



JAEI

February 2022 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

If a tiny virus can
do this much damage,
imagine what mustard
seed size faith can do.



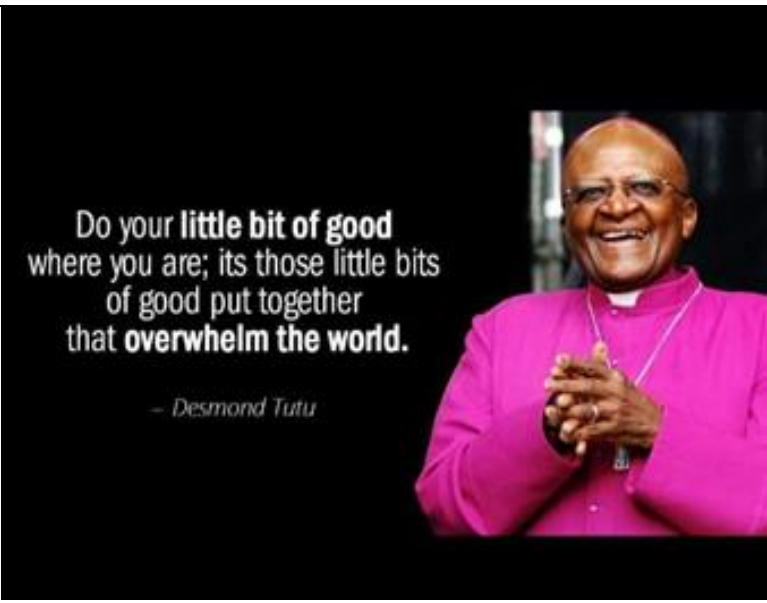

Keep faith
in God,
through
all times. He
will pull us
through.

Amen





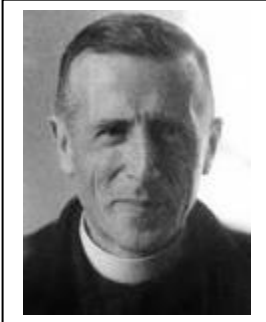
Smiling is infectious;
you catch it like the flu.
When someone smiled at me today,
I started smiling too.
I passed around a corner, and
someone saw my grin.
When he smiled, I realized I had
passed it on to him.
I thought about that smile, and then I
realized its worth.
A single smile, just like mine, could
travel around the earth.
So if you feel a smile begin,
don't leave it undetected.
Let's start an epidemic quick
and get the world infected.


by Spike Milligan



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| <p>Tuesday</p> | <p>1</p> |  |
| <p>Wednesday</p> | <p>2</p> | <p>World Wetlands Day 2022 Wetlands action for people and nature</p> <p>World Wetlands Day is a day for us to remember the importance of the world's wetlands for people and for our planet.</p> <p>Wetlands are ecosystems that contain quantities of water, usually providing a home for special vegetation communities and a wide variety of wildlife that depend on them for survival. Some wetlands flood throughout the year but others flood only during the wettest seasons.</p> <p>These extraordinary places leave nature lovers in awe of their unique range of wildlife and plants. Beautiful and fascinating as they are, wetland habitats are vital to people in practical terms, too, protecting our settlements from flooding, providing plant material for crafts and shelters and reducing the impacts of water pollution.</p>  <p>South Africa's wetlands also play a vital role in our water security, one of the most important issues of our time. Healthy wetlands depend on the ecosystems around them being effectively protected and appropriately managed. If this happens, intact water catchments can allow water to enter our rivers to fill dams and recharge groundwater resources – particularly important as rainfall becomes more variable and drought more frequent with climate change.</p> <p>But our wetlands are struggling to play their part because they urgently need to be better conserved. The Convention on Wetlands should give designated Ramsar wetlands some of the highest levels of international conservation protection, yet South Africa's wetlands remain some of our most threatened ecosystems.</p> <p>Research by the National Biodiversity Assessment shows that 65% of our wetlands are under threat. This includes all the different types of wetlands. While</p> |

