



Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Dear brothers and sisters of many different faiths,

The intention we entrust to our prayers on September 27, during the Season of Creation, which Christian churches are currently observing, focuses on a consequence of war that is all too often overlooked: **environmental devastation.**

Wars do not merely kill people. They poison the air, contaminate soil and aquifers, set forests and crops ablaze, destroy ecosystems and water infrastructures, spread toxic substances, and leave behind wounds that continue to cause death long after the weapons have fallen silent. Even rebuilding what has been destroyed requires enormous amounts of energy and raw materials.

A study by Scientists for Global Responsibility and the Conflict and Environment Observatory estimate that the overall climate footprint of military operations accounts for around 5.5 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions. This estimate, however, does not include many indirect effects of war, such as wildfires, forced displacement of people and reconstruction. If the world's armies were a country, they would have the fourth-largest climate footprint on the planet. Yet the reporting of military emissions continues to be incomplete and often voluntary, and there is no specific, effective international system in place that requires the measurement, prevention and remediation of the environmental damage caused by conflicts.

On September 27, let us pray, each according to our own faith and tradition, that awareness may grow that caring for creation is an essential part of building peace. Let us pray that the international community will fill this void, ensure transparency regarding emissions from military equipment, and recognize the environment as a victim of war that must be protected.

Let us combine prayer with action: let us call for enforceable rules, independent monitoring and clear accountability. There will be no peace amongst peoples as long as we continue to wage war on the Earth. Protecting our common home means protecting the lives and future of everyone.

May the Lord give you peace

Assisi, September 2026

+ Felice Accrocca, Bishop