

JAEI July 2022 Environmental Prayer Diary

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



Friday

1

Plastic Free July

Plastic waste is a blight on the environment and the planet's oceans, taking a heavy toll on marine life. Almost 80,000 tonnes of plastic leak into the oceans

and rivers of South Africa each year, making up 3% of the plastic waste generated in the country every year. Now, South Africa has taken steps to ensure waste along the plastic lifecycle is being addressed.



In light of the detrimental effect the fossil fuel by-product poses to the country and continent's environment,

Cabinet has adopted the draft resolution on plastic

pollution presented by the United Nations Environmental Assembly (UNEA) in Nairobi, Kenya, at the end of February, 2022.

In essence, the draft resolution is a call for a legally binding global agreement on plastics. It seeks to address the waste management of plastic, the circular approach of the material while recognising its effects on marine life, and the fact that plastic pollution is a transboundary issue. The agreement would tackle plastic pollution across the full lifecycle of plastics, from preventive measures in the upstream part of the lifecycle, to downstream ones addressing waste management, in order to prevent plastic pollution in the marine and other environments and to support the goals outlined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Within the Anglican Church of South Africa, Provincial Synod, meeting online from September 21 to 24 2021, approved the resolution on plastic pollution. (see *full resolution*)

The Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) drafted and co-signed a letter from

global faith communities to the United Nations Environmental Assembly, warning that the world is "facing a triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution" and calling on member states to recognise that plastic pollution is a "pervasive and escalating phenomenon" which requires urgent, co-ordinated global action.



International Plastic Bag Free Day, a global initiative that aims to eliminate the use of plastic bags, is celebrated on July 3.

What you can do

- Ensure that your Parish is aware of (and implements) the Provincial Synod Resolution of September 2021 on plastic pollution.
- Bring a reusable coffee cup or dine-in at your local café.
- Choose to refuse balloons and other single-use plastic party decorations.
- Choose to refuse single-use plastic bathroom products.
- Swap liquid soap for bar soaps and avoid single-use plastic.
- Avoiding disposable products and packaging has a huge impact.
- Before you buy, stop and think about the low or no waste options.

Saturday

2

A new report by WWF and adelphi looks at the complex nexus between nature and security. The report outlines four pathways through which environmental degradation and biodiversity loss act as drivers of insecurity and exacerbate conflict situations, besides advancing further environmental degradation. Four main pathways form the nature-security nexus. These pathways spell out the different ways in which environmental degradation and biodiversity loss interact with conflict, insecurity and peace:

- Ecosystem and biodiversity loss, livelihood insecurity and political instability
- The environment, conflict financing and organised crime
- Competition and conflicts around natural resources
- The impacts of war and conflict on the environment

https://climate-diplomacy.org/magazine/environment/nature-conflict-and-peace-links-between-environment-security-and-peace-and

Prayerfully reflect on this.

Acknowledgment -- https://greenchristian.org.uk/resources/prayer-guide/

	1	
Sunday	3	Prayer of St Basil the Great 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 realize that they live not for us alone, but for themselves and for Thee, and that they too love the sweetness of life. Amen.
Monday	4	PSALM 24:1 The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.
		God speaks to us in bird and song
Tuesday	5	God speaks to us in bird and song, in winds that drift the clouds along, above the din and toil of wrong, a melody of love.
		God speaks to us in far and near, in peace of home and friends most dear, from faded past and present clear, a melody of love.
		God speaks to us in darkest night, by quiet ways through mornings bright, when shadows fall with evening light, a melody of love.
		O Voice divine, speak unto me, beyond the earth, beyond the sea, and let me echo joyfully a melody of love.
		Joseph Johnson Source: Voices Together #539
Wednesday	6	"Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not." Dr. Seuss, The Lorax

