



JAEI

August 2023 Environmental Prayer Diary

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

<p>Tuesday</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>God Creator of the Universe</p> <p>God, Creator Of the Universe Of the earth and sea Of the earth's fruits and flowers Of all humans, habitats and creatures</p> <p>Help us to value and care for your world In all its beauty and fragility In trust for you Creator God. Amen</p> <p>Helen Mason <i>2018 Women's World Day of Prayer</i></p>
<p>Wednesday</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>Holistic Peace</p> <p><i>Peaceful change starts within us and grows incrementally from where we are. Our social and physical location will influence the problems we see and the solutions we can imagine. We must "think globally and act locally" as did Nobel Peace Prize winner Professor Wangari Maathai (1940–2011).</i></p> <p>Maathai devoted herself to environmental and democratic reform in her native Kenya.</p> <p>As a young academic biologist at the University of Nairobi in the 1970s . . . Maathai grew concerned about the environmental devastation created in Nairobi by widespread deforestation. She recognized that a massive replanting program could both save the land and provide a source of income for Nairobi's poor. So in 1977 she founded a small local organization that paid Nairobi women to plant trees. The organization soon grew into a nationwide and then pan-African one known as the Greenbelt Movement. Since its inception, the movement has planted upwards of forty million trees in Africa and provided sources of income for nearly one million women.</p> <p>The genius of Maathai's vision was its holistic awareness of the linkage between environmental sustainability and economic opportunity. . . .</p> <p><i>In her Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech, Wangari Maathai said,</i></p> <p>[The Green Belt Movement] participants discover that they must be part of the solutions. They realize their hidden potential and are empowered to overcome</p>



inertia and take action. They come to recognize that they are the primary custodians and beneficiaries of the environment that sustains them.

Entire communities also come to understand that while it is necessary to hold their governments accountable, it is equally important that in their own relationships with each other, they exemplify the leadership values they wish to see in their own leaders, namely justice, integrity and trust.

Although initially the Green Belt Movement’s tree planting activities did not address issues of democracy and peace, it soon became clear that responsible governance of the environment was impossible without democratic space. Therefore, the tree became a symbol for the democratic struggle in Kenya. Citizens were mobilized to challenge widespread abuses of power, corruption and environmental mismanagement. . . .

Through the Green Belt Movement, thousands of ordinary citizens were mobilized and empowered to take action and effect change. . . . They learned to overcome fear and a sense of helplessness and moved to defend democratic rights.

In time, the tree also became a symbol for peace and conflict resolution. . . .

It is 30 years since we started this work. Activities that devastate the environment and societies continue unabated. Today we are faced with a challenge that calls for a shift in our thinking, so that humanity stops threatening its life-support system. We are called to assist the Earth to heal her wounds and in the process heal our own—indeed, to embrace the whole creation in all its diversity, beauty and wonder. This will happen if we see the need to revive our sense of belonging to a larger family of life, with which we have shared our evolutionary process.

In the course of history, there comes a time when humanity is called to shift to a new level of consciousness, to reach a higher moral ground. A time when we have to shed our fear and give hope to each other.

That time is now.