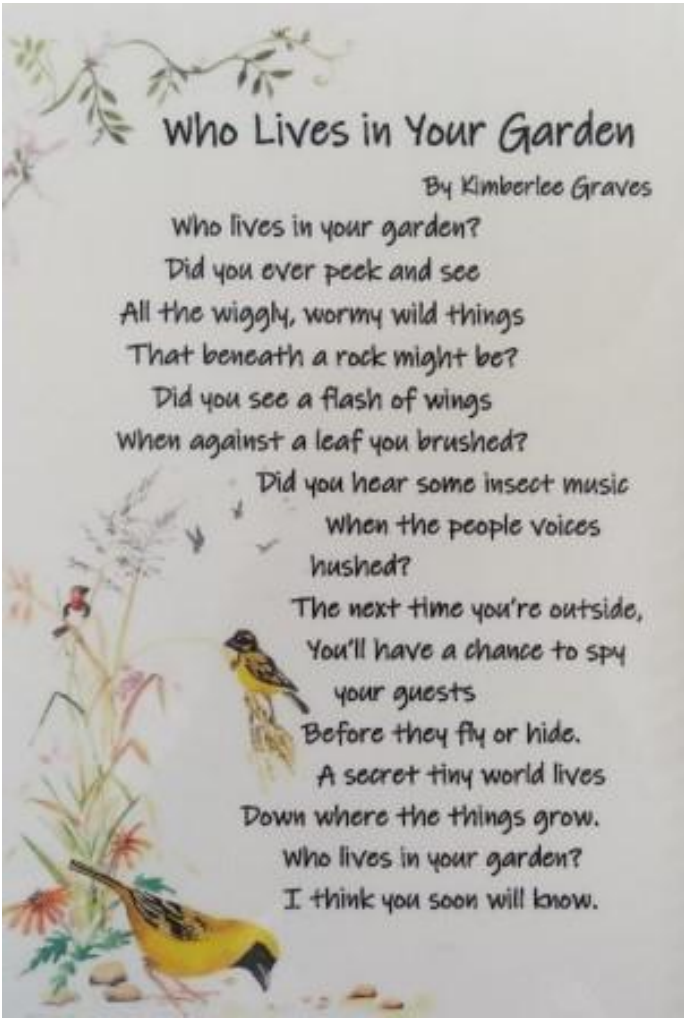



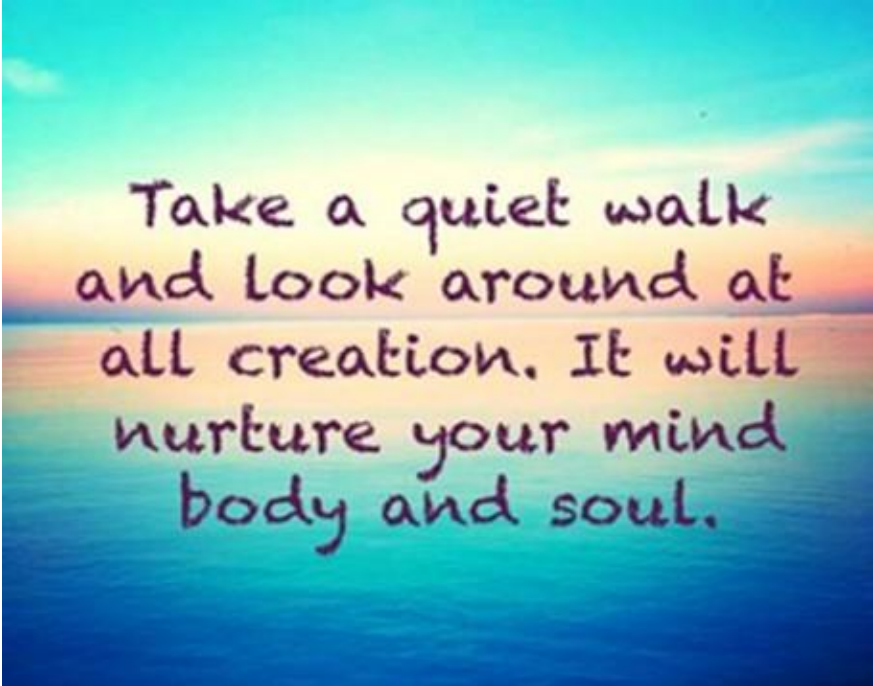
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| | | <p>only 11% of our wetlands are protected, it leaves 71% of our wetlands unprotected. This outlines a clear picture of the state of our wetland resources.</p> <p>How can we help?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness and understanding of the importance of wetlands. • Take part in programmes that help protect and restore wetlands. Check out your local municipality or non-governmental programmes' website for more details). • Report any illegal activities such as filling, clearing, or dumping in wetlands. • Keep surface areas that wash into storm drains clean of any toxic chemicals or fertilisers as these will eventually go into the wetlands and cause severe further damage. • Plant only indigenous trees, shrubs and flowers to maintain the ecological balance of our local wetlands. • Use paper and recycled products. • Use non-toxic products for household cleaning, lawn and garden care. <p>Let's go save our wetlands!</p> <p>Pray for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Forgiveness for decimating these precious resources in our Country</i> • <i>Give thanks for the biodiversity contained in our Wetlands</i> • <i>Ask for protection and inspiration of those involved in the conservation of these precious areas as well as adequate funding for the necessary programmes to rehabilitate our Wetlands. Also pray for those whose livelihood is connected with our wetlands.</i> |
| <p>Thursday</p> | <p>3</p> | <p>“The schedules are crammed with shows urging us to travel further, drive faster, build bigger, buy more, yet none of them are deemed to offend the rules, which really means that they don't offend the interests of business or the pampered sensibilities of the Aga class. The media, driven by fear and advertising, are hopelessly biased towards the consumer economy and against the biosphere.”</p>  <p>George Monbiot</p> |
| <p>Friday</p> | <p>4</p> | <p>Let us see one another through eyes enlightened by understanding and compassion.</p> <p>Release us from judgment so we can receive the stories of our sisters and brothers with respect and attention.</p> <p>Open our hearts to the cries of a suffering world and the healing melodies of peace and justice for all creation.</p> <p>Empower us to be instruments of justice and equality everywhere.</p> |

