



JAEI

May 2022 Environmental Prayer Diary

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

A Prayer for Ukraine

God of peace and justice,
 we pray for the people of Ukraine today.
 We pray for peace and the laying down of weapons.
 We pray for all those who fear for tomorrow,
 that your Spirit of comfort would draw near to them.
 We pray for those with power over war or peace,
 for wisdom, discernment and compassion
 to guide their decisions.
 Above all, we pray for all your precious children, at risk and in fear,
 that you would hold and protect them.
 We pray in the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace.
 Amen.


Archbishop Justin Welby
 Archbishop Stephen Cottrell

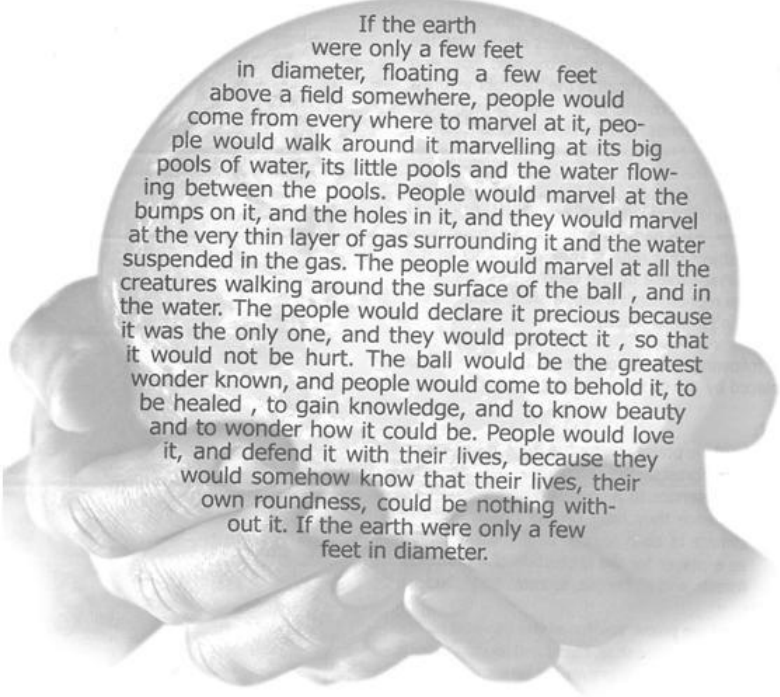




<p>Sunday</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Wisdom to Care for the Earth</p> <p>Lord, grant us the wisdom to care for the earth and till it. Help us to act now for the good of future generations and all your creatures. Help us to become instruments of a new creation, Founded on the covenant of your love.</p> <p><i>The Cry of the Earth</i></p>
<p>Monday</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>1st Week in May – National Bird Week</p> <p>Birdwatching and praying have a lot in common. Bird-watching can be more than a hobby – it can be a spiritual discipline, a facet of a life of prayer, an extension of seeking, seeing, and hearing from the Spirit of Jesus. Not only do the disciplines of bird-watching and contemplative prayer appear strikingly similar, but there are also parallels in the tools as well.</p> <p>Watch and See</p> <p>Both birdwatching and prayer have to do with <i>seeing</i> - slow down enough to see and actually observe the world around you. Unless one consciously</p>

		<p>chooses to alter one's pace and pay attention, so much of what is all around in the physical world is missed. This is also true of the spiritual realm. If one doesn't make room in one's thoughts and schedule to give attention to Jesus, or cultivate a hospitable heart, one can be blind to his presence, his working and his speaking.</p> <p>Listen and Hear</p> <p>A call, the rustle of leaves, or the whirr of wings turns one's eyes in the right direction to locate the bird. Seeing and hearing work together. In contemplative prayer, to hear requires not only slowing down and paying attention, but also stillness.</p> <p>Guides and Guidebooks</p> <p>A good bird guide helps in recognising, identifying and getting to know particular birds. Learning what to look for and how to look is not automatic. Similarly, time spent in studying God's Word, opens one to see with the eyes of the heart. Like a good pair of binoculars, the Bible extended one's ability to see truly.</p> <p>Prayer and birds are gifts of the Spirit of grace (who descended and alighted on Jesus in the form of a dove!). Contemplative prayer and bird-watching are ways to receive and begin to unwrap these gifts of love.</p>
<p>Tuesday</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>International Leopard Day</p> <p>The IUCN warns Leopard populations are rapidly disappearing and under threat, largely due to human pressures and habitat loss, while captive animals suffer in zoos, circuses and under private ownership. Even in modern zoos big cats repeatedly pace, frustrated because their hunting and territorial instincts are denied.</p> <p>There are eight sub-species of leopard - African leopard (vulnerable); Indian leopard (vulnerable); Javan leopard (critically endangered) Arabian leopard (critically endangered); Persian leopard (endangered); Amur leopard (critically endangered) Indochinese leopard (vulnerable); Sri Lankan leopard (vulnerable); as well as the Snow leopard (endangered) and Clouded leopard (endangered).</p> <p>These magnificent cats are crucial role for keeping the right balance of species in their area.</p> <p>South Africa's National List of Threatened or Protected Species (2007) gave the African leopards a status of Vulnerable and the Convention on the International Trade Endangered Species (CITES) placed it in Appendix I, meaning that commercial trade is prohibited and the export and import of skins and hunting trophies is limited.</p> <p>Notwithstanding the fact that leopards are protected under national legislation throughout most of their range, they are still under threat due to habitat loss through agricultural development and human population encroachment in their ranges. The other threats are illegal and legal trade of leopard goods, hunting by humans and poisoning. Leopard skins and canines are widely traded</p>



