

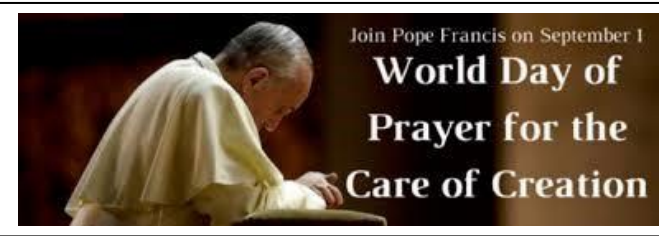





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September 2017 Environmental Prayer Diary






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| <p>Saturday</p> | <p>1</p> | <p>“... As Christians we wish to contribute to resolving the ecological crisis which humanity is presently experiencing. In doing so, we must first rediscover in our own rich spiritual patrimony the deepest motivations for our concern for the care of creation.</p> <p>We need always to keep in mind that, for believers in Jesus Christ, the Word of God who became man for our sake, “the life of the spirit is not dissociated from the body or from nature or from worldly realities, but lived in and with them, in communion with all that surrounds us” (<i>Laudato Si'</i>, 216). The ecological crisis thus summons us to a profound spiritual conversion: Christians are called to “an ecological conversion whereby the effects of their encounter with Jesus Christ become evident in their relationship with the world around them” (<i>ibid.</i>, 217). For “living our vocation to be protectors of God’s handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience” (<i>ibid.</i>).</p> <p>The annual World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation will offer individual believers and communities a fitting opportunity to reaffirm their personal vocation to be stewards of creation, to thank God for the wonderful handiwork which he has entrusted to our care, and to implore his help for the protection of creation as well as his pardon for the sins committed against the world in which we live. The celebration of this Day, on the same date as the Orthodox Church, will be a valuable opportunity to bear witness to our growing communion with our Orthodox brothers and sisters. We live at a time when all Christians are faced with the same decisive challenges, to which we must respond together, in order to be more credible and effective. It is my hope that this Day will in some way also involve other Churches and ecclesial Communities and be celebrated in union with similar initiatives of the World Council of Churches. “- Pope Francis</p> <p>September 1 was proclaimed as a day of prayer for creation by the Orthodox Church in 1989, and many other Christian churches have joined since then, such as the Anglican Church in 2012 (Anglican Consultative Council) and the Catholic Church most recently in 2015.</p> <p>Join the rest of the World to pray for Creation today!</p> |
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| <p>Sunday</p> | <p>2</p> | <p>1st September - International Vulture Day</p> <p>Give thanks for the beauty of these iconic birds and the important part that these majestic birds play in our eco-systems</p> |  |
| <p>Monday</p> | <p>3</p> | <p>1st week in September - Arbor Week</p> <p>Give thanks for the incredible beauty, variety and diversity of plants in our Country. Pray for forgiveness when we have taken this beauty for granted and pray that each one of us will utilize this resource wisely.</p> |  |
| <p>Tuesday</p> | <p>4</p> | <p>God of Creation and Lord of Life God of creation and Lord of life, you entrusted us to care for our environment, but in many parts of the world we have failed. Help us to realise how fragile and unstable our surroundings are, because we are not looking after creation. We need to be true stewards and to understand how the most insignificant little flowers, and the tiniest insects, each creature and individual people are all part of a wondrous whole.</p> <p>Amen</p> | |
| <p>Wednesday</p> | <p>5</p> | <p>Imagine a machine that uses solar energy to remove carbon from the air and turns it into a beautiful, strong and sustainable building material.</p>  <p>Oh wait...that's what trees are.</p> | |
| <p>Thursday</p> | <p>6</p> | <p>Spirit of God, You established the dance of Creation; Bring life out of death Bring order out of chaos. Call us to radical action: To care for the web of Creation To share our resources justly And to work for the renewal of our Mother, Earth. We commit ourselves to action for climate justice.</p> <p>Most Revd Dr Thabo Makgoba, <i>Archbishop of Cape Town</i></p> | |

