



# JAEI

## January 2020 Environmental Prayer Diary




(The purpose of this Prayer Diary is to provide subjects for your reflection and prayer as the Spirit moves you)



<p><b>Wednesday</b></p>	<p><b>1</b></p>	<p><b>New Year's Prayer</b></p> <p>As the dawn breaks on a new year, let us give thanks for all we hold dear: our health, our family and our friends.</p> <p>Let us release our grudges, our anger and our pains, for these are nothing but binding chains. Let us live each day in the most loving ways, the God-conscious way. Let us serve all who are in need, regardless of race, colour or creed.</p> <p>Let us keep God of our own understanding in our hearts and to chant God's name each day. Let us lead the world from darkness to light, from falsehood to truth and from wrong to right.</p> <p>Let us remember that we are all one, embracing all, discriminating against none.</p> <p>May your year be filled with peace, prosperity and love. May God's blessings shower upon you and bestow upon each of you a bright, healthy and peaceful new year.</p> <p><b>Rev. Marcy Sheremetta</b></p>	
<p><b>Thursday</b></p>	<p><b>2</b></p>	<p><b>Sit and be still</b> until in the time of no rain you hear beneath the dry wind's commotion in the trees the sound of flowing water among the rocks, a stream unheard before, and <b>you are where breathing is prayer.</b></p> <p>– Wendell Berry</p>	
<p><b>Friday</b></p>	<p><b>3</b></p>	<p>For when God gave great knowledge to the human being, the human being elevated himself in his soul and turned away from God. God so regarded the human being that he would perfect all his works in him. But the old deceiver tricked human beings and infected them with the crime of disobedience, by the delight of an unseasonable wind, so that they sought for more than they should have.</p> <p><b>Hildegard of Bingen</b> c. 1152</p>	


<p><b>Saturday</b></p>	<p><b>4</b></p> <p><b>International Year of Plant Health</b></p> <p>The United Nations (UN) is declaring 2020 the 'International Year of Plant Health.'</p> <p>"Plant health" is usually considered the discipline that uses a range of measures to control and prevent pests, weeds and disease causing organisms to spread into new areas, especially through human interaction such as international trade."</p> <p>Capping off the 'Decade on Biodiversity,' the UN continues to recognize and promote healthy ecosystems as key to sustainable development. Celebration of the International Year of Plant Health would bring increased global attention to the importance of plant health in solving global issues including hunger, poverty and threats to the environment.</p> <p>The International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) is the UN body that sets phyto (plant) sanitary standards for international trade of plants and plant products. Plant pests leave millions without food to eat and have devastating impacts on food security and trade. Invasive alien species, in particular, harm plant biodiversity and trigger billions of dollars in pest eradication in agriculture and forestry. The IPPC defines plant pests (including invasive alien species) as "any species, strain or biotype of plant, animal or pathogenic agent harmful to plants or plant products."</p> <p><b><i>Prayerfully consider how you can become involved in this focus.</i></b></p>
<p><b>Sunday</b></p>	<p><b>5</b></p> <p>Creator God,      whose Spirit moved over the face of the waters,      who gathers the seas into their places      and directs the courses of the rivers,      who sends rain upon the earth      that it should bring forth life:      we praise you for the gift of water.</p> <p>Redeemer God,      who spared Noah and creatures of every kind      from the waters of the flood,      who led your people over dry land through the sea      and across the Jordan to the land of promise,      who marks our adoption as children      with the sign of water:      we thank you for the gift of water.</p> <p>Sustaining God,      create in us such a sense of wonder and delight      in this and all your gifts,      that we might receive them with gratitude,      care for them with love      and generously share them with all your creatures,      to the honour and glory of your holy name.</p> <p><b><i>Rev. John Paarlberg.</i></b>  <i>National Council of Churches</i></p>



<p><b>Monday</b></p>	<p><b>6</b></p>	<div data-bbox="612 125 1286 983" data-label="Image"> </div>
<p><b>Tuesday</b></p>	<p><b>7</b></p>	<p><b>You shall go out with joy</b></p> <p>You shall go out with joy  And be let forth with peace,  And the mountains and the hills  Will break forth before you.  There'll be shouts of joy  And the trees of the fields  Will clap, will clap their hands.</p> <p>And the trees of the fields will clap  their hands,  And the trees of the fields will clap  their hands,  And the trees of the fields will clap  their hands,  While you go out with joy.</p> <div data-bbox="970 1151 1453 1547" data-label="Image"> </div>
<p><b>Wednesday</b></p>	<p><b>8</b></p>	<p>“The good man is the friend of all living things.”</p> <p><b>Gandhi</b></p> <div data-bbox="1182 1637 1449 1888" data-label="Image"> </div>