Thursday	7	Lord, Renew our spirits and cleanse our hearts. Renew our minds and transform our lives. Renew our cities and rebuild our ruins. Renew our world, in your name we pray, Amen. Credit: TEAR Australia	
		A Night Meditation	
Friday	8	From the rising of the sun to its setting the Mighty One speaks and summons the earth.' As earth requires rest	
		and the seas need time to be replenished, so in my resting may I be made more alive, so in stillness may my creativity be borne anew. Bless me in the night, O God, that I may wake refreshed. With your ministering messengers of sleep bless me this night.	
		John Philip Newell Sounds of the Eternal, A Celtic Psalter, Morning and Night Prayer	
Saturday	9	Encyclical Letter <i>Fratelli Tutti o</i> f Pope Francis on Social Friendship	the Fraternity and
		Chapter Two A Stranger on the Road	A Tourist Facts. A Foreign Facts. On Freshering and
		56. The previous chapter should not be read as a cool and detached description of today's problems, for "the joys and hopes, the grief and anguish of the people of our time, especially of those who are poor or afflicted, are the joys and hopes, the grief and anguish of the	POPE FRANCIS ME
		followers of Christ as well. Nothing that is genuinely human fails to find an echo in their hearts".[53] In the atter ray of light in the midst of what we are experiencing, and be few lines of action, I now wish to devote a chapter to a part Christ two thousand years ago. Although this Letter is add of good will, regardless of their religious convictions, the pany of us can relate to and find challenging.	pefore proposing a rable told by Jesus ressed to all people
		"Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. 'Teacher,' he to inherit eternal life?' He said to him, 'What is written in the read there?' He answered, 'You shall love the Lord your Go and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with your neighbour as yourself.' And he said to him, 'You answer; do this, and you will live.' But wanting to justify him 'And who is my neighbour?' Jesus replied, 'A man wan Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, whim, and went away, leaving him half dead. Now by chance	ne law? What do you not with all your heart, the all your mind; and have given the right self, he asked Jesus, as going down from the stripped him, beat

down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, 'Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.' Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?" He said, 'The one who showed him mercy.' Jesus said to him, 'Go and do likewise.'"(Lk 10:25-37).

Prayerfully consider how this is affecting our own Country

Sunday

10

11

O God of the poor,

help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth, so precious in your eyes.

Bring healing to our lives,

that we may protect the world and not prey on it,

that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.

Touch the hearts

of those who look only for gain

at the expense of the poor and the earth.

Teach us to discover the worth of each thing, to be filled with awe and contemplation, to recognize that we are profoundly united with every creature as we journey towards your infinite light. We thank you for being with us each day. Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love and peace.

Monday

World Population Day

World Population Day seeks to focus attention on the urgency and importance of population issues, was established by the then-Governing Council of the

United Nations Development Programme in 1989, an outgrowth of the interest generated by the Day of Five Billion, which was observed on 11 July 1987. For several years population has been increasing faster than many vital non-renewable and renewable resources. This means the amount of these resources per person is declining, despite modern technology. Human overpopulation is among the

most pressing environmental issues, silently aggravating the forces behind:

gravating the forces berning.

- Increased Global Warming and Climate Change
- Water shortages
- Species Extinction
- Habitat loss
- Pollution

- Acidifying oceans
- Invasive species
- Over-exploitation of natural resources
- Poaching
- Rain forest destruction
- Desertification
- Toxic waste
- Urban sprawl
- More Intensive Farming Practices
- Elevated Crime Rate
- Political instability

However, ecological issues are just the beginning. Two billion people live in poverty, more than the population of the entire planet less than 100 years ago. Today there are more people suffering in misery and starvation in the world than ever before in history.

Pray for ways to meet this enormous and urgent challenge with perceptive dignity and understanding.

Tuesday 12



Wednesday

13

World Shark Awareness Day

Shark Awareness Day celebrates the wondrous sea creatures that have had a bad rep for quite a while now. When you think of the dangers of the sea, sharks definitely make it on the list because of the way they are depicted in movies and cartoons. However, Shark Awareness Day is not a day to cry foul at said innocent fish, but instead, it is a day of crying foul FOR them. The strong and extremely resilient predators are, in fact, more scared of humans than the other way around. There's a bigger chance of being struck by lightning than being killed or attacked by a shark. From being killed because humans are scared of them to being harvested for their meat and fins, sharks have made it on the list

of endangered species, which is bad news for them as well as the environment.

Over the decades, shark numbers have sadly dwindled alarmingly. People have been hunting them for their skin, meat, and fins all over the world. This overfishing has led to many shark organizations lobbying to make the shark meat trade illegal. Yet many fishing companies refuse to follow the laws and protocols, continuing to catch sharks for



their personal gain. Moreover, the scary and dangerous image of sharks, created by pop culture, has led to many unnecessary killings of the fish.

A reduced shark population can have grievous impacts on the environment. Sharks keep the ocean health in check by keeping the population of other sea inhabitants under control.