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| <p>Friday</p> | <p>7</p> | <p>SDG Goal #15: Sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, halt biodiversity loss</p> <p>Mobilize significant resources from all sources and at all levels to finance sustainable forest management and provide adequate incentives to developing countries to advance such management, including for conservation and reforestation</p> <p><i>Pray that this target may be achieved</i></p>  |
| <p>Saturday</p> | <p>8</p> |  <p><i>"I love to think of nature as an unlimited broadcasting station, through which God speaks to us every hour, if we will only tune in. "</i></p> <p><i>George Washington Carver</i></p> |
| <p>Sunday</p> | <p>9</p> | <p>Affirmation of faith</p> <p>You, O God, are supreme and holy. You create our world and give us life. Your purpose overarches everything we do. You have always been with us. You are God. You, O God, are infinitely generous, good beyond all measure. You came to us before we came to you. You have revealed and proved your love for us in Jesus Christ, who lived and died and rose again. You are with us now. You are God. You, O God, are Holy Spirit. You empower us to be your gospel in the world. You reconcile and heal; you overcome death. You are our God. We worship you.</p> |

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| <p>Monday</p> | <p>10</p> | <p>Faith and Science - Praying for Creation</p> <p><i>On the World Day of Prayer for Creation in September 2017, Pope Francis and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew offered a moving joint statement:</i></p> <p>The story of creation presents us with a panoramic view of the world. Scripture reveals that, “in the beginning,” God intended humanity to cooperate in the preservation and protection of the natural environment. . . . The earth was entrusted to us as a sublime gift and legacy, for which all of us share responsibility until, “in the end,” all things in heaven and on earth will be restored in Christ (Ephesians 1:10). Our human dignity and welfare are deeply connected to our care for the whole of creation.</p> <p>However, “in the meantime,” the history of the world presents a very different context. It reveals a morally decaying scenario where our attitude and behaviour towards creation obscures our calling as God’s co-operators. Our propensity to interrupt the world’s delicate and balanced ecosystems, our insatiable desire to manipulate and control the planet’s limited resources, and our greed for limitless profit in markets - all these have alienated us from the original purpose of creation. We no longer respect nature as a shared gift; instead, we regard it as a private possession. . . .</p> <p>The consequences of this alternative worldview are tragic and lasting. The human environment and the natural environment are deteriorating together, and this deterioration of the planet weighs upon the most vulnerable of its people. The impact of climate change affects, first and foremost, those who live in poverty in every corner of the globe. Our obligation to use the earth’s goods responsibly implies the recognition of and respect for all people and all living creatures. The urgent call and challenge to care for creation are an invitation for all of humanity to work toward sustainable and integral development.</p> <p>[We] offer thanks to the loving Creator for the noble gift of creation and pledge commitment to its care and preservation for the sake of future generations. After all, we know that we labour in vain if the Lord is not by our side (Psalms 126-127), if prayer is not at the centre of our reflection and celebration. Indeed, an objective of our prayer is to change the way we perceive the world in order to change the way we relate to the world. . . .</p> <p>We urgently appeal to those in positions of social and economic, as well as political and cultural, responsibility to hear the cry of the earth and to attend to the needs of the marginalized, but above all to respond to the plea of millions and support the consensus of the world for the healing of our wounded creation. We are convinced that there can be no sincere and enduring resolution to the challenge of the ecological crisis and climate change unless the response is concerted and collective, unless the responsibility is shared and accountable, unless we give priority to solidarity and service.</p> <p><i>From Richard Rohr’s daily meditations</i> www.cac.org</p>  |
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| <p>Tuesday</p> | <p>11</p> | <p>2nd Week in September – National Clean-up Week</p> <p>Jesus Christ, teach us to empathise with Earth. Living God Where there is waste, let us bring recycling, Where there is recycling, let us bring reuse, Where there is reuse, let us bring sustainability, Where there is sustainability, let us bring justice Where there is justice, let us bring love</p> |  |
| <p>Wednesday</p> | <p>12</p> | <p>I / We, [Name], stand at a critical moment in Earth’s history - a time when humanity must choose its future. As the world becomes increasingly interdependent and fragile, - the future at once holds great peril and great promise. To move forward we must recognise that in the midst of a magnificent diversity of cultures and life forms we are one human family and one Earth community with a common destiny.</p> <p>We must join together to bring forth a sustainable global society founded on respect for nature, universal human rights, economic justice, and a culture of peace.</p> <p>To this end, it is imperative that we, the peoples of Earth, declare our responsibility to one another, to the greater community of life, and to future generations.</p> <p><i>“To realize these aspirations, we must decide to live with a sense of universal responsibility, identifying ourselves with the whole Earth community as well as our local communities. We are at once citizens of different nations and of one world in which the local and global are linked. Everyone shares responsibility for the present and future well-being of the human family and the larger living world. The spirit of human solidarity and kinship with all life is strengthened when we live with reverence for the mystery of being, gratitude for the gift of life, and humility regarding the human place in nature” (from Earth Charter).</i></p> <p>All praise to you God for your goodness to us. Give us hearts of flesh to rejoice in your gifts, to beg pardon when we err, and to live justly. We ask this in the name of your Son Jesus, who lives and breathes among us. Amen.</p> <p>For the full text and other ideas go to www.earthcharter.org</p> |  |



