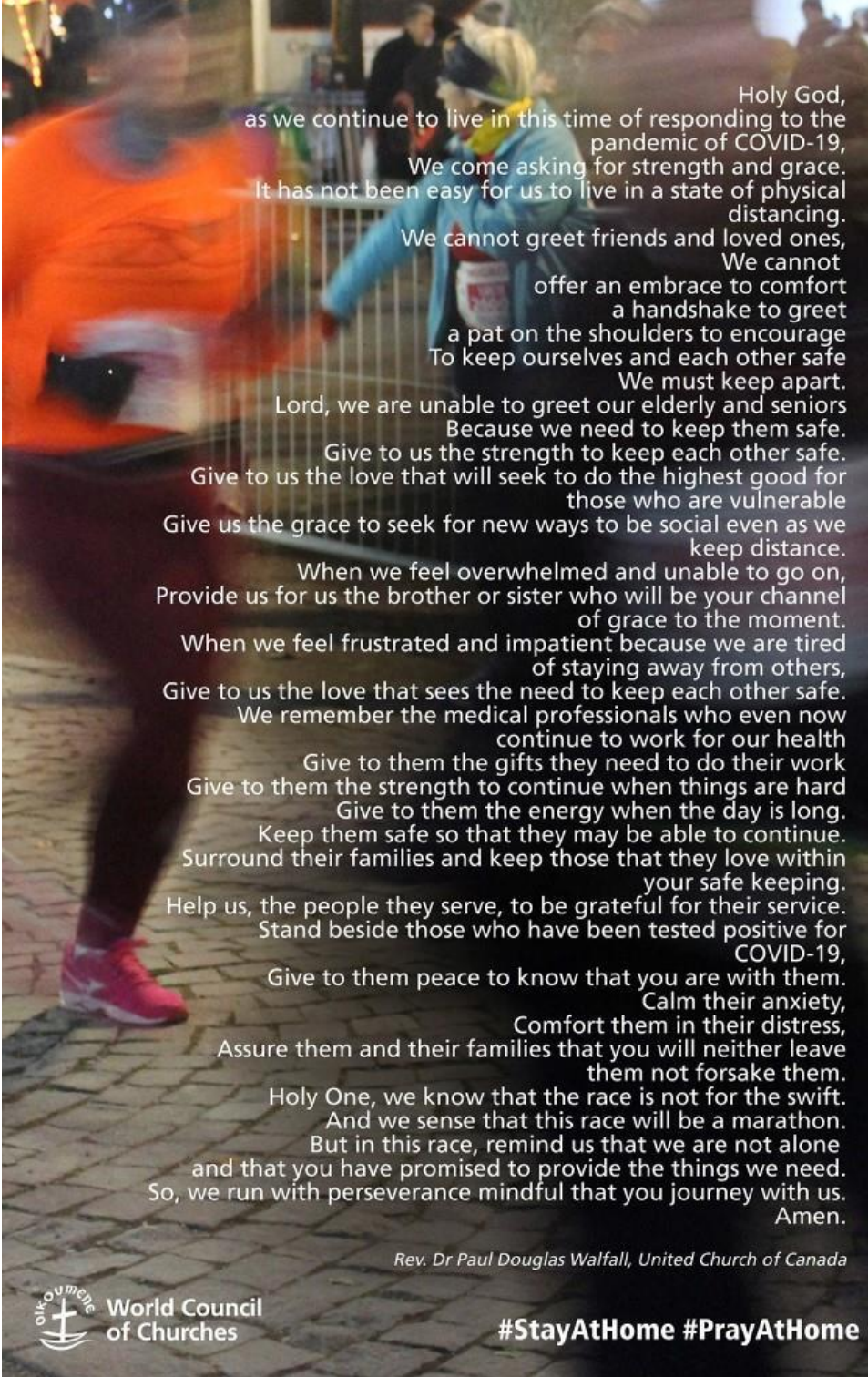




JAEI

July 2020 Environmental Prayer Diary

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






Holy God,
as we continue to live in this time of responding to the
pandemic of COVID-19,
We come asking for strength and grace.
It has not been easy for us to live in a state of physical
distancing.
We cannot greet friends and loved ones,
We cannot
offer an embrace to comfort
a handshake to greet
a pat on the shoulders to encourage
To keep ourselves and each other safe
We must keep apart.
Lord, we are unable to greet our elderly and seniors
Because we need to keep them safe.
Give to us the strength to keep each other safe.
Give to us the love that will seek to do the highest good for
those who are vulnerable
Give us the grace to seek for new ways to be social even as we
keep distance.
When we feel overwhelmed and unable to go on,
Provide us for us the brother or sister who will be your channel
of grace to the moment.
When we feel frustrated and impatient because we are tired
of staying away from others,
Give to us the love that sees the need to keep each other safe.
We remember the medical professionals who even now
continue to work for our health
Give to them the gifts they need to do their work
Give to them the strength to continue when things are hard
Give to them the energy when the day is long.
Keep them safe so that they may be able to continue.
Surround their families and keep those that they love within
your safe keeping.
Help us, the people they serve, to be grateful for their service.
Stand beside those who have been tested positive for
COVID-19,
Give to them peace to know that you are with them.
Calm their anxiety,
Comfort them in their distress,
Assure them and their families that you will neither leave
them not forsake them.
Holy One, we know that the race is not for the swift.
And we sense that this race will be a marathon.
But in this race, remind us that we are not alone
and that you have promised to provide the things we need.
So, we run with perseverance mindful that you journey with us.
Amen.

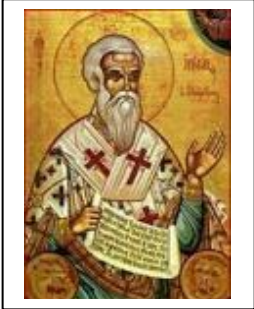

Rev. Dr Paul Douglas Walfall, United Church of Canada


 World Council
of Churches

#StayAtHome #PrayAtHome

<p>Wednesday</p>	<p>1</p>	