		<p>domestically in some central and West African countries where parts are used in traditional rituals and sold openly in villages and cities. Leopards are hunted and poisoned by humans in defence of their livestock. The trophy hunting of female leopards has a significant impact on the demographic and population level of leopards within an area. Some people have an irrational fear of leopards and tend to persecute them unnecessarily.</p> <p>It would be a very sad day if these majestic cats disappeared from our world!</p> <p>O God, enlarge within us the sense of fellowship with all living things, for our brothers and sisters, the inarticulate beasts, to whom Thou gave the earth as their home in common with us. We remember with shame that in the past we have exercised the high dominion of humanity with ruthless cruelty so that the voice of the earth, which should have gone up to thee in song has become a groan of anguish and a cry of torment. May we realise that they live not for us alone, but for themselves and for Thee, and that they too love the sweetness of life. Amen.</p> <p><i>St Basil the Great</i></p>
<p>Wednesday</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>We breathe in what the trees breathe out, and they breathe in what we breathe out. Forever overwhelmed by the beauty of God's design...</p> 
<p>Thursday</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>“Let me seek, then, the gift of silence, and poverty, and solitude, where everything I touch is turned into prayer: where the sky is my prayer, the birds are my prayer, the wind in the trees is my prayer, for God is in all.”</p> <p><i>Thomas Merton,</i> <i>Thoughts in Solitude</i></p>

<p>Friday</p>	<p>6</p>	 <p>If the earth were only a few feet in diameter, floating a few feet above a field somewhere, people would come from every where to marvel at it, people would walk around it marvelling at its big pools of water, its little pools and the water flowing between the pools. People would marvel at the bumps on it, and the holes in it, and they would marvel at the very thin layer of gas surrounding it and the water suspended in the gas. The people would marvel at all the creatures walking around the surface of the ball , and in the water. The people would declare it precious because it was the only one, and they would protect it , so that it would not be hurt. The ball would be the greatest wonder known, and people would come to behold it, to be healed , to gain knowledge, and to know beauty and to wonder how it could be. People would love it, and defend it with their lives, because they would somehow know that their lives, their own roundness, could be nothing without it. If the earth were only a few feet in diameter.</p>
<p>Saturday</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>“Environment’ is a term that creates no pictures in the mind, which is why I have begun to use ‘natural world’ or ‘living planet’ instead.”</p> <p>George Monbiot</p> 
<p>Sunday</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>Mother’s Day</p> <p><i>Mother's Everywhere</i></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>Author Unknown</p> 
<p>Monday</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>International Compost Awareness Week</p> <p>Theme for 2022 - <i>Recipe for Regeneration: Compost</i></p> <p>The 2022 theme highlights the overall regenerative agriculture movement and how compost and organics recycling fit into that process. Regenerative agriculture is a system that focuses on improving soil health using agricultural practices with the idea that healthier soil will lead to healthier, more nutrient-rich crops and, ultimately, less carbon in the atmosphere through increased carbon sequestration.</p> <p>Where does compost and organics recycling fit in? Compost, when added to farmland, gardens, yards, and other landscapes creates healthier soils and</p>

crops by providing food for soil microbes in the ground. These microbes enrich the quality of the soil while also sequestering carbon in the soil through photosynthesis, a tool for combating climate change.