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| <p>Thursday</p> | <p>13</p> | <p><i>“And God saw all that He had made and it was very good.”</i></p> <p>Holy God, into this world you have set a community of creation. Earth, sky, sun and rain; plants, animals, insects, birds and fish; women, men, boys and girls, young and old.</p> <p>We acknowledge our dependence on the fruits of the earth, the clear running water, the shelter of trees and the goodness of soil. We acknowledge our dependence on you Lord, as author and creator.</p> <p>So help us, Lord of all, that the network of creation which so supports and helps us may not further be broken, and that we may be amongst those who repair the damage of the years.</p> <p>Lord our God, you renew the face of the earth and bring newness to our world. Restore the waters Refresh the air Revive the land Breathe new life into all your creation and begin with us. Amen.</p> <p><i>The Rhythm of Life 1996 David Adam SPCK (adapted)</i></p> |
| <p>Friday</p> | <p>14</p> | <p>Today give thanks for the many people involved in wonderful environmental sustainability initiative and conservation efforts which are now bearing fruit.</p> <div data-bbox="1114 1144 1453 1429" data-label="Image"> </div> |
| <p>Saturday</p> | <p>15</p> | <div data-bbox="470 1496 807 1939" data-label="Image"> </div> <div data-bbox="807 1496 1433 1939" data-label="Text"> <p>Something will have gone out of us as a people if we ever let the remaining wilderness be destroyed... We simply need that wild country available to us, even if we never do more than drive to its edge and look in.</p> <p>— Wallace Stegner —</p> <p>AZ QUOTES</p> </div> |

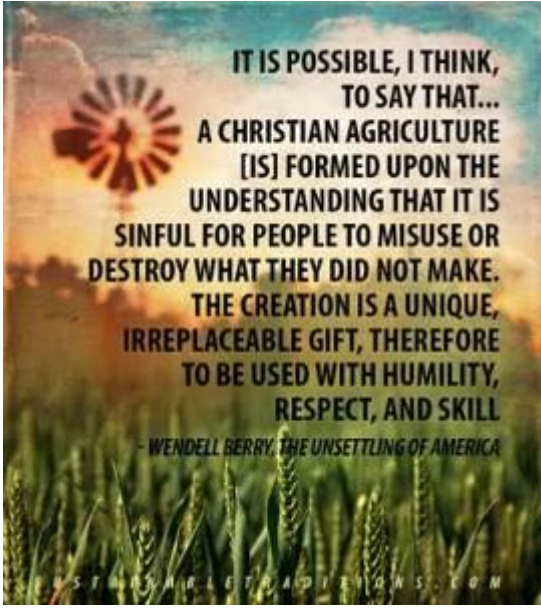
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| <p>Sunday</p> | <p>16</p> | <p>International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer</p> <p>Creator God, the sun, the wind and the waves are your gifts for the flourishing of the whole community of life on earth. Help us to use them creatively to produce sustainable energy for all.</p>  <p>Through scientists, engineers and scholars new knowledge comes to light; may new developments in the production of sustainable energy protect our fragile planet and promote the well-being of all peoples and all creatures on their journey to wholeness.</p> <p>Creator God, You have blessed humankind with understanding, imagination and memory. Show us how to learn from past mistakes and plan for the future creatively and responsibly.</p> <p>Create in us a new heart and a new vision, O God, that the gifts of Your Spirit may work in us and renew the face of the earth. May we be one with you so that our work is yours and your work is ours. We ask this in the name of Jesus, who lives with you and with the Holy Spirit forever.</p> <p>Amen.</p> |
| <p>Monday</p> | <p>17</p> | <p>“Our relationship with the earth involves something more than pragmatic use, academic understanding, or aesthetic appreciation. A truly human intimacy with the earth and with the entire natural world is needed. Our children should be properly introduced to the world in which they live.”</p> <p>Thomas Berry <i>(“Human Presence,” in The Dream of the Earth)</i></p> |
| <p>Tuesday</p> | <p>18</p> |  <p>“Together, we pledge our commitment to raising awareness about the stewardship of creation.”</p> <p>- Pope Francis</p> |

