



# JAEI

## May 2021 Environmental Prayer Diary

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

### ***Covid-19 Pandemic Daily noon-time prayer***

God bless the world,  
Give it wisdom at this time,  
Grant us relief and release,  
Be with those who are ill,  
And bless the carers fighting this pandemic,  
For Jesus Christ's sake,  
Amen




### **Prayer During a Pandemic**

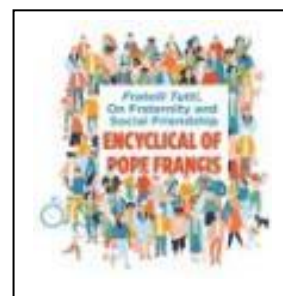
God, you see all and know all,  
your eyes are upon us, your children, in this our time of pain and suffering.  
We affirm and recognise that you, our God, have been  
and continue to be present with us throughout this COVID-19 pandemic.  
Yet over this past year, we have witnessed and experienced intense anguish:  
    physical and mental illness, hunger and starvation,  
    rising unemployment and the broadening of social inequities,  
    and the abuse of the most vulnerable by the powerful.  
We cry out for relief and for justice and ask:  
    How long, O Lord? Will you forget us forever?  
    How long will you hide your face from us?  
    How long must we have sorrow in our hearts all day?  
As we cry out to you for an answer,  
with faith, we declare that our trust and confidence is in you.  
In our lament, may we not lose hope, but even in the darkest night,  
may we still be able to sing unto you a new song,  
because you, God, have dealt bountifully with us.  
Glory to you, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. **Amen.**

<https://www.oikoumene.org/resources/prayers/week-of-prayer-over-covid-19-day-1-prayers-of-lament>



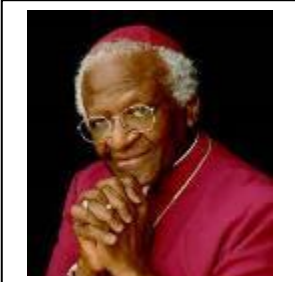
<p><b>Saturday</b></p>	<p>1</p>	<p><b>1<sup>st</sup> Week in May – National Bird Week</b></p> <p>In the first week of May every year BirdLife South Africa tries to get as many South Africans as possible from all walks of life aflutter with excitement over the feathered inhabitants of the country. Although the Bird of the Year for 2021 will not be found locally, the Cape Rockjumper is a splendid choice ... and yes, it is in trouble and the culprit yet again is CLIMATE CHANGE!</p> <div data-bbox="437 427 764 719" data-label="Image"> </div> <p><a href="#">The Cape Rockjumper is the Bird of the Year 2021</a></p> <p>With red eyes and striking colouration, the Cape Rockjumper is one of South Africa's most recognisable bird species. This bird is endemic (<i>that is, it occurs nowhere else in the world</i>) to the Cape Floral Kingdom from the northern Cederberg through the Cape Fold Mountains to Port Elizabeth</p> <p>Increased fire frequency creates habitat that is favourable to Cape Rockjumpers by opening up the habitat for this species, as it likes to forage by hopping around on the ground. This is a reason that it is mostly associated with high alpine areas and mountainous terrain within the Fynbos, where vegetation is naturally sparse and low. Ironically though, a range of studies have indicated that it is vulnerable to climate change rather than benefitting from it, with decreases in range and reporting rate according to the Southern African Bird Atlas Project.</p> <p>The Cape Rockjumper is thus the first South African species to gain a threatened conservation status (Near Threatened according to the IUCN red list) due to the direct and indirect effects of climate change.</p> <p><b>Prayer:</b></p> <p>Dear God,  We give thanks for birds. All types of birds.  Small birds and large birds.  Domestic fowl, migratory birds and birds of prey,  hooting birds, whistling birds, shrikes,  coloured parrots and dark darting wrens.  Birds too numerous to mention.  We pray for them all.</p> <p>We mourn the loss of certain species  and pray for the deliverance of endangered ones.  We praise the character of birds, their constancy,  their desire for freedom, their flair for music and talent for flying.  May we always marvel at the ability to fly.</p> <p>Grant them fair weather, fresh food and abundant materials  for building their nests in spring.  Provide them too with perches and roosts with pleasant aspects.  Dear God, guide our thoughts to the joy and beauty of birds.  Feathered angels.  May they always be above us.  Amen!</p> <p><b>Michael Leunig</b></p>
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<p><b>Sunday</b></p>	<p><b>2</b></p>	<p>Father, we live in a world where things have gone badly wrong because we have forgotten you and left you out of account. We have worshipped other gods and not hallowed your Name. We have adopted our own way of life and have not served your Kingdom. We have chosen what pleases us and have not done your will. Lord, forgive us our sin and folly and blindness. Turn us back to yourself, for the sake of your Son, our only Saviour.</p> <p><b>Frank Colquhoun</b></p>
<p><b>Monday</b></p>	<p><b>3</b></p>	<p>“For in the true nature of things, if we rightly consider, every green tree is far more glorious than if it were made of gold and silver.</p> <p><b>Martin Luther King Jr.</b></p>
<p><b>Tuesday</b></p>	<p><b>4</b></p>	
<p><b>Wednesday</b></p>	<p><b>5</b></p>	<p><b>1 Corinthians 15:35-41</b></p> <p><b>The Resurrection Body</b></p> <p><sup>35</sup> But someone will ask, “How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come?” <sup>36</sup> How foolish! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. <sup>37</sup> When you sow, you do not plant the body that will be, but just a seed, perhaps of wheat or of something else. <sup>38</sup> But God gives it a body as he has determined, and to each kind of seed he gives its own body. <sup>39</sup> Not all flesh is the same: People have one kind of flesh, animals have another, birds another and fish another. <sup>40</sup> There are also heavenly bodies and there are earthly bodies; but the splendour of the heavenly bodies is one kind, and the splendour of the earthly bodies is another. <sup>41</sup> The sun has one kind of splendour, the moon another and the stars another; and star differs from star in splendour.</p>

