

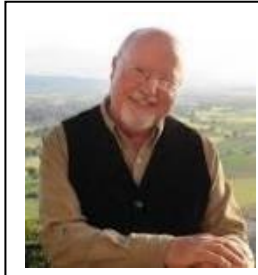



JAEI

May 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>Friday</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Keep us, good Lord, under the shadow of your mercy in this time of uncertainty and distress. Sustain and support the anxious and fearful, and lift up all who are brought low; that we may rejoice in your comfort knowing that nothing can separate us from your love in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.</p> <p><i>.... An Intercession of the day during these stressful pandemic times ...</i></p> <p>O God our Healer, show your compassion for the whole human family that is in turmoil and burdened with illness and with fear. Hear our cry, O God, Listen to our prayer.</p>
<p>Saturday</p>	<p>2</p>	<div data-bbox="762 981 1126 1391" data-label="Image"> </div> <p><i>.... An Intercession of the day during these stressful pandemic times ...</i></p> <p>Come to our aid as the coronavirus spreads globally, heal those who are sick, support and protect their families and friends from being infected. Hear our cry, O God, Listen to our prayer.</p>
<p>Sunday</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>Let us pray to God, who alone makes us dwell in safety: For all who are affected by coronavirus, through illness or isolation or anxiety, that they may find relief and recovery: Lord, hear us, Lord, graciously hear us.</p> <p>For those who are guiding our nation at this time, and shaping national policies, that they may make wise decisions: Lord, hear us, Lord, graciously hear us.</p>

	<p>For doctors, nurses and medical researchers, that through their skill and insights many will be restored to health: Lord, hear us, Lord, graciously hear us.</p> <p>For the vulnerable and the fearful, for the gravely ill and the dying, that they may know your comfort and peace: Lord, hear us, Lord, graciously hear us.</p> <p>We commend ourselves, and all for whom we pray, to the mercy and protection of God. Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.</p> <p><i>.... An Intercession of the day during these stressful pandemic times ...</i> Grant us your spirit of love and self-discipline so that we may come together, working to control and eliminate the coronavirus. Hear our cry, O God, <i>Listen to our prayer.</i></p>
<p>Monday</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Creation Is the Primary Cathedral</p> <p>Creation itself—not ritual or spaces constructed by human hands—was Francis’ primary cathedral. It is no accident that the majority of Jesus’ stories and metaphors are based on human and natural observations, not classroom theology. It is not unimportant that both Jesus and Francis were peripatetic teachers—talking while walking—and on the road of the world. In our own time, major teachers like Thomas Berry and Teilhard de Chardin have rediscovered this natural and universal theology.</p> <p>The Gospel transforms us by putting us in touch with that which is much more constant and satisfying, literally the “ground of our being,” and has much more “reality” to it than theological concepts or the mere ritualization of reality. Daily cosmic events in the sky and on the earth are the Reality above our heads and beneath our feet every minute of our lives: a continuous sacrament. I find that a preoccupation with religious rituals tends to increase the more we remain untouched by Reality Itself—to which the best rituals can only point.</p> <p>Jesus himself commonly points to things like the red sky, a hen, lilies, the fig tree, a donkey caught in a pit, the birds of the air, the grass in the field, the temple animals that he released from their cages, and on and on. He was clearly looking at the seemingly “nonreligious” world, ordinary things all around him, and appeared to do most of his teaching out of doors. Francis said, “Wherever we are, wherever we go, we bring our cell and our soul with us. Our Brother Body is our cell and our soul is the hermit living in the cell. If our soul does not live in peace and solitude within this moving cell, of what avail is it to live in a man-made cell?”</p> <p>Both Jesus and Francis knew that everything created was a message about the nature of God. Nature was not empty of divinity. Seeing nature as secular</p> 

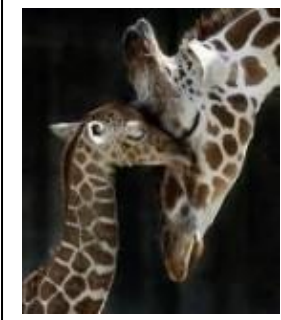
		<p>or merely functional created much of the loneliness and seeming meaninglessness in our contemporary worldview.</p> <p>In the five-day Men's Rites of Passage — that was a focus of my work for fifteen years—so many men felt that prayers and rituals inside of human-scale buildings were rather domesticated and controlled. They often perceived that the salvation offered inside these artificial constructs was also “small” and churchy. Almost without exception, the greatest breakthroughs for our men occurred during extended times of silence in nature, where the human and the merely verbal were not in control, or during rituals that were raw and earthy. Remember that good ritual, like art itself, merely imitates nature.</p> <p>Gateway to Silence: Praised be You, my Lord, through all your creatures. —<i>Francis of Assisi</i></p> <p>From Richard Rohr's daily meditations www.cac.org</p> <p>.... An Intercession of the day during these stressful pandemic times ... Make us vigilant, attentive, and proactive during this COVID-19 pandemic that has created suffering and death for many people. Hear our cry, O God, Listen to our prayer</p>
<p>Tuesday</p>	<p>5</p>	 <p>.... An Intercession of the day during these stressful pandemic times ... Heal our self-centeredness and indifference that makes us worry only when the virus threatens us, open ways beyond timidity and fear that too easily ignore our neighbour. Hear our cry, O God, Listen to our prayer.</p>