<p>Thursday</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>In the midst of Winter, when the days are cold and wind can pierce.... remind us of the warmth of your love. In the midst of Winter, when days are short, dawn comes late, and dusk arrives early..... remind us that in the darkness your light still shines. In the midst of Winter, when the flowers of spring still lie hidden in the earth, when leaves are off the trees, and the world can seem bleak..... remind us that Summer is but a short time away. And when in our lives we feel as if we are experiencing a season of winter, reach out to us with the power of your resurrection so that we may feel the warmth of your love and see your light that alone can take away the darkness of our soul. Amen</p>
<p>Friday</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>Shortly after raising the status of pangolins to the top level of protection, the Chinese government this week removed the highly trafficked mammal's scales from its official list of traditional medicines.</p> <p>Conservation organisations have hailed the move as a breakthrough moment for pangolins worldwide.</p> <p><i>'Most significant conservation action decision ever made for entire pangolin order', shows new era of conservation commitment.</i></p> <p>Read article: https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2020-06-11-watershed-for-pangolins-as-china-wipes-scales-off-medicine-list/</p> <p>Give thanks that this mile-stone decision has been taken by the Chinese Government</p>

<p>Saturday</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>“Whether Christians do right by the environment depends on whether we see the Earth as a megastore where we can ‘shop’ for whatever we want - or as a garden that needs careful tending.”</p> <p>Norman Wirzba</p> 
<p>Sunday</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>Loving God, open our hearts that we may feel the breath and play of your Spirit. Unclench our hands that we may reach out to one another and touch and be healed. Open our lips, that we may drink in the delight and wonder of life. Unclog our ears, to hear your agony in our inhumanity. Open our eyes, that we may see Christ in friend and stranger. Breathe your Spirit into us and touch our lives with the life of Christ.</p> <p>A prayer from New Zealand</p>
<p>Monday</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>As we enter into a spirit of prayer May we quiet ourselves, as the earth quiets herself at night. May we be in touch with our internal rhythms as the tides follow the moon. May we let go of our losses as the autumn trees do their leaves. May we use times of darkness to grow as bulbs do underground. And as nature models to us each day, May we always, always, turn towards the light. Amen</p> <p>Rev Kate Wilkinson</p>
<p>Tuesday</p>	<p>7</p>	

