



JAEI

September 2021 Environmental Prayer Diary

September is Season of Creation

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

Coronavirus Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, you travelled through towns and villages curing every disease and illness.
At your command, the sick were made well.
Come to our aid now, in the midst of the global spread of the coronavirus, that we may experience your healing love.
Response: Lord Jesus heal us.

Heal those who are sick with the virus.
May they regain their strength and health through quality medical care.
Heal us from our fear, which prevents nations from working together and neighbours from helping one another.
Response: Lord Jesus heal us.

Heal us from our pride, which can make us claim invulnerability to a disease that knows no borders.
Lord Jesus Christ, healer of all, stay by our side in this time of uncertainty and sorrow.
Response: Lord Jesus heal us.

Be with those who have died from the virus.
May they be at rest with you in your eternal peace.
Response: Lord Jesus heal us.

Be with the families of those who are sick or have died.
As they worry and grieve, defend them from illness and despair.
May they know your peace.
Response: Lord Jesus heal us.

Be with the doctors, nurses, researchers and all medical professionals who seek to heal and help those affected and who put themselves at risk in the process.
May they know your protection and peace.
Response: Lord Jesus heal us.

Be with the leaders of all nations. Give them the foresight to act with charity and true concern for the well-being of the people they are meant to serve.
Give them the wisdom to invest in long term solutions that will help prepare for or prevent future outbreaks. May they know your peace, as they work together to achieve it on earth.
Response: Lord Jesus heal us.

Whether we are home or abroad, surrounded by many people suffering from this illness or only a few, Lord Jesus Christ, stay with us as we endure and mourn, persist and prepare.
In place of our anxiety, give us your peace.
Response: Lord Jesus heal us. Amen.

Acknowledgement: St Mark's, District Six

1 September–4 October Season of Creation

2021 Season of Creation



The 2021 theme is :**A Home for All? Renewing the Oikos of God.**”

The Psalmist proclaims “*the Earth is the Lord’s and all that is in it.*” There are two statements of faith at the heart of this song. The first is that every creature belongs to the Earth community. The second is that the entire community belongs to the Creator. A Greek word for this Earth community is ***oikos*** and is the root of the word ***oikoumene***, or ecumenical, which describes our ‘common home’, as Pope Francis calls it in *Laudato Si’*. Our common home, the Earth, belongs to God,

and each beloved creature belongs to this common *oikos*.

By rooting our theme in the concept of *oikos*, we point to the integral web of relationships that sustain the wellbeing of the Earth. The word ecology (*oikologia*) describes the relationships between animals, plants, non-sentient organisms and minerals that each play a vital role in maintaining the balance of this beloved community. Each creature is important and contributes to the health and resilience of the biodiverse ecosystem in which it lives. Humans belong in the right relationship within this Earth community. We are made from the same stuff of the Earth, and are cared for by our co-creatures and the land.

Human relationships also have ecological significance. Economic (*oikonomia*), social and political relationships affect the balance of creation. Everything that we fabricate, use and produce has its origin in the Earth, whether mineral, plant or animal based. Our habits of consuming energy and goods affect the resilience of planetary systems, and the capacity of the Earth to heal itself and sustain life. Economic and political relationships have direct effects on the human family and the more-than human members of God’s *oikos*. Genesis 2.15 reminds us that among our co-creatures, the Creator has given humans a special vocation to tend and keep the *oikos* of God.

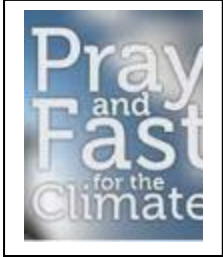

For centuries, humans (*anthropoi*) have ordered our lives and economies according to the logic of markets rather than the limits of the Earth. This false logic exploits the *oikos* of God, and makes creation a means to economic or political ends. The current exploitation of land, plants, animals and minerals for profit results in the loss of habitats that are homes for millions of species, including humans whose homes are at risk due to climate conflict, loss and damage. Reason tells us that in this *anthropocene* age, ecological and social disintegration and exclusion cause the current climate crisis and accelerate ecological instability. Wisdom equips us to find the answers, and pathways to build green economies of life and just political systems that would sustain life for the planet and people.

Faith gives us trust that God’s Spirit is constantly renewing the face of the Earth. Within this horizon of hope, our baptismal call frees us to return to our human vocation to till and keep God’s garden. In Christ, God calls us to participate in renewing the whole inhabited Earth, safeguarding a place for every creature, and reform just relationships among all creation.

During this liturgical Season of Creation, the ecumenical Christian family calls every household and society to repent and reshape our political, social and economic systems towards just, sustainable economies of life, which respect the life-giving ecological limits of our common home.