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| <p>Saturday</p> | <p>5</p> |  |
| <p>Sunday</p> | <p>6</p> | <p>This is your garden, Creator God a thing of beauty beyond understanding, a poem that is being written not in words, but in colours, wind's whisper, soaring bird, flower's petal, gentle rain, sunlight's warmth. This is your garden, Creator God, a thing of beauty beyond understanding.</p> |
| <p>Monday</p> | <p>7</p> | <p>'The world, this palpable world, which we were wont to treat with the boredom and disrespect with which we habitually regard places with no sacred association for us, is in truth a holy place, and we did not know it. Venite, adoremus.'</p> <p><i>Teilhard de Chardin</i></p>  |

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| <p>Tuesday</p> | <p>8</p> | <p>Read Matthew 10:37-42</p> <p><i>“Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me.”</i></p> <p>I recently travelled to Cambodia to visit the communities that CAFOD work with there. What struck me the most was how generous and kind these communities were. They invited us into their homes and made us feel truly welcome, despite us being strangers to them.</p> <p>In today’s gospel Jesus tells us that we will be judged by our hospitality, as it is when we are welcoming others that we are welcoming God. Jesus says that anyone who gives “a cup of cold water to one of these little ones who is my disciple” will gain a great reward. This teaches us that God is invested in our bodily interests and cares that all should have enough to sustain them.</p> <p>However, many across the world don’t have access to clean drinking water. The rural communities in Cambodia who had welcomed me so warmly were unable to offer me a cup of water as it would have been unsafe for me to drink. Due to climate change, many in Cambodia are experiencing severe water shortages, with the lives and livelihoods of rural communities being threatened by drought. This means that families are being forced to drink unclean water from village streams, causing them to get sick.</p> <p>By tackling climate change and helping to give these communities access to safe water, we are helping to fulfil God’s vision for the world: a world where all have the basic necessities needed in order to flourish and live life to the full.</p> <p><i>God of all creation,</i></p> <p><i>You created the world and all that is in it for everyone to enjoy. We give you thanks for the abundance of your creation, especially for the gift of water. Grant us the wisdom to be good stewards of this precious gift. We also pray for those who feel the impacts of water shortages around the world.</i></p> <p><i>Amen.</i></p> <p><i>This reflection and prayer were written by Charlotte Bray, who is currently taking part in the Step into the Gap programme.</i></p> <p>www.cafod.org</p> |
| <p>Wednesday</p> | <p>9</p> | <p>“We’re the only creature who can decide <i>not</i> to do something we’re capable of doing. That’s our superpower, even if we exercise it too rarely.”</p> <p>Bill McKibben</p>  |