<p>Thursday</p>	<p>6</p>	<p><b>Encyclical Letter <i>Fratelli Tutti</i> of Pope Francis on the Fraternity and Social Friendship</b></p> <p><b>Conflict and fear</b></p> <p>25. War, terrorist attacks, racial or religious persecution, and many other affronts to human dignity are judged differently, depending on how convenient it proves for certain, primarily economic, interests. What is true as long as it is convenient for someone in power stops being true once it becomes inconvenient. These situations of violence, sad to say, “have become so common as to constitute a real ‘third world war’ fought piecemeal”.<a href="#">[23]</a></p> <p>26. This should not be surprising, if we realize that we no longer have common horizons that unite us; indeed, the first victim of every war is “the human family’s innate vocation to fraternity”. As a result, “every threatening situation breeds mistrust and leads people to withdraw into their own safety zone”.<a href="#">[24]</a> Our world is trapped in a strange contradiction: we believe that we can “ensure stability and peace through a false sense of security sustained by a mentality of fear and mistrust”.<a href="#">[25]</a></p> <p>27. Paradoxically, we have certain ancestral fears that technological development has not succeeded in eliminating; indeed, those fears have been able to hide and spread behind new technologies. Today too, outside the ancient town walls lies the abyss, the territory of the unknown, the wilderness. Whatever comes from there cannot be trusted, for it is unknown, unfamiliar, not part of the village. It is the territory of the “barbarian”, from whom we must defend ourselves at all costs. As a result, new walls are erected for self-preservation, the outside world ceases to exist and leaves only “my” world, to the point that others, no longer considered human beings possessed of an inalienable dignity, become only “them”. Once more, we encounter “the temptation to build a culture of walls, to raise walls, walls in the heart, walls on the land, in order to prevent this encounter with other cultures, with other people. And those who raise walls will end up as slaves within the very walls they have built. They are left without horizons, for they lack this interchange with others”.<a href="#">[26]</a></p> <p>28. The loneliness, fear and insecurity experienced by those who feel abandoned by the system creates a fertile terrain for various “mafias”. These flourish because they claim to be defenders of the forgotten, often by providing various forms of assistance even as they pursue their criminal interests. There also exists a typically “mafioso” pedagogy that, by appealing to a false communitarian mystique, creates bonds of dependency and fealty from which it is very difficult to break free.</p> <p><b><i>Prayerfully consider how this is affecting our own Country</i></b></p>
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<p><b>Friday</b></p>	<p><b>7</b></p>	<p><b>The Beauty of Nature</b></p> <p>O God, we thank you for this earth, our home;  For the wide sky and the blessed sun,  For the salt sea and the running water,  For the everlasting hills  And the never-resting winds,  For trees and the common grass underfoot.  We thank you for our senses  By which we hear the songs of birds,  And see the splendour of the summer fields,  And taste of the autumn fruits,  And rejoice in the feel of the snow,  And smell the breath of the spring.  Grant us a heart wide open to all this beauty;  And save our souls from being so blind  That we pass unseeing  When even the common thorn bush  Is aflame with your glory,  O God our creator,  Who lives and reigns forever and ever</p> <p><b>Walter Rauschenbusch</b></p>
<p><b>Saturday</b></p>	<p><b>8</b></p>	<p><b>World Migratory Bird Day</b></p> <p>The 2021 World Migratory Bird Day conservation theme, “Sing, Fly, Soar - Like a Bird!”</p> <p>World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) is an awareness-raising campaign held under the auspices of the United Nations, highlighting the need for the conservation of migratory birds and their habitats. It aims to draw attention to the threats faced by migratory birds, their ecological importance, and the need for international cooperation to conserve them. The Day is celebrated bi-annually on the second Saturday in May and in October.</p> <p>Through the activities being undertaken on the three flyways - Americas, East Asian-Australasian and <a href="#">Africa-Eurasian</a> (which is the one that concerns South Africa) and the resulting exchange of information, World Migratory Bird Day hopes to increase the level of awareness about the threats – both general and specific – that migratory birds are facing. By comparing their experiences and concerns, sharing their stories and activities, people around the world will make their voices and actions reach out even further,</p> <div data-bbox="976 1099 1477 1317" data-label="Image"> </div> <div data-bbox="976 1563 1497 1841" data-label="Image"> </div> <div data-bbox="1008 1841 1469 1933" data-label="Caption"> <p><i>Amur falcons flocking / preparation for migration from South Africa to Europe and beyond</i></p> </div>