<p><b>Thursday</b></p>	<p><b>9</b></p>	<p><b>Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning</b></p> <p>Obtaining a quality education is the foundation to improving people’s lives and sustainable development. Major progress has been made towards increasing access to education at all levels and increasing enrolment rates in schools particularly for women and girls. Basic literacy skills have improved tremendously, yet bolder efforts are needed to make even greater strides for achieving universal education goals. For example, the world has achieved equality in primary education between girls and boys, but few countries have achieved that target at all levels of education.</p> <p><b>Facts &amp; Figures:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enrolment in primary education in developing countries has reached 91 per cent but 57 million children remain out of school</li> <li>• More than half of children that have not enrolled in school live in sub-Saharan Africa</li> <li>• An estimated 50 per cent of out-of-school children of primary school age live in conflict-affected areas</li> <li>• 103 million youth worldwide lack basic literacy skills, and more than 60 per cent of them are women</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Prayerfully consider who you can encourage in their education.</i></b></p>	
<p><b>Friday</b></p>	<p><b>10</b></p>		
<p><b>Saturday</b></p>	<p><b>11</b></p>	<p>“If man were by nature a solitary animal, the passions of the soul by which he was conformed to things so as to have knowledge of them would be sufficient for him; but since he is by nature a political and social animal it was necessary that his conceptions be made known to others. This he does through vocal sound. Therefore there had to be significant vocal sounds in order that men might live together. Whence those who speak different languages find it difficult to live together in social unity.”</p> <p><b><i>Saint Thomas Aquinas</i></b></p>	

<p><b>Sunday</b></p>	<p><b>12</b></p>	<p>Creator God  we are your people, - one people - your family,  bound together with the woven chord that binds all of creation together,  fashioned from your love.  Brothers and sisters, children together,  One family in fellowship with you,</p> <p>In the beginning, Lord,  I was alone.  Like the earth,  before your Spirit moved over the waters  I was formless and empty,  and darkness filled the depths of my heart.  Then, it was as if you declared  'Let there be Light',  and out of the darkness  I began to see hope,  like a shimmering ray of love  breaking through the parting clouds at the conclusion  of the night.</p> <p>In the beginning, Lord I was alone,  but when I saw you in the light I was no longer afraid.  You held out your hand,  and though I had a choice  I had no choice,  because to refuse  was to embrace again the darkness.</p> <p>In the beginning, Lord I was alone,  Now I feel again a part  of your creation,  loved, wanted, needed, family.  In the light of your presence,  I hold out my heart that others  might glimpse through it your reflection,  and be drawn from the darkness that I once embraced  into the light of your sunrise,  the brightness of your face.</p>	
<p><b>Monday</b></p>	<p><b>13</b></p>	<p>“Our five senses evolved for survivability, and probably are the minimum necessary for our survival. There is so much of the universe which we cannot and do not see... We do now know from instrumentation developed just in the last fifty years more about some of what's out there in the universe. “</p> <p><b>Mary Davis</b>  CEO: Special Olympics International</p>	

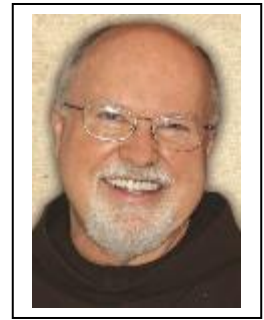
<p><b>Tuesday</b></p>	<p><b>14</b></p>	<p><b>Psalm 107</b></p> <p><sup>1</sup> Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever.</p> <p><sup>2</sup> Let the redeemed of the LORD tell their story— those he redeemed from the hand of the foe,</p> <p><sup>3</sup> those he gathered from the lands, from east and west, from north and south.<sup>[a]</sup></p> <p><sup>4</sup> Some wandered in desert wastelands, finding no way to a city where they could settle.</p> <p><sup>5</sup> They were hungry and thirsty, and their lives ebbed away.</p> <p><sup>6</sup> Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress.</p> <p><sup>7</sup> He led them by a straight way to a city where they could settle.</p> <p><sup>8</sup> Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for mankind,</p> <p><sup>9</sup> for he satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things.</p> <p><sup>10</sup> Some sat in darkness, in utter darkness, prisoners suffering in iron chains,</p> <p><sup>11</sup> because they rebelled against God’s commands and despised the plans of the Most High.</p> <p><sup>12</sup> So he subjected them to bitter labour; they stumbled, and there was no one to help.</p> <p><sup>13</sup> Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble, and he saved them from their distress.</p> <p><sup>14</sup> He brought them out of darkness, the utter darkness, and broke away their chains.</p> <p><sup>15</sup> Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for mankind,</p> <p><sup>16</sup> for he breaks down gates of bronze and cuts through bars of iron.</p>
<p><b>Wednesday</b></p>	<p><b>15</b></p>	<p>"It should not be fear of impending disaster with regard to global change that obliges us to change our ways with regard to the natural environment. Rather, it should be a recognition of the cosmic harmony and original beauty that exists in the world. We must learn to make our communities more sensitive and to render our behaviour toward nature more respectful. We must acquire a compassionate heart – what St. Isaac of Syria, a seventh century mystic once called a heart that burns with love for the whole of creation: for humans, for birds and beasts, for all God’s creatures."</p> <p><b><i>His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew</i></b></p> 