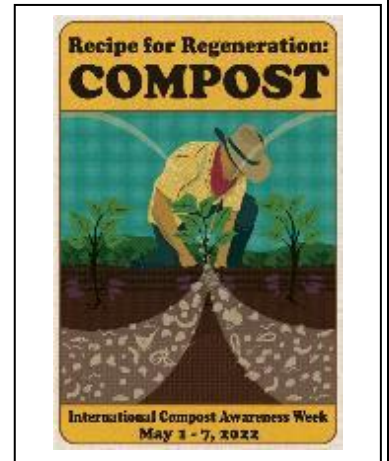
Just as a chef pulls together the best ingredients to create the perfect recipe, the 2022 theme, **Recipe for Regeneration: Compost**, focuses on the crucial role recycling our food scraps and yard trimmings plays by creating compost, which when added to soil results in a recipe that makes our food more nutritious, the air we breathe cleaner and our climate healthier overall.

What Are the Benefits of Using Compost and Composting Food and Yard Waste?

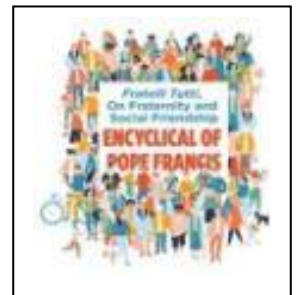
Here are some key facts regarding organics recycling and compost use highlighting why ICAW is such an important awareness-building program:


- The use of landfill space and incineration can be reduced by at least one-third when organics are recycled. Focused attention on recycling organic residuals is key to achieving high-waste diversion rates.
- Methane, a greenhouse twenty-five times as powerful as carbon dioxide, can be significantly reduced through the recycling of organics instead of their being landfilled.
- Soil health and productivity is dependent on organic matter – the essence of compost - to provide the sustenance for the biological diversity in the soil. Plants depend on this to convert materials into plant-available nutrients and to keep the soil well-aerated. Additional benefits include the reduced need for pesticide usage to ward off soil-borne and other plant diseases.
- Compost offers a significant answer to climate change mitigation. Compost's return to the soil serves as a "carbon bank," helping to store carbon thereby removing it from the atmosphere.
- Compost is a huge benefit for both water conservation and quality. When used in water quality projects, compost bind pollutants to the organics material and prevents them from entering our lakes, wetlands, streams and rivers. Soil erosion is mitigated, and water-holding capacity improved through compost's enhancement of soil structure, binding soil particles together.

"As for that in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with patience." - Luke 8:15



<p>Tuesday</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>Isaiah 43:19-21</p> <p>See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland. ²⁰ The wild animals honour me, the jackals and the owls, because I provide water in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland, to give drink to my people, my chosen, ²¹ the people I formed for myself that they may proclaim my praise.</p>
<p>Wednesday</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>Encyclical Letter <i>Fratelli Tutti</i> of Pope Francis on the Fraternity and Social Friendship</p> <p>Forms of Subjection and of Self-Contempt</p> <p>51. Certain economically prosperous countries tend to be proposed as cultural models for less developed countries; instead, each of those countries should be helped to grow in its own distinct way and to develop its capacity for innovation while respecting the values of its proper culture. A shallow and pathetic desire to imitate others leads to copying and consuming in place of creating and fosters low national self-esteem. In the affluent sectors of many poor countries, and at times in those who have recently emerged from poverty, there is a resistance to native ways of thinking and acting, and a tendency to look down on one's own cultural identity, as if it were the sole cause of every ill.</p> <p>52. Destroying self-esteem is an easy way to dominate others. Behind these trends that tend to level our world, there flourish powerful interests that take advantage of such low self-esteem, while attempting, through the media and networks, to create a new culture in the service of the elite. This plays into the opportunism of financial speculators and raiders, and the poor always end up the losers. Then too, ignoring the culture of their people has led to the inability of many political leaders to devise an effective development plan that could be freely accepted and sustained over time.</p> <p>53. We forget that “there is no worse form of alienation than to feel uprooted, belonging to no one. A land will be fruitful, and its people bear fruit and give birth to the future, only to the extent that it can foster a sense of belonging among its members, create bonds of integration between generations and different communities, and avoid all that makes us insensitive to others and leads to further alienation”.^[50]</p> <p><i>Prayerfully consider how this is affecting our own Country</i></p>