		<p>throughout the flyways, underlying the fact that bird conservation is, indeed, a global issue.</p> <p>Birds that migrate through the African-Eurasian Flyway can be divided in three main groups: Waterbirds, Landbirds and Birds of Prey (Raptors). Throughout their migration, these birds are facing various threats, from habitat loss to illegal killing, most of them being anthropogenic such as pollution. Conserving migrant birds is a global challenge that is addressed by the <a href="#">Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)</a>, an environmental treaty under the aegis of the UN Environment. CMS brings together countries and the wider international conservation community to achieve coordinated conservation and management of migratory animals (amongst other birds) throughout their entire distribution ranges.</p> <p><b><i>Pray for God’s protection on our migratory birds as they journey to their summer destinations.</i></b></p> <p>Even the stork in the sky Knows her seasons; And the turtledove and the swift and the thrush Observe the time of their migration; But My people do not know The ordinance of the LORD. - <i>Jeremiah 8:7</i></p>	
<p><b>Sunday</b></p>	<p><b>9</b></p>	<p><b>Mother’s Day</b></p> <p><b><i>Mother’s Everywhere</i></b></p> <p>May the blessing of the Divine Be an especially bright benediction Upon mothers everywhere On your blessed day - On Mother’s Day!</p> <p><b><i>Author Unknown</i></b></p>	
<p><b>Monday</b></p>	<p><b>10</b></p>	<p>“Goodness is stronger than evil. Love is stronger than hate. Light is stronger than darkness. Life is stronger than death. Victory is ours through Him who loves us.”</p> <p><b><i>Archbishop Desmond Tutu</i></b></p>	
<p><b>Tuesday</b></p>	<p><b>11</b></p>	<p>“Lord God, we thank you for the gift of your creation, deepen our respect for all living things and strengthen us to be responsible stewards of your world.”</p> <p><b><i>Llandaff Cathedral, Cardiff</i></b></p>	

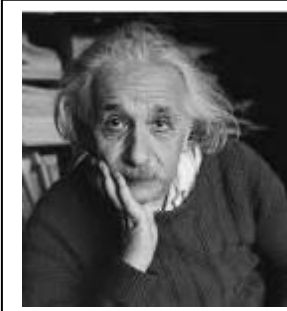
<p><b>Wednesday</b></p>	<p><b>12</b></p>	<p><b>The Silent Sermon</b></p> <p>A member of a certain church, who previously had been attending services regularly, stopped going. After a few weeks, the preacher decided to visit him It was a chilly evening. The pastor found the man at home alone, sitting before a blazing fire. Guessing the reason for his preacher's visit, the man welcomed him, led him to a comfortable chair near the fireplace...and waited.</p> <p>The preacher made himself at home but said nothing. In the grave silence, he contemplated the dance of the flames around the burning logs. After some minutes, the preacher took the fire tongs, carefully picked up a brightly burning ember and placed it to one side of the hearth all alone, then he sat back in his chair, still silent. The host watched all this in quiet contemplation. As the one lone ember's flame flickered and diminished, there was a momentary glow and then its fire was no more. Soon it was cold and dead. Not a word had been spoken since the initial greeting.</p> <p>The preacher glanced at his watch and realised it was time to leave. He slowly stood up, picked up the cold, dead ember and placed it back in the middle of the fire. Immediately it began to glow, once more with the light and warmth of the burning coals around it. As the preacher reached the door to leave, his host said with a tear running down his cheek, 'Thank you so much for your visit and especially for the fiery sermon. I will be back in church next Sunday.'</p> <p>We live in a world today, which tries to say too much with too little. Consequently, few listen. Sometimes the best sermons are the ones left unspoken....</p> <div data-bbox="992 472 1493 831" data-label="Image"> </div>
<p><b>Thursday</b></p>	<p><b>13</b></p>	<p><b>Ascension Day</b></p> <p>O God of earth and sky, as Jesus came among us in Bethlehem to raise us up to heaven, so today we recall his departing from us at Jerusalem to be in all places. Though he is hidden from our sight, enable us to abide in him by the power and grace of the Holy Spirit, until his mercy and grace fill your whole creation. Amen.</p> <div data-bbox="1064 1424 1473 1686" data-label="Image"> </div> <p><b>Copyright © 2000 Order of Saint Luke Publications. Used with permission.</b></p>

