






# JAEI

## January 2018 Environmental Prayer Diary

### *Welcome to 2018!*


<p><b>Monday</b></p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Usher in the new year with meditation and talking to God. If the weather permits, go outside, find a quiet place to stand or sit, look up at the stars and just feel God's presence. It is so powerful to be surrounded by nature in the calm silence, knowing that God made the world around you and always has you in his hands. He has been with you through years past, and he will continue to be with you in the coming year. Knowing that and feeling that peace is the best way to start a fresh new year.</p>  <p><i>God of all ages, you have brought us to the beginning a new year, and have promised to make all things new. May we in hope rejoice in all the seasons of creation in the year to come.</i></p>
<p><b>Tuesday</b></p>	<p>2</p>	<p><b>“God ‘Making All Things New’ doesn’t mean Christians can ignore the environment.”</b></p> <p>“It was a perfect Saturday afternoon: cloudless sky, 72 degrees, and a clean breeze blowing across the mountaintop where my husband Matthew and I sat on a bench, enjoying the view..... “ <a href="#">Read more</a></p> <p><b>Nancy Sleeth</b> (Director of Blessed Earth)</p> <p><a href="http://www.blessedearth.org/">http://www.blessedearth.org/</a></p>
<p><b>Wednesday</b></p>	<p>3</p>	<p>God of wisdom, guide us in the choices we make each day, in what we buy, how we travel, and what we reuse. Enable us to live in harmony with your creation God of life - hear our prayer.</p> <p>God of every time and place, we pray for the future of our earth. Help us to be good stewards of the gifts you have given us that future generations may rejoice in your many gifts to us. God of life - hear our prayer</p>
<p><b>Thursday</b></p>	<p>4</p>	<p>“We are talking only to ourselves. We are not talking to the rivers, we are not listening to the wind and stars. We have broken the great conversation. By breaking that conversation we have shattered the universe. All the disasters that are happening now are a consequence of that spiritual 'autism.' “</p>  <p><b>Thomas Berry</b></p>

<p><b>Friday</b></p>	<p>5</p>	<p><b>SDG Goal #2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By 2020, maintain the genetic diversity of seeds, cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and their related wild species, including through soundly managed and diversified seed and plant banks at the national, regional and international levels, and promote access to and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge, as internationally agreed</li> </ul> <p><i>Pray</i> that this Target may be achieved.</p>	
<p><b>Saturday</b></p>	<p>6</p>	<p>"Without a healthy environment we cannot end poverty or build prosperity. We all have a role to play in protecting our only home: we can use less plastics, drive less, waste less food and teach each other to care."</p> <p><b>António Guterres. UN Secretary-General</b></p>	
<p><b>Sunday</b></p>	<p>7</p>	<p><b>The Baptism of Our Lord</b></p> <p>God of returning light, God who refills the seas, the earth in this season is infused with the brilliance of light held in water: the shimmer of moon on ice, the icy glitter of stars, sun glistening on snow. So infuse us with your Spirit that we may reveal your light to all in need.</p>	
<p><b>Monday</b></p>	<p>8</p>		


<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>9</b>	<p>One of the key visions for COP23 (held in Bonn, November 2107) was to harness innovation, enterprise and investment to fast track the development and deployment of climate solutions in an effort to limit the rise of global temperatures to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.</p> <p>Significant progress was made.</p> <p><b><i>Pray that these efforts will continue to bear fruit.</i></b></p>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>10</b>	<p><b>Affirmation of Faith</b></p> <p>God creates all things, renews all things and celebrates all things</p> <p><i>This we believe.</i></p> <p>Earth is a sanctuary, a sacred planet filled with God’s presence, a home for us to share with our kin.</p> <p><i>This we believe.</i></p> <p>God became flesh and blood a piece of Earth, a human being called Jesus Christ, who lived and breathed and spoke among us, suffered and died on a cross, for all human beings and for all creation.</p> <p><i>This we believe.</i></p>
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>11</b>	<p>Pray to understand what man has forgotten.</p> <p><b><i>Native American (Lumbee) Proverb</i></b></p>
<b>Friday</b>	<b>12</b>	<p><b>SDG Goal #3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By 2030, end preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age, with all countries aiming to reduce neonatal mortality to at least as low as 12 per 1,000 live births and under-5 mortality to at least as low as 25 per 1,000 live births</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Pray</i></b> that this Target may be achieved</p>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>13</b>	<p>In your time, Creator God, this world was put in place, and in your time became beautiful, through the craftsmanship of your love.</p> <p>Remind us always as we look at sunrise, landscape or tiny child, to look beyond the artist brush or created thing, to the artist and creator.</p>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>14</b>	<p>God who delights in the land, who brings joy with gifts of water and ground, who bathes us in holy wisdom: help us to give proper care to this planet. Teach us how to assist those who tend her soil, to conserve and to protect your beloved earth.</p>