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| <p>Thursday</p> | <p>10</p> | <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Francis of Assisi</p> <p>Remember that when you leave this earth, you can take with you nothing that you have received - only what you have given: a full heart, enriched by honest service, love, sacrifice and courage.</p> </div> |
| <p>Friday</p> | <p>11</p> | <p>Encyclical Letter <i>Fratelli Tutti</i> of Pope Francis on the Fraternity and Social Friendship</p> <p>The Illusion of Communication</p> <p>42. Oddly enough, while closed and intolerant attitudes towards others are on the rise, distances are otherwise shrinking or disappearing to the point that the right to privacy scarcely exists. Everything has become a kind of spectacle to be examined and inspected, and people’s lives are now under constant surveillance. Digital communication wants to bring everything out into the open; people’s lives are combed over, laid bare and bandied about, often anonymously. Respect for others disintegrates, and even as we dismiss, ignore or keep others distant, we can shamelessly peer into every detail of their lives.</p> <p>43. Digital campaigns of hatred and destruction, for their part, are not – as some would have us believe – a positive form of mutual support, but simply an association of individuals united against a perceived common enemy. “Digital media can also expose people to the risk of addiction, isolation and a gradual loss of contact with concrete reality, blocking the development of authentic interpersonal relationships”.^[46] They lack the physical gestures, facial expressions, moments of silence, body language and even the smells, the trembling of hands, the blushes and perspiration that speak to us and are a part of human communication. Digital relationships, which do not demand the slow and gradual cultivation of friendships, stable interaction or the building of a consensus that matures over time, have the appearance of sociability. Yet they do not really build community; instead, they tend to disguise and expand the very individualism that finds expression in xenophobia and in contempt for the vulnerable. Digital connectivity is not enough to build bridges. It is not capable of uniting humanity.</p> <p><i>Prayerfully consider how this is affecting our own Country</i></p> <div style="text-align: right;">  </div> |

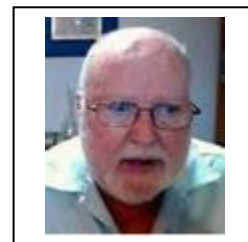
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| <p>Saturday</p> | <p>12</p> |  <p>Who Lives in Your Garden By Kimberlee Graves</p> <p>Who lives in your garden? Did you ever peek and see All the wiggly, wormy wild things That beneath a rock might be? Did you see a flash of wings When against a leaf you brushed? Did you hear some insect music When the people voices hushed? The next time you're outside, You'll have a chance to spy your guests Before they fly or hide. A secret tiny world lives Down where the things grow. Who lives in your garden? I think you soon will know.</p> |
| <p>Sunday</p> | <p>13</p> | <p>Holy God, You alone are unutterable, from the time you created all things that can be spoken of. You alone are unknowable, from the time you created all things that can be known.</p> <p>All things cry out about you, those which speak, and those which cannot speak. All things honor you, those which think, and those which cannot think.</p> <p>For there is one longing, one groaning, that all things have for you... All things pray to you that comprehend your plan and offer you a silent hymn.</p> <p>In you, the One, all things abide, and all things endlessly run to you who are end of all. Amen.</p> <p><i>A collect from Gregory of Nazianzen</i></p> |
| <p>Monday</p> | <p>14</p> | <p>"As Orthodox Christians, we use the Greek word <i>kairos</i> to describe a moment in time, often a brief moment in time, which has eternal significance. For the human race as a whole, there is now a <i>kairos</i>, a decisive time in our relationship with God's creation. We will either act in time to protect life on earth from the worst consequences of human folly, or we will fail to act. May God grant us the wisdom to act in time. Amen."</p>  <p><i>His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew</i></p> |

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| <p>Tuesday</p> | <p>15</p> | <p>We pray for a just and fair relationship between the farmer and the retailer; for researchers and academics, for food writers and political commentators, for government officials and all those involved in shaping public policies and attitudes to food production and consumption; for the reduction in food waste and a new valuing and honouring of the fruits of the earth.</p> <p>Lord of all life: Hear our prayer.</p> |
| <p>Wednesday</p> | <p>16</p> | <p>Psalm 147. 7-10; 14-18.</p> <p>Sing to the Lord with thanksgiving; make melody to our God upon the lyre! He covers the heavens with clouds, he prepares rain for the earth, he makes grass grow upon the hills, He gives to the beasts their food, and to the young ravens which cry. Praise the Lord'. His delight is not in the strength of the horse, nor his pleasure in the legs of a man. He makes peace in your borders; he fills you with the finest of the wheat. He sends forth his command to the earth; his word runs swiftly. He gives snow like wool; he scatters hoarfrost like ashes. He casts forth his ice like morsels; who can stand before his cold? He sends forth his word, and melts them; he makes his wind blow, and the waters flow.</p> |
| <p>Thursday</p> | <p>17</p> |  <p>Take a quiet walk and look around at all creation. It will nurture your mind body and soul.</p> |