- Boycott shark products Sharks are hunted for their meat, skin, and fins.
 Many places in the world offer special fin soups or products made out of shark leather. Boycott such places and encourage others to do so, too.
- **Educate others** Spread awareness about the day by talking about it with others. Pop culture has done enough damage to sharks' image. Now it's time for you to join the force to undo the damage by spreading positivity about this amazing fish.
- *Revisit* your own mindset on sharks and encourage others to do the same.
- **Pray** for all those involved in shark conservation
- **Pray** for the ceasing of the senseless killing of sharks for the restaurant and "muti" market.

Thursday

14

The Earth is the Lord's

This we know: the earth does not belong to us.

The earth is the Lord's and so are all its people.

This we know: we did not weave the web of life.

The earth is the Lord's and so is all that breathes on it.

This we know: we are called to till and work the earth.

The earth is the Lord's and so are all who work the land.

This we know: that we are called to take care of creation.

The earth is the Lord's yet we have polluted and abused it.

This we know: that whatever befalls the earth, Befalls the sons and daughters of the earth

This we know: that the earth is the Lord's. And so we will serve Him in it.

Amen

Source: **Bishop Eric Pike**, Diocese of Port Elizabeth (South Africa): adapted from various sources including Ray Simpson

Friday 15



Saturday

World Snake Day

16

Fear of snakes is one of the most common phobias, yet many people have never seen a snake in person. Research suggests humans have evolved an innate tendency of a fear snakes as a means of survival. This feeling is really common, but we don't see snakes all the time and they are no longer a threat to our everyday lives – so there's



really no reason for this overwhelming disgust or hatred of these incredible creatures.

Further there are over 100 references to snakes (serpents) in the Bible – and none of them positive! – which does nothing to help the innocent snake's cause. So, the poor unfortunate snake has to live with this perpetually bad reputation! – a reputation that doesn't match their behaviour or their importance. Unfortunately, the reality is that most of the antipathies that surround snakes are guided by ignorance or misunderstanding. Snakes are solitary creatures who prefer to be left alone.

Snakes are on this planet for a reason, just like all wildlife. They are not here to scare us and there isn't one hiding in every bush to leap out and attack! No! remember, snakes want nothing to do with us, they are terrified of us!

Snakes form a key link in the food web and help maintain the biodiversity on Earth. They act as predators, and as prey. They help maintain a healthy ecosystem and environment. Nature has given us a free service provider in pest control (normally in the form of rats and mice.)

Of the 170 species of snakes in Southern Africa only a handful are capably of inflicting a deadly bite – notably the mambas, cobras, boomslangs and adders. The vast majority of snakes are totally harmless to both humans and pets.

Overcoming *Ophidiophobia* (fear of snakes) is a long process but learning more about these amazing creatures and their role in the environment would be a really good start.

So, should you see a snake in your garden or in a nature reserve, let it be (call a snake-catcher if you are against snakes being in the garden). **Do not harm** it!

If you are concerned about snake identification and whether it is venomous or harmless – download the excellent free app from the African Snakebite

	1		
		Institute. (Also available on <i>PlayStore</i> on your cell phone.) This app also has an up-to-date list of experienced snake catchers in your area.	
		Consider how you can change your own perspective of this wonderful creature that God has created	
Sunday	17	God of creation, who loves all he has made and all that has evolved, open the eyes of your people, that your love might be reflected in our care for the planet. Through Jesus Christ, who walked this earth and calls us by name. Amen.	
		Rt Revd Nicholas Baines Bishop of Leeds	
		Mandela Day	
Monday	18	2022 Theme: "Do what you can, with what you have, wherever you are"	
		The Nelson Mandela International Day campaign remains rooted in the call Nelson Mandela made in 2009 to honour him by working in communities rather than by celebrating his birthday.	
		In a world in which inequality continues to grow and in which the destructive impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has exposed existing disparities and damaged vulnerable communities in all kinds of ways, the call to action is as broad and as inclusive as possible – identify those in need around you and do what you can to make a difference for them.	
		The South African focus of the Nelson Mandela Foundation will be food and nutrition programme - promoting community and backyard gardens, supporting fruit and indigenous tree planting, and creating awareness of the intersections between food security and climate change.	
		People are urged to:	
		 Plant and grow fresh, organic and cost-effective produce in or for vulnerable communities. 	
		 Plant and grow trees for the well-being of all, with an emphasis on fruit trees in support of food production for vulnerable communities. 	
		 Invest in sustainable food production platforms to the benefit of vulnerable communities. 	
		Embrace home and community planting and growing as a contribution to protecting the environment and addressing the challenge of climate change.	