<p><b>Monday</b></p>	<p><b>15</b></p>	<p><b>Creation as the Body of God</b></p> <p><i>The universe itself can be understood as the primary revelation of the divine - Thomas Berry</i></p> <p>The incarnation of God did not only happen in Bethlehem two thousand years ago. That is just when some of us started taking it seriously. The incarnation actually happened approximately 13.8 billion years ago with a moment that we now call “The Big Bang” or the First Manifestation. At the birth of our universe, God materialized and revealed who God is. Iliia Delio writes: “Human life must be traced back to the time when life was deeply one, a Singularity, whereby the intensity of mass-energy exploded into consciousness.” This Singularity provides a solid basis for inherent reverence, universal sacrality, and a spiritual ecology that transcends groups and religions.</p> <p>St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) stated, “The immense diversity and pluriformity of this creation more perfectly represents God than any one creature alone or by itself.” However, for some reason, perhaps human self-absorption, Christians thought humans were the only creatures that God cared about, and all else—animals, plants, light, water, soil, minerals—was literally just “food” for our own sustenance and enjoyment. I do not believe that the Infinitely Loving Source we call God would or could be so stingy and withholding.</p> <p>God created millions of creatures for millions of years before <i>Homo sapiens</i> came along. Many of these beings are too tiny for us to see or have yet to be discovered; some have seemingly no benefit to human life; and many, like dinosaurs, lived and died long before we did. Why do they even exist? A number of the Psalms say that creation exists to reflect and give glory to God. The Jewish people already had a kind of “natural theology.” God has chosen to communicate God’s very Self in multitudinous and diverse shapes of beauty, love, truth, and goodness, each of which manifests another facet of the Divine. (See Job 38-39, Wisdom 13:1-9, Romans 1:20.)</p> <p>Christians must realize what a muddle we have gotten ourselves into by not taking incarnation and <i>the body of God</i> seriously. As Sally McFague, a Christian theologian, says so powerfully, “Salvation is the direction of all of creation, and creation is the very place of salvation.” All is God’s place, which is our place, which is the only and every place.</p> <p>Our very suffering now, our crowded presence in this nest that we have largely fouled, will soon be the <i>one</i> thing that we finally share in common. It might be the one thing that will bring us together politically and religiously. The earth and its life systems, on which we all entirely depend, might soon become the very thing that will convert us <i>to a simple lifestyle, to a necessary community, and to an inherent and natural sense of the Holy</i>. We all breathe the same air and drink the same water. There are no Native, Hindu, Jewish, Christian, or Muslim versions of the universal elements. They are exactly the same for each of us.</p> <p><b>Richard Rohr</b></p> <p><a href="https://cac.org/creation-body-god-2016-11-09/">https://cac.org/creation-body-god-2016-11-09/</a></p>
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<p><b>Tuesday</b></p>	<p><b>16</b></p>	<p><b>Reflection:</b>  <b><i>Pope Francis - Laudato Si</i></b></p> <p><b>IV. Decline in the quality of human life and the breakdown of society</b></p> <p>“43. Human beings too are creatures of this world, enjoying a right to life and happiness, and endowed with unique dignity. So we cannot fail to consider the effects on people’s lives of environmental deterioration, current models of development and the throwaway culture.</p> <p>44. Nowadays, for example, we are conscious of the disproportionate and unruly growth of many cities, which have become unhealthy to live in, not only because of pollution caused by toxic emissions but also as a result of urban chaos, poor transportation, and visual pollution and noise. Many cities are huge, inefficient structures, excessively wasteful of energy and water. Neighbourhoods, even those recently built, are congested, chaotic and lacking in sufficient green space. We were not meant to be inundated by cement, asphalt, glass and metal, and deprived of physical contact with nature.”</p> <p><b><i>Prayerfully</i></b> reflect on this</p>
<p><b>Wednesday</b></p>	<p><b>17</b></p>	 <p>O Lord, seize us with your power and light, help us to protect all life, to prepare for a better future, for the coming of your Kingdom of justice, peace, love and beauty. Praise be to you! Amen.  <b>POPE FRANCIS</b>  (Laudato Si' 246)</p>
<p><b>Thursday</b></p>	<p><b>18</b></p>	<p>As people of faith, we are called into covenant. Your covenant of faithfulness and love extends to the whole creation. We pray for the healing of the earth, that present and future generations may enjoy the fruits of creation, and continue to glorify and praise you. in song, has been a groan of travail</p>





