**JAEI Environmental Corner**

**World Environment Day - 2016**

## *“Go Wild for Life”*

The booming illegal trade in wildlife products is eroding Earth’s precious biodiversity, robbing us of our natural heritage and driving whole species to the brink of extinction. The killing and smuggling is also undermining economies and eco-systems, fuelling organised crime, and feeding corruption and insecurity across the globe.

Wildlife crime endangers not only iconic elephants and rhinos, but even smaller species such as abalone, tortoises, lizards and even dung beetles!

The multi-billion-dollar illegal wildlife trade is facilitated by corruption at every point along often labyrinthine trade routes, robbing animals of their lives, and people of their heritage, economic opportunities, and social and political well-being. Corruption at all levels of policy and law enforcement remains a massive issue, and unless it is urgently and effectively addressed, curbing the illegal wildlife trade remains a distant goal.

Huge efforts to counter the illicit trade - including stronger policies, awareness campaigns and investments in community conservation and law enforcement - have scored some great successes. However, many species remain at risk and it will take a dedicated and sustained effort by each and every one of us to turn the tide.

How can we do it? More people need to understand the damage this illicit business is doing to our environment, livelihoods, communities and security. We must change our habits and behaviour so that demand for illegal wildlife products falls. More awareness and action pushes governments and international bodies to introduce and enforce tougher laws and combat those still willing to break them.

This year’s theme for World Environment Day – “***Go Wild for Life”*** – encourages everyone to celebrate all those species under threat and take action to help safeguard them for future generations. This can be about animals, birds or plants that are threatened within your local area as well as at the national or global level - many local extinctions will eventually add up to a global extinction! Whoever you are, and wherever you live, show zero-tolerance for the illegal trade in wildlife in word and deed, and make a difference.

The Endangered Wildlife Trusts’ Project ***Hayi Laa!*** is an endeavour to reduce the illegal trade in wildlife and wildlife products through various initiatives including capacity building among law enforcement agencies and the judiciary, working with communities impacted by wildlife crime, cooperation and strategy development with other conservation NGOs, commenting on proposed legislation, and support for various rhino conservation initiatives.

In order to highlight this scourge - perhaps this Liturgy especially compiled for World Environment Sunday 2016 by *GreenAnglicans* can be used as a fitting tribute to all our species lost to the devastation wrought by this menace.

**Suggested Readings**

* Genesis 1:12-28
* Psalm 148
* Rev 5:11-14
* Matthew 10:26-33

**Introduction**

**Leader** We light a candle to God, the Creator, who created light in the cosmos and breathed life into all creation.

***A candle is lit***

Leader We light a candle to Jesus Christ,

The light of the world,

our hope and our salvation.

***A candle is lit***

**Leader** We light a candle to the Holy Spirit,

who sets our faith on fire

and gives us courage to follow the truth.

***A candle is lit*.**

*(Per Harling. Reproduced by ECEN for Creation Time 2001)*

**Kyrie**

As we come home to Earth.

**Lord have mercy**

As we seek to love our home.

**Christ, have mercy.**

As we seek to care for our kin.

**Lord, have mercy.**

**God, our Creator, help us to love**

**all creatures as kin,**

**all animals as partners on Earth,**

**all birds as messengers of praise,**

**all tiny beings as expressions of your mysterious design**

**and protect all creatures as voices of hope. Amen.**

*(*[*www.seasonofcreation.com*](http://www.seasonofcreation.com)*)*

**Collect**

Creator God

out of the overflowing of your love you created all things

with rich variety and great beauty

and entrusted us with responsibility for them

grant that we might so value all that you have given into our care

that we may strive to sustain its blessings for all people for all time

through our Lord and saviour Jesus Christ

who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit

one God now and for ever

Amen

**Prayers**

O God, enlarge within us the sense of fellowship with all living things, for our brothers and sisters, the animals who cannot talk, for we share the earth as our common home. God of all creation, as we look at the environment, your divine power and immense love are ever present. We thank you for the beautiful creation and abundant resources you have provided your children. We ask for your help in revealing how we can be better stewards of your creation. Help us to use only the resources we need, never being selfish by taking more than necessary. Please give us the opportunity to share our wealth with those who are less fortunate instead of disposing of our surplus. Help us to remember that the environment is home to all life and that we must take up the responsibility to ensure all life is respected. We thank you for this day and ask for your blessing on this journey. Amen. *(CHAUSA)*

God of creation, you created animals to roam the earth and fish to fill the seas. We pray for creatures on the verge of extinction, and that those responsible for poaching and polluting will be held responsible. Help us to live in a way that does not endanger life, but cherishes and nourished the life around us. Amen *(Sojourners)*

May we realize that animals do not live for us alone, but for themselves and for you, and that they too love the sweetness of life. Amen. Prayer of St Basil *(Adapted)*

**Creative Suggestions**

* **Show a video clip before your Sermon slot**

Video Clip - *What a wonderful world* – (this clip can be downloaded through FireFox – small download) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B8WHKRzkCOY>

* **Music During Communion**

While the congregation receives communion, instead of music being sung, put on a CD of birdsong, bush or sea soundscapes or whales. Examples would be the stunning *“African Soundscapes”* by Guy Gibbon - downloadable from <http://www.cdbaby.com/cd/guygibbon> for $10 (about R155 – and worth *every* cent!!!) or “*Animals in Action – a Day in Klaserie”* available from Children’s Eco-training – contact them through their website - [www.**ecochildren**.co.za/](http://www.ecochildren.co.za/)

**Prayer for Africa**

O Lord, Creator of the entire world, O Loving God, this prayer is for Africa.

Bless the plains, rivers, trees and all the African lands. Bless the birds, fish and animals That bring beauty and abundance to Africa.

*(Education for Justice)*

**Celebrate World Environment Sunday and make a difference!**