<p>Wednesday</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>'We recognize a tree by its fruit, and we ought to be able to recognise a Christian by their actions. The fruit of faith should be evident in our lives, for being a Christian is more than making sound professions of faith. It should reveal itself in practical and visible ways. Indeed it is better to keep quiet about our beliefs, and live them out, than to talk eloquently about what we believe, but fail to live by it.'</p>	
<p>Thursday</p>		<p>9</p> <p>Bless to me, O God, Each thing my eye sees; Bless to me, O God, Each sound my ear hears; Bless to me, O God, Each odour that goes to my nostrils; Bless to me, O God, Each taste that goes to my lips; Each note that goes to my song, Each ray that guides my way, Each thing that I pursue.</p>	<p><i>Carmina Gadelica III Celtic</i></p>
<p>Friday</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>SDG Goal 8: Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all</p> <p>Roughly half the world's population still lives on the equivalent of about US\$2 a day. And in too many places, having a job doesn't guarantee the ability to escape from poverty. This slow and uneven progress requires us to rethink and retool our economic and social policies aimed at eradicating poverty.</p> <p>A continued lack of decent work opportunities, insufficient investments and under-consumption lead to an erosion of the basic social contract underlying democratic societies: that all must share in progress. The creation of quality jobs will remain a major challenge for almost all economies well beyond 2015.</p> <p>Sustainable economic growth will require societies to create the conditions that allow people to have quality jobs that stimulate the economy while not harming the environment. Job opportunities and decent working conditions are also required for the whole working age population.</p> <p><i>Achievements in all areas of this Goal have been sadly lacking and recently the serious implications of COVID-19 has impeded progress still further. Pray that Governments will address this problem with urgency.</i></p>	

<p>Saturday</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>World Population Day</p> <p>World population day is an important awareness day celebrated to spread awareness about the issues of the global population and the importance of reproductive health. Reproductive health and gender equality are essential for achieving sustainable development.</p>  <p>UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund) opens a call for humanitarian aid to meet 48 million women and young people urgently, outlining how women and girls face unique challenges during humanitarian disasters, ranging from being more likely to die from pregnancy and childbirth complications to an increased risk of gender-based abuse. More than 168 million people worldwide need humanitarian aid right now.</p> <p>The current population of the Earth is over 7.6 billion people and growing – set to reach 8 billion by 2025, 9 billion by 2040, and 11 billion by 2100. Population is growing rapidly, far outpacing the ability of our planet to support it, given current practices.</p> <p>Overpopulation is associated with negative environmental and economic outcomes ranging from the impacts of over-farming, deforestation, and water pollution to eutrophication and global warming and climate change. While a lot of positive steps are being taken to better ensure the sustainability of humans on our planet, the problem of having too many people has made lasting solutions more challenging to find.</p>
<p>Sunday</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>We hold the Earth We hold brothers and sisters who suffer from storms and droughts intensified by climate change. We hold all species that suffer. We hold world leaders delegated to make decisions for life. We pray that the web of life may be mended through courageous actions to limit carbon emissions. We pray for right actions for adaptation and mitigation to help our already suffering earth community. We pray that love and wisdom might inspire my actions and our actions as communities. . . so that we may, with integrity, look into the eyes of brothers and sisters and all beings and truthfully say, we are doing our part to care for them and the future of the children. May love transform us and our world with new steps toward life.</p> <p><i>Prayer of Stewardship by Catholic Relief Services</i></p>

Monday

13

World Shark Awareness Day

Shark Conservation - Why should we be concerned?

Sharks have survived largely unchanged for some 400 million years and form a unique and fascinating group of animals. They have the potential to be important in fields such as human medicine, and, when fished responsibly, can provide a valuable source of food.

As apex predators, sharks play a vital role in the ocean's eco-system by maintaining the species below them in the food chain and serving as an indicator for ocean health. They help remove the weak and the sick as well as keeping the balance with competitors helping to ensure species diversity. Their removal from the ecosystem will have drastic and unpredictable consequences.

The endangered Great White Shark was declared a protected species in 1991 (South Africa being the first country in the world to do so.)

Consider the ways in which you can contribute to shark conservation ...