<p><b>Friday</b></p>	<p>14</p>	<p><b>Psalm 93:4</b></p> <p><i>'Mightier than the violent raging of the seas, mightier than the breakers on the shore - the LORD above is Mightier than these!'</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Lord reigns and He is in control of all things</li> <li>• When we look around, things may seem out of control.</li> <li>• But when we focus our eyes on Him, we will know that everything is ok.</li> <li>• Above all the noise and drama, the Lord is there, Mightier than these!</li> </ul> <p><b>Prayer:</b> Lord, I want to lift up my eyes above the troubles and issues, and I want to fix my eyes on You. You are Mightier than all of these things that surround me, so I will have confidence. Amen.</p> <p><b>Alive To God</b>  <a href="http://www.AlivetoGod.com">www.AlivetoGod.com</a></p>
<p><b>Saturday</b></p>	<p>15</p>	<div style="background-color: black; color: white; padding: 10px;"> <p>A grandfather was walking through his yard when he heard his granddaughter repeating the alphabet in the tone of voice that sounded like a prayer. He asked her what she was doing.</p> <p>The little girl explained:          "I'm praying, but I can't think of exactly the right words, so I'm just saying all the letters, and God will put them together for me because he knows what I'm thinking."</p> </div>
<p><b>Sunday</b></p>	<p>16</p>	<p><b>Ascension Sunday</b></p> <p>Oh Lord, thank You for Your benevolent nature. Whilst Your Son was taken up into heaven, He blessed us here on earth. I pray that I do not take for granted the blessings that You have given me, instead I receive them with my whole heart. So on this ascension Sunday, Father I give You the glory, honour and praise because of who You are and because of all that You have done, in Jesus' Name, Amen.</p>



<p><b>Monday</b></p>	<p>17</p>	<p><b>Staying Grounded</b></p> <p>There are lists upon lists of things you can do to help the environment. I'm sure you've read and perhaps tried many of them: reducing, reusing, recycling; walking, biking, or taking public transportation; using less water and energy; eating less meat. I hope you'll continue to find ways to live more simply as an individual and in community, and that you'll encourage your church and government to protect the environment.</p> <p>As you do this vital work, you may be discouraged and disheartened to see progress come slowly or seemingly not at all. You may be tempted to give up or to give in to easy excess. You may feel hate toward the "enemy" that is destroying creation.</p> <p>I suggest three practices to keep you grounded, loving, and hopeful:</p> <p><b>Stay close to nature.</b> Reconnect with creatures and plants, whether in an animal shelter, your garden, a city park, or the wilderness. Actually touch the living soil with your bare hands and feet. Feel the breeze and listen to the birds.</p> <p><b>Lament the suffering and loss you see.</b> Let yourself truly grieve for extinct species, for people touched by hurricanes, famine, and disease. Cry and wail aloud. Beat a drum. Tear a piece of cloth. Create and bury a litany of loss.</p> <p><b>Celebrate the beauty and mystery of our universe.</b> Write a poem, chant a psalm, paint a picture. Say thanks for the abundance of air, water, food, and shelter you receive every day. Praise the Creator who is gradually bringing all of creation to fullness and wholeness, through your participation.</p> <p><b>Gateway to Silence:</b>  Praised be You, my Lord, through all your creatures. —Francis of Assisi</p> <p><i>From Richard Rohr's daily meditations</i>  <a href="http://www.cac.org">www.cac.org</a></p> 
<p><b>Tuesday</b></p>	<p>18</p>	

<p><b>Wednesday</b></p>	<p><b>19</b></p>	<p><b>The Garden is Rich</b></p> <p>The garden is rich with diversity  With plants of a hundred families  In the space between the trees  With all the colours and fragrances.  Basil, mint and lavender,  Great Mystery keep my remembrance pure,  Raspberry, Apple, Rose,  Great Mystery fill my heart with love,  Dill, anise, tansy,  Holy winds blow in me.  Rhododendron, zinnia,  May my prayer be beautiful  May my remembrance O Great Mystery  Be as incense to thee  In the sacred grove of eternity  As I smell and remember  The ancient forests of earth.</p> <p><b>Chinook Psalter</b></p>
<p><b>Thursday</b></p>	<p><b>20</b></p>	<p><b>World Bee Day</b></p> <p>We are not mindful enough of the consequences of our actions in nature all around us. Our ancestors knew that everything you take from nature you must someday return. If you give back, the balance is maintained and nature fills you with positive energy.</p> <p>However, in modern times intensive agriculture and monocultures are becoming widespread. More and more agricultural land is planted with monocultures, which are constantly under attack by pests and diseases. Our ancestors fought against this with natural methods, using crop rotation to avoid such troubles.</p> <p>We can also work together and with positive action help preserve the nature in which we live. One way to contribute to the survival and conservation of bees and other pollinators is to plant native honey plants, as the flowers of these provide nectar and pollen, which are vital for pollinators. And then in the autumn these same plants will reward us with fruit we can enjoy until the next spring. Much depends on where we intend to place our honey plants. In a flowerpot on a balcony, in a small garden, in a field or even a public area. There are a great many bee-friendly plants to choose from that are suitable for even a flowerpot, both herbs and aromatic plants. There are a host of bee-friendly indigenous plants which provide juicy nectar for these tiny warriors (speak to your local nursery) and we can all make our gardens or even balconies a rich pasture for these tiny pollinators.</p> <p>However, these tiny warriors have more up their pollen baskets than meets the eye ....</p> <div data-bbox="1129 994 1449 1308" data-label="Image"> </div>