Friday

18

Franciscan Ecological Wisdom - God is Being Itself



The Franciscan philosopher and theologian John Duns Scotus (1266–1308), whom I studied for four years in seminary, wrote that “God first wills Christ as his supreme work.” In other words, God’s “first idea” and priority was to make the Godself both visible and shareable. The word used in the Bible for this idea was *Logos*, which was taken from Greek philosophy, and which I would translate as the “Blueprint” for reality. *The whole of creation*—not just Jesus—is the partner in the divine dance. Everything is the “child of God”—no exceptions. When you think of it, what else could anything be? All created beings must, in some way, carry the divine DNA of their Creator.

Without a sense of the inherent sacredness of the world—in every tiny bit of life and death—we struggle to see God in our own reality, let alone to respect reality, protect it, or love it. The consequences of this ignorance are all around us, seen in the way we have exploited and damaged our fellow human beings, the dear animals, the web of growing things, the land, the waters, and the very air. It took until the twenty-first century for a pope to clearly say this, in Pope Francis’ prophetic document *Laudato Si’*. May it not be too late and may the unnecessary gap between practical seeing (science) and holistic seeing (religion) be fully overcome. They still need each other.

Franciscan mysticism has an *incarnational worldview*, which is the profound recognition of the presence of the divine in literally “every thing” and “every one.” It is the key to mental and spiritual health, as well as to a kind of basic contentment and happiness. An incarnational worldview is the only way we can reconcile our inner worlds with the outer one, unity with diversity, physical with spiritual, individual with corporate, and divine with human.

What we see in Franciscan mystics, again and again, is a joyful and unitive consciousness that intuits and experiences what Duns Scotus called “the univocity of being.” By this, Duns Scotus meant that we can speak with *one consistent and true voice* about a rock, a tree, an animal, a human, an angel, and God! They all participate in the one same state of Being to varying degrees, and *Deus est Ens*, he often wrote: “God is Being itself.” This eliminates any clear distinction between the sacred and the profane, because Christ existed in matter from all eternity (Colossians 1:15–20; Ephesians 1:3–11), ever since God decided to materialize and reveal who God is through creation. It is summarized on our Franciscan coat of arms by the Latin phrase *Deus Meus et Omnia*: “My God and All Things!”