- **Learn As Much As You Can About Sharks**

Learn how different human activities are a threat to sharks. By educating yourself on the issues, you can find effective ways to help.

- **Do Not Use Shark Products**

Shark cartilage and oils are found in a range of products from beauty items to health nutrition. So before consuming any product, make sure it does not use any shark materials. By boycotting shark products, you will reduce market demand, causing companies to stop killing sharks to make these products.

- **Reduce Your Seafood Consumption**

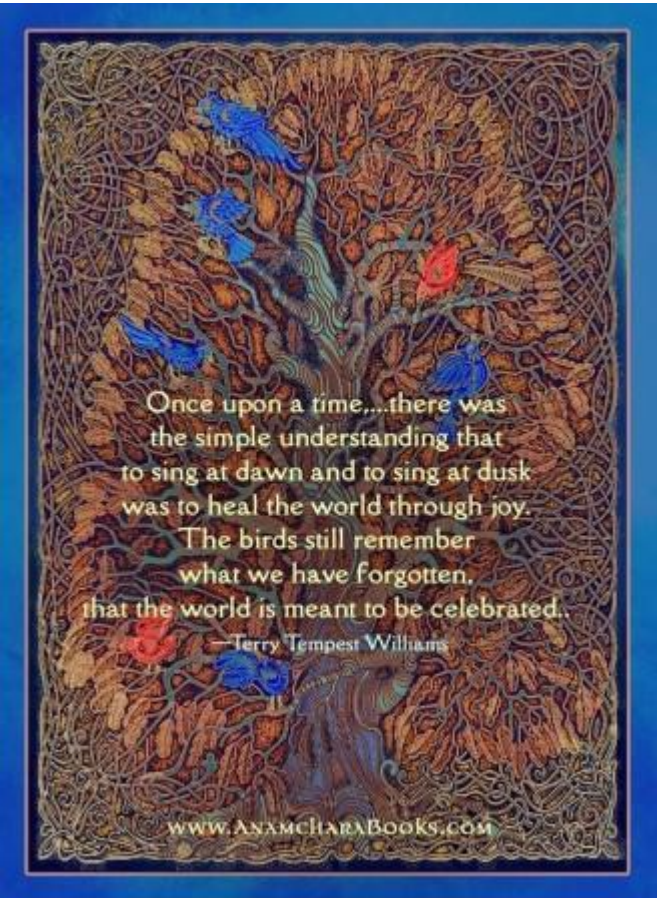
Commercial fishing negatively impacts sharks by reducing the populations of their food sources and sharks are often killed as a by-product of commercial fishing.

- **Reduce, Reuse, Recycle**


One of the biggest threats to shark species is pollution – especially plastic pollution. Ensure that you dispose of your plastic responsibly.


- **Talk!** Spread the shark conservation message – especially to children.



<p>Tuesday</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>Reflection <i>Pope Francis</i></p> <p>“50. Instead of resolving the problems of the poor and thinking of how the world can be different, some can only propose a reduction in the birth rate. At times, developing countries face forms of international pressure which make economic assistance contingent on certain policies of “reproductive health”. Yet “while it is true that an unequal distribution of the population and of available resources creates obstacles to development and a sustainable use of the environment, it must nonetheless be recognized that demographic growth is fully compatible with an integral and shared development”. To blame population growth instead of extreme and selective consumerism on the part of some, is one way of refusing to face the issues. It is an attempt to legitimize the present model of distribution, where a minority believes that it has the right to consume in a way which can never be universalized, since the planet could not even contain the waste products of such consumption. Besides, we know that approximately a third of all food produced is discarded, and “whenever food is thrown out it is as if it were stolen from the table of the poor”. Still, attention needs to be paid to imbalances in population density, on both national and global levels, since a rise in consumption would lead to complex regional situations, as a result of the interplay between problems linked to environmental pollution, transport, waste treatment, loss of resources and quality of life.”</p> <p><i>Prayerfully reflect on this matter</i></p>
<p>Wednesday</p>	<p>15</p>	 <p>Once upon a time,...there was the simple understanding that to sing at dawn and to sing at dusk was to heal the world through joy. The birds still remember what we have forgotten, that the world is meant to be celebrated. — Terry Tempest Williams</p> <p>www.ANAMCHARABOOKS.COM</p>