<p>Thursday</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>God of all feathered beings, Thank you for birds. Thank you for their early morning songs. I, too, lift a song to heaven when morning breaks. This song of praise. For redwing blackbirds. For robins bathing outside the window. For peacocks and cassowarys For the ostrich and the egret For the loon and the petrel For the pelican and seagull.</p> <p>The morning song of a bird announces a newly dawning day, fresh, with new life. Great God, give us fresh spirits. Can we gather the baby chicks under our wings as we celebrate Your creation? Your feathered beings, The woodpecker and the heron and the pigeon And yes, the chicken.</p> <p>God, You know my imperfections. I ignore the baby chick within. All that is fresh and new, and desires growth, Sometimes I ignore it or fight it. I am sometimes too fragile to allow the new within to survive. Create within me the ability to greet each day like Your birds. And to care for animals as You would, God, You who would gather us all within Your outstretched wings.</p> <p>Carol Adams <i>from "Prayers for Animals"</i></p>
<p>Friday</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>The best remedy for those who are afraid, lonely or unhappy is to go outside, somewhere where they can be quiet, alone with the heavens, nature and God. Because only then does one feel that all is as it should be and that God wishes to see people happy, amidst the simple beauty of nature.</p> <p>Anne Frank</p> 



<p>Saturday</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>World Migratory Bird Day</p> <p>2022 Theme to Focus on Light Pollution</p> <p>The first of the annual World Migratory Bird Day is celebrated on 14 May - by which time all our migratory birds have long since left South Africa for sunnier climes and, we look forward to their return in Spring.</p> <p>However, these beautiful creatures endure such a lot of hardship on their journeys to their sunnier climes and each year these hardships get worse.</p> <p>Artificial light is increasing globally by at least 2 per cent per year and it is known to adversely affect many bird species. Light pollution is a significant threat to migratory birds, causing disorientation when they fly at night, leading to collisions with buildings, perturbing their internal clocks, or interfering with their ability to undertake long-distance migrations.</p> <p>Solutions to light pollution are readily available and more and more cities in the world are taking measures to dim building lights during migration phases in spring and autumn. Best practice guidelines are also being developed under the Convention on Migratory Species to address this growing issue and ensure that action is taken globally to help birds migrate safely and return to us in Spring!</p> <p><i>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.</i></p> <p><i>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.</i></p> <p><i>Especially we praise their disregard for human hierarchy and the ease with which they leave their droppings on the heads of commoners or kings regardless.</i></p> <p><i>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.</i></p> <p><i>Dear God, guide our thoughts to the joy and beauty of birds. Feathered angels. May they always be above us.</i></p> <p><i>Amen!</i></p>
<p>Sunday</p>	<p>15</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.</p> <p>Jeremiah 8</p>



<p>Monday</p>	<p>16</p>	
<p>Tuesday</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>Verse: Psalm 33:5b</p> <p><i>'The earth is full of the steadfast love (loving-kindness) of the LORD.'</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There's no spot in the universe where you will not find His love. • The earth is full of His love, and you are surrounded by it. • The traces and the footprints of His love can be seen in every direction. • Don't try to block out His love, but live and abide in His love. <p>Prayer: Lord, thank You for Your great love for me. Open my eyes that I may see Your love in everything that surrounds me. Amen.</p> <p>Pastor Andrew Roebert <i>Alive to God</i></p>
<p>Wednesday</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>A Hymn of Remorse</p> <p>We covered over your colourful earth with grey cement. We cut down trees and stripped the soil wherever we went. We scarred the hills for gold and coal, Blind with greed inside our soul, Our goal: to have complete control. Lord, have mercy. Can we be restored? Lord, have mercy.</p> <p>What of the lands of tribes and nations who lived here first? Who took the best with broken treaties, and left the worst? By whom were slaves bought, used, sold? Who valued humans less than gold? Who told us racist lies until our hearts went cold? Lord, have mercy. Can we be restored? Lord, have mercy.</p> <p>The noise of traffic is drowning out the songbird's song. Your voice within us is telling us that we've gone wrong. You call us from our selfishness, To be blessed—and to bless To turn to you, to begin anew. Lord, have mercy. Can we be restored? Lord, have mercy.</p> <p>Brian McLaren</p>