<p>Wednesday</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>Creator and Redeemer, as we approach you in prayer: Strengthen our paths Strengthen our minds Strengthen our hearts Strengthen our speech We pray first for your community, the Church, the body of Christ. <i>I pray for all my relatives – all living things.</i></p> <p>God our Healer, love is something we must have. We must have it because our Spirit feeds upon it. We must have it because without it we become weak and faint. Without love, we weaken and our courage fails. Creator, you declared that love in your Son Jesus Christ. Help your Church declare that love in this world. <i>I pray for all my relatives – all living things.</i></p> <p>Great Spirit, we feel you in the eland, the impala, with the mist on the lake and in the blue waves, in the call of the weavers. It is beautiful. You tell us heaven is still more beautiful. Injustice and suffering will be gone. We rejoice and look forward in hope as You help us build your kingdom in our communities. Those who have worn out their shoes know where to step. Help us to follow the footsteps of Jesus. <i>I pray for all my relatives – all living things.</i></p> <p>God our Hope, life glows from the bosom of Mother Earth. Mother Earth throws off dead stalks and withered limbs; and new strong saplings arise. We ask such new life for those who suffer, and that they be sustained by Your spirit. We now remember those who suffer; those in special need <i>I pray for all my relatives – all living things.</i></p> <p>God our Loving Creator, the faces of the past are like leaves that settled to the ground. They make the soil rich and thick, so that new fruit will come forth every summer. We give thanks for the wisdom the elders have passed down to us, and we ask that it may bear fruit in us. We remember those who have gone before. <i>I pray for all my relatives – all living things.</i></p> <p>Creator, you saw the world and declared it good. The beauty of the trees, the softness of the air, the fragrance of the grass speak to us. The summit of the mountain, the thunder of the sky, the rhythm of the rivers speak to us. The faintness of the stars, the freshness of the morning, the dewdrops on the flowers speak to us. But above all, our hearts soar, for you speak to us in your Son, our Brother, Jesus Christ, in whose name we offer these prayers. Amen.</p> <p><i>.... An Intercession of the day during these stressful pandemic times ...</i> Strengthen and encourage those in public health services and in the medical profession: care-givers, nurses, attendants, doctors, all who commit themselves to caring for the sick and their families. Hear our cry, O God, <i>Listen to our prayer.</i></p>
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<p>Thursday</p>	<p>7</p> <p>Jane Goodall says ‘disrespect for animals’ caused pandemic</p> <p>World-renowned British primatologist Jane Goodall says the coronavirus pandemic was caused by humanity's disregard for nature and disrespect for animals.</p> <p>Jane Goodall, who is best known for trail-blazing research in Africa that revealed the true nature of chimpanzees, pleaded for the world to learn from past mistakes to prevent future disasters.</p> <p>During a conference call ahead of the release of the new National Geographic documentary, <i>Jane Goodall: The Hope</i>, the 86-year-old also said everyone can make a difference.</p>  <p>How do you view this pandemic?</p> <p>Goodall: It is our disregard for nature and our disrespect of the animals we should share the planet with that has caused this pandemic, that was predicted long ago.</p> <p>Because as we destroy, let's say the forest, the different species of animals in the forest are forced into a proximity and therefore diseases are being passed from one animal to another, and that second animal is then most likely to infect humans as it is forced into closer contact with humans.</p> <p>It's also the animals who are hunted for food, sold in markets in Africa or in the meat market for wild animals in Asia, especially China, and our intensive farms where we cruelly crowd together billions of animals around the world. These are the conditions that create an opportunity for the viruses to jump from animals across the species barrier to humans.</p> <p>What can we do about these animal markets?</p> <p>It's really good that China closed down the live wild animal markets, in a temporary ban which we hope will be made permanent, and other Asian countries will follow suit. But in Africa it will be very difficult to stop the selling of bush meat because so many people rely on that for their livelihoods.</p> <p>It will need a lot of careful thought on how it should be done, you can't just stop somebody doing something when they have absolutely no money to support themselves or their families, but at least this pandemic should have taught us the kind of things to do to prevent another one.</p> <p>What can we hope for?</p> <p>We have to realise we are part of the natural world, we depend on it, and as we destroy it, we are actually stealing the future from our children.</p> <p>Hopefully, because of this unprecedented response, the lockdowns that are going on around the world, more people will wake up and eventually they can start thinking about ways they can live their lives differently.</p> <p>Everyone can make an impact every single day.</p> <p>If you think about the consequences of the little choices you make: what you eat, where it came from, did it cause cruelty to animals, is it made from intensive farming — which mostly it is — is it cheap because of child slave labour, did it harm the environment in its production, where did it come from, how many miles did it travel, did you think that perhaps you could walk and not take your car.</p> <p>(Also consider) ways that you could perhaps help alleviate poverty because when people are poor, they can't make these ethical choices. They just have to do whatever they can to survive — they can't question what they buy, they must buy the cheapest,</p>
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		<p>and they are going to cut down the last tree because they are desperate to find land on which they can grow more food.</p> <p>So what we can do in our individual lives does depend a little bit on who we are, but we all can make a difference, everybody can.</p> <p>— By Stéphane Orjollet © Agence France-Presse</p> <p>Taken from - https://www.thesouthafrican.com/lifestyle/environment/jane-goodall-coronavirus-pandemic/</p> <p>.... An Intercession of the day during these stressful pandemic times ... Inspire, give insight and hope to all researchers focused on developing a vaccine. Hear our cry, O God, Listen to our prayer.</p>
<p>Friday</p>	<p>8</p>	<div data-bbox="676 600 1219 1214" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>.... An Intercession of the day during these stressful pandemic times ... Sustain all workers and business owners who suffer loss of livelihood due to shut-downs, quarantines, closed borders, and other restrictions. Protect and guard all those who must travel. Hear our cry, O God, Listen to our prayer.</p>
<p>Saturday</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>“Nature is revolting to reclaim her kingdom. If now we don't make peace with her what's the point of us!” Abhijit Naskar</p> <div data-bbox="1160 1496 1445 1738" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>.... An Intercession of the day during these stressful pandemic times ... Guide the leaders of the nations that they speak the truth, halt the spread of misinformation and act with justice so that all your family may know healing. Hear our cry, O God, Listen to our prayer.</p>