<p>Thursday</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>World Snake Day</p> <p>Since the beginning of time, snakes have had a bad reputation being deemed evil, sly and deadly. When speaking about one's fears in life, most often snakes are at the top of the list. There are many misconceptions about these long, slithery, legless creatures. However, like all animals in the web of life, snakes play an important role in our ecosystem by maintaining a balance in the food web. Because snakes are both predator and prey, they keep the pest population down by feeding on mice and other small rodents that damage crops and carry disease and in turn, provide food for other creatures in the system.</p> <p>Snakes are naturally shy and reclusive. Much of their lives are spent avoiding conflict and especially avoiding encounters with humans. The platitude 'snakes are more afraid of you than you are of them' is true. They will do their best to stay out of our sight and out of our path. World Snake Day is an opportune time to get to know snakes better. This day of recognition was established to help people learn more about these misrepresented reptiles and to highlight the vital role they play in the balance of nature.</p> <p><i>Consider how you can change your own perspective of this wonderful creature that God has created.</i></p> <div data-bbox="1145 129 1465 385" data-label="Image"> </div> <div data-bbox="1031 618 1469 972" data-label="Image"> <p><i>Black-headed centipede eater snake – TOTALLY harmless to humans but valuable contributor to the eco-system</i></p> </div>
<p>Friday</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>Ecclesiastes 3 <i>A Time for Everything</i></p> <p>3 There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens:</p> <p>2 a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot,</p> <p>3 a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build,</p> <p>4 a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance,</p> <p>5 a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing,</p> <p>6 a time to search and a time to give up, a time to keep and a time to throw away,</p> <p>7 a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak,</p> <p>8 a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace.</p> <p>⁹What do workers gain from their toil? ¹⁰I have seen the burden God has laid on the human race. ¹¹He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has</p>

		<p>also set eternity in the human heart; yet^a no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end. ¹² I know that there is nothing better for people than to be happy and to do good while they live. ¹³ That each of them may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all their toil—this is the gift of God. ¹⁴ I know that everything God does will endure forever; nothing can be added to it and nothing taken from it. God does it so that people will fear him.</p> <p>¹⁵ Whatever is has already been, and what will be has been before; and God will call the past to account.^b</p> <p>¹⁶ And I saw something else under the sun: In the place of judgment—wickedness was there, in the place of justice—wickedness was there.</p> <p>¹⁷ I said to myself, “God will bring into judgment both the righteous and the wicked, for there will be a time for every activity, a time to judge every deed.”</p> <p>¹⁸ I also said to myself, “As for humans, God tests them so that they may see that they are like the animals. ¹⁹ Surely the fate of human beings is like that of the animals; the same fate awaits them both: As one dies, so dies the other. All have the same breath^c; humans have no advantage over animals. Everything is meaningless. ²⁰ All go to the same place; all come from dust, and to dust all return. ²¹ Who knows if the human spirit rises upward and if the spirit of the animal goes down into the earth?”</p>
<p>Saturday</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>Nelson Mandela Day</p> <p>No matter how small your action, Mandela Day is about changing the world for the better, just as Nelson Mandela did every day.</p> <p>What are you doing to make the world a better place?</p> <p>What are you doing to make every day a Mandela Day by taking action against poverty which ultimately benefits the environment?</p> 
<p>Sunday</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>Lord, we pray for the scientists engaged in research into ways of reducing our carbon footprint and for politicians who are responsible for converting their ideas into legislation. Grant them honesty, integrity and a deep perception of the long-term effects of their actions, so that short-term economics are not allowed to weigh their decisions when so much hangs on policies which will affect generations to come.</p> <p>Amen</p>

<p>Monday</p>	<p>20</p>	
<p>Tuesday</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>"For the Fruit of All Creation"</p> <p>For the fruit of all creation, Thanks be to God; For the gifts to every nation, Thanks be to God; For the ploughing, sowing, reaping, Silent growth while we are sleeping, Future needs in earth's safe-keeping, Thanks be to God.</p> <p>In the just reward of labour, God's will is done; In the help we give our neighbour, God's will is done; In our world-wide task of caring For the hungry and despairing, In the harvests we are sharing, God's will is done.</p> <p>For the harvests of the Spirit, Thanks be to God; For the good we all inherit, Thanks be to God; For the wonders that astound us, For the truths that still confound us, Most of all that love has found us, Thanks be to God.</p> <p>Fred Pratt Green Words © 1970 Hope Publishing Company</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zbBUFSOkbdM</p>