<p>Thursday</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>World Bee Day 20 May</p> <p>2022 theme: “Bee engaged: Build Back Better for Bees”</p> <p>The purpose of World Bee Day is to recognise and acknowledge the positive impact that bees and other pollinators have on our ecosystem. The theme this year aims to highlight and confront the negative impact that the Covid-19 pandemic has had on the beekeeping industry globally and stress the protection of bees, other pollinators and their habitats.</p> <p>One third of the world's food production depends on bees. Pollination is a necessary process that needs to occur to help crops grow, and bees are responsible for pollinating 75% of all leading global crops. Bees are vital in providing the balance between human beings, plants, animals, and the environment. Bees have become increasingly endangered, with one million species facing extinction. That would mean far fewer apples, soft fruits, beans, tomatoes and more.</p> <p>So how can we help?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planting bee-friendly plants like daisies and red clover may help bring more bees to your area • Leaving a small dish with a few pebbles and water can help out thirsty bees • If you maintain a garden, lower or completely cut out the usage of pesticides as they can harm bees • Support your local beekeepers by buying their honey and other hive products. <p>May the bees be well and healthy and continue their magic pollen dance Maintaining Grandmother's Earth's Green Kingdom May their young be well and healthy and continue their great and ancient tradition May the bees on earth be as plentiful as stars in the heavens <i>Shantimayi.</i></p>
<p>Friday</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>Endangered Species Day</p> <p>Ninety-nine percent of all species that have ever lived have gone extinct over the course of five mass extinctions, which, in the past, were largely a result of natural causes such as volcano eruptions and asteroid impacts. Today, the rate of extinction is occurring 1,000 to 10,000 times faster because of human activity. The main modern causes of extinction are the loss and degradation of habitat (mainly deforestation), over exploitation (hunting, overfishing), invasive</p>



species, climate change, and nitrogen pollution and the pervasive plastic pollution in the ocean. Wildlife trafficking also continues to be a big problem because for some species, the fewer members there are, the more valuable they become to poachers and hunters.

A report from the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) warns that there is overwhelming evidence that nature is declining globally at rates unprecedented in human history – and the rate of species extinctions is accelerating, with grave impacts on people around the world now likely.

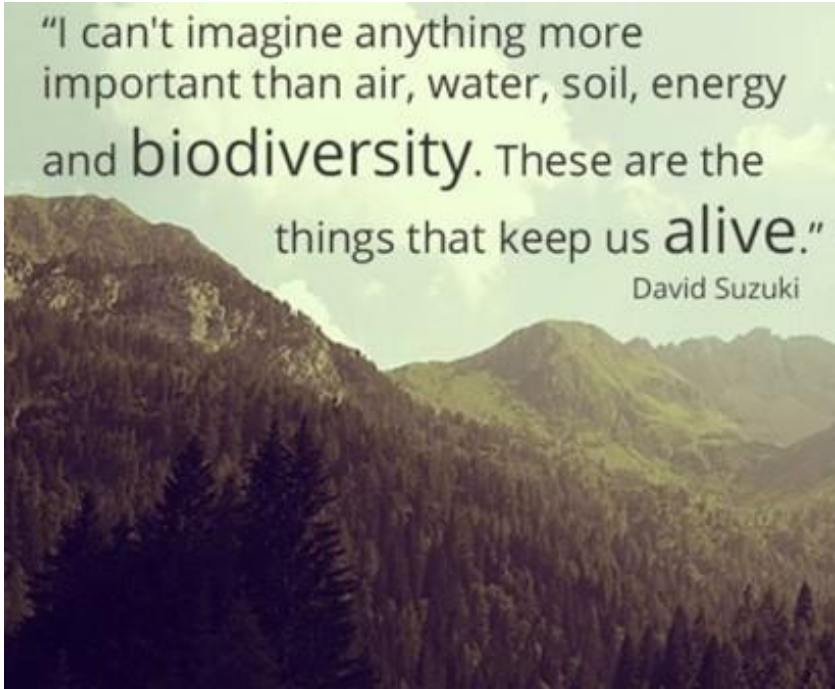

While it may seem unimportant if we lose one butterfly or rat species, it matters because all species are connected through their interactions in a web of life. A balanced and biodiverse ecosystem is one in which each species plays an important role and relies on the services provided by other species to survive. Healthy ecosystems are more productive and resistant to disruptions. Even if it's not a keystone species [a species that others in an ecosystem depend on], its loss will weaken the functionality of the entire ecosystem, which just makes it easier for that ecosystem to stop working.

South Africa ranks as the third most biodiverse country in the world. It is recognised for high levels of endemism and is home to over 95,000 known species but tragically many species' survival is threatened. Loss of species in the past has played a role in pandemics, fires, the decline of valued species and the rise of invasive ones, decreased carbon sequestration and the reduction of ecosystem services on which we depend.