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| Wednesday | 19 | <p>Reflection:</p> <p><i>Pope Francis - Laudato Si</i></p> <p>“228. Care for nature is part of a lifestyle which includes the capacity for living together and communion. Jesus reminded us that we have God as our common Father and that this makes us brothers and sisters. Fraternal love can only be gratuitous; it can never be a means of repaying others for what they have done or will do for us. That is why it is possible to love our enemies. This same gratuitousness inspires us to love and accept the wind, the sun and the clouds, even though we cannot control them. In this sense, we can speak of a “universal fraternity”.</p> <p><i>Prayerfully</i> reflect on this</p> |
| Thursday | 20 | <p>“We have neglected the truth that a good farmer is a craftsman of the highest order, a kind of artist.</p> <p><i>Wendell Berry</i></p> |
| Friday | 21 | <p>International Peace Day</p> <p>May the oppressed people and those who oppress them, free each other May those who are handicapped, and those who think they are not, help each other May those who need someone to listen touch the hearts of those who are too busy May the homeless bring joy to those who open their doors reluctantly May the lonely heal those who think they are self-sufficient May the poor melt the hearts of the rich May seekers for truth give life to those who are satisfied that they have found it May the dying who do not wish to die be comforted by those who find it hard to live May the unloved be allowed to unlock the hearts of those who cannot love May prisoners find true freedom and liberate others from fear May those who sleep on the streets share their gentleness with those who cannot understand them May the hungry tear the veil from the eyes of those who do not hunger after justice May those who live without hope cleanse the hearts of their brothers and sisters who are afraid to live May the weak confound the strong and save them May violence be overcome by compassion May violence be absorbed by men and women of peace May violence succumb to those who are totally vulnerable That we may be healed Amen</p> |



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| <p>Saturday</p> | <p>22</p> | <p>World Rhino Day</p> <p>There's no reason to celebrate: 1,028 rhinos killed in South Africa alone during 2017 works out to be nearly three rhinos killed every day. While poaching is down in Kruger National Park, it is significantly up in other provinces, particularly KwaZulu-Natal.</p> <p>Although it is encouraging that poaching levels are not escalating, losses are still extremely high, the outlook for rhino population growth severely impacted, and poachers are proving adept at changing their target sites and trafficking strategies.</p> <p>Furthermore, there are continuing and worrying signs that poaching gangs are increasingly moving beyond South Africa's borders and gaining a foothold in other African countries – many of which have fewer resources available to protect wildlife.</p> <p>Pray for all those involved in rhino conservation – for strength and endurance. Pray for those involved in the heinous act of poaching – that their hearts may turn to love of these creatures and away from their illicit dealings.</p> |  |
| <p>Sunday</p> | <p>23</p> | <p>We praise you, our Lord and God, for the variety of your creation And for the sanctity you have bestowed on all life through creation. May we know the sanctity of life and foster the conservation And preservation of the variety of God-given life May we never- knowingly or otherwise – be responsible For the extinction of a plant or an animal God, may new life fill us, through the gift of your Holy Spirit To know your wonder, your love and the abundant life you give.</p> |  |
| <p>Monday</p> | <p>24</p> | <p>Heritage Day</p> <p>On this day all South Africans across the spectrum are encouraged to celebrate their culture and the diversity of their beliefs and traditions, in the wider context of a nation that belongs to all its people</p> <p>Let us Pray for unity within all the Peoples of South Africa – that each may be seen as a Child of God and respect and care for all creatures</p> |  |