Wednesday 22

Nature Reflects God's Goodness



God brought things into being in order that his [sic] goodness might be communicated to creatures, and be represented by them; and because his goodness could not be adequately represented by one creature alone, he produced many and diverse creatures, that what was wanting to one in the representation of the divine goodness might be supplied by another. For goodness, which in God is simple and uniform, in creatures is manifold and divided. —Thomas Aquinas

Nature itself is the primary Bible. As Paul says in Romans 1:20, "What can be known about God is perfectly plain, for God has made it plain. Ever since God created the world, God's everlasting power and deity is there for the mind to see in all the things that God has created." The world itself is the primary locus of the sacred, and actually provides all the metaphors that the soul needs for its growth.

If you scale chronological history down to the span of one year, with the Big Bang on January 1, then our species, *Homo sapiens*, doesn't appear until 11:59 PM on December 31. That means our written Bible and the church appeared in the last nanosecond of December 31. I can't believe that God had nothing to say until the last nanosecond. Rather, as both Paul and Thomas Aquinas say, God has been revealing God's love, goodness, and beauty since the very beginning through the natural world of creation. "God looked at everything God had made, and found it very good" (Genesis 1:31).

Acknowledging the intrinsic value and beauty of creation, elements, plants, and animals is a major paradigm shift for most Western and cultural Christians. In fact, we have often dismissed it as animism or paganism. We limited God's love and salvation to our own human species, and even then we did not have enough love to go around for *all* of humanity! God ended up looking quite miserly and inept, to be honest.

Listen instead to the Book of Wisdom:

How dull are all people who, from the things-that-are, have not been able to discover God-Who-Is, or by studying the good works have failed to recognize the Artist. . . . Through the grandeur and beauty of the creatures we may, by analogy, contemplate their Author.

All you have to do today is walk outside and gaze at one leaf, long and lovingly, until you know, really know, that this leaf is a participation in the eternal being of God. It's enough to create ecstasy. The seeming value or dignity of an object doesn't matter; it is the dignity of your relationship to the object that matters, that transforms object to subject, and allows you to meet things centre to centre or subject to subject, inner dignity to inner dignity. For a true contemplative, a gratuitously falling green leaf will awaken awe and wonder just as much as a golden tabernacle in a cathedral.


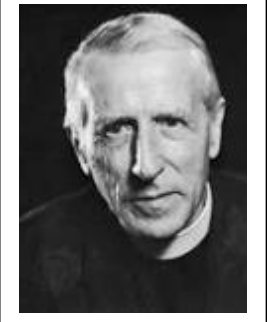
Gateway to Silence:


Praised be You, my Lord, through all your creatures. —Francis of Assisi

From Richard Rohr's daily meditations

www.cac.org

<p>Thursday</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>We 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 recognize 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. 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. Towards 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>Preamble: The Earth Charter, June 29, 2000</i></p>
<p>Friday</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>A Winter Blessing</p> <p>Blessed are you, winter, dark season of waiting, you affirm the dark seasons of our lives, forecasting the weather of waiting in hope.</p> <p>Blessed are you, winter, you faithfully guard a life unseen, calling those who listen deeply to discover winter rest.</p> <p>Blessed are you, winter, frozen and cold on the outside, within your silent, nurturing womb you warmly welcome all that longs for renewal.</p> <p>Blessed are you, winter, your bleak, barren trees preach wordless sermons about emptiness and solitude.</p> <p>Blessed are you, winter, you teach us valuable lessons about waiting in darkness with hope and trust.</p> <p>Blessed are you, winter, season of blood red sunsets and star-filled, long, dark nights, faithfully you pour out your beauty.</p> <p>Blessed are you, winter, with your wild and varied moods, so intent on being yourself, you refuse to be a people-pleaser.</p> <p>Blessed are you, winter, your inconsistent moods often herald spring’s arrival, yet how gracefully you step aside when her time has come.</p> <p><i>Joyce Rupp & Macrina Wiederkehr</i></p>