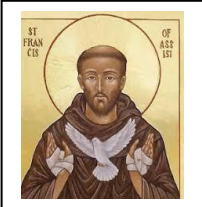
From Richard Rohr’s daily meditations


www.cac.org




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| <p>Saturday</p> | <p>19</p> | <p>World Pangolin Day</p> <p>World Pangolin Day is an opportunity to join together in raising awareness about these unique mammals - and their plight. Pangolin numbers are rapidly declining in Asia and Africa.</p> <p>Pangolin – the venerable ‘wise old man’ of the African bush – is said to be a totem of good luck and the bringer of rain. This enigmatic creature that holds the secrets of 85 million years of evolution is now the most poached mammal on the planet.</p> <p>The demand for pangolins comes mostly from China, where pangolin scales are unfortunately believed to be a cure-all of sorts and pangolin flesh is considered a delicacy. In Vietnam, pangolins are frequently offered at restaurants catering to wealthy patrons who want to eat rare and endangered wildlife. There is no evidence to support claims regarding medicinal properties of pangolin scales or any other part of the pangolin.</p> <p>The ground pangolin (<i>Smutsia temminckii</i>), also known as Temminck's pangolin, Cape pangolin or steppe pangolin, is one of four species of pangolins which can be found in Africa, and the only one in southern and eastern Africa.</p> <p>The African Pangolin Working Group are focussed on the conservation of Africa's pangolins through research, engagement with law enforcement and judiciary agencies and are actively engaged in the rescue, rehabilitation and release of pangolins from the trade.</p> <p>Species threats</p> <p>Although large predators, starvation, fires and possibly disease pose a threat to wild pangolins, the vast majority of threats facing pangolins today are of a human origin.</p> <p>Rehabilitation</p> <p>All pangolins retrieved out of the illegal wildlife trade are compromised. Each retrieved pangolin is assessed, treated and rehabilitated by our experienced team.</p> <p>Law Enforcement</p> <p>The African Pangolin Working Group works very closely with law enforcement organizations with information, training, on the ground collaboration, and testimony.</p> <p>The K9 unit</p> <p>The African Pangolin Working Group, in partnership with the Paramount Group, has developed a K9 pangolin detection program with several dogs in training to detect the scent of pangolins.</p> <p>Report a sighting</p> |
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| | | <p>The African Pangolin Working Group is mapping the past and present distribution of all pangolins in Africa and welcome sightings of any pangolin species from any year and any country.</p> <p><i>God of all creation, you created animals to roam the earth and fish to fill the seas. We pray for our pangolins on the verge of extinction, specifically that those responsible for poaching and polluting will be held responsible. We give thanks for those who are working for the protection and conservation of this precious species. Help us all to live in a way that does not endanger life but cherishes and nourishes the life in and around us. Amen</i></p> |
| <p>Sunday</p> | <p>20</p> | <p>World Whale Day</p> <p>The rapid warming of the planet is leading to a loss of habitat for whales and dolphins and greater competition for a diminishing amount of prey species. It is affecting the timing and ranges of their migration, their distribution and even their ability to reproduce. As the food supply moved in response to ocean warming as a result of climate change so did the whales, apparently putting them closer to shipping lanes and fishing locations that had been designed to avoid the whales' usual feeding grounds</p> <p>Whales are very important for the oceans. It could be said that they are “ecosystem engineers” because they help, in so many ways to keep life at sea healthy by redistributing nutrients across the oceans.</p> <p>The Southern Right whale is no exception, but today their habitat, the international waters of the southwest Atlantic , faces the threat of industrial fishing.</p> <p>Whales play a vital role in our ecosystem by maintaining a stable food chain and feeding other marine animals that provide a cleaner atmosphere and help growing economies increase their awareness and profitability through tourism.</p> <p>Whales play a key part in helping to combat climate change through their role in the marine ecosystem. The way that whales feed, poo, migrate, and dive between the surface and the ocean depths (known as the 'whale pump'), circulates essential nutrients throughout the ocean. The buoyant faecal plumes produced by whales are rich in the nutrients that phytoplankton need to grow and thus, importantly, absorb carbon dioxide in surface waters, allowing for more carbon to be naturally drawn into the oceans from the atmosphere. The phytoplankton which feed on these plumes more than half of the oxygen you breathe.</p> <p>Due to both their size and swimming patterns, whales both increase the ocean's ability to absorb CO₂ and at the same time actually act as living carbon sinks that store CO₂ in their bodies (the carbon captured by ocean and coastal organisms is known as “blue carbon”).</p> <div data-bbox="1209 517 1549 869" data-label="Image"> </div> <div data-bbox="1145 1585 1549 1827" data-label="Image"> </div> |

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| | | <p>Whales accumulate carbon in their bodies during their long lives. When they die, they sink to the bottom of the ocean, locking that carbon away for hundreds of years – a literal carbon sink. Each great whale sequesters 33 tons of CO₂ on average. A tree, meanwhile, absorbs only up to 48 pounds of CO₂ a year.”</p> <p>Were it not for whaling, the animals might have removed 2 million tons of carbon from Earth's atmosphere. In other words, whales fight climate change without trying.</p> <p><i>“For all we know of the world, we know so little. Whales sing, of this we are aware, but more than that is pretty much a mystery. Scientists tell us that the blue whale’s song, projecting waves of sound that touch neither the sea bottom nor the foamy surface, can extend five thousand miles through the ocean. Deep tones, like the beat of a great bass, follow one by one rhythmically, with an interval of two minutes in between. Of course, as we recall, the whale is holding its breath as it sings, for it is no fish. It must return to the surface to breathe after traveling underwater for nearly an hour at a time.</i></p> <p><i>St. Francis of Assisi would have taken great delight in such a miracle of God’s creation. “What marvellous things it says about the Lord, that He created beings such as these!” Francis would say. Their very existence is a hymn of praise.</i></p> <p><i>Nobody knows why the blue whale sings. Perhaps only the Psalmist. “Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord. Lord, hear my prayer.” Perhaps the whale’s song is not in search of a mate or in defence of territory.</i></p> <p><i>Perhaps, floating in blue eternity, he sings in order to pray.”</i></p> <p>Sue Hallett Catholic365</p> |
| Monday | 21 | <p>Though the fig tree should not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will take joy in the God of my salvation. God, the Lord, is my strength; he makes my feet like the deer's; he makes me tread on my high places. To the choirmaster: with stringed instruments.</p> <p>Habakkuk 3:17-19</p> |
| Tuesday | 22 | <p>“Do all you can to preach the gospel and if necessary, use words!”</p> <p>St Francis of Assisi</p>  |
| Wednesday | 23 | <p>If the clouds be full of rain, they empty [themselves] upon the earth: and if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be.</p> <p>Ecclesiastes 11:3</p> |