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| <p>Tuesday</p> | <p>25</p> | <p>SDG Goal #16: Promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies</p> <p>Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all</p> <p><i>Pray that this target may be achieved</i></p> |  |
| <p>Wednesday</p> | <p>26</p> | <p>Psalm 65</p> <p>¹ Praise awaits you, our God, in Zion; to you our vows will be fulfilled.</p> <p>² You who answer prayer, to you all people will come.</p> <p>³ When we were overwhelmed by sins, you forgave our transgressions.</p> <p>⁴ Blessed are those you choose and bring near to live in your courts! We are filled with the good things of your house, of your holy temple.</p> <p>⁵ You answer us with awesome and righteous deeds, God our Saviour, the hope of all the ends of the earth and of the farthest seas,</p> <p>⁶ who formed the mountains by your power, having armed yourself with strength,</p> <p>⁷ who stilled the roaring of the seas, the roaring of their waves, and the turmoil of the nations.</p> <p>⁸ The whole earth is filled with awe at your wonders; where morning dawns, where evening fades, you call forth songs of joy.</p> <p>⁹ You care for the land and water it; you enrich it abundantly. The streams of God are filled with water to provide the people with grain, for so you have ordained it.</p> <p>¹⁰ You drench its furrows and level its ridges; you soften it with showers and bless its crops.</p> <p>¹¹ You crown the year with your bounty, and your carts overflow with abundance.</p> <p>¹² The grasslands of the wilderness overflow; the hills are clothed with gladness.</p> <p>¹³ The meadows are covered with flocks and the valleys are mantled with grain; they shout for joy and sing.</p> |  |

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| <p>Thursday</p> | <p>27</p> | <p>Song of Earth</p> <p><i>Melody - "Jesus Christ is Risen Today. "</i></p> <p>Hail the Earth that first appeared. Alleluia! When a word from God was heard. Alleluia! Let the Earth arise and be. Alleluia! Filled with living mystery. Alleluia!</p> <p>Hail the rainbow flying high. Alleluia! Spun by God across the sky. Alleluia! Giving Earth a solemn word. Alleluia! Never to unleash a flood. Alleluia!</p> <p>Hail the planet blue and green. Alleluia! Where the face of God is seen. Alleluia! Glory filling all the Earth. Alleluia! Celebrating every birth. Alleluia!</p> <p>Hail our body made with clay. Alleluia! Given breath to praise and pray Alleluia! Clay God honoured by God's birth. Alleluia! As a human life on Earth. Alleluia!</p> <p>Hail the groans of Earth in pain. Alleluia! From the weight of human sin. Alleluia! Longing for the Christ who died. Alleluia! All creation to revive. Alleluia!</p> <p>Words: © Norman Habel 1999</p> |
| <p>Friday</p> | <p>28</p> |  <p>IT IS POSSIBLE, I THINK, TO SAY THAT... A CHRISTIAN AGRICULTURE [IS] FORMED UPON THE UNDERSTANDING THAT IT IS SINFUL FOR PEOPLE TO MISUSE OR DESTROY WHAT THEY DID NOT MAKE. THE CREATION IS A UNIQUE, IRREPLACEABLE GIFT, THEREFORE TO BE USED WITH HUMILITY, RESPECT, AND SKILL</p> <p>- WENDELL BERRY, THE UNSETTLING OF AMERICA</p> |

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| Saturday | 29 | <p>God, our Creator, as we reflect on the mystery of our fragile planet we celebrate the wonders of Earth as our home.</p> <p>Help us to discern how we have polluted our planet and show us how to empathize with the groaning of creation.</p> <p>Teach us to sense the presence of God pulsing through Earth as a living green blue sanctuary. Teach us to love Earth as our home.</p> <p>In the name of Christ, the Word of God, who is the creative impulse in all creation.</p> <p>Amen</p> |
| Sunday | 30 | <p>Peace Blessing</p> <p>Peace of the world Peace of the city Peace of the village Peace of the desert Peace of Mother Earth Peace of the cosmos Peace to you Peace to me Peace to my neighbour Peace to whom it may concern Peace. Peace, Peace!</p> |