Season of Creation Resources

Green Anglicans - Season of Creation 2021

<p>Wednesday</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>World Day of Prayer for Creation</p> <p>Join with many other Christians from around the world with the monthly Pray and Fast for the Climate Movement.</p> <p>https://prayandfastfortheclimate.org.uk/resources/</p> <p><i>The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, The world, and those who live in it; For he has founded it on the seas, And established it on the rivers.</i></p> <p>O God of this earth, as nations gather to meet in Glasgow in November for COP26, We pray for the representatives of the rich and the powerful, And for those sent there by the poor and the vulnerable. Give to them all gifts of wisdom and discernment, That they might truly understand what faces your world today, And see what needs to be done in days ahead. Give to them qualities of kindness, justice and determination, That they may hear creation's cry of distress, And together take binding actions to safeguard the climate. And stir up in us what we expect from others. Make us wise and discerning, kind, and just, Determined to play our part in caring for creation, now and for ever. Amen.</p> 
<p>Thursday</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>Arbor Day/Arbor Week</p> <p>This year, Arbor week will run from 30 August to 5 September</p> <p>Arbor Week is a national campaign initiated to celebrate South Africa's trees and to raise awareness about their importance. It is also an opportune time to call on all South Africans to plant indigenous trees as a practical and symbolic gesture of sustainable environmental management.</p>  <p>Each year, two trees, one common and one rare, are highlighted to increase public awareness of indigenous trees. 2021 sees a new category introduced - Tree for Promotion</p> <p>Common Tree of the Year: <i>Vachellia karoo</i> (Previously known as <i>Acacia karoo</i>)</p> <p>Rare (Uncommon) Tree of the Year: <i>Warburgia salutaris</i> (Pepper-bark tree) This is an endangered tree but not suited to the Gauteng climate</p> <p>Tree for Promotion: <i>Portulacaria Afra</i>, (Spekboom)</p> <p>Why not plant a tree to mark a special celebration/commemoration – Confirmations, Baptisms, Birthdays, Memorium etc and encourage others to do the same.</p> <p><i>“..... On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.” - Revelation 22:2</i></p>

<p>Friday</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>IUCN World Conservation Congress 2020</p> <p>The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) World Conservation Congress will hold its Congress in Marseille, France, from 3-11 September 2021 in a hybrid (in-person and virtual) format. It will be the first major environmental event held in a hybrid format since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The Congress 2020 was originally scheduled to take place in June 2020, but due to the extraordinary situation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, it was postponed.</p> <p>The IUCN World Conservation Congress will focus on nature-based recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, and the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, currently being negotiated under the Convention on Biological Diversity. The Congress is being structured around seven main themes: landscapes; freshwater; oceans; climate change; rights and governance; economic and financial systems; and knowledge, innovation, and technology. Held once every four years, the IUCN World Conservation Congress brings together several thousand leaders and decision-makers from government, civil society, Indigenous Peoples organisations, the private sector, and academia, with the goal of conserving the environment and promoting nature-based solutions to global challenges.</p> <p>The world is increasingly recognising the inextricable link between biodiversity conservation and human and economic wellbeing, a connection made all the more visible by the COVID-19 pandemic. The IUCN Congress will be a key milestone for nature conservation and the development of a new global framework for biodiversity.</p> <p>Pray:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For delegates – whether in-person or virtual – that they will be guided by the Holy Spirit in their discussions and decisions • For the safety of delegates attending in-person • That significant agreements be achieved • That countries take the outcomes of the Conference seriously and initiate meaningful changes in their government policies
<p>Saturday</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>International Vulture Day</p> <p>International Vulture Day is a joint effort of South Africa's Birds of Prey Programme and England's Hawk Conservancy Trust and is a day to consider the ecological importance of a bird of prey that is otherwise mostly dismissed with a shudder.</p> <p>This group of highly specialised birds performs a vital ecological service in the ecosystems they live in. They are responsible for the removal of dead and decaying animals thereby reducing the spreading of diseases such as anthrax and rabies. Unfortunately, they face many threats, which can be area specific or applicable to all species. These threats have resulted in substantial population declines in the majority of the vulture species worldwide. Threats that they face include persecution, electrocution and collision with powerlines, drowning in reservoirs, loss of suitable habitat and shortage of safe food supplies.</p>