Below are just a handful of species threatened with extinction in South Africa – we need to do all we can to ensure their survival!



Prayerfully consider what your action will be in the fight against extinction

<p>Saturday</p>	<p>21</p>	
<p>Sunday</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>International Biodiversity Day</p> <p>The UN has proclaimed 22 May the <i>International Day for Biological Diversity</i> to increase understanding and awareness of <i>biodiversity</i> issues</p>  <p>Biodiversity has to be one of the most complex features of our planet, but also one of the most vital. It speaks of the great variety of life on our planet, in all its unique shapes and fascinating interactions.</p> <p>Nature conservation begins in our own gardens, and with an increase in construction taking place all around us, there has never been a more important time to make sure your garden can provide food and shelter for as many species as possible. By having a wide range of indigenous plants, you can feed and shelter a number of insects, birds and other species that are losing their habitat due to the prolific building developments.</p> <p>More Plants, Less Lawn</p> <p>If you have large areas of lawn in your garden, why not break them up with some plants? By adding some flowerbeds and filling them with gorgeous indigenous plants, you are not only making your garden more beautiful, but you are also increasing your garden's biodiversity.</p> <p>A Wider Variety of Plants</p> <p>As South Africans, we are so fortunate to have a wide variety of indigenous plant species to choose from when we want to add plants to our gardens. In order to increase the biodiversity in your garden, try and opt for mainly indigenous plants, and include as many different species as you can – the more the merrier! Each plant provides food and shelter for a particular bird or</p>

		<p>insect, so the more you can feed and shelter, the better your garden is for the environment</p> <p>Invite Creatures to Your Garden</p> <p>In addition to your plants that will offer food and some shelter for creatures, you can add some other items to your garden to encourage visitors. By adding birdhouses, bat boxes, birdbaths, ponds and mulch to your garden, you can expect to see many happy visitors enjoying it.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">May God who established the dance of creation, who marvelled at the lilies of the field, who transforms chaos to order, lead us to transform our lives and the Church to reflect God's glory in creation.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Andrew Warmback and Brian Wilinson,</i> <i>Network of Earthkeeping Christian Communities in South Africa.</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Monday</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">23</p>	<p>World Turtle & Tortoise Day</p> <p>Turtles and tortoises have been integral components of global ecosystems for about 220 million years and have played important roles in human culture for at least 400,000 years.</p> <p>South Africa, and in particular the Cape, has the richest diversity of tortoises in the world. Of the 40 species of tortoise known, South Africa has 12 species and 2 Subspecies. In addition, the southern African region has 5 terrapin and 5 turtle species. These include the smallest tortoise (Namaqualand speckled padloper), one of the rarest tortoises (Geometric tortoise) and the largest turtle (leatherback turtle) in the world.</p> <p>As adults they are coming under increasing threat from human activities. Many of our tortoise species have very specific habitat requirements. They are unable to live in other areas because of the lack of specific food or competition from other species. Destruction of habitat for agriculture is a major threat to their survival, particularly in the Cape. Large numbers are still killed as a traditional source of food and the 'pet trade' encourages the capture of numbers, far in excess of their reproduction.</p> <p>All tortoises are protected by law in South Africa and may not be killed, captured or kept in captivity. The only reason to pick one up would be to remove it to a place of safety from a position where it was unlikely to survive - e.g. - a busy road or from the threat of an approaching fire. If picked up the animal should be released as near as possible to the place it was located. In the Cape, especially, where species distribution is limited by habitat, untold harm will be done by releasing the captured animal into the distribution area of another species or where it may not have the correct food plants.</p> <p>Leave them alone and undisturbed unless absolutely necessary - and then only very carefully to prevent them opening up their limbs or expelling their fluids. A little bit of thought and care for other species will go a long way to assisting their survival.</p> <p>However, introduced species are not welcome and fast becoming invasive species, posing a threat to our indigenous terrapins through disease and</p>

parasite transmission as well as competition for similar resources. They also threaten biodiversity in wetland ecosystems and are known carriers of salmonella which can be transferred to people handling these terrapins.

These turtles are categorised as 1b under the NEMBA (*National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act*) and need to be eradicated. Do not release any of these intruders back into the wild, in fact, don't buy a pet turtle in the first place!



Alligator snapping turtle



Common snapping turtle



European pond turtle



Madagascar (Malagasy) snapping turtle



Slider turtles

- Do all you can to eradicate invasive species.
- Don't remove indigenous tortoises and turtles from the wild.
- Don't buy invasive species.
- Educate others about this topic.