<p>Friday</p>	<p>19</p>	<p><b>What's Your Excuse for not Planting Trees?</b></p> <p>"I came across an inspiring story the other day. It's an article about two men in the Sunzhuang Township in Northern China planting trees. "So?" you say. "What's the big deal about planting trees?" The big deal is that both of them are disabled. One is completely blind, and the other is missing both of his arms. Think about that for a minute. No arms to hold on with and no eyes to see and yet they are making a positive difference in the world. Over the past decade, they have planted 10,000 trees.</p> <p>Why? I've included a link to the <a href="#">story</a>, and you can read what they say. The article doesn't tell us their faith. Are they Christians, Buddhists, or just men trying to help? We don't know. We do know that both of them need a purpose in life. So they are planting trees. Tree planting is really something we do for the next generation. It's something we do for our children...and our great, great grandchildren.</p> <p>A week ago, we had a missionary family of five over for Friday night dinner. They were visiting us from their home in China, a city south of where these trees are being planted. Their city is similar in size (area-wise) to where we live—Lexington, Kentucky—but instead of 300,000 residents they have 30 million. When we said grace, I asked everyone at the table to add what they are thankful for. Truth be told, I was shamelessly trying to learn what was on the children's hearts. Their guileless gratitude gave me a little more understanding why Jesus said that the kingdom of heaven is populated by children.</p> <p>Later in the evening, their daughter sang a song for us (in Chinese), and we adults talked about life in their city. One of the big challenges of living in China today is trees—or the lack thereof. China has air that you can see before you breathe it. The air quality index this minute in Lexington is 46. In my old hometown in Maine it is 9, and in their city in China it is 172. To put that in context, 0-50 air quality index is considered good; 50-100 is moderate; and everything over 100 is designated unhealthy. In many Chinese cities, it frequently goes over 250 (very unhealthy/hazardous). Masks must routinely be worn when going out of doors. The cause of the polluted air in China is too much human industry, and too few trees.</p> <p>This situation is not unique to China. All over the globe, the lack of trees and the overabundance of human industry is resulting in changes to the air we breathe. Which is the reason that a blind man and a man without arms planting trees is news. They are part of the solution.</p> <p>The origin of the word "inspiring" is "to breathe into." May the Lord bless these men, and may He inspire us to plant trees and to seed the earth with the Gospel. If a man without arms and his friend who is blind can work to make the world better, <b><i>what's your excuse?</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Dr. Matthew Sleeth</i></b>  <a href="http://www.blessedearth.org/featured/whats-your-excuse-for-not-planting-trees/">http://www.blessedearth.org/featured/whats-your-excuse-for-not-planting-trees/</a></p> 
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<p><b>Saturday</b></p>	<p><b>20</b></p>	<p><b>Prayer of thanksgiving for the Earth</b></p> <p>O amazing Creator, there is no end to the awe we feel in the face of your magnificent creation. Words cannot convey our gratitude for such an undeserved gift. We praise you for the beauty that stops us in our tracks wherever we turn. We revere you for the fecundity of creation that has spewed forth life and goodness for billions of years. We thank you for the multitude of ways that the natural world sustains and nourishes us in body and spirit. We are humbled that we are part of such a display of your glory. Our hearts overflow with love for You, revealed in the wonder of creation. May all the angels and saints join us in our song of gratitude, praising You forever and ever. Amen</p>
<p><b>Sunday</b></p>	<p><b>21</b></p>	<p>God of revealing light, every dawn tells us how intricately your world is knit: Bare twigs snare the sun and clouds, the shifting winds weave a favorable atmosphere, moisture sifts through in mist or snow, and slowly penetrates the waiting soil. Cleanse our hearts as we repent of human pollution and violence; help your people preserve this life-giving air.</p>
<p><b>Monday</b></p>	<p><b>22</b></p>	<p><b>Children’s Earth Prayer</b></p> <p>Dear God, thank you for this beautiful planet. Bless it and keep it safe from harm. We pray for the protection of the animals, the soil, air and water. May we care for all you have made. Help us to love the Earth as you do. We pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.</p>
		
<p><b>Tuesday</b></p>	<p><b>23</b></p>	<p><b>Petitions for the Earth</b></p> <p>That the Earth be revered and cared for as God intends, <b><i>I pray to the Lord.</i></b></p> <p>That we stop poisoning the soil and seas with trash and toxins, <b><i>I pray to the Lord.</i></b></p> <p>That we repent of our greed and live simply and lightly on the Earth, <b><i>I pray to the Lord</i></b></p> <p>That all members of this faith community take seriously the Bishops’ mandate to protect the Earth, <b><i>I pray to the Lord</i></b></p> <p>That global warming is halted and reversed before more damage can occur, <b><i>I pray to the Lord</i></b></p> <p>That protection of the Earth be a top political priority, <b><i>I pray to the Lord</i></b></p>