		<p>Imagine waking in the middle of the night to an elephant ripping the roof from your house in search of food. This is a reality in some communities in Africa where, as wild spaces shrink, people and elephants are competing for space and resources like never before. These conflicts can be deadly for both, as villagers and elephants clash over food: the elephant's size is matched by its appetite, which drives them to raid crops grown by subsistence farmers.. Electric fences aren't feasible in many areas due to lack of electricity, and other types of fences are also ineffective against such large, hungry creatures.</p> <p>However, researchers and conservationists may have found a simple solution – bees!</p> <p>Using this knowledge, <a href="#">researchers have discovered ways to use elephants' fear of bees</a> to protect them. The first is the <a href="#">"Beehive Fence"</a> - a line of beehives set about ten meters apart that are linked with ropes or wires. When an elephant touches the ropes, the hives swing, the bees emerge, and the elephants retreat. In addition to providing protection from the elephants, villagers benefit from increased pollination of their crops, and they can harvest the honey as an added source of income. In addition, they noticed that the elephants produced "distinctive 'rumble' vocalizations in response to bee sounds" - a warning to other elephants that they were in danger. When they played audio recordings of the elephant 'rumble' warnings, they also observed elephants leaving the area.</p> <p>In a <a href="#">TED Talk</a>, zoologist Lucy King , who pioneered this amazing project shares the story of the bee- hive fences that keep elephants at bay while also helping farmers establish new livelihoods.</p> <p><b><i>Give thanks for all involved in conserving and protecting bees and pray for new insights and resources for their continued work.</i></b></p>
<p><b>Friday</b></p>	<p><b>21</b></p>	<p>"The most beautiful gift of nature is that it gives one pleasure to look around and try to comprehend what we see."</p> <p><b><i>Albert Einstein</i></b></p> 



<p>Saturday</p>	<p>22</p> <p><b>International Biodiversity Day</b></p> <p><b>Biodiversity Day 2021 Theme: “We’re part of the solution”.</b></p> <p>The theme was chosen to be a continuation of the momentum generated last year under the over-arching theme, “<i>Our solutions are in nature</i>”, which served as a reminder that biodiversity remains the answer to several sustainable development challenges. From nature-based solutions to climate, health issues, food and water security, and sustainable livelihoods, biodiversity is the foundation upon which we can build back better.</p> <p>Biodiversity is usually plotted as the richness of a geographic area which includes three main types: diversity within species (genetic diversity), between species (species diversity) and between ecosystems (ecosystem diversity).</p> <p>There are over 100 000 known species of plants, animals (<i>vertebrates and invertebrates</i>) and fungi/algae in South Africa. Scientists believe that there are at least another 50 000 species in the country that have not yet been discovered and/or named. This comprises about 7% of the world’s vascular plants, 7% of birds, 5% of mammals, 4% of reptiles, 2% of amphibians and 1% of freshwater fishes. Less information is available on invertebrate groups, but South Africa has almost a quarter of global cephalopods (octopuses and squids), and some terrestrial invertebrate groups are very strongly represented.</p> <p>What can we as individuals do to help slow the loss of biodiversity? Since consumption of resources is a root cause of biodiversity loss, we can consume less and be more mindful about what we consume. We need to leverage our purchasing power to help protect biodiversity by consuming products that do not harm the environment. Ecolabels enable consumers to determine which products are green, safe, and environmentally sustainable. Doing some research into labels claiming to be environmentally friendly is a good policy, but here are a few trustworthy labels available in South Africa.</p> <div data-bbox="995 264 1497 430" data-label="Image"> </div> <div data-bbox="418 1357 561 1505" data-label="Image"> </div> <p><b>Forest Stewardship Council</b> – The FSC promotes the sustainable management of the world’s forests by ensuring that the harvest of forests for timber and non-timber products maintains a forest’s biodiversity, productivity, and ecological processes, and by respecting the rights of and providing incentives to indigenous people to sustain forest resources. In addition to prohibiting the destruction of natural forests, the FSC safeguards endangered species, and bans toxic pesticides and the planting of genetically modified trees. FSC certified products include lumber, paper, printing, packaging, furniture, and other products made from wood.</p> <div data-bbox="418 1711 561 1877" data-label="Image"> </div> <p><b>Fair Trade Certified</b> – This label guarantees that farmers and workers that produce products in the developing world are getting a fair deal. It also ensures protection of local ecosystems and promotes sustainable and organic agriculture. Fair Trade certified products include beans and grains, cocoa, coffee, flowers and plants, fruits and vegetables, honey, herbs and spices, nuts and oil seeds, sugar, tea and wine. Apparel, sports balls, and beauty products can also be certified.</p>
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**Marine Stewardship Council** – The MSC is a global organization that develops standards for sustainable fishing and certifies seafood (from wild capture fisheries only) that comes from sustainable fisheries. At sustainable fisheries, current catches must be maintained at levels that ensure fish populations and their ecosystems remain healthy and productive today and in the future. Aligned with MSC WWF provides a [list of certified sustainable fish](#) for responsible eating.