<p>Sunday</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>Mother's Day</p> <p>Heavenly Father, we praise You and we thank You for the gift of our mothers, through whom You give us life and through whom we experience love.</p> <p>We thank You for Mary, the mother of our Lord Jesus Christ, a mother so gracious and a woman of example in motherhood for all of us.</p> <p>Lord Jesus Christ, we pray and we lift up all mothers today, believers and non-believers alike in Your name. Motherhood is a beautiful journey, caring and nurturing a life from God and seeing it grow into a part of humanity.</p> <p>We pray that mothers today everywhere do take a moment to think of this beautiful and gracious gift from God in their livelihood.</p> <p>We thank our mothers, giving thanks for all the pain, suffering and commitment in raising us as children. We thank them for the sacrifice of their time, pleasures and interest to give us a life of contentment.</p> <p><i>.... An Intercession of the day during these stressful pandemic times ...</i> Heal our world, heal our bodies, strengthen our hearts and our minds, and in the midst of turmoil, give us hope and peace. Hear our cry, O God, Listen to our prayer.</p>
<p>Monday</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>From St Patrick's Breastplate</p> <p>I am giving you worship with all my life, I am giving you obedience with all my power, I am giving you praise with all my strength, I am giving you honour with all my speech. I am giving you love with all my heart, I am giving you affection with all my sense, I am giving you my being with all my mind, I am giving you my soul, O most high and holy God. Praise to the Father, Praise to the Son, Praise to the Spirit, The Three in One.</p> <p>Adapted from Alexander Carmichael, Carmina Gadelica (1900)</p> <p><i>.... An Intercession of the day during these stressful pandemic times ...</i> Hold in your gentle embrace all who have died and who will die this day. Comfort their loved ones in their despair. Hear our cry, O God, Listen to our prayer.</p>
<p>Tuesday</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>"Return to Me with all your heart," says the Lord, "with fasting, weeping, and with mourning; and rend your hearts, not your garments." Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and he relents over disaster. Who know whether he will not turn and relent, and leave a blessing behind him. Blow the trumpet in Zion; consecrate a fast."</p> <p>Joel 2:12-15</p> <p>Remember all your family, the entire human race, and all your creation, in your love. Listen to our prayer.</p>