Thursday

16

## Infinite Presence, Infinite Love

*When he considered the primordial source of all things, [St. Francis] was filled with even more abundant piety, calling all creatures, no matter how small, by the name of brother and sister, because he knew they had the same source as himself. —Saint Bonaventure (1221-1274)*



If Christianity would have paid attention to the teachings and example of Jesus and Francis, our planet—“Mother Sister Earth,” as Francis called her—would perhaps be much healthier today. But it took until the 21<sup>st</sup> century for a pope to write an entire encyclical, *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home*, making this quite clear and demanding.

We have not honoured God's Presence in the elemental, physical world. We made God as small as our own constricted hearts. We just picked and chose, saying, “Oh, God is really only in my group, in baptized people, in moral people, etc.” Is there that little of an Infinite God to go around? Do we have to be stingy with God? As Isaiah put it “the arm of God is not too short to save!” (59:1). Why pretend only we deserve God, and not other groups, religions, animals, plants, the elements, Brother Sun, and Sister Moon? It just won't sell any more.

God is saving creation and bringing all creatures back where they began—into union with their Creator. God loves everything that God has made! All created things God proclaimed “good” (see Genesis 1:9-31 and Wisdom 11:24-12:1). But we, with our small minds, can't deal with that. We have to whittle God and Love into small parts that our minds can handle and portion out. Human love is conditional and operates out of a scarcity model. There's not enough to go around, just like Andrew said about the boy's five loaves and two small fish (John 6:9). Humans can't conceptualize or even *think* infinite or eternal concepts. We cannot imagine Infinite Love, Infinite Goodness, or Infinite Mercy.

Tertullian, a third century Father of the Church, often called the first Christian theologian, said “enfleshment is the hinge of salvation.” We don't come to the God Mystery through concepts or theories but by connecting with *what is*—with God's immediate, embodied presence which is all around us. I want you to begin to notice that almost all of Jesus' common stories and examples are nature based and relationship based—and never once academic theory! (Fr. Thomas Berry [1914-2009] taught the same way in our time, and I hope to share his work much more in my writings and teachings in the future.)

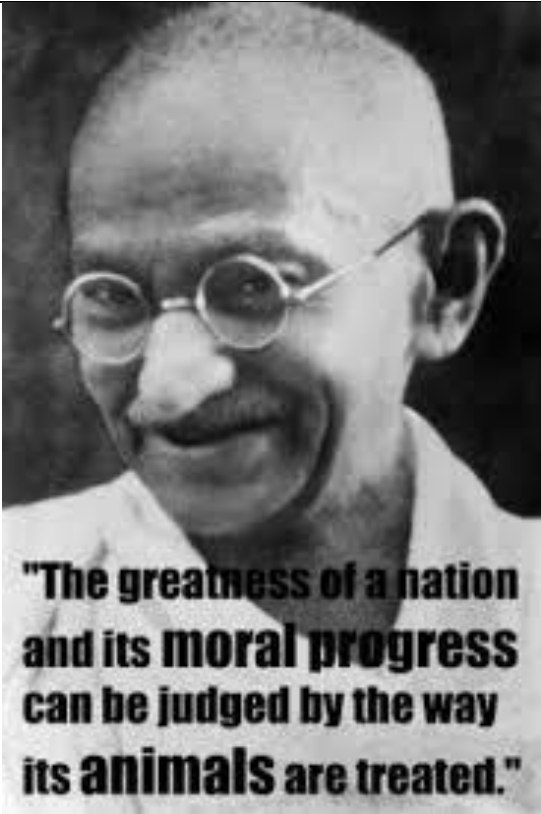
We have not recognized the one Body of Christ in creation. Perhaps we just didn't have the readiness or training. There is first of all the seeing, and then there is the recognizing; the second stage is called contemplation. We cannot afford to be blind any longer. We must learn to see and recognize how broad and deep the Presence is if we are to truly care for our common home.