Tuesday 19 "I v

Read Matthew 13: 24-43

"I will utter things hidden since the creation of the world."

In all the noise around us, especially the judgements of social media, it can get alarmingly difficult to discern the good from the bad, the real from the fake.

In his parable of the weeds, Jesus explains that the weeds and the wheat cannot be untangled by any human hand without the risk of uprooting what is good. We endure a world where both good and evil must grow together, where the poor suffer injustice while the indifferent prosper.

In the Bible, humans often live in a murky predicament, unable to see and choose wisely. In Genesis, there are two trees growing in the same garden - the forbidden tree of knowledge and the tree of life. And there are two brothers, Cain and Abel, one who finds favour and one who, overcome with envy, kills the other. Yet, he is not 'weeded-out' of the world but allowed to wander as a wayfarer and mourn his crime.

When we confront the changing world, the unforeseeable future, there is a crisis of clarity. We stumble in the dark. This Sunday's readings refuse us the luxury of surety. They confront us with the shadow within ourselves and implore trust in the Spirit who "intercedes for us in unutterable sighs" (Romans 8:27). We can still act on principle and in faith, putting hope, love and justice at the centre of our lives.

Loving God,

In the immeasurable brilliance of your Spirit, show us how to choose the path of light. May we glimpse things hidden since the creation of the world that you revealed to us through your Son. Amen.

This reflection and prayer were written by **Francis Stewart** of CAFOD Theology Team.

https://cafod.org.uk

Wednesday

Psalm 126:6

20

'Those who go out ... carrying seed to sow, will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves (a harvest) with them.'

- Life gives us the opportunity to sow seeds that will bring a harvest.
- We can be people who dispense God's mercy and grace to others.
- We all carry seed within us, but for it to work we have to sow it and plant it.
- It may not be easy, but the results will be a harvest and great joy!

Prayer: Lord, may my life be poured out as a seed that is sown. May I see a harvest and be filled with songs of joy, as I look and see the fruit that You will bring forth as a result of my sowing and planting. Amen.

Pastor Andrew Roebert

Alive to God

Website: www.AlivetoGod.com

Thursday

21

Creation as the Body of God

The universe itself can be understood as the primary revelation of the divine. - Thomas Berry

The incarnation of God did not only happen in Bethlehem two thousand years ago. That is just when some of us started taking it seriously. The incarnation actually

happened approximately 13.8 billion years ago with a moment that we now call "The Big Bang" or the First Manifestation. At the birth of our universe, God materialized and revealed who God is. Ilia Delio writes: "Human life must be traced back to the time when life was deeply one, a Singularity, whereby the intensity of mass-energy exploded into consciousness." This



Singularity provides a solid basis for inherent reverence, universal sacrality, and a spiritual ecology that transcends groups and religions.

St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) stated, "The immense diversity and pluriformity of this creation more perfectly represents God than any one creature alone or by itself." However, for some reason, perhaps human self-absorption, Christians thought humans were the only creatures that God cared about, and all else—animals, plants, light, water, soil, minerals—was literally just "food" for our own sustenance and enjoyment. I do not believe that the Infinitely Loving Source we call God would or could be so stingy and withholding.

God created millions of creatures for millions of years before *Homo sapiens* came along. Many of these beings are too tiny for us to see or have yet to be discovered; some have seemingly no benefit to human life; and many, like dinosaurs, lived and died long before we did. Why do they even exist? A number of the Psalms say that creation exists to reflect and give glory to God. The Jewish people already had a kind of "natural theology." God has chosen to communicate God's very Self in multitudinous and diverse shapes of beauty, love, truth, and goodness, each of which manifests another facet of the Divine. (See Job 38-39, Wisdom 13:1-9, Romans 1:20.)

Christians must realize what a muddle we have gotten ourselves into by not taking incarnation and *the body of God* seriously. As Sally McFague, a Christian theologian, says so powerfully, "Salvation is the direction of all of creation, and creation is the very place of salvation." All is God's place, which is our place, which is the only and every place.

Our very suffering now, our crowded presence in this nest that we have largely fouled, will soon be the *one* thing that we finally share in common. It might be the one thing that will bring us together politically and religiously. The earth and its life systems, on which we all entirely depend, might soon become the very thing that will convert us to a simple lifestyle, to a necessary community, and to an inherent and natural sense of the Holy. We all breathe the same air and drink the same water. There are no Native, Hindu, Jewish, Christian, or Muslim versions of the universal elements. They are exactly the same for each of us.