<p>Saturday</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>“I believe that religious experience begins with awe and wonder. That is the first step in the spiritual journey. Awe is the beginning of wisdom.”</p> <p>Matthew Fox <i>Author and a passionate advocate of Creation Spirituality</i></p>	
<p>Sunday</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>Creator of earth, sea, and sky, kindle the fire of your Spirit within us that we may be bold to heal and defend the earth, and pour your blessing upon all who work for the good of the planet.</p> <p>God, Giver of life, Hear our prayer.</p> <p>Breath of life, receive our thanks for the beauty of the Earth and all who dwell in it, and grant us the wisdom and will to conserve it.</p> <p>God, Giver of life, Hear our prayer.</p> <p>Source of life, heal and redeem the wounds of your creation, and visit the places and people who suffer from our indifference, neglect, and greed.</p> <p>God, Giver of life, Hear our prayer.</p> <p>Lover of all you have made, we thank you for the wondrous diversity of your creatures, and we pray for their wellbeing.</p> <p>God, Giver of life, Hear our prayer.</p> <p>Author of the book of nature, receive our gratitude for places of restoration and healing, and continue to bless those places that feed our lives and spirits.</p> <p>God, Giver of life, Hear our prayer.</p> <p>Giver of all good gifts awaken us daily to our dependence upon your bounty and make us always thankful for the abundance of your blessings.</p> <p>God, Giver of life, Hear our prayer.</p> <p>Divine Physician heal our communities, especially those where neglect, greed, or violence inflict suffering upon people and other creatures.</p> <p>God, Giver of life, Hear our prayer.</p> <p>Eternal God, the light of all who know you, come and fill our hearts with your love. Help us speak when many keep silent, help us stand for what is right when many sit in indifference. Increase our faith and charity, until your kingdom comes, and heaven and earth rejoice in everlasting glory, through your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ.</p> <p>Amen.</p>	
<p>Monday</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>“The time has come to realise that an interpretation of the universe - even a positivist one - remains unsatisfying unless it covers the interior as well as the exterior of things; mind as well as matter. The true physics is that which will, one day, achieve the inclusion of man in his wholeness in a coherent picture of the world.”</p> <p>Pierre Teilhard de Chardin</p>	
<p>Tuesday</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>“Is it not enough for you to feed on the good pasture, that you must tread down with your feet the rest of your pasture; and to drink of clear water, that you must muddy the rest of the water with your feet?”</p> <p>Ezekiel 34:18</p>	

<p>Wednesday</p>	<p>29</p>	 <p>Matthew 6:26 26 Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?</p> <p><i>Reg Gersbach</i></p>
<p>Thursday</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>Blessed are you when you do not fear the winter. Blessed are you still if you do. Blessed are you when you endure the growing pains of compassion. Blessed are you when you bless the cold and do not curse it. Blessed be the bare trees, the frost, the clouds of our breath in the air. Blessed be the blue skies. Blessed be the sun, and the stars. Blessed be the winter. Blessed be the world. May peace reign.</p> <p>Jenna Griffin <i>Poet</i></p>
<p>Friday</p>	<p>31</p>	<p>World Ranger Day</p> <p>Lured by adventure, an enjoyment of the outdoors, a love of wildlife, and the desire to be on the frontline of conservation, rangers play an extremely important role in the preservation of Africa's animals and environment. Their task is relentless, and the work has changed significantly over the years, becoming more and more dangerous. Ruthless poachers enter protected areas to slaughter wildlife such as elephant and rhino, and they will stop at nothing. Ranger morale fluctuates constantly, and the positive moment of saving a rhino can quickly be undone by the sound of a gunshot.</p> <p><i>World Ranger Day</i> recognises and celebrates the accomplishments and work done by rangers around the world and here in South Africa, giving their lives to protect natural and cultural resources, and commemorates rangers killed or injured in the line of duty.</p> <p>Pray for blessings, protection and strength for the courageous men and women involved in this important work.</p> 