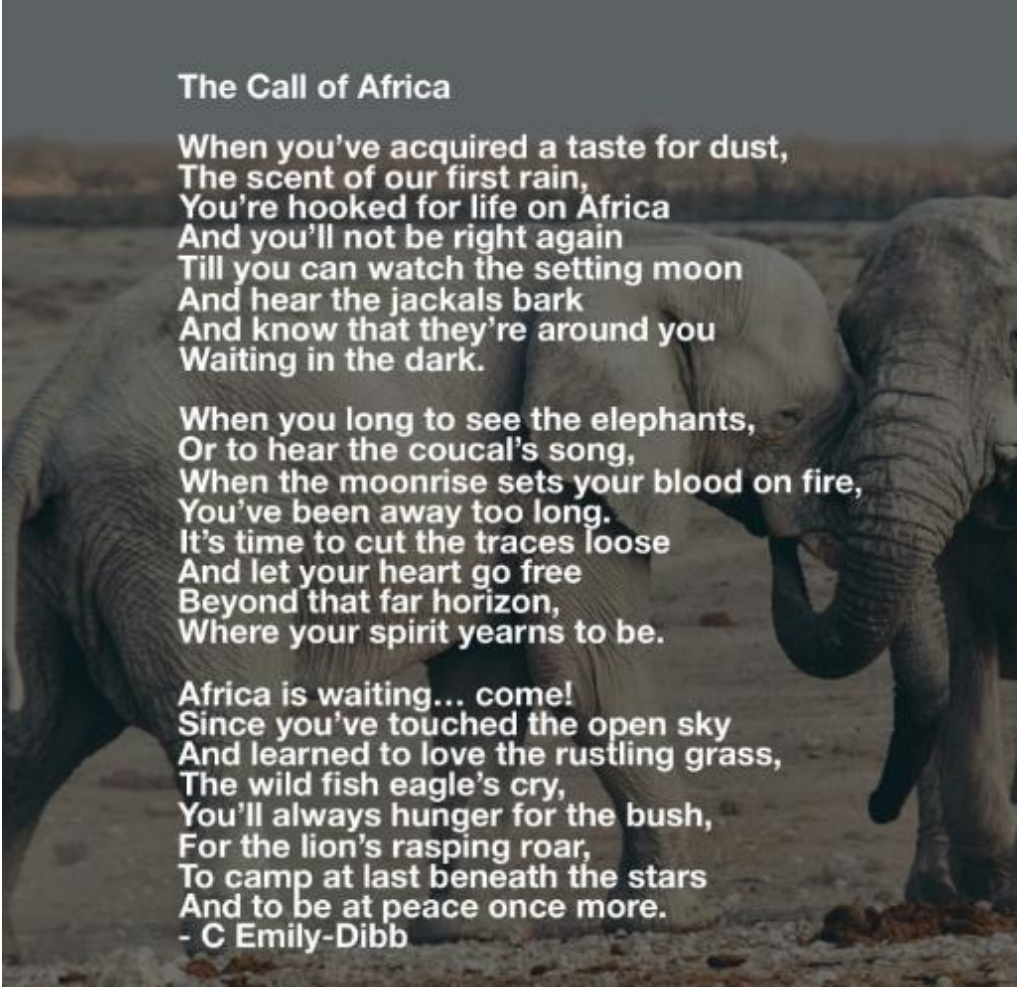
*May God make me a soft pawed turtle,
give me a hard shell to endure the blows,
indignities and insults of life without flinching.
Give me a soft paws that I may not wound or trample
those among whom you send me oh Lord
Amen*


Tuesday

24

Hey Look! The Artist signed His Name!



<p>Wednesday</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>O God of mountain peaks and rolling veld, Whose voice is in the lion's roar and whose reach is in the heron's swoop. Look with favour on our ancient lands and pour out your blessing on Africa that her history may inspire our children, her bountiful resources feed the nations and her drumbeat draw all people into the dance of reconciliation. Through Jesus Christ our Lord Amen</p>
<p>Thursday</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>Africa Day</p>  <p>The Call of Africa</p> <p>When you've acquired a taste for dust, The scent of our first rain, You're hooked for life on Africa And you'll not be right again Till you can watch the setting moon And hear the jackals bark And know that they're around you Waiting in the dark.</p> <p>When you long to see the elephants, Or to hear the coucal's song, When the moonrise sets your blood on fire, You've been away too long. It's time to cut the traces loose And let your heart go free Beyond that far horizon, Where your spirit yearns to be.</p> <p>Africa is waiting... come! Since you've touched the open sky And learned to love the rustling grass, The wild fish eagle's cry, You'll always hunger for the bush, For the lion's rasping roar, To camp at last beneath the stars And to be at peace once more. - C Emily-Dibb</p>
<p>Friday</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>Kindness</p> <p>There is a kindness that dwells deep down in things; it presides everywhere, often in the places we least expect. The world can be harsh and negative, but if we remain generous and patient, kindness inevitably reveals itself. Something deep in the human soul seems to depend on the presence of kindness; something instinctive in us expects it, and once we sense it we are able to trust and open ourselves.</p> <p>John O'Donohue</p>

