

Day for the Care of Creation. Don Savina (CEI): "If the world is sick it is also because the heart of man is sick"

"The pandemic was an ordeal that brought us all to our knees. Today, this same ordeal offers us a chance to get back on our feet. However, this will happen only if we act in unison and in a new way." This is the meaning of the Message of the Day for the Care of Creation that the Italian Bishops' – CEI - Commissions on Social Affairs and Labour and on Ecumenism and Dialogue published today marking the celebration of World Environment Day. "We are living a time of pandemic and we have not yet overcome it," Don **Giuliano Savina**, Director of the CEI Office for Ecumenism and Dialogue, told SIR. *"This time is both crucial and dramatic. Whether and how we will overcome it is up to the sense of responsibility of each and every one of us. We have been given signals and these signals today must become seeds for new fruits".* **What role can be the role of Churches and religions?** They have a very important role, especially for the formation of conscience. If the world is sick - as we wrote in the Message - it is also



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because there is a sick heart. The heart of man is sick. He must return to contemplate Creation as it was bestowed upon us by the Lord. While this pandemic has tragically exposed the fragility of human condition, it has also enabled us to recognize ourselves as human; to realize that we mutually depend on one another. All on the same boat. During this period Pope Francis has guided us along this path. He did so by proposing two important occasions. The first was in March, when he called on Christians of every denomination to join together in reciting the Lord's Prayer for the end of the pandemic. The second was May 14, Day of Prayer, Fasting and Charity launched by the Higher Committee of Human Fraternity. **Which initiatives were promoted in Italy?** In 2018 we hosted a very significant ecumenical conference in Milan at the end of which the Christian Churches in Italy signed and published a joint statement of commitment to a new world. The document sets out practical proposals and initiatives that can serve as guidelines for a new direction today. These include the proposal to communicate the beauty of creation and denounce the conflicts with God's plan for creation; the invitation to change our behaviours and habits that are not in harmony with the ecosystem, together with the willingness and determination to work in synergy with all those in civil society whose commitment is motivated by the same spirit. It must also be said that in recent years, the initiatives jointly promoted by the Churches for the environment have increased, especially in the context of the National Day for the Care of Creation, celebrated on 1 September. **Thus we cannot act as we did before the pandemic. What needs to change?** This tragic time is an inducement for us to undertake serious discernment. The question is, how do we intend to overcome it? The future will depend on the answer everyone is called upon to give with sense of responsibility. It takes very little to forget. It takes very little to succumb - as we are seeing these days - to violence and

[wickedness. This time has challenged us. Now is the time to sow seeds. Tomorrow we will reap the fruits of what we have sown today.](#)

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