The Standards and Labelling (S&L) programme implemented by the Department of Energy, places energy labels on appliances that provide consumers with accurate and comparable information on their energy efficiency. The project forms part of an integral part of the measures geared towards reducing electricity consumption and the carbon footprint of the residential sector in South Africa. [The information provided on the label informs users of the energy efficient](#) rating of each appliance, the manufacturer and product model. For some appliances, the label will also have non-energy data such as water consumption per cycle and appliance noise level. Labels have seven horizontal colour coded bars. Each colour-coded bar reflects an energy threshold for a particular appliance.



**Badger-Friendly Honey** Initiative. The **Badger-Friendly Honey** Initiative aims to minimise the conflict between **badgers** and commercial beekeepers in South Africa and provide positive incentives for **badger-friendly** beekeeping.

***Resolve to be Part of the Solution!***

**Sunday**

**23**

***Pentecost***


We light a candle,  
and enjoy the flickering light ,  
the fragrance  
and warmth it creates.  
But without the spark that ignites,  
there will be no flame.  
Without the wax,  
the source of power,  
the wick will not burn.  
Without the flame,  
there will be no fragrance,  
no warmth, no light.  
And so with us, Lord.  
You are the catalyst that ignites us,  
and the fuel that sustains us.  
You fill us with your fragrance  
as you enter our lives.  
You empower us  
to carry your flame in our hearts,  
to be the fragrance, warmth,  
and light of your love,  
in this dark world.