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| <p>Thursday</p> | <p>24</p> | <p>By faith I gaze up to the heavens and know within its vastness that this is your creation planned and effected within eternity</p> <p>By faith - I pluck an ear of corn and know within its symmetry lies the chemistry of life - the potential of creation within my hand</p> <p>By faith I listen for your voice and know the whisper that I hear breathed a world into existence yet listens to the prayer within my soul</p> <p>By faith I strive to do your will and know the door that I approach may lead me to shadows where my roll is to become your light</p> <p>By faith I cling to your word and know the strength that I receive has it's source within the love that is at the centre of all things</p> |
| <p>Friday</p> | <p>25</p> |  |

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| <p>Saturday</p> | <p>26</p> | <p>“Nature is the direct expression of the divine imagination.”</p> <p>John O'Donohue <i>Priest, Author & Irish Poet</i></p> |  |
| <p>Sunday</p> | <p>27</p> | <p>Lord of all life your care is known through the sparrow and the hairs of our head: remind us of your goodness in creation and our place within it that our voice may resound with every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea proclaiming honour and glory to the Lamb, Through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives with you and with the Holy Spirit forever. Amen</p> | |
| <p>Monday</p> | <p>28</p> | <p>Leap Day for Frogs</p> <p>Why should we celebrate Leap Day for Frogs?</p> <p>It's all about realising that we have an amazing diversity of frogs in South Africa, from our mountain grasslands to wetlands to rivers and even deserts. When people think about frogs, normally the toads we find in our gardens come to mind, but SA has an incredible array of frog species – 125 species in total. This we have to celebrate, but also the fact that they are on our doorstep. Frogs are cool because you can find them in your back garden. Kids are crazy about frogs, and somehow when we get older, we lose that. With Leap Day for Frogs we are bringing some of that joy and awareness back</p> <p>The Prayer of the Frog</p> <p>Brother Bruno was saying his prayers, but he could hear frogs vying with each other by the intensity of their croaking. He tried to concentrate on his crucifix. In an attempt to drown out the racket he recited his prayers aloud, in an increasingly loud voice, but it was useless. The obsessive croaking of the frogs was upsetting his concentration as he was praying. He exclaimed, “Silence! I am praying!”</p> <p>He was a saint and his orders inspired respect. At once, nature became silent, just as a fire goes out; and complete silence reigned over the marsh. Brother Bruno noted from his window that the toads had stopped croaking, that the herons’ beaks were closed, and the flies that remained quite still on the reeds no longer dared to buzz in a wind that had fallen silent.</p> |   |

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| | <p>Contented, he returned to his prayers. But another voice was heard - an inner voice. This small voice said to him: "And what if God derived greater pleasure in the croaking of the frogs than in the chanting of your psalms?"</p> <p>Shocked, the saint replied, "But what can God find so pleasurable in the croaking of a frog? And what's more, at full volume... Why did God invent noise?"</p> <p>Saint Bruno returned to his window and allowed nature to resume its course. The insects and frogs filled the silence of the night with their subdued rhythm. Bruno listened to this chant, no longer resisting it, and at once his heart beat in accord with the universe.</p> <p>From that day on he prayed ceaselessly; his days passed in continuous prayer. He was constantly reminded of God by the croaking of the frogs.</p> <p><i>Source: Nathalie Leone, Christian Stories of Wisdom, (Black Dog & Leventhal, 2016) page 166. First published in France under the title Contes des sages chrétiens by Nathalie Leone, Le Seuil, 2005.</i></p> <p>Consider this</p> <p>Stop resisting. Reframe. Try a different angle, a minor shift in perspective.</p> <p>In the new frame the croaking frog was no longer an interruption. In the moment of finally listening to the language of the world around him, Bruno learned for the first time in his life what it really meant to pray. Letting go of his quest for silence, Bruno found a deeper prayer in the noises and the sounds of the world around him.</p> |
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Trinity invites us
to trust the
relationality
of nature itself.

—Cynthia Bourgeault

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