<p><b>Wednesday</b></p>	<p><b>24</b></p>	<p><b>O Worship the King</b></p> <p>O worship the King, all glorious above  O gratefully sing His wonderful love  Our Shield and Defender, the Ancient of Days  Pavilioned in splendour, and girded with praise</p> <p>O tell of His might, O sing of His grace  Whose robe is the light and canopy space  His chariots of wrath the deep thunderclouds form  And dark is His path on the wings of the storm</p> <p>O measureless might, ineffable love  While angels delight to worship above  Thy mercies how tender, how firm to the end  Our Maker, Defender, Redeemer, and Friend</p> <p>You alone are the matchless King  To You alone be all majesty  Your glories and wonders, what tongue can recite?  You breathe in the air, You shine in the light</p> <p><i>(Based on Psalm 104)</i></p> 
<p><b>Thursday</b></p>	<p><b>25</b></p>	<p><b>Prayer of Gratitude for Creation</b></p> <p>God of the universe,  We thank You for Your many good gifts -  For the beauty of Creation and its rich and varied fruits,  For clean water and fresh air, for food and shelter, animals and plants.  Forgive us for the times we have taken the earth's resources for granted  And wasted what You have given us.  Transform our hearts and minds So that we would learn to care and share,  To touch the earth with gentleness and with love,  Respecting all living things.  We pray for all those who suffer as a result of our waste, greed and indifference,  And we pray that the day would come when everyone has enough food and clean water.  Help us to respect the rights of all people and all species  And help us to willingly share your gifts, today and always. Amen.</p> 



<p><b>Friday</b></p>	<p><b>26</b></p>	<p><b>Read Matthew 6:24-34</b></p> <p><i>“Look at the birds in the sky”</i></p> <p>Jesus reveals to us that God is a generous father who created the earth and has provided enough for everything and everyone on it to flourish. Even the birds have been given enough to eat and the flowers beautiful clothes to wear.</p> <p>However, the reality is that so many of our brothers and sisters struggle to get enough to eat or drink. This is partly because a minority of the population are using up more than their fair share of the world’s natural resources.</p> <p>We live in a consumerist society which dictates that we need to accumulate an excessive amount of food and material goods in order to flourish. The consequence of this extravagant wealth comes at a price, as it means that many in our global family are left lacking.</p> <p>Jesus presents us with alternative values which challenge our society’s emphasis on materialism and consumerism. Jesus tells us that if we prioritise the building up of God’s Kingdom on earth, and work for justice and fairness for all, then “all these things will be given to you.”</p> <p>God has provided enough for everyone on this earth to share, therefore by working for a fair distribution of the world’s resources, all on earth shall flourish. In this way we will be able to answer Jesus’ call to serve God over money.</p> <p><b>Prayer:</b></p> <p>God of love,</p> <p>We give you thanks for the abundance of your creation, for you have provided the fruits of the earth for all to enjoy. Inspire us to share what we have so that all your children may live life to the full.</p> <p>Amen.</p> <p><b><i>This reflection and prayer were written by Charlotte Bray, who is currently taking part in the Step into the Gap programme. (<a href="https://cafod.org.uk/">https://cafod.org.uk/</a>)</i></b></p>
<p><b>Saturday</b></p>	<p><b>27</b></p>	 <p>THE GREATEST THREAT TO OUR WILDLIFE IS THE BELIEF THAT SOMEONE ELSE WILL SAVE IT. -Wild Heart</p>

<p><b>Sunday</b></p>	<p><b>28</b></p>	<p>God of surprising light, we expect the sun to rise and to set by appointment, the planet to turn in lawful order, and our days to proceed as we intend. Keep us alive to the miracles of your creative love among us and ignite in us the fire of that love for your entire world.</p>
<p><b>Monday</b></p>	<p><b>29</b></p>	<p>"This is what God the Lord says – the Creator of the heavens, who stretches them out, who spreads out the earth with all that springs from it, who gives breath to its people, and life to those who walk on it: 'I, the Lord, have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand.'"</p> <p><i>Isaiah 42:5-6</i></p>
<p><b>Tuesday</b></p>	<p><b>30</b></p>	<p>For a long time we have thought we were better than the living world, and now some of us tend to think we are worse, that everything we touch turns to soot. But neither perspective is healthy. We have to remember how it feels to have equal standing in the world, to be "between the mountain and the ant . . . part and parcel of creations," as the Iroquois traditionalist Oren Lyons says.</p> <p><i>Janine M. Benyus</i></p>
<p><b>Wednesday</b></p>	<p><b>31</b></p>	 <p>The peace of God be in your heart  The grace of God be in your words  The love of God be in your hands  The joy of God be in your soul  and in the song that your life sings.</p>