		<p>Poisoning, however, remains the greatest threat, especially in Africa where a number of incidents have resulted in substantial numbers of birds been poisoned. Circling vultures alert authorities to dead bodies - a fact that poachers are also aware of. Carcasses are laced with poison as a means to remove these “eye in the skies” so that poachers can continue unhindered with the removal of wildlife. This is now commonly referred to as “sentinel poisoning”.</p> <p>Pray for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give thanks for the beauty of these iconic birds and the important part that these majestic birds play in our eco-systems. • Give thanks for the many people involved in this project: that may they be truly blessed • Pray that perceptions of this magnificent, but much maligned, bird to be changed • Pray that funding for the conservation of this iconic species be made available. • Pray that poaching be eliminated and that those involved would find better employment options.
<p>Sunday</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>Creator of All, We are grateful that from your communion of love you created our planet to be a home for all. By your Holy Wisdom you made the Earth to bring forth a diversity of living beings that filled the soil, water and air. Each part of creation praises you in their being, and cares for one another from our place in the web of life.</p> <p>With the Psalmist, we sing your praise that in your house “even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young.” We remember that you call human beings to keep your garden in ways that honour the dignity of each creature and conserve their place in the abundance of life on Earth.</p> <p>But we know that our will to power pushes the planet beyond her limits. Our consumption is out of harmony and rhythm with Earth’s capacity to heal herself. Habitats are left barren or lost. Species are lost and systems fail. Where reefs and burrows, mountaintops and ocean deeps once teemed with life and relationships, wet and dry deserts lie empty, as if uncreated. Human families are displaced by insecurity and conflict, migrating in search of peace. Animals flee fires, deforestation and famine, wandering in search of a new place to find a home to lay their young and live</p> <p>During this Season of Creation, we pray that the breath of your creative Word would move our hearts, as in the waters of our birth and baptism. Give us faith to follow Christ to our just place in the beloved community. Enlighten us with the grace to respond to your covenant and call to care for our common home. In our tilling and keeping, gladden our hearts to know that we participate with your Holy Spirit to renew the face of your Earth, and safeguard a home for all.</p> <p>In the name of the One who came to proclaim good news to all creation, Jesus Christ. Amen.</p>

Monday

6

COP 26

After being postponed from November 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic, the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) is scheduled to take place in Glasgow, Scotland, from 31 October – 12 November 2021. The COP26 summit will bring parties together to accelerate action towards the goals of the Paris Agreement and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. The UK, who are hosting the Conference, is committed to working with all countries and joining forces with civil society, companies and people on the frontline of climate change to inspire climate action ahead of COP26.



One of the key characteristics of the COP conferences is that people from all over the world are represented, both in official delegations and from civil society. A crucial element of achieving climate justice is involving those most affected by the crisis in the decisions taken to resolve it.

The decisions made by governments and world leaders this year will have a huge bearing on what the world will look like post-coronavirus. While global attention has (rightly) been focused on responding to the pandemic, the climate crisis is now more urgent than ever. The Planet is still on course for catastrophic global temperature rises that will put millions of lives, the global economy and our whole world at risk. We need governments, businesses and communities to take this emergency seriously and act with urgency.

We're already experiencing the effects of the climate crisis – but people living in poverty are being hit first and worst. Already, more people are going hungry, extreme weather events are becoming more frequent and severe, and communities are being displaced. Climate change is not only an environmental issue.






Climate change is a poverty issue; a hunger issue; issue of inequality and injustice. It's a human issue.



It's an important moment – and one that needs a lot of prayer!

Pray:

- That this crucial COP26 will go ahead as planned – whether in-person or virtual
- For the preparations needed for COP26 – now only 60 days away!
- For the safety of delegates attending during this uncertain Pandemic
- For the gap between rhetoric and action – we pray for wisdom for world leaders
- For co-operation between Countries
- For rich countries to agree to support developing countries financially to mitigate carbon emission and also their adaptation strategies.
- That delicate issues be handled with diplomacy, justice, transparency and understanding
- That significant Agreements be achieved
- That all countries would adhere to their undertakings
- For those affected by recent climate-related disasters

<p>Tuesday</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies</p> <p>Encouraged by the increasing interest of the international community in clean air, and emphasising the need to make further efforts to improve air quality (including reducing air pollution) to protect human health, the UN General Assembly designated 7 September as the International Day of Clean Air for blue skies. This Day will be observed annually to raise awareness and mobilise global action to address air pollution.</p>  <p>Air pollution is a two-fold problem:</p> <p>Health impact: tiny, invisible particles of pollution penetrate deep into our lungs, bloodstream and bodies. These pollutants are responsible for about one-third of deaths from stroke, chronic respiratory disease, and lung cancer, as well as one quarter of deaths from heart attack. Ground-level ozone, produced from the interaction of many different pollutants in sunlight, is also a cause of asthma and chronic respiratory illnesses.</p> <p>Climate impact: short-lived climate pollutants (SLCPs) are among those pollutants most linked with both health effects and near-term warming of the planet. They persist in the atmosphere for as little as a few days or up to a few decades, so reducing them can have an almost immediate health and climate benefits for those living in places where levels fall.</p> <p>Prayerfully consider ways you can contribute to reducing air pollution. Here are some examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Riding a bike or walking instead of driving. • Taking a bus or carpooling. • Buying a car that has greater fuel efficiency. • Cut down on car journeys • Turning off lights and appliances when they are not in use. • Using energy efficient light bulbs and appliances.
<p>Wednesday</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>"Climate change is much more than an issue of environmental preservation. Insofar as human-induced, it is a profoundly moral and spiritual problem. To persist in our current path of ecological destruction is not only folly. It is suicidal because it jeopardizes the diversity of our planet. Moreover, climate change constitutes a matter of social and economic justice. For, those who will most directly and severely be affected by climate change will be the poorer and more vulnerable nations (what Christian Scriptures refer to as our "neighbour") as well as the younger and future generations (the world of our children, and of our children's children)."</p>  <p>His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew</p>