<p>Wednesday</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>Gracious God Give our leaders wisdom, discernment and strength. Keep them healthy, safe and rested so that they can guide us through this time. Give our government leaders wisdom on how to stop the virus and stabilise our economy Give our spiritual leaders your discernment on how to meet people's needs as they glorify your name and encourage the Church Give our medical leaders insight into how to stop the virus. Strengthen their resolve and honour their hard work in creating a treatment for COVID-19. Give our civic leaders inspiration, courage, joy and strength to meet the needs of their communities And help us, as leaders in our communities to display courage, hope, generosity and kindness. In Jesus' Name Amen</p> <p>.... An Intercession of the day during these stressful pandemic times ... O God our Healer, show your compassion for the whole human family that is in turmoil and burdened with illness and with fear. Hear our cry, O God, Listen to our prayer.</p>
<p>Thursday</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>Reflection: Pope Francis - Laudato Si</p> <p>34. "It may well disturb us to learn of the extinction of mammals or birds, since they are more visible. But the good functioning of ecosystems also requires fungi, algae, worms, insects, reptiles and an innumerable variety of microorganisms. Some less numerous species, although generally unseen, nonetheless play a critical role in maintaining the equilibrium of a particular place. Human beings must intervene when a geosystem reaches a critical state. But nowadays, such intervention in nature has become more and more frequent. As a consequence, serious problems arise, leading to further interventions; human activity becomes ubiquitous, with all the risks which this entails. Often a vicious circle results, as human intervention to resolve a problem further aggravates the situation. For example, many birds and insects which disappear due to synthetic agrottoxins are helpful for agriculture: their disappearance will have to be compensated for by yet other techniques which may well prove harmful. We must be grateful for the praiseworthy efforts being made by scientists and engineers dedicated to finding solutions to man-made problems. But a sober look at our world shows that the degree of human intervention, often in the service of business interests and consumerism, is actually making our earth less rich and beautiful, ever more limited and grey, even as technological advances and consumer goods continue to abound limitlessly. We seem to think that we can substitute an irreplaceable and irretrievable beauty with something which we have created ourselves."</p> <p>Prayerfully consider this</p> <p>.... An Intercession of the day during these stressful pandemic times ... Come to our aid as the coronavirus spreads globally, heal those who are sick, support and protect their families and friends from being infected. Hear our cry, O God, Listen to our prayer.</p>

Friday

15

International Day of Families

The family is the smallest building block of society, and no doubt, the most important one as well! Having strong familial bonds provides support and a safe environment which are necessary for an individual's development.

If we have stronger families, we will have stronger communities. A strong family unit can help each member feel more fulfilled and better about

themselves and the world. It also provides a real-life example of how the human family can work together to create a better world.

Every family is different - family can be defined many different ways, and International Day of Families recognises that. Some families consist of children; some do not. Some consist of one parent, others more than one. Family is about more than just celebrating those who share DNA with you - it's about celebrating all the people you love. It's the people in your life who want you in theirs - the ones who accept you for who you are. The ones who love you no matter what.

International Day of Families is a time of celebration, but it's also a time for serious conversations about some of the challenges that families around the world face. Many families are dealing with issues like poverty, lack of health care, employment, child rearing and huge environmental challenges. And today, we promote awareness and a better understanding of some of these challenges.

We are also part of a bigger family - the family of God - where experience the love of God. To be able to call the only eternal, all-knowing, all-powerful Creator of the universe "Father" or even "Daddy" (the English equivalent to the Aramaic word "Abba") is one of the greatest blessings of what it means to be part of God's family. It means that the wall of sin and hostility that separated us from God has been demolished by the cross of Jesus Christ. This is indeed reason to celebrate and give thanks!

So take today to think critically about what family really means to you, and how you can get closer to the people you love.


At the end of the day, family is family - no matter what.

... An Intercession of the day during these stressful pandemic times ...

Grant us your spirit of love and self-discipline so that we may come together, working to control and eliminate the coronavirus. Hear our cry, O God,

Listen to our prayer.