### **Gateway to Silence:**

Brother Sun, Sister Moon, help me see God in all things.


*From Richard Rohr's daily meditations*


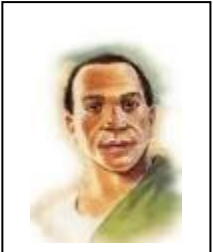
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<p><b>Friday</b></p>	<p><b>17</b></p>	<p><b>Reflection:</b></p> <p><b><i>Pope Francis - Laudato Si</i></b></p> <p>10. I do not want to write this Encyclical without turning to that attractive and compelling figure, whose name I took as my guide and inspiration when I was elected Bishop of Rome. I believe that Saint Francis is the example par excellence of care for the vulnerable and of an integral ecology lived out joyfully and authentically. He is the patron saint of all who study and work in the area of ecology, and he is also much loved by non-Christians. He was particularly concerned for God’s creation and for the poor and outcast. He loved, and was deeply loved for his joy, his generous self-giving, his openheartedness. He was a mystic and a pilgrim who lived in simplicity and in wonderful harmony with God, with others, with nature and with himself. He shows us just how inseparable the bond is between concern for nature, justice for the poor, commitment to society, and interior peace.</p> <p>11. His disciple Saint Bonaventure tells us that, “from a reflection on the primary source of all things, filled with even more abundant piety, he would call creatures, no matter how small, by the name of ‘brother’ or ‘sister’”.<sup>[20]</sup> Such a conviction cannot be written off as naive romanticism, for it affects the choices which determine our behaviour. If we approach nature and the environment without this openness to awe and wonder, if we no longer speak the language of fraternity and beauty in our relationship with the world, our attitude will be that of masters, consumers, ruthless exploiters, unable to set limits on their immediate needs. By contrast, if we feel intimately united with all that exists, then sobriety and care will well up spontaneously. The poverty and austerity of Saint Francis were no mere veneer of asceticism, but something much more radical: a refusal to turn reality into an object simply to be used and controlled.</p> <p><b><i>Prayerfully consider this</i></b></p>
<p><b>Saturday</b></p>	<p><b>18</b></p>	 <p><b>"The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated."</b></p>



<p><b>Sunday</b></p>	<p><b>19</b></p>	<p><b>The Lord's Prayer Liturgy</b></p> <p>Loving God, we remember that Jesus taught us to pray saying, "Our Father..."  <b>You created us, you made this world, and you called your creation very good. Yet often we forget that you are our loving Parent who continues to bless your world.</b></p> <p>Jesus told us that you are "...in heaven..."  <b>Yet we fail to live in awe of you. We take you for granted, and we don't see the awesome beauty of the world you have made.</b></p> <p>We pray, "Hallowed be your name..."  <b>We confess that our reverence for you does not always lead us to care reverently for your earth, sky and sea.</b></p> <p>We pray, "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven..."  <b>We confess that we often put our own interests first-exploiting your creation and living for our own convenience and self-interest.</b></p> <p>We pray, "Give us today our daily bread."  <b>We confess that we consume more than our share of the world's resources, while billions go hungry every day and your whole creation suffers.</b></p> <p>We pray, "Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us."  <b>We confess that we see these words only in spiritual terms, while the Bible is filled with teachings about economic justice and creation care.</b></p> <p>We pray, "Save us from the time of trial."  <b>Help us to resist the temptations of spending more, using more, acquiring more, and wasting more.</b></p> <p>We pray, "Deliver us from evil..."  <b>Free us from greed and self-centeredness that separate us from you and others.</b></p> <p>We pray, "For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever."  <b>Help us to know that in caring for your wonderful world, we are working for your kingdom, being good stewards of your creative power, and giving you glory.</b></p> <p>We pray, "Amen."  <b>We end our prayers with "Amen," a word that means "let it be so." We know we can be faithful disciples by your grace. Amen!</b></p> <p><i>From Limestone Presbyterian Church,  "The Lord's Prayer and Creation Care: A Litany of Confession."  Written by Revs. Bruce and Carolyn Gillette.</i></p>
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<p><b>Monday</b></p>	<p><b>20</b></p>	<p><b>Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning</b></p>  <p><b>Goal 4 Targets:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and Goal-4 effective learning outcomes</li> <li>• By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education</li> <li>• By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university</li> <li>• By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship</li> <li>• By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations</li> <li>• By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy</li> <li>• By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development</li> <li>• Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, nonviolent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all</li> <li>• By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programmes, in developed countries and other developing countries</li> <li>• By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing states</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Prayerfully consider what actions you can take to assisting in achieving these goals</i></b></p>
<p><b>Tuesday</b></p>	<p><b>21</b></p>	<p>“We need the tonic of wildness—to wade sometimes in marshes where the bittern and the meadow-hen lurk, and hear the booming of the snipe; to smell the whispering sedge where only some wilder and more solitary fowl builds her nest, and the mink crawls with its belly close to the ground. At the same time that we are earnest to explore and learn all things, we require that all things be mysterious and unexplorable, that land and sea be infinitely wild, unsurveyed and unfathomed by us because unfathomable. We can never have enough of nature.”</p> <p><b><i>Henry David Thoreau</i></b></p>