<p>Thursday</p>	<p>9</p>	 <p><i>“Some day, after we have mastered the winds, the waves, the tides and gravity, we shall harness the energies of love. Then, for the second time in the history of the world, man will have discovered fire.”</i></p> <p><i>Teilhard de Chardin</i></p>
<p>Friday</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>O for a Thousand Trees</p> <p>O for a thousand trees to sing And join with us this day, With ferns and frogs and butterflies: A forest hymn of praise.</p> <p>Come celebrate with all the land, Let species rare begin, With geese and owls and cockatoo: A choir of country kin.</p> <p>How can we hear creation groan, The Outback cry in pain? With desert dragons we rejoice When Earth is born again.</p> <p>Let ev’ry stream and river flow In song toward the sea; With whale, and seal and albatross We thank God we are free!</p> <p>O for a thousand trees to sing And join with us this day, With ferns and frogs and butterflies: A forest hymn of praise.</p> <p>Words: © <i>Norman Habel</i> 2004 <i>Songs for Celebrating with Creation</i></p> 

<p>Saturday</p>	<p>11</p>	
<p>Sunday</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>God, Creator of our common home, your boundless love includes everyone. Open our hearts and minds to your generous will that we may proclaim Christ's love and justice through words and actions. May we serve the needs of our neighbours within the Community of all Creation and may justice flow down like rivers. Amen</p>
<p>Monday</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>World Clean-up Week & Clean-up Day (13-18 September 2021)</p> <p>World Clean-up Day falls on 18 September, is a global social action program aimed at combating the global solid waste problem. Coinciding with the global event is Clean-up and Recycle SA Week (an initiative by the local plastics industry, supported and endorsed by the various packaging and retail streams and retailers) takes place from 13 – 18 September.</p>  <p>Pollution - especially plastic - is a people problem it is the careless disposal of waste. The three golden rules of sustainability we learned as children were “reduce, reuse, and recycle”. But for some reason, “recycle” was the one most highlighted. As we learn more about going green, it’s becoming clearer that <i>recycling</i> is actually the least important of those three actions, and should be the last resort – by reducing usage and reusing a whole lot more, there would be significantly less stuff in the world to recycle.</p>

When it comes to recycling - many of us might not understand exactly why, how or where.... When a material is used to make something, it's important that it breaks down organically, can be reused, or recycled into something else, otherwise, that material only serves one purpose before it ends up in a landfill long-term where it will not break down. Landfill sites can negatively impact our environment in many ways such as emitting greenhouse gases that contribute to global warming and ultimately, climate change. Non-recycled waste can contribute to air pollution, water pollution, and put animal lives and human lives at risk. Alternatively, if we recycle, we can significantly reduce the amount of pollution our waste creates.

How to recycle at home

- Separate your waste – keep wet (waste) and dry (recyclables) apart
- Find out which recyclables are accepted for recycling in your community - a school, drop-off site, buy-back centre or curb-side collection, Waste Reclaimers or by the Municipality
- Educate your household – post a list of the things that are recycled somewhere visible until you and your family get into the habit
- Set up a holding area for your recyclables – it could be a box or clearly marked bins. Once you have collected enough recyclable materials, plan a trip to your nearest drop-off site (saves fuel!!) or support your curb-side collection or Waste Reclaimers.

Special Notes

- Clean the recyclables if heavily soiled e.g. foodstuff
- Flatten the plastic bottles, cartons, cardboard boxes and cans to reduce volume
- A plastics identification code appears on the product to identify packaging plastics



Visit <http://cleanupandrecycle.co.za/recycle/mywaste/> for information on **recycling**

..... Now, go and do your bit!



Tuesday



14


“Because all creatures are connected, each must be cherished with love and respect, for all of us as living creatures are dependent on one another. Each area is responsible for the care of this family.”

Pope Francis



<p>Wednesday</p>	<p>15</p>	
<p>Thursday</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer</p> <p><i>"Ozone: All there is between you and UV."</i></p> <p>In 1994, the UN General Assembly proclaimed 16 September the International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer, commemorating the date of the signing of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer in 1987.</p>  <p>But what is the Ozone Layer? The ozone layer, a fragile shield of gas, protects the Earth from the harmful portion of the rays of the sun, thus helping preserve life on the planet.</p> <p>Life on Earth would not be possible without sunlight. But the energy emanating from the sun would be too much for life on Earth to thrive were it not for the ozone layer. This stratospheric layer shields Earth from most of the sun's harmful ultraviolet radiation. Sunlight makes life possible, but the ozone layer makes life as we know it possible.</p> <p>So, when scientists working in the late 1970s discovered that humanity was creating a hole in this protective shield, they raised the alarm. The hole - caused by ozone-depleting gases (ODSs) used in aerosols and cooling, such as refrigerators and air-conditioners – was threatening to increase cases of skin cancer and cataracts, and damage plants, crops, and ecosystems.</p> <p>The global response was decisive and in 1985, the world's governments adopted the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer. Thanks to the Montreal Protocol, the ozone layer is healing and expected to return to pre-1980 values by mid-century.</p> <p>Remember: An Earth without Ozone, Is Like A House without A Roof!</p> <p><i>Give thanks for the advances in the protection of the ozone layer, and pray that all governments will continue work together to find ways to protect our earth.</i></p>