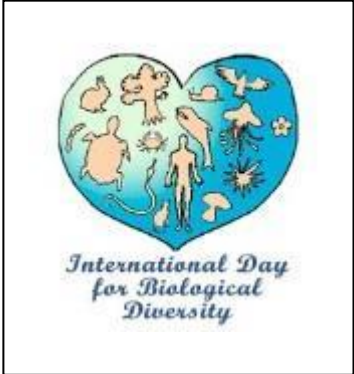


<p>Saturday</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>Psalm 46</p> <p>¹ God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. ² Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be moved, and though the mountains be toppled into the depths of the sea; ³ Though its waters rage and foam, and though the mountains tremble at its tumult. ⁴ The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our stronghold. ⁵ There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High. ⁶ God is in the midst of her; she shall not be overthrown; God shall help her at the break of day. ⁷ The nations make much ado, and the kingdoms are shaken; God has spoken, and the earth shall melt away. ⁸ The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our stronghold. ⁹ Come now and look upon the works of the Lord, what awesome things he has done on earth. ¹⁰ It is he who makes war to cease in all the world; he breaks the bow, and shatters the spear, and burns the shields with fire. ¹¹ "Be still, then, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations; I will be exalted in the earth." ¹² The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our stronghold.</p> <p><i>... An Intercession of the day during these stressful pandemic times ...</i></p> <p>Make us vigilant, attentive, and proactive during this COVID-19 pandemic that has created suffering and death for many people. Hear our cry, O God, <i>Listen to our prayer.</i></p>
<p>Sunday</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>Endangered Species Day</p> <p><i>Have we forgotten that wilderness is not a place but a season and that we are in its final hour? - Ian McCallum, Wilderness</i></p> <p>Endangered Species Day is an opportunity for people of all ages to learn about the importance of protecting endangered species and everyday actions they can take to help protect them.</p> <p>Species are critical for a healthy planet, but growing pressures from human activities are putting them at risk of extinction. Habitat destruction, invasive species, overexploitation, illegal wildlife trade, pollution and climate change are threatening the survival of species worldwide.</p> <p>IUCN (<i>International Union for the Conservation of Nature</i>) is at the forefront of the global fight to save species from extinction. Its Species Survival Commission has over 9000 members, within 160 Specialist Groups. The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species is used to guide decision making and conservation action. IUCN provides technical expertise for conservation issues and projects.</p> <p>It is shocking is that some creatures across the globe even become extinct before they are scientifically documented.</p> 

		<p>In South Africa, many organisations, (for example, The South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) and Endangered Wildlife Trust to name just two) work tirelessly to save wildlife and habitats with their vision being a world in which both humans and wildlife prosper in harmony with nature – from the smallest frog to the majestic rhino.</p> <p>.... An Intercession of the day during these stressful pandemic times ...</p> <p>Heal our self-centeredness and indifference that makes us worry only when the virus threatens us, open ways beyond timidity and fear that too easily ignore our neighbour. Hear our cry, O God, Listen to our prayer.</p>
<p>Monday</p>	<p>18</p>	<div data-bbox="758 566 1136 1070" data-label="Image"> <p>During these uncertain times, make sure you stock up on human decency & compassion.</p> </div> <p>.... An Intercession of the day during these stressful pandemic times ...</p> <p>Strengthen and encourage those in public health services and in the medical profession: care-givers, nurses, attendants, doctors, all who commit themselves to caring for the sick and their families. Hear our cry, O God, Listen to our prayer.</p>
<p>Tuesday</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>A prayer for the world</p> <p>God of love and hope, you made the world and care for all creation, and yet the world feels strange right now. The news is full of stories about Coronavirus. Many are anxious because of it; many are anxious that they might become ill; many are anxious about their family and friends; Many are anxious about their parents, their children, their jobs and their security. Be with us in our worries and help us to find some peace. We pray for the doctors and nurses and scientists who are working to discover the right medicines to give hope to those who are ill. Thank you that even in these strange and worrying times, you are with us. Help us to look for the signs of your goodness and love towards us, and keep our hearts always in your love; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.</p> <p>.... An Intercession of the day during these stressful pandemic times ...</p> <p>Inspire, give insight and hope to all researchers focused on developing a vaccine. Hear our cry, O God, Listen to our prayer.</p>