***From Richard Rohr’s daily meditations
www.cac.org***

Thursday **3**



<p>Friday</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>God of all creation, your goodness and glory shine forth through everything you have made. Through the light of faith, help us to see this world, our common home, not as a resource to dominate and exploit, but as a gift to be cherished by all generations. Prompted by your Spirit, we ask this in the name of Jesus, through whom all creation was made. Amen</p>
<p>Saturday</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>O Lord, grant us the grace to grow deeper in our respect of And care for your Creation. <i>Lord, hear our prayer.</i></p> <p>O Lord, help us to recognize the sacredness of all of your Creatures as signs of your wondrous love. <i>Lord, hear our prayer.</i></p> <p>O Lord, help us turn from the selfish consumption of Resources meant for all and to see the impacts of our choices on the poor and vulnerable. <i>Lord, hear our prayer.</i></p>
<p>Sunday</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>“Everything got started in Christ and finds its purpose in him.” Lord Jesus, Sustainer of Life, you hold creation together by your powerful word. May we learn to partner you in your work of protecting and preserving this precious world; Show us how to live lives which impact our environment in a positive way, giving back to the planet we have so often plundered.</p> <p>“Christ brought you over to God’s side and put your lives together, whole and holy in his presence.” Lord Jesus our redeemer, you paid the price for our world to be made right again. May we live responsible lives, worthy of the price you paid for our redemption; In this world of greed and selfishness, we pray that you will overthrow the corrupt systems which prevent the poor from having enough to eat; Raise up campaigners who will speak out for wisdom, restraint and compassion in the distribution of natural resources.</p> <p>“All the broken and dislocated pieces of the universe - people and things, animals and atoms - get properly fixed and fit together in vibrant harmonies, all because of his death.” Lord Jesus, Author and Finisher, you will one day restore all of creation to wholeness again. May we never lose hold of the hope that is in you.</p> <p>We pray for our beloved planet, scarred by conflict and natural disaster: bring healing to its lands and cleansing to its waters; bring justice to its peoples and peace to its nations; bring life for today and hope for the future. God of all Eternity, ignite in us, your people, the faith to believe that you will one day heal our broken world, and grow in us the perseverance to keep praying and working towards that day when your creation will once again be whole and free. We ask all these things in and through the matchless name of your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.</p> <p>Written by Lyndall Bywater <i>(Inspired by Colossians 1:15-23; quotes from verses 17, 20 & 22, the Message)</i></p>



Monday

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Women in Conservation

The Black Mambas are the world's first all-female anti-poaching unit. They are 36 young African women who patrol 20,000 hectares of the Balule Nature Reserve, part of the Greater Kruger National Park, South Africa. Kruger is home to the largest population of rhino in the world and also is victim to more poaching attacks than any other area.



These women, with a passion for wildlife and rhino conservation, are also the voice in the community through their conservation work. The objectives of the Black Mambas is not only the protection of rhinos through boots on the ground and a presence on the frontline, but also through being a role model in their communities. They want their communities to understand that there are far greater benefits to them through rhino conservation rather than poaching.

The Black Mambas operate in the Greater Kruger National Park an area worse hit by rhino poaching than any other place in the world. There can be up to 11 different poaching 'gangs' at any one time operating in the Greater Kruger area, so the Black Mambas play a vital role in early detections.

The Black Mambas' area of operation is surrounded by very large communities and it is these communities that many of the poachers are recruited from. The Mambas work in the local community is an important part of their role.






The Black Mambas have achieved a 63% reduction in poaching incidents in their area of operation since being formed. The Mambas walk 20km every day, checking the perimeter fences for signs of incursions. Unarmed, the Mambas are backed up by the armed patrol units if signs of poaching activity is discovered.




A lot of focus has been placed on recovering wire snares that have been laid, often as part of the bush meat poaching 'industry' with the area now rarely targeted by gangs leaving snares. It is proven that many bush meat poachers will progress to the poaching of endangered species.

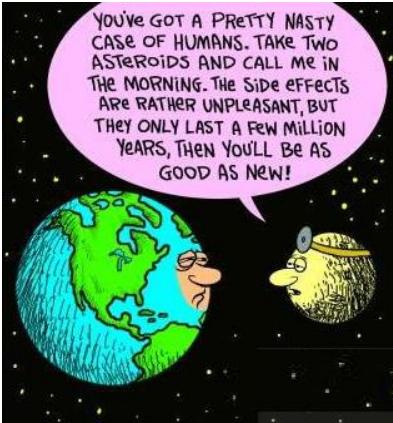

The Black Mambas also deliver engaging conservation education to local schools through their thriving Bush Babies outreach programme. Thousands of local children benefit from weekly classes on conservation, with many enjoying an annual visit to the Reserve to experience first-hand the conservation of wildlife and how it impacts life in their communities.