<p><b>Monday</b></p>	<p><b>24</b></p>	<p><b>23 May – World Tortoise &amp; Turtle Day</b></p> <p><b>Conserving South Africa's Vulnerable Tortoises</b></p> <p>Tortoises are some of our most fascinating fauna. The unique domed shaped carapace combined with their slow gate and unusual appearance never fail to attract attention to wildlife enthusiasts.</p> <p>South Africa has the richest tortoise fauna in the world, with 14 species being present representing one-third of all tortoise species globally. Our species range in size from the largest, the <a href="#">leopard tortoise</a>– our most common tortoise - that can be over 60cm in length and weigh up to 40kg to the smallest tortoise in the world, the speckled padloper that never exceeds 10cm in length. In between these extremes, we have a range of species that exhibit fascinating differences in size, behaviour and ecology.</p> <div data-bbox="443 667 794 898" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>Sadly, tortoises are vulnerable due to the illegal pet trade. The beautiful colours of the <a href="#">geometric tortoise</a> have resulted in many being illegally collected for the pet trade and combined with its shrinking habitat mean that it has reached the status of <a href="#">critically endangered</a>.</p> <p>The unique biology of tortoises belies the fact that they face numerous threats including climate change, illegal poaching and wildlife trafficking, shrinking habitats due to development, habitat degradation and bad habitat management (e.g. habitat fragmentation, overgrazing and uncontrolled fires). Currently over half of all terrestrial tortoises globally are classified as threatened.</p> <p>It is important to note that all tortoise species in South Africa are protected by law. Hereby the collection, captivity, donation, selling, import and export of tortoises are illegal. Most tortoises are wrongfully picked up when crossing roads. Should you come across a tortoise crossing a road, leave it alone unless it is necessary to remove the tortoise out of danger. When moving a tortoise out of the road, place it across the road in the direction it was heading and safely past the fencing.</p> <p>Tortoises illegally held captive in households are often left in the garden as pets and not provided with the necessary nutritional natural plants they require. They are also unable to interact in the wild with their own species. Sadly these tortoises can never be released back into the wild again, as they become contaminated with disease, which can be dangerous to tortoise populations in the wild. Captive tortoises are also more likely to be subjected to unwanted parasites like ticks. Interbreeding is also another negative side effect of unnaturally relocating tortoises from their specific habitats, as they end up breeding with other tortoise species outside their natural zone. .... SO PLEASE DON'T DO IT!</p> <p>Extracts from <a href="https://conservationmag.org/en/wildlife/conserving-south-africa-s-tortoises">https://conservationmag.org/en/wildlife/conserving-south-africa-s-tortoises</a> &amp; <a href="http://www.capenature.co.za">www.capenature.co.za</a></p> <p><b><i>We must celebrate, and pray for, all the organisations and movements led by everyday people, working individually or together, to protect tortoises and turtles and their environments</i></b></p>
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<p><b>Tuesday</b></p>	<p><b>25</b></p>	<p><b>Love Song to the Earth</b></p> <p>This is an open letter  From you and me together  Tomorrow's in our hands now  Find the words that matter  Say them out loud  And make it better somehow</p> <p>Looking down from up on the moon  It's a tiny blue marble  Who'd have thought the ground we stand on  Could be so fragile</p> <p>This is a love song to the earth  You're no ordinary world</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">A diamond in the universe  Heaven's poetry to us  Keep it safe, Keep it safe, Keep it safe  'Cause it's our world ..... It's our world</p> <p>It's not about possessions,  Money or religion  How many years we might live  When the only real question  That matters is still a matter of perspective</p> <p>Looking down from up on the moon  You're a tiny blue marble  Who'd have thought the ground we stand on  Could be so fragile</p> <p>See mama earth is in a crazy mess  I's time for us to do our best  From deep sea straight up to everest  She under crazy stress  Unless you wanna be motherless  Clean heart  Green heart  Is the way I stress  Speediness and too much greediness  Six billion people all want plentiness (It's our world)  Some people think this is harmless (It's our world)  But if we continue  There'll only be emptiness</p> <p><i>Songwriters: John Shanks / Sean Paul Henriques / Natasha Bedingfield / Toby Gad  Love Song to the Earth lyrics © Iagem Cv, Bullet Point Music, Gadfly Songs, Dutty  Rock Music, One77 Songs <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zBEGxqJKup8">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zBEGxqJKup8</a>  <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zBEGxqJKup8">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zBEGxqJKup8</a></i></p> <p><i>Music video by Paul McCartney, Jon Bon Jovi, Sheryl Crow, Fergie, Colbie Caillat, Natasha  Bedingfield, Leona Lewis, Sean Paul, Johnny Rzeznik, Krewella, Angelique Kidjo, Kelsea Ballerini,  Nicole Scherzinger, Christina Grimmie, Victoria Justice, Q'orianka Kilcher performing Love Song  To The Earth. Keep It Safe, LLC</i></p>
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<p><b>Wednesday</b></p>	<p><b>26</b></p>	<p><b>Africa Day</b></p> <p>Our Lord and God Almighty, we praise you, for you created us all and made us into many different tribes and nations, that we may befriend one another and that we may not despise each other. Open our hearts, we pray, so that we may respond to the needs of all our brothers and sisters. Oh Lord Jesus, bless all our lands with more lasting peace and fraternal understanding. Above all, heavenly Father, touch the hearts of our political leaders and all those in power. We pray that they may exercise power gently, that they may humbly seek a disinterested dialogue that will bring about understanding, leading us all to a place where all nations and all people live together in peace and harmony. Where there is bitterness teach us forgiveness and reconciliation, replace hatred with love and indifference with care. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.</p> <p><b>A prayer from Tanzania</b> <a href="http://www.overcomingviolence.org">http://www.overcomingviolence.org</a></p>
<p><b>Thursday</b></p>	<p><b>27</b></p>	 <p><b>Diversity displays God's generous love.</b></p> <p>cac.org</p>





<p><b>Friday</b></p>	<p><b>28</b></p>	<p>Dear Mother earth,  Who day by day unfolds rich blessing on our way, O Praise God! Alleluia!  The fruits and flowers that verdant grow, Let them his praise abundant show.  O praise God, O praise God, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.</p> <p><b>St. Francis</b></p>
<p><b>Saturday</b></p>	<p><b>29</b></p>	<p>"The word "ecology" contains the prefix "eco," which derives from the Greek word <i>oikos</i>, signifying "home" or "dwelling." How unfortunate, then, and indeed how selfish it is that we have reduced its meaning and restricted its application. This world is indeed our home. Yet it is also the home of everyone, just as it is the home of every animal creature and of every form of life created by God. It is a sign of arrogance to presume that we human beings alone inhabit this world. Moreover, it is a sign of arrogance to imagine that only the present generation enjoys its resources."</p> <p><b>His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew</b></p> 
<p><b>Sunday</b></p>	<p><b>30</b></p>	<p><b>Trinity Sunday</b></p> <p>The Church has had a long tradition of theologians who explored Creation as a revelation of God.</p> <p>Augustine, Aquinas, Teilhard de Chardin and later Thomas Berry believed that the Universe held the understanding/revelation of the nature of the Trinity. For them, the Universe has not only been life producing but also a consciousness producing process. We are called as Church to tell of the Universe as the primary revelation of the Divine.</p> <p>As the grandeur of the natural world declines, the manifestation of the Divine is diminished. We are distorting the story of ourselves - who we are and what our lives are about.</p> <p>The parable for future generations is this: if we violate our planet, the planet withdraws pure air, water and fertile soil. Shoals of fish vanish, biodiversity declines. Creation will not endure the afflictions we impose on it. We, as a species, need to obey the divine directions of the natural world or we will perish. The situation recalls the wilderness experiences of the Israelites. In our desertification perhaps, like the Israelites, we will hear God more clearly, and yearn for the Promised Land, the ideal society, that our Creator had always intended...a Communion of Creation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To know the Trinity calls us to renew the face of the Earth by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Moving towards a spiritual intimacy with creation</li> <li>2. Developing a spirituality of the Divine as revealed in the visible world</li> <li>3. Developing a spirituality of justice that embraces the whole Earth Community.</li> </ol> </li> </ul> 