<p><b>Wednesday</b></p>	<p><b>22</b></p>	
<p><b>Thursday</b></p>	<p><b>23</b></p>	<p>Every creature, every plant, every rock and grain of sand proclaims the glory of its Creator, worships through colour, shape, scent and form. A multi-sensory song of praise. Creator God, may we join with the whole of your creation, in praising you, our Creator, through the fragrance and melody of our lives.</p>
<p><b>Friday</b></p>	<p><b>24</b></p>	<p>“Nature is schoolmistress, the soul the pupil; and whatever one has taught or the other has learned has come from God p the Teacher of the teacher.” <b>Tertullian</b> (<i>Quintus Septimius Florens Tertullianus,</i>) c. 155 – c. 240 AD Roman Author, Born 160.</p> 
<p><b>Saturday</b></p>	<p><b>25</b></p>	<p>“If we could see the miracle of a single flower clearly, our whole life would change.” <b>Buddha</b></p>
<p><b>Sunday</b></p>	<p><b>26</b></p>	<p>May this eternal truth be always on our hearts, That the God who breathed this world into being, Placed stars into the heavens and designed a butterfly's wing, Is the God who entrusted his son to the care of ordinary people, became vulnerable that we might know how strong is the wonder of Love. A mystery so deep it is impossible to grasp. A mystery so beautiful it is impossible to ignore.</p>

<b>Monday</b>	<b>27</b>	<p>Make me a tree, Lord,  Sturdy,  Deep rooted,  Useful.  Support  To those in need,  Shelter  To those who are weary,  Fruit  For those who hunger.  Make me a tree, Lord,  Sturdy,  Deep rooted,  Useful.</p>	
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>28</b>	<p>“The natural world demands a response beyond scientific insight. The natural world demands a response that rises from the wild unconscious depths of the human soul.”  <i>Thomas Berry</i></p>	
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>29</b>	<p>Loving Lord, you have given us matchless skill in the realm of science and technology. Help us to understand that you alone are the source of all truth and understanding. Let us never be blinded by the lure of the marketplace or tempted to put at risk the lives and health of our fellow-humans. Watch over our motives, dear Lord, that we may ever give prime place to the furtherance of your kingdom. This we ask in the Name of your Son, who died that we might live.</p>	
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>30</b>	<p>“Every moment and every event of every man's life on earth plants something in his soul.”  <i>Thomas Merton</i></p>	
<b>Friday</b>	<b>31</b>	<p><b>A Franciscan Blessing</b></p> <p>May God bless us with <b>discomfort</b> at easy answers, half-truths, and superficial relationships, so that we may live deep within our hearts.</p> <p>May God bless us with <b>anger</b> at injustice, oppression, and exploitation of people and the environment, so that we may work for justice, freedom, and peace.</p> <p>May God bless us with <b>tears</b> to shed for those who suffer from pain, rejection, hunger, and war, so that we may reach out our hands to comfort them and turn their pain into joy.</p> <p>And may God bless us with enough <b>foolishness</b> to believe that we can make a difference in this world, so that we can do what others claim cannot be done, to bring justice and kindness to all our children and the poor</p>	