Give thanks for these courageous women and **pray for their protection** as they carry it out. Support the work of the Black Mambas if you are able to. (Visit <https://www.helpingrhinos.org/black-mambas/> for more information)

<p>Tuesday</p>	<p>8</p>	
<p>Wednesday</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>Women's Day</p> <p>Bless all women who daily strive to bring peace to their communities, their homes and their hearts. Give them strength to continue to turn swords into ploughshares. Where there is hatred, let me sow love: We pray for all women who face prejudice, inequality and gender disparities! Amen.</p> 
<p>Thursday</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>World Lion Day</p> <p>Although the South African government announced in May 2021 that it would be clamping down on the controversial multimillion-dollar lion-breeding industry, this sadly has not come to fruition and this despicable practice is still with us. No time frame was set nor has legislation been amended so far, and the breeding industry is still legally allowed to continue its operations.</p> <p>Lion farming is governed by a patchwork of contrasting legislation across multiple provincial and national authorities with disparities and legal loopholes which create opportunities for harmful and fraudulent behaviour.</p> <p>A report by the Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP) (in November 2021) uncovered new evidence that bones and body parts of captive lions bred in South Africa are being traded to Asia in large numbers. Bones and other parts of the animals were being exported, likely for use in traditional medicine, as well as in "luxury goods."</p> <p>This clandestine trade benefits the entire value chain, from the breeding facilities to the criminals who profit. There is unfortunately ample proof that the legal, captive-lion breeding industry in South Africa continued to trade on lion bones, despite the moratorium.</p> 


		<p>Lions are intensively bred, cubs are removed from the mother and used, purchased, or rented for human interaction. Once too big they are used in lion walk excursions before being sold for further exhibition and breeding purposes or even for captive lion hunts. Their body parts are sold directly or indirectly into the global lion bone trade to be used in products of no medicinal value. Resist the urge to pet a lion cub at all costs – they will face a grim future.</p> <p><i>Pray that legislation will be amended urgently to protect these beautiful cats</i></p>	
<p>Friday</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>O Holy Spirit, come to us. Come, bring the children. Pour each a cupful of spring water. Say to them, "This is how water tastes."</p> <p>Come, bring the children. Climb a hill together. Breathe in pure air. Say to them, "Air, this is air."</p> <p>Come, bring the children. Find a sun-drenched place of forest. Say to them, "Listen. Let the trees speak their story."</p> <p>Come, bring the children. Stand under a star-spangled sky. Say to them, "Be still."</p> <p>Come, bring the children. Kneel and kiss the earth. Say it simply: "This is your mother." O Holy Spirit, come to us.</p> <p><i>Mary Lou Kownacki</i></p>	
<p>Saturday</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>"One individual cannot possibly make a difference, alone. It is individual efforts, collectively, that makes a noticeable difference—all the difference in the world!"</p> <p><i>Dr. Jane Goodall</i> <i>DBE, primatologist</i></p>	
<p>Sunday</p>	<p>13</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>14</p>	<p>World Elephant Day</p> <p><i>World Elephant Day</i> asks you to help conserve and protect elephants from the numerous threats they face. The elephant is loved, revered and respected by people and cultures around the world, yet we balance on the brink of seeing the last of this magnificent creature.</p> <p>Until recently South Africa had escaped ivory poachers trying to cash-in on the illicit global trade, which is estimated to be worth more than one billion dollars. Unfortunately, the demise of elephants in central and eastern Africa has shifted the poaching endemic further south to South Africa which remains a stronghold for these giant pachyderms.</p> <p>It's estimated that Africa loses 35 000 to 50 000 every year to poachers and fewer than 500 000 elephants remain in the wild today on the African continent.</p> <p>In the Kruger Park, most elephant poaching incidents occur in the north of the park, whilst rhino poachers concentrate on the central and southern areas where rhino are more common. Escalating elephant poaching in the park is stretching the park's counter-poaching resources to the limit along the reserves border.</p> <p>Another concern is the "new poaching trend" of wildlife poisoning where poachers resort to wildlife poisoning in national parks and protected areas in Southern Africa. This trend, which started in Zimbabwe a few years ago is now steadily growing in South Africa. Apart from the animals being targeted, numerous other species also suffer because to this. Last year two lions and over 100 vultures died after feeding on a poisoned elephant carcass. As such, vultures are becoming more vulnerable with some species now critically endangered as unscrupulous poachers resort to poisoning of carcasses.</p> <p><i>Pray that poaching and the illegal trade will be curbed.</i></p>		
<p>Tuesday</p>	<p>15</p>	<p>"Elephants are simply one more natural resource that is being caught up in human greed on the one hand and human need on the other. We somehow need people to become reacquainted with nature or they can have no clue as to the interrelatedness of cause and effect."</p> <p><i>Dr. Stephen Blake</i> <i>Max Planck Institute for Ornithology</i></p>		