<p>Friday</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>A Prayer based on the Hymn, How Great Thou Art</p> <p>Our souls sing out a joyful song, Our souls sing out how great Thou art. We consider the works You have made The stars of the night, the leaves of the trees The birds of the air the oceans and streams.</p> <p>Our souls sing out a mournful song, Our souls grieve before our God We consider the works our hands have made; The warming of the planet, the rising of seas The wilting of the harvest, devastating communities.</p> <p>Our souls sing out a contrite song Our souls bow down low. We regret the works our hands have made The impact on the poorest, the livelihoods lost The deepening of poverty, the environmental and human cost.</p> <p>Our souls sing out a penitent song, Our souls turn back to what is right. We consider the good works our hands can make; The words of justice we can speak, the acts of love we can give The hand of solidarity we can extend, for others to fully live.</p> <p>Our souls sing out a hopeful song Our souls look to the Lord, where our hope comes from We consider the works you call us to; The love of our neighbour, the stewardship of the earth The flourishing of all creation, the wonder of its worth Amen “</p> 
<p>Saturday</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>“There is not one blade of grass, there is no colour in this world that is not intended to make us rejoice.”</p> <p>John Calvin</p> 

<p>Sunday</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>God of all hopefulness, we bring before You our concerns for the world and her people. <i>Gracious God, we turn to You, For You are the source of our hope and the creator of the Kingdom.</i></p> <p>We pray for parents around the world who reach out in hope for their children. We pray for justice: when they struggle to provide food for their families; when they cannot find a place to make a home for their children. <i>Gracious God, we turn to You, For You are the source of our hope and the creator of the Kingdom.</i></p> <p>We pray for those who find themselves on the margins of their societies We pray for justice: that they might confront centres of power with the experience of life on the margins; that they might be allowed to contribute to the welfare of society; that we may all be enriched by the insights and wisdom they bring to our communities. <i>Gracious God, we turn to You, For You are the source of our hope and the creator of the Kingdom.</i></p> <p>We pray for our common home and all who seek to ensure its wellbeing. We pray for justice: that all nations of the world will work together for the common good of each person and our planet; that conservation will enable habitats to flourish while meeting the needs of local communities; that we each understand the impact we have upon the earth and adjust our lifestyle accordingly. <i>Gracious God, we turn to You, For You are the source of our hope and the creator of the Kingdom.</i></p> <p>We pray for ourselves, Disturb us and disquiet us with a passion for justice. Challenge us to grasp a vision of Your new world and motivate us to act to birth it into being. Enable us to pass on the gift of hope, so others are empowered to continue the journey of faith. <i>Gracious God, we turn to You, For You are the source of our hope and the creator of the Kingdom.</i></p> <p>Acknowledgment – Season of Creation 2021 (Scottish Eco-congregation 2018 adapted)</p>
<p>Monday</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>“Nature is the direct expression of the divine imagination.”</p> <p>John O'Donohue <i>Priest, Author & Irish Poet,</i></p> 

Tuesday

21

International Day of Peace

2021 Theme: “Recovering better for an equitable and sustainable world”

Each year the International Day of Peace is observed around the world on 21 September. The UN General Assembly declared this as a day devoted to strengthening the ideals of peace, through observing 24 hours of non-violence and cease-fire.

In 2021, as we heal from the COVID-19 pandemic, we are inspired to think creatively and collectively about how to help everyone recover better, how to build resilience, and how to transform our world into one that is more equal, more just, equitable, inclusive, sustainable, and healthier.



The pandemic is known for hitting the underprivileged and marginalised groups the hardest. By April 2021, over 687 million COVID-19 vaccine doses were administered globally, but over 100 countries have not received a single dose. People caught in conflict are especially vulnerable in terms of lack of access to healthcare.

The pandemic has been accompanied by a surge in stigma, discrimination, and hatred, which only cost more lives instead of saving them - the virus attacks all without caring about where we are from or what we believe in. Confronting this common enemy of humankind, we must be reminded that we are not each other's enemy. To be able to recover from the devastation of the pandemic, we must make peace with one another.

.... And we must make peace with nature. Despite the travel restrictions and economic shutdowns, climate change is not on pause. What we need is a green and sustainable global economy that produces jobs, reduces emissions, and builds resilience to climate impacts.