<p>Wednesday</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>World Bee Day</p> <p><i>The bee is small among flying creatures, but what it produces is the best of sweet things.</i> (Sirach 11:3)</p> <p>Bees and other pollinators, such as butterflies, bats and hummingbirds, are increasingly under threat from human activities.</p> <p>Pollinators allow many plants, including many food crops, to reproduce. Not only do pollinators contribute directly to food security, but they are key to conserving biodiversity - a cornerstone of the Sustainable Development Goals. They also serve as sentinels for emergent environmental risks, signalling the health of local ecosystems.</p> <p>Invasive insects, pesticides, land-use change and monocropping practices may reduce available nutrients and pose threats to bee colonies.</p> <p>To raise awareness of the importance of pollinators, the threats they face and their contribution to sustainable development, the UN designated 20 May as World Bee Day.</p> <p>World Bee Day is a day in which we are all tasked with celebrating our bees and raising awareness for the critical role they play in the world and in our lives. For one day around the world, everyone will be united in <i>bee-buzziness</i>. A day committed to mobilising international co-operation to take the challenges surrounding our bees head on. Their health and well-being, the direct threat to food security we face – the need to eradicate hunger and malnutrition – and maintaining our rich biodiversity and ecosystems. The bottom line is that bees pollinate over 170 000 plant species and without them our diverse food supply would be less abundant and our landscapes devoid of the colours and scents of these plants in flower.</p> <p>Like us, bees are what they eat. A healthy starting point is creating healthy spaces of diverse flora for bees. Let's feed them right - we need to disrupt the food deserts and develop bee food diversity on farmlands using bee-friendly wind breaks, ground covers and planting of trees for bees. Plant bee friendly food at home, encourage your communities to plant bee friendly food along walkways, park lands and other community property. Use all available land bee-effectively. Secondly, stop using harmful chemicals. It is time for a global ban, one following in the footsteps of the ruling by the European Union. Let's reverse the negative effects of bad decisions in our past and create a positive future for our children and future generations. We need to foster sustainable farming practices that support the delicate balance of nature.</p> <p>And finally, let's celebrate a reverence for our bees. Without them our quality of life is to be drastically impacted on. Imagine for a moment your favourite natural landscape in the world, see it, smell it as the different fragrances wake up your senses, a space abundant with flora and fauna. The sounds of insects buzzing, bird calls filling the air. Now see it for a moment, grey and brown, the smell of dirt choking your nostrils. And the silence. A wasteland.</p> <p>Bees are the abundance in our lives. Let's avoid the worst legacy we can leave future generations, lets avoid a wasteland. Support World Bee Day this 20 May.</p>
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		<p>In the Orthodox Church, the importance of bees has been recognised for centuries and have prayers for both bees and beehives.</p>  <p><i>O God, the Creator of all, who blesses seed and makes it to increase and makes it profitable for our use: Through the intercession of the Forerunner and Baptist John, mercifully hearing our prayers, be pleased to bless and sanctify the bees by Your own deep compassion, that they may abundantly bear fruit for the beauty and adornment of Your temple and Your holy altars, and they may be useful for us, in Christ Jesus our Lord, to Whom be honour and glory unto ages of ages. Amen.</i></p> <p>.... An Intercession of the day during these stressful pandemic times ...</p> <p>Sustain all workers and business owners who suffer loss of livelihood due to shut-downs, quarantines, closed borders, and other restrictions. Protect and guard all those who must travel. Hear our cry, O God, Listen to our prayer.</p>
<p>Thursday</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>“Let us not only clean our hands, we must purify our hearts.” Lailah Gifty Akita <i>Founder of Smart Youth Volunteers Foundation, Ghana</i></p>  <p>.... An Intercession of the day during these stressful pandemic times ...</p> <p>Guide the leaders of the nations that they speak the truth, halt the spread of misinformation and act with justice so that all your family may know healing. Hear our cry, O God, Listen to our prayer.</p>
<p>Friday</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>International Biodiversity Day</p> <p>The theme of the International Day for Biological Diversity (IDB) on 22 May 2020 is <i>"Our Solutions are in Nature"</i></p> <p>The theme for the day shows that biodiversity remains the answer to a number of sustainable development challenges that we all face. From nature-based solutions to climate, to food and water security, and sustainable livelihoods, biodiversity remains the basis for a sustainable future.</p>  <p><i>International Day for Biological Diversity</i></p> <p>The Global Biodiversity Assessment Report that was released by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Eco-system Services in May 2019 warned that 1-million species are threatened with extinction and that global biodiversity is declining at an “unprecedented” speed and that speed is “accelerating”. Although the report was received with much doom and gloom across the globe, there is certainly hope. There is so much that can be done by the international community in a spirit of co-operation if we all do our part.,</p>