<p>Wednesday</p>	<p>16</p>	
<p>Thursday</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>Encyclical Letter <i>Fratelli Tutti</i> of Pope Francis on the Fraternity and Social Friendship</p> <p>Chapter Three - Envisaging and engendering an open world</p> <p>Moving Beyond Ourselves</p> <p>88. In the depths of every heart, love creates bonds and expands existence, for it draws people out of themselves and towards others.[65] Since we were made for love, in each one of us “a law of ekstasis” seems to operate: “the lover ‘goes outside’ the self to find a fuller existence in another”. [66] For this reason, “man always has to take up the challenge of moving beyond himself”. [67]</p> <p>89. Nor can I reduce my life to relationships with a small group, even my own family; I cannot know myself apart from a broader network of relationships, including those that have preceded me and shaped my entire life. My relationship with those whom I respect has to take account of the fact that they do not live only for me, nor do I live only for them. Our relationships, if healthy and authentic, open us to others who expand and enrich us. Nowadays, our noblest social instincts can easily be thwarted by self-centred chats that give the impression of being deep relationships. On the contrary, authentic and mature love and true friendship can only take root in hearts open to growth through relationships with others. As couples or friends, we find that our hearts expand as we step out of ourselves and embrace others. Closed groups and self-absorbed couples that define themselves in opposition to others tend to be expressions of selfishness and mere self-preservation.</p> <p>90. Significantly, many small communities living in desert areas developed a remarkable system of welcoming pilgrims as an exercise of the sacred duty of hospitality. The medieval monastic communities did likewise, as we see from the Rule of Saint Benedict. While acknowledging that it might detract from the discipline and silence of monasteries, Benedict nonetheless insisted that “the poor and pilgrims</p> 



		<p>be treated with the utmost care and attention”.^[68] Hospitality was one specific way of rising to the challenge and the gift present in an encounter with those outside one’s own circle. The monks realized that the values they sought to cultivate had to be accompanied by a readiness to move beyond themselves in openness to others.</p> <p><i>Prayerfully consider how this is affecting our own Country</i></p>
Friday	18	<p>“The environment, after all, is where we all meet, where we all have a mutual interest. It is one thing that all of us share. It is not only a mirror of ourselves, but a focusing lens on what we can become.”</p> <p><i>Lady Bird Johnson</i> <i>First Lady of the United States (1963–69)</i></p> 
Saturday	19	<p>International Orangutan Day</p> <p>On International Orangutan Day on August 19, we show our support for orangutans. This day is meant to inspire people to take action to safeguard this amazing animal in the wild.</p>  <p>Illegal logging inside protected areas and unsustainable logging in concessions where orangutans live, remains a major threat to their survival. Today, more than 50% of orangutans are found outside protected areas in forests under management by timber, palm oil and mining companies. Rainforests are often cleared to make room for palm oil plantations, causing orangutans to lose their homes.</p> <p>To protect orangutans, avoid products made with unsustainable palm oil known to originate in South Est Asia.</p> <p>South Africa produces palm oil and aims to meet both international and domestic demand. Palm oil is used in making biofuel, candles, cosmetics and in edible products such as ice cream and margarine (listed in ingredients as <i>Sodium Laureth Sulfate</i>.) and it may be well to pressurize local manufacturers to insist on locally grown palm oil.</p> <p><i>Are you aware of the palm oil content in the products you use?</i></p>
Sunday	20	<p>Praised Be <i>A prayer inspired by the papal encyclical ‘Laudato Si’</i></p> <p>Living God, have mercy on us, for the times we forget that we belong to each other. You call us to be still, to hear the whisper of our Sister Wind, to feel the radiance of our Brother Sun, and to be nourished by our Mother Earth. Renew us in your healing love. Inspire us to water the earth, and nurture one another,</p>