***You are invited** to join the efforts of the United Nations family as we focus on recovering better for a more equitable and peaceful world. Celebrate peace by standing up against acts of hate online and offline, and by spreading compassion, kindness, and hope in the face of the pandemic, and as we recover.*

Origami Peace Crane

Origami cranes have been a popular symbol of peace since the story of Sadako Sasaki. Sadako was 2 years old when the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima (2 kilometres from her home), and whilst she amazingly survived the blast, she was later diagnosed with leukaemia caused by radiation exposure. She died aged 12, but before she died it's believed that she folded over 1,000 origami cranes.



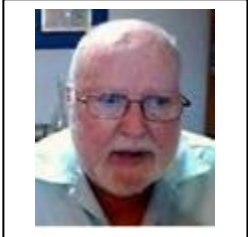
Fold a Peace Crane:

[Click here for the instructions for how to fold an origami peace crane.](#)

This is a very powerful story to reflect upon as you fold your crane. Think about the impact of conflict, especially upon innocent bystanders. When you have finished your crane, why not think about current conflicts taking place – whether in your own life, or in the wider world, and write them onto your crane to remind you to pray for peace in those situations.

<p>Wednesday</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>World Rhino Day</p> <p>World Rhino Day was first announced by WWF-South Africa in 2010 and has grown into an international ecological observance encompassing both African and Asian rhino species.</p> <p>Sadly, rhinos continue to be severely threatened due to poaching and their numbers are decreasing rapidly. Rhinos are poached for their horn, a fibrous growth that is mostly made of keratin, the same stuff that our fingernails are made out of. The demand for rhino horn in Asia and the Middle East is massive with it fetching over \$65,000 a kilogram on the black market, making it pricier than diamonds, gold and even cocaine. The reason for this sudden increase is the mistaken belief by Asian traditional healers that rhino horn is a cure for cancer.</p> <p>One of the things that rhino need is the space in which to breed successfully and the Black Rhino Range Expansion Project of WWF SA aims to add protected land to their range in the hopes of making them more secure. They also help to secure breeding populations in protected areas elsewhere in the country. This project is a partnership between the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife, Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Board and is supported by the Ford Wildlife Foundation.</p> <p>There are many other smaller rhino anti-poaching projects throughout the country and many private reserves and national parks need funding to help equip their teams. Due to the value of rhino horn, the poachers are extremely well funded and equipped, so it is hard for the patrols to fight against those who are better equipped.</p> <p>Canine Heroes</p> <p>Ensuring that the fauna and flora of many game reserves enjoy protection from the ever-increasing demand for certain species – including rhino, mainly from eastern countries is an expensive and dangerous job. It’s a job that demands high levels of training, dedication, equipping and commitment. To this end, the reserves employ forces of highly trained men and women, who have passed a stringent selection process. Each day, these people literally put their lives on the line by protecting and patrolling the reserves. Poachers are heavily armed with weapons and use them without any discretion.</p> <p>To aid the anti-poaching units in this highly dangerous undertaking, many Reserves are using highly skilled and trained dogs. The dogs are trained to track humans, and their responsibility is to help detect and track down rhino poachers. Each of the dogs undergoes rigorous, sophisticated training lasting altogether one and a half years. Their handlers act in unison with their dogs as a team to take a stand against rhino poaching.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be cautious should you wish to donate to rhino conservation as some of the “organisations” are less than ethical. Ethical options are WWF SA, Endangered Wildlife Trust, SANParks Honorary Rangers. • Pray for all those involved in rhino conservation – for strength and endurance. • Pray for those involved in the heinous act of poaching – that their hearts may turn to love of these creatures and away from their illicit dealings.
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<p>Thursday</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>Climate Change</p> <p>Science and religion should be natural partners when it comes to caring for our common home. As Christians, we have a clear mandate to steward Creation (see the invitation to “cultivate and care for” the earth in Genesis 2:15). Yet with real perversity, much of Judeo-Christian history has preferred the earlier verse, “fill the Earth and subdue it” (1:28), as license to exploit this world - and even other peoples - in an entirely selfish way. The Catholic Church’s tragic “Doctrine of Discovery” even supported the conquest, oppression, and destruction of indigenous people and their lands. Once we feel free to objectify <i>anything</i>, we are no longer inside the life of the Trinity, <i>which is always and entirely a subject-to- subject way of relating</i>. Yet it is the same Church which teaches us this loving way of relating!</p> <p>For decades, since the first World Climate Conference in 1979, we have known that the globe is warming due to increased carbon emissions. Pope Francis has affirmed that climate change is real and is primarily “a result of human activity.” Scientists, he says, “speak very clearly.” Oil and gas companies don’t want us to stop using fossil fuels, so they have fabricated their own “science” to deny climate change. The debate has become politicised, and people create their own preferred reality, all evidence to the contrary.</p> <p>Today we are no longer simply theorising about, but actually witnessing intensified and more frequent hurricanes, coral reefs dying, glaciers rapidly melting, and sea levels rising. So many people and creatures will suffer and face extinction if we do not quickly change our lifestyle. Let us work together to creatively find solutions, to reduce our carbon footprint, to live more simply and sustainably on this, our only home. Humanity and the earth really will live or die together. The health of the planet and our continued existence depend upon our choices and actions.</p> <p>Pope Francis urges us:</p> <p><i>“Given the complexity of the ecological crisis and its multiple causes, we need to realise that the solutions will not emerge from just one way of interpreting and transforming reality. Respect must also be shown for the various cultural riches of different peoples, their art and poetry, their interior life and spirituality. If we are truly concerned to develop an ecology capable of remedying the damage we have done, no branch of the sciences and no form of wisdom can be left out, and that includes religion and the language particular to it.”</i></p> <p>Our goal is not to amass information or to satisfy curiosity, but rather to become painfully aware, to dare to turn what is happening to the world into our own personal suffering and thus to discover what each of us can do about it.</p> <p>To rebuild spirituality “from the bottom up,” we must turn the valuable information of science and theology into transformation, change of heart, mind, and being. I invite you to learn about and connect with the suffering of someone or some place and discern your own part to play in healing our collective brokenness.</p> <p>Gateway to Silence: Divine Reality, endlessly knowable</p> <p>From Richard Rohr’s daily meditations www.cac.org</p> 
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Friday