	<p>South Africa’s policy and legislative framework for biodiversity is well developed, providing a strong basis for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. South Africa is one of the few countries in the world to have a Biodiversity Act and a National Biodiversity Institute. A safe, healthy and sustainably managed environmental and natural resource base provides critical eco-system services that are a foundation for economic and social development.</p> <p>We all need to play our part in ensuring these measures are upheld.</p> <p><i>Litany for the Planet</i></p> <p>Grasses multiply and wild flowers proliferate Because you God in Christ set the earth free</p> <p>Vegetables colour the garden and herbs give aroma to the spiral Because you Spirit led us into the new creation</p> <p>The lion and the lamb are making friends; the worms love the lettuce Because you Wisdom inspired new natural companions</p> <p>The insects live in diverse croplands with birds sharing the spoils Because you Lord of Love taught us to share</p> <p>Every part of the creation is significant from flies to mosquitoes Because you Creator of all, reasoned everything into being</p> <p>Now teach us triune God to transcend ideology to sustainability Because Christ you are the peace between us</p> <p><i>... An Intercession of the day during these stressful pandemic times ...</i></p> <p>Heal our world, heal our bodies, strengthen our hearts and our minds, and in the midst of turmoil, give us hope and peace. Hear our cry, O God, <i>Listen to our prayer.</i></p>
<p>Saturday</p>	<p>23</p> <p>World Turtle Day</p> <p>Turtles, Tortoises & Terrapins of Southern Africa</p> <p>World Turtle/Tortoise Day aims to increase respect and knowledge for the world’s oldest creatures. These creatures are reptiles, characterised by a special bony or cartilaginous shell developed from their ribs that acts as a shield. These gentle animals have been around for about 200 million years, yet they are rapidly disappearing as a result of the exotic food industry, habitat destruction and the cruel pet trade.</p> <p>The distinction between turtles, tortoises and terrapins are frequently confused. Turtles are entirely marine dwellers, tortoises are land-based and terrapins are found in the fresh waters of rivers and dams.</p> <p>Turtles are endangered world-wide and unfortunately, it is the nesting females, that are most at risk when they come ashore to lay eggs. Turtle meat and eggs are still eaten in some countries, gill nets, pollution, human ignorance and impact on breeding sites are all major threats to their survival.</p> <div data-bbox="1070 1659 1453 1973" data-label="Image"> <p><i>A loggerhead female laying her eggs on a KZN beach</i></p> </div>

All turtles found in South African waters (loggerheads, leatherbacks, green turtles and hawksbill turtles) are classified as endangered on the IUCN red list and the Olive Ridley turtle is classified as critically endangered. Only the leatherback (the largest marine reptile globally) and the loggerhead turtles nest on the beaches of northern Kwa-Zulu Natal.

Sea turtles are threatened with extinction by us. Their journey of over 100 million years of survival may finally come to an end because of human action, or inaction.

Threats to their nesting habitats, night disruptions of nesting females, beach parties, 4x4 vehicles riding on the beach or careless beach umbrellas can destroy viable eggs. Plastic litter, particularly plastic bags, food packaging and balloons that resemble jellyfish and seaweed, are ingested and obstruct the stomach of a turtle, causing a slow and painful death. The same can be said about plastic drinking straws and other single-use plastic items that are a risk to the lives of sea turtles. This is something we can all work to prevent.



Some simple acts that we can do to protect these amazing reptiles is to prevent Plastic Pollution in all its forms. Reduce or eliminate your use of single-use plastic items. Support initiatives like BYOB (**B**ring **Y**our **O**wn **B**ag). Leave balloons out of your celebrations - balloons can travel thousands of kilometres and pollute the most remote and pristine places and are lethal to marine turtles.

The Turtle Prayer





Great Turtle spirit,
I invite you into my life.
I seek your lessons of tremendous patience.
I seek your lessons of stability.
I seek your lessons of the shore.
Lead me along that place where water touches earth,
the space between movement and stillness.
Remind me that I carry all I need with me at all times.
Awaken my senses so that I am prepared for opportunities as they arrive.
Help me trust that all happens when and how it should.
Shield me from harm, and share your primal wisdom.
Please, help me remember that my home is with me wherever I go.
Mother Turtle,
I call to you.

Travis Bowman

.... An Intercession of the day during these stressful pandemic times ...
Hold in your gentle embrace all who have died and who will die this day. Comfort their loved ones in their despair. Hear our cry, O God,
Listen to our prayer.

<p>Sunday</p>	<p>24</p>	<div data-bbox="651 129 1241 519" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>Remember all your family, the entire human race, and all your creation, in your love. <i>Listen to our prayer.</i></p>
<p>Monday</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>Lord, in these times when we fear we are losing hope Or feel our efforts are futile, Let us see in our hearts and minds the image of your resurrection, And let that be the source of courage and strength. With that, and in your company, Help us to face challenges and struggles Against all that is born of injustice. <i>Prayer from the Philippines</i></p> <p><i>.... An Intercession of the day during these stressful pandemic times ...</i> O God our Healer, show your compassion for the whole human family that is in turmoil and burdened with illness and with fear. Hear our cry, O God, <i>Listen to our prayer.</i></p>
<p>Tuesday</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>Africa Day Prayer for Africa Dear God For the love of Africa Hear my prayer Africa is the cradle of your creation Therefore, grant me patience To nurture growth and goodness In this great land Africa is the rainbow of your heavens Therefore, grant me tolerance To celebrate difference and diversity Across this wide continent Africa is the drumbeat of your heart Therefore, grant me courage To offer comfort and compassion In the face of her people's trials To the prisons of poverty in Africa Let me bring the liberation of choice And to the deserts of her suffering Cool streams of relief To the tunnels of deception in Africa Let me bring lamps of truth And to the jungles of her conflict</p> <div data-bbox="1078 1173 1453 1588" data-label="Image"> </div>