- To become absorbed in this sacred quest will lead to revelations of Divine mysteries we have never know.

**Eco Theology** helps us to understand God and the Trinity through the whole story of creation, and to discover God's desire for all creation to be in communion.

Through science, we have a new appreciation of creation and our Father, the Creator.

Current scientific research estimates that the universe started 13.7 billion years ago when two part photons chanced to collide and became all time and space.

The Creator's principles of chance and freedom of choice are at the heart of continuing creation ...

- billions of galaxies and still emerging
- earth with its complex biodiversity ... all an expression of the nature of our creator.

Science calls the process of creation, differentiation. Had the process in key areas differed by as little as one millionth of one percent, creation would have collapsed into dust. Such is the enduring presence of divine wisdom.

Into our time by universe standards, two thousand years ago, the creator sent his only son. Jesus came to teach us the way to live. He modelled love, ultimate and complete, of us and for us to follow.

As the Franciscans say: The universe only exists because God was always going to give himself to it in love.

Our evolutionary stage, homo sapiens, is marked by two

- A generosity of spirit
- An ability to celebrate

The night before he died, Jesus instituted the sublime celebration, the Eucharist. In many ways, the Eucharist is the summation of creation.

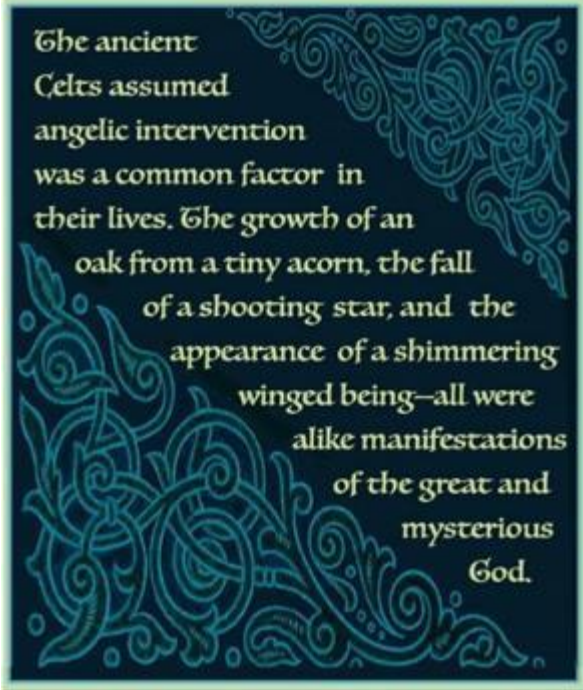
The world is not something indifferent, raw material, to be utilized as we see fit. Rather it is part of God's plan.....The relationship between the Eucharist and the cosmos helps us to see the unity in God's plan and to grasp the profound relationship between creation and the new creation inaugurated in the resurrection of Christ, the new Adam."

Finally, the spirit calls us to communion with all creation. Each reality of the universe is in communion with every other reality in the universe. Scientists have given us challenging, mind opening insights into all manner of connectedness. The unity of the entire complex of galactic systems is among the most basic experience of contemporary physics. Current scientific research has presented a very clear picture of the relatedness of the universe - of every part of creation.

Life on earth depends on so many things:

- The delicate equipoise of the earth's dance around the sun
- The gentle pull of the moon creating our tidal rhythms

		<p>All critical to life on earth</p> <p>In a similar way, it is passion that is at the heart of human physical and spiritual creativity. When Jesus died, he yielded up the Spirit. At Pentecost, we experienced the Spirit's dramatic re-entry that heightens our understanding of what it means to be "fully alive".</p> <p>Through the Spirit we become alive to our place in the communion of creation - our relatedness - our interconnection with all that God has done.</p> <p>Where is eco justice in our thoughts and action? And so we come to Trinity Sunday. Today we celebrate the wonder of relationship. We reflect on our desire to make the relationship of Creator, Son and Holy Spirit real in our own living. We are called to work to create healthy relationships between all God's people and with all creation.</p> <p><a href="https://www.northsydneycatholics.com/images/Ministries/Ecology_Group/trinity_sunday">https://www.northsydneycatholics.com/images/Ministries/Ecology_Group/trinity_sunday</a></p>
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<p><b>Monday</b></p>	<p><b>31</b></p>	
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