24

Psalm 19

¹ The heavens declare the glory of God;
the skies proclaim the work of his hands.

² Day after day they pour forth speech;
night after night they reveal knowledge.

³ They have no speech, they use no words;
no sound is heard from them.

⁴ Yet their voice goes out into all the earth,
their words to the ends of the world.

In the heavens God has pitched a tent for the sun.

⁵ It is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber,
like a champion rejoicing to run his course.

⁶ It rises at one end of the heavens
and makes its circuit to the other;
nothing is deprived of its warmth.

⁷ The law of the LORD is perfect,
refreshing the soul.

The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy,
making wise the simple.

⁸ The precepts of the LORD are right,
giving joy to the heart.

The commands of the LORD are radiant,
giving light to the eyes.

⁹ The fear of the LORD is pure,
enduring forever.

The decrees of the LORD are firm,
and all of them are righteous.

¹⁰ They are more precious than gold,
than much pure gold;
they are sweeter than honey,
than honey from the honeycomb.

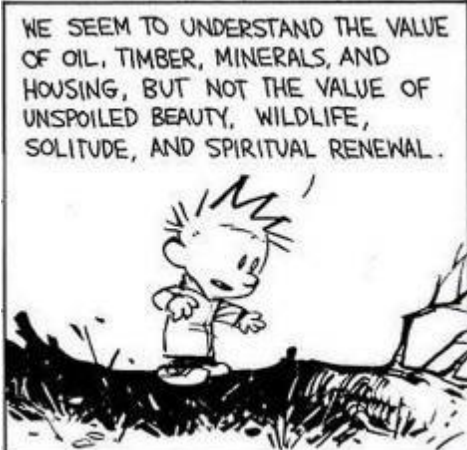

¹¹ By them your servant is warned;
in keeping them there is great reward.

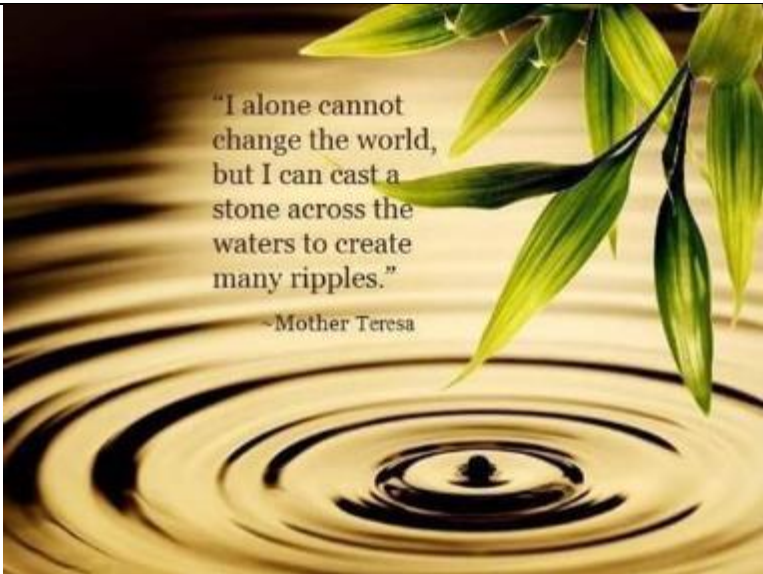
¹² But who can discern their own errors?
Forgive my hidden faults.