		<p>Flags of reconciliation To the caves of despair in Africa Let me bring voices of hope And to the swamps of her fear Whispers of comfort Wherever Africa teaches her children Share the lessons of my fading past And where she dreams of tomorrow Set my feet on the path of progress Wherever Africa raises her leaders Judge my support by democracy's voice And where she breathes in community Join my breath with inspiration Wherever Africa cherishes her wilderness Mark my celebration of nature's bounty And where she cares for her people Watch my spirit swell with love For the love of Africa Hear my prayer Dear God.</p> <p>.... An Intercession of the day during these stressful pandemic times ... Come to our aid as the coronavirus spreads globally, heal those who are sick, support and protect their families and friends from being infected. Hear our cry, O God, Listen to our prayer.</p>
<p>Wednesday</p>	<p>27</p>	<div data-bbox="735 1037 1158 1462" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>.... An Intercession of the day during these stressful pandemic times ... Grant us your spirit of love and self-discipline so that we may come together, working to control and eliminate the coronavirus. Hear our cry, O God, Listen to our prayer.</p>
<p>Thursday</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>O gracious and holy Father, give us wisdom to perceive you, diligence to seek you, patience to wait for you, eyes to behold you, a heart to meditate upon you, and a life to proclaim you, through the power of the spirit of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. Saint Benedict</p> <p>.... An Intercession of the day during these stressful pandemic times ... Make us vigilant, attentive, and proactive during this COVID-19 pandemic that has created suffering and death for many people. Hear our cry, O God, Listen to our prayer.</p>

<p>Friday</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>All things bright and beautiful <i>South African version</i></p> <p><i>Chorus:</i> All things bright and beautiful All creatures great and small All things wise and wonderful The Lord God made them all.</p> <p>The vygie and the thorn trees The laughing turtle doves The kudus of the bushveld Are made by God above</p> <p>The rugged Drakensberge Die Klein en Groot Karoo The bushveld and the forest The coast and ocean blue</p> <p>This beautiful creation He gave us out of love He made us to be stewards That all might plenty have.</p> <p>.... An Intercession of the day during these stressful pandemic times ... Heal our self-centeredness and indifference that makes us worry only when the virus threatens us, open ways beyond timidity and fear that too easily ignore our neighbour. Hear our cry, O God, <i>Listen to our prayer.</i></p>	  
<p>Saturday</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>Forgive us, Mother Earth</p> <p>Beloved Mother Earth, All other creatures, The Creator has made all things good All creatures are our brothers and sisters Living by the Grace of The Creator of life Blessed by the Earth that gives food each day. Yet we have hurt Mother Earth. We have destroyed our brothers and sisters. With a desire for more and more wealth, more and more prosperity We have damaged the earth without mercy. We dump our waste everywhere The oceans, mountains, fields, and forests Broken by our actions. Even the bowels of the earth have been dredged without mercy For gold, coal, manganese, marble, and other minerals. Forgive our pride and greed. Forgive our arrogance and evil ways. May this plague be an opportunity for us to learn That our human economy is not everything.</p>	

		<p>The economy must move with ecology. Ecology and economy must be balanced for the sake of the <i>oikoumene</i>, So the Earth can be a home worthy of inhabitation by all creatures. May we learn with our minds, all of creation is not our enemy We must organize our lives more wisely To distance life from extinction So that we of this generation May experience the intention of The Creator of Life that is truly good. Forgive us, Mother Earth, Forgive us, fellow members of creation. Please accept us back in the dance of divine life Where we hug each other as brothers and sisters Sharing energy with each other for life that is mutual and whole.</p> <p>Rev. Dr. Mery Kolimon <i>a well-known theologian, activist, and church leader from Indonesia, offered this prayer.</i></p> <p>.... An Intercession of the day during these stressful pandemic times ... Strengthen and encourage those in public health services and in the medical profession: care-givers, nurses, attendants, doctors, all who commit themselves to caring for the sick and their families. Hear our cry, O God, Listen to our prayer</p>
<p>Sunday</p>	<p>31</p>	<div data-bbox="632 943 1264 1570" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>.... An Intercession of the day during these stressful pandemic times ... Guide the leaders of the nations that they speak the truth, halt the spread of misinformation and act with justice so that all your family may know healing. Hear our cry, O God, Listen to our prayer</p>

****Intercessory Prayers taken from <https://www.lutheranworld.org>**