Gateway to Silence:

Brother Sun, Sister Moon, help me see God in all things.

From Richard Rohr's daily meditations www.cac.org

Friday	22	"Pleasure is Nature's test, her sign of approval. When a man is happy, he is in harmony with himself and his environment." **Oscar Wilde**
Saturday	23	"Wild Geese" You do not have to be good. You do not have to walk on your knees for a hundred miles through the desert repenting. You only have to let the soft animal of your body love what it loves. Tell me about despair, yours, and I will tell you mine. Meanwhile the world goes on. Meanwhile the sun and the clear pebbles of the rain are moving across the landscapes, over the prairies and the deep trees, the mountains and the rivers. Meanwhile the wild geese, high in clean blue air, are heading home again. Whoever you are, no matter how lonely, the world offers itself to your imagination, calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting — over and over announcing your place in the family of things. Mary Oliver Pulitzer Prize-winning poet, writes of the unity among all living things. The despair she talks about in her poem "Wild Geese" is how we feel when climate disaster hits, and when the future looks bleak and desperate. But then, the world "calls you like wild geese," reminding us of our oneness and of a 'good
		life connected to each other and the earth.'
Sunday	24	Creator God, Thank you for the waters of the earth, for the life-sustaining rains, lakes, and deep oceans. Keep us mindful of how precious these are, and how vulnerable they are. Help us to work together for clean water, and for the sharing of it with those who have need of it today. Amen.
		Rt Revd Christine Hardman Bishop of Newcastle

Monday

25

The Canticle of Brother Sun

Most High, all powerful, good Lord, Yours are the praises, the glory, the honour, and all blessing.

To You alone, Most High, do they belong, and no man is worthy to mention Your name.

Be praised, my Lord, through all your creatures, especially through my lord Brother Sun, who brings the day; and you give light through him. And he is beautiful and radiant in all his splendour! Of you, Most High, he bears the likeness.

Praise be You, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars, in heaven you formed them clear and precious and beautiful.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Wind, and through the air, cloudy and serene, and every kind of weather through which You give sustenance to Your creatures.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Water, which is very useful and humble and precious and chaste.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Fire, through whom you light the night and he is beautiful and playful and robust and strong.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Mother Earth, who sustains us and governs us and who produces varied fruits with coloured flowers and herbs.

Praised be You, my Lord, through those who give pardon for Your love, and bear infirmity and tribulation.

Blessed are those who endure in peace for by You, Most High, they shall be crowned.

Praised be You, my Lord, through our Sister Bodily Death, from whom no living man can escape. Woe to those who die in mortal sin.

Blessed are those whom death will find in Your most holy will, for the second death shall do them no harm.

Praise and bless my Lord, and give Him thanks and serve Him with great humility.

Amen

Tuesday	26	When storms come your way. Remember you know the Master of the Wind. When sickness finds you, remember you know the Great Physician. When your heart gets broken, just say I know the Potter. It doesn't matter what we go through, God is there for us always. Amen
Wednesday	27	"For even creation reveals Him who formed it, and the very work made suggests Him Who made it, and the world manifests Him Who ordered it. The Universal Church, moreover, through the whole world, has received this understanding from the Apostles themselves." Saint Irenaeus (Circa 129 – 203
Thursday	28	Psalm 148 7 Praise the LORD from the earth, you great sea creatures and all ocean depths, 8 lightning and hail, snow and clouds, stormy winds that do his bidding, 9 you mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars, 10 wild animals and all cattle, small creatures and flying birds, 11 kings of the earth and all nations, you princes and all rulers on earth, 12 young men and women, old men and children.
Friday	29	As I walk with Beauty "As I walk, as I walk, The universe is walking with me, In beauty it walks before me, In beauty it walks behind me, In beauty it walks below me, In beauty it walks above me, Beauty is on every side." Traditional Navajo Prayer

Saturday 30



Sunday

31

World Ranger Day

World Ranger Day is celebrated worldwide each year on July 31st to commemorate Rangers killed or injured in the line of duty and to celebrate the work Rangers do to protect the planet's natural treasures and cultural heritage.

Pray for blessings, protection and strength for the courageous men and women involved in this important work.



WORLD RANGER DAY - 31 JULY