		<p>so all may flourish. Together, as one family, may we always sing your praise. Through Christ our Lord, Amen.</p> <p>Rachel McCarthy CAFOD</p>
<p>Monday</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>World Mosquito Day (20 August)</p> <p>More than just annoying summertime pests and one of the world's most deadly animal, mosquitoes are also responsible for spreading malaria, a disease that kills over half a million people every year.</p> <p>However, this little pesky pest is also a really fascinating insect! and it may be well to take some time to learn more about mosquitoes and the effects they have on humans and the environment. learn a little more about it as well as what we can do to help control them.</p> <p>The two most common types of mosquitoes found in South Africa are the common house mosquito (<i>Culex pipiens</i>) and the small, black and white-striped bush mosquito (<i>Aedes aegyptii</i>), neither of which - thankfully - transmit Malaria. The <i>Anopheles</i> mosquitoes transmit malaria. Of the 500 <i>Anopheles</i> species, only 30-40 can spread malaria. Common species that transmit malaria in Africa are <i>Anopheles gambiae</i>.</p> <p><i>Anopheles gambiae</i> have a variable body colour, but typically range from light brown to grey with pale spots of yellow, white or cream scales, and dark areas on their wings.</p> <p>Differences between <i>Anopheles</i>, and genera <i>Aedes</i> and <i>Culex</i> is in the resting position. <i>Anopheles</i> rests parallel to a surface while the <i>Aedes</i> and <i>Culex</i> rest at an angle. The <i>Anopheles</i> is also more active lower to the ground at dusk.</p> <div data-bbox="1209 607 1493 887" data-label="Image"> </div> <div data-bbox="448 1413 818 1630" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>Only female mosquitoes need a blood meal, primarily for egg production. Mosquitoes are busiest at night and will fly considerable distances for a blood meal. They hunt for food by detecting body heat and carbon dioxide (the gas we breathe out.)</p> <p>Male mosquitoes feed exclusively on plant nectars and in the process, pollinate all manner of plants. These insects are also an important food source for many other animals, including bats, birds, reptiles, amphibians and even other insects. So even the pesky little pest is very useful in the eco-system!</p> <p>September to May is considered the malaria season. Malaria is endemic in the Lowveld of Mpumalanga and in Limpopo (including the Kruger Park and adjacent private game reserves), and the Maputaland coast of KwaZulu Natal.</p> <p>Mosquitoes are attracted to darker colours, so wearing a long-sleeved light-coloured shirt when outdoors in the evenings is a good choice.</p>