<p>Saturday</p>	<p>28</p>	
<p>Sunday</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>Father, we praise you with all your creatures. They came forth from your all-powerful hand; they are yours, filled with your presence and your tender love. Praise be to you!</p> <p>Son of God, Jesus, through you all things were made. You were formed in the womb of Mary our Mother, you became part of this earth, and you gazed upon this world with human eyes. Today you are alive in every creature in your risen glory. Praise be to you!</p> <p>Holy Spirit, by your light you guide this world towards the Father's love and accompany creation as it groans in travail. You also dwell in our hearts and you inspire us to do what is good. Praise be to you!</p> <p>Triune Lord, wondrous community of infinite love, teach us to contemplate you in the beauty of the universe, for all things speak of you.</p> <p>Awaken our praise and thankfulness for every being that you have made. Give us the grace to feel profoundly joined to everything that is.</p> <p>God of love, show us our place in this world as channels of your love for all the creatures of this earth, for not one of them is forgotten in your sight. Enlighten those who possess power and money that they may avoid the sin of indifference, that they may love the common good, advance the weak, and care for this world in which we live.</p> <p>The poor and the earth are crying out. O Lord, seize us with your power and light, help us to protect all life, to prepare for a better future, for the coming of your Kingdom of justice, peace, love and beauty. Praise be to you!</p> <p>Amen.</p> <p><i>A prayer for the earth from Laudato Si'</i></p>

<p>Monday</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>Contemplating Creation - Sensing Nature</p> <p><i>Fr. Richard explores how a creation-cantered spirituality offers a natural openness to the type of sensing that comes from contemplation:</i></p> <p>Creation spirituality reveals our human arrogance, and maybe that's why we are afraid of it. Maybe that's why we're afraid to believe that God has spoken to us primarily in <i>what is</i>. Francis of Assisi was basically a hermit. He lived in the middle of nature. And if we want nature to come to life for us, we have to live in the middle of it for a while. When we get away from the voices of human beings, then we really start hearing the voices of animals and trees. They start talking to us, as it were. And we start talking back. Foundational faith, I would call it, the grounding for personal and biblical faith.</p> <p>I have been blessed to spend several Lents living as a hermit in nature. When we get rid of our watches and all the usual reference points, it is amazing how real and compelling light and darkness become. It's amazing how real animals become. And it's amazing how much we notice about what's happening in a tree each day. It's almost as if we weren't seeing it all before, and we wonder if we have ever seen at all. I don't think that Western civilization realizes what a high price we pay for separating ourselves from the natural world. One of the prices is certainly a lack of a sort of natural contemplation, a natural seeing. My times in the hermitage re-situated me in God's universe, in God's providence and plan. I had a feeling of being realigned with <i>what is</i>. I <i>belonged</i> and was thereby saved! Think about it.</p> <p>So, creation spirituality is, first of all, the natural spirituality of people who have learned how to see. I am beginning to think that much of institutional religion is rather useless if it is not grounded in natural seeing and nature religion.</p> <p>We probably don't communicate with something unless we have already experienced its communications to us. I know by the third week I was talking to lizards on my porch at the hermitage, and I have no doubt that somehow some communion was happening. I don't know how to explain it beyond that. I was reattached, and they were reattached.</p> <p>When we are at peace, when we are not fighting it, when we are not fixing and controlling this world, when we are not filled with anger, all we can do is start loving and forgiving. Nothing else makes sense when we are alone with God. All we can do is let go; there's nothing worth holding on to, because there is nothing else we need. It is in that free space, I think, that realignment happens. Francis lived out of such realignment. And I think it is the realignment that he announced to the world in the form of worship and adoration.</p> <p>From Richard Rohr's daily meditations www.cac.org</p>
<p>Tuesday</p>	<p>31</p>	