672). We also urge once again the setting up of a Care of the Earth ministry at every level of Church organization. We strongly remind our government not to pursue short-term economic gains at the expense long-term ecological damage.

6. As we celebrate Creation Time, let us deepen our faith in the Triune God through our communal liturgies, devotions, and in our personal prayer life. Let us celebrate God the Father as the Creator, Jesus Christ as the Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit as Sustainer of all life, human and non-human. Let us “thank God for the many ways He has gifted our land” and “resolve to cherish and protect what remains of this bounty for this and future generations of Filipinos” (*Ibid.*, p. 664) May Mary, Mother of Life, protect us, bless and heal our land.

For the CBCP Permanent Council:

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September 1, 2003