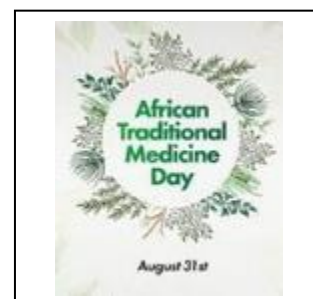
		<p>The smell of lavender, citronella, clove, peppermint, basil, cedarwood, eucalyptus, peppermint, lemongrass and rosemary tend to deter mosquitoes, so bear this in mind when choosing house plants for summer.</p> <p>Installing a ceiling fan in the room disperses the carbon dioxide around the room and away from your face and also disrupts air flow, which makes it harder for the mosquitoes to fly around.</p> <p>Do an inspection of your garden and remove any stagnant water laying around that would be ideal breeding grounds for mosquitoes.</p> <p>Perhaps eradicating mosquitoes would save hundreds of thousands of lives, including tens of thousands of children and one has to wonder why Noah didn't squish the mosquito when he had the chance. However, without the mosquitoes, many animals could decline due to a lack of food. Fish populations could be impacted, as many fish species rely on mosquito larvae as a food source. Bats that rely largely on mosquitoes for food may also decline or even go extinct if mosquitoes did.</p> <p>So, even though we are not fans of mosquitoes, spare a thought for these little critters whilst reaching for the "anti-itch" cream! it, too, is one of God's amazing creatures!</p>
<p>Tuesday</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>Acts 4:32-37</p> <p><i>The Believers Share Their Possessions</i></p> <p>³² All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had. ³³ With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And God's grace was so powerfully at work in them all ³⁴ that there were no needy persons among them. For from time to time those who owned land or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales ³⁵ and put it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to anyone who had need.</p> <p>³⁶ Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means "son of encouragement"), ³⁷ sold a field he owned and brought the money and put it at the apostles' feet.</p>
<p>Wednesday</p>	<p>23</p>	


<p>Thursday</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>Flower Carol</p> <p>Spring has now unwrapped the flowers, Day is fast reviving, Life in all her growing powers Towards the light is striving: Gone the iron touch of cold, Winter time and frost time, Seedlings, working through the mould, Now make up for lost time.</p> <p>Herb and plant that, winter long, Slumbered at their leisure, Now bestirring, green and strong, Find in growth their pleasure; All the world with beauty fills, Gold the green enhancing, Flowers make glee among the hills, Set the meadows dancing.</p> <p>Through each wonder of fair days God Himself expresses; Beauty follows all His ways, As the world He blesses: So, as He renews the earth, Artist without rival, In His grace of glad new birth We must seek revival.</p> <p>Earth puts on her dress of glee; Flowers and grasses hide her; We go forth in charity— Brothers all beside her; For, as man this glory sees In th'awakening season, Reason learns the heart's decrees, Hearts are led by reason.</p> <p>Praise the Maker, all ye saints; He with glory girt you, He who skies and meadows paints Fashioned all your virtue; Praise Him, seers, heroes, kings, Heralds of perfection; Brothers, praise Him, for He brings All to resurrection!</p> <p>Thomas Moran (1837–1926)</p>
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<p>Friday</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>“I am the fiery life of the essence of God; I am the flame above the beauty in the fields; I shine in the waters; I burn in the sun, the moon, and the stars. And with the airy wind, I quicken all things vitally by an unseen, all-sustaining life. “</p> <p><i>St Hildegard of Bingen</i></p>	
<p>Saturday</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>World Wild Dog Day</p> <p>The brave journey of Smoke and her pack of African Wild Dogs</p> <p>In South Africa, most of our reserves (protected areas) share boundaries with dense rural community settlements or farmers – this means that the direct threat to any wild animal significantly increases when they leave a protected area. Deliberate persecution, snaring, hunting, disease, and roadkill are some of those threats.</p> <p>Read the endearing story of how Smoke and her pack survived and their journey from Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park to Madikwe Game Reserve and the fantastic team that brought them to a safe haven.</p> <p><i>Give thanks for Wild Dog Range Expansion Project of the EWT Carnivore Conservation Programme.</i></p> <p><i>Pray for all involved in this critical research and programme management and that funding would be made available for this important work.</i></p>	
<p>Sunday</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>Creator God, You show us what love is through the beauty of the earth and the gift of your Son.</p> <p>For the love of... animal and plant mountain and forest sea and city woman and man friend and family those who live far from us and those yet to be born.</p> <p>Move us to live more simply, to protect the earth and to speak up for those in need. Amen.</p> <p><i>Sarah Hagger-Holt</i> <i>CAFOD</i></p>	