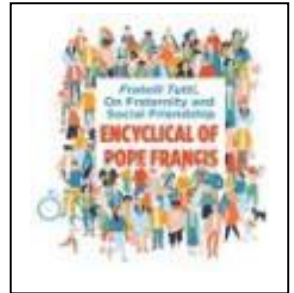
¹³ Keep your servant also from wilful sins;
may they not rule over me.


Then I will be blameless,
innocent of great transgression.

¹⁴ May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart
be pleasing in your sight,
LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.

<p>Saturday</p>	<p>25</p>		
<p>Sunday</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>World Rivers Day</p> <p>World Rivers Day is a celebration of the world's waterways. It highlights the many values of rivers and strives to increase public awareness and encourages the improved stewardship of rivers around the world.</p> <p>Rivers carry water and nutrients to areas all around the earth. They play a very important part in the water cycle, acting as drainage channels for surface water. Rivers provide excellent habitat and food for many of the earth's organisms. The quality of a stream or river is often a good indication of the way of life within a community through which it flows. It is an indicator of the socio-economic conditions and environmental awareness and attitude of its users.</p> <p>The Vaal River system, on which approximately 19 million people depend for drinking water and commercial use, is polluted beyond acceptable standards. This is the finding of the SA Human Rights Commission (SAHRC), which set up an inquiry into long-running problems in the river system. Sadly, this has been an on-going problem for a number of years. The cause of the pollution is the vast amount of untreated sewage entering the Vaal because of inoperative and dilapidated wastewater treatment plants which have been unable to properly process sewage and other wastewater produced in Emfuleni, from the city of Johannesburg metropolitan municipality and Midvaal municipality.</p> <p>One of the consequences of the pollution is on natural ecosystems directly dependent on the water in and from the Vaal. The population of Yellowfish, peculiar to SA rivers such as the Vaal, are under threat of extinction on account of the change in the balance of river flora and other competing species in the river caused by pollution of the Vaal. There are also direct concerns relating to the negative impact the pollution has had on the economy.</p> <p>Read full article</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pray for urgent and comprehensive intervention by the Gauteng province, Department of Water, local Municipalities and other stakeholders • Pray for all affected by this disaster. 	

<p>Monday</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>Encyclical Letter <i>Fratelli Tutti</i> of Pope Francis on the Fraternity and Social Friendship</p> <p><i>Pandemics and Other Calamities in History</i></p> <p>If everything is connected, it is hard to imagine that this global disaster is unrelated to our way of approaching reality, our claim to be absolute masters of our own lives and of all that exists. I do not want to speak of divine retribution, nor would it be sufficient to say that the harm we do to nature is itself the punishment for our offences. The world is itself crying out in rebellion. We are reminded of the well-known verse of the poet Virgil that evokes the “tears of things”, the misfortunes of life and history.[33]</p> <p>35. All too quickly, however, we forget the lessons of history, “the teacher of life”. [34] Once this health crisis passes, our worst response would be to plunge even more deeply into feverish consumerism and new forms of egotistic self-preservation. God willing, after all this, we will think no longer in terms of “them” and “those”, but only “us”. If only this may prove not to be just another tragedy of history from which we learned nothing. If only we might keep in mind all those elderly persons who died for lack of respirators, partly as a result of the dismantling, year after year, of healthcare systems. If only this immense sorrow may not prove useless, but enable us to take a step forward towards a new style of life. If only we might rediscover once for all that we need one another, and that in this way our human family can experience a rebirth, with all its faces, all its hands and all its voices, beyond the walls that we have erected.</p> <p><i>Prayerfully consider how this is affecting our own Country</i></p>
<p>Tuesday</p>	<p>28</p>	 <p>“I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples.”</p> <p>~Mother Teresa</p>



<p>Wednesday</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste</p> <p>Food waste is the decrease in the quantity or quality of food resulting from decisions and actions by retailers, food services and consumers. Large amounts of nutritious edible food are often unnecessarily wasted and discarded by households, restaurants and retailers.</p> <p>There are many factors that influence food waste and numerous ways in which the food is wasted. These range from consumer behaviour patterns, habits and knowledge to shelf life and various marketing strategies employed by retailers to optimise profits.</p> <p>Due to a lack of awareness or knowledge, consumers often shy away from fresh produce such as fruits and vegetables that do not have a desirable appearance or have become discoloured despite still maintaining their nutrition value and remaining safe to eat.</p> <p>This wasted food has many profound effects on environmental sustainability, food security, rural development and economic factors such as livelihoods. As such, reducing food waste is a crucial step in achieving the world's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially SDG 2 (End Hunger) and SDG 12 (Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Examine your own food choices and wastage. Consider how best you can mitigate your food wastage.</i> • <i>Plant a small food/herb garden</i> 	
<p>Thursday</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>May God bless us with wonder at creation's glory. May God bless us with fury at creation's spoiling. May God bless us with courage at this critical hour. And may the blessing of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, rest upon us and on all creation, this day and for the future to come. Amen</p>	