<p>Monday</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>Lord,</p> <p>We're so thankful for the gift of life, the gift of creation and your tender care in every aspect of our lives, every day. You have lovingly organised the heavens, the earth and all they contain in order to generously fulfil our needs and provide safety to your creation;</p> <p>May you fill us with humility, wisdom and strength to administer our needs and wants so that - as heirs of the gift of life together with the whole of your creation – the privilege you have granted us to enjoy the offerings of your work stands in agreement with the responsibility you have given us to care for it, in accordance to your divine order.</p> <p>May we grow in consciousness of the impact of our deeds, in time and space, on the infinitely small and the infinitely big in our day to day interactions with one another and with your creation.</p> <p>May we not give in to fear of earthly uncertainties and their compulsion to amass earthly goods for ourselves but grow confident in your willingness and endless ability to protect us and generously provide for our every need while life shall last and, hence, grow in communion with you and in joy and happiness in sharing with one another.</p> <p>We make this our humble prayer in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.</p> <p>Moise Liboto Makuta <i>CAFOD's Country Representative for Niger</i></p>
<p>Tuesday</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>African Traditional Medicine (uMuthi) Day</p> <p>For the past two decades, 31 August has been marked as African Traditional Medicine Day, to honour the integral role of traditional medicine in the health and welfare of generations of people on the continent.</p> <p>About 80% of Africa's population relies on uMuthi for their basic health needs. Traditional medicine is often the only healthcare service that is available, accessible and affordable to many people on the continent. The word 'uMuthi' translates in isiZulu as 'tree' confirming that much of the medicine is of plant origin and the industry needs to be regulated if we are to manage our indigenous vegetation resources</p> <p>African traditional medicine has a rich heritage and a wide range of applications rooted in indigenous plants. <i>Food & Trees for Africa (FTFA)</i> is helping to cultivate a sustainable economy for traditional medicinal plants via indigenous nurseries and training in correct harvesting habits.</p> <p>South Africa has the fourth highest number of medicinal plant species in the world. Some traditional knowledge has been lost in the face of advances in modern medicine. However, there is now a major shift back towards our country's indigenous knowledge systems. More than 60% of South Africans use indigenous medicinal plants in their healthcare, nutritional, or cultural practices.</p> <p>Destructive harvesting methods and other unsustainable practices threaten the survival of our diverse medicinal plants. Most of these plants are endemic species whose medicinal properties rely on stimuli from their natural environment. For this reason,</p>



		<p>sustainable wild harvesting is the most important conservation measure for overused, vulnerable, and endangered plants.</p> <p>Wild nurseries can provide huge benefits, as does having direct access to indigenous trees. Research has shown that in some cases, more than half the indigenous plants used for traditional medicine are woody trees and shrubs. FTFA aims to help make more medicinal plants readily available and reduce threats to rare species. Planting indigenous trees helps achieve this. Urbanisation has distanced many communities from traditional harvesting areas. Indiscriminate harvesting in communal land areas and unregulated informal trade, meanwhile, have made it very difficult to maintain the sustainability of the sector.</p> <p>Reliance on traditional belief systems has an important and ongoing role to play in South Africa. The misuse of this traditional knowledge is, however, one of the major threats to indigenous medicinal trees. Links to this knowledge need to be maintained for new generations to preserve the integrity of sustainable traditional approaches.</p> <p>Creating awareness around the impacts of incorrect harvesting, promoting traditional medicinal knowledge, and providing access to indigenous medicinal plants will help to harness the multitude of benefits provided by South Africa's indigenous trees.</p> <p>The health of millions could be at risk because medicinal plants used to make traditional remedies, (including drugs to combat cancer and malaria), are overexploited.</p> <p><i>Pray for the sustainable harvesting of our precious plants.</i></p>
<p>Wednesday</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>Education, if it means anything, should not take people away from the land, but instil in them even more respect for it, because educated people are in a position to understand what is being lost. The future of the planet concerns all of us, and all of us should do what we can to protect it. As I told the foresters, and the women, you don't need a diploma to plant a tree.”</p> <p><i>Wangari Maathai</i> <i>Nobel Peace Prize Laureate and author of Unbowed</i></p> 
<p>Thursday</p>	<p>31</p>	