





# JAEI



## February 2024 Environmental Prayer Diary


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


<p><b>Thursday</b></p>	<p>1</p>	
<p><b>Friday</b></p>	<p>2</p>	<p><b>World Wetland Day</b></p> <p>Theme for 2024: <b><i>Ecosystems and Human Well-Being: Wetlands and Water</i></b></p> <p>Wetlands and watercourses are often the only remaining ‘greenspace’ because the natural landscape outside the wetland has been transformed and is no longer doing the work it once did. It no longer protects and covers the soil, takes up surplus nutrients, sustains biodiversity and slows water flow. This job is now being done largely by the remaining wetland and watercourse systems.</p> <p>Healthy rivers and wetlands are necessary to address one of the most crucial issues in our country today – that of water security. However, studies show that our rivers and wetlands are among the most threatened ecosystems in South Africa and are currently in poor ecological condition.</p> <p>Water security is essential for human wellbeing and socio-economic development. The ecological infrastructure of rivers, wetlands and their catchment areas supply vital water to people.</p> <p>Freshwater ecosystems, and the species within them, can improve the quantity and quality of water available for people to use. A healthy catchment area with natural vegetation allows water to enter rivers to fill our dams and to replenish</p> <div data-bbox="1070 1252 1485 1807" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p><b>World Wetlands Day</b></p> <p>2 February 2024</p>  <p>Ecosystems and Human Well-Being: Wetlands and Water</p> </div>

		<p>underground aquifers. Plants and micro-organisms within the freshwater ecosystems help to clean and filter pollution from the water.</p> <p>The healthier the ecosystems are, the better they are able to provide the quantity and quality of water that people need. They also play a crucial role in buffering us through drought periods and long-term climate variation. South Africa is among the most water scarce countries per capita in the world, and droughts are a natural feature of South Africa's climate, though expected to increase as a result of climate change.</p> <p>Common direct negative impacts on wetlands include filling, grading, removal of vegetation, alien vegetation, building construction and changes in water levels and drainage patterns, agriculture, urbanisation, soil erosion, dumping of waste, pollution (industrial waste and domestic sewage) and livestock grazing.</p> <p>The global climate change crisis is expected to exacerbate the loss and degradation of many wetlands and the loss or decline of their species and to increase the incidence of vector-borne and waterborne diseases in many regions. The projected continued loss and degradation of wetlands will reduce the capacity of wetlands to mitigate impacts and result in further reduction in human well-being (including an increase in the prevalence of disease), especially for poorer people in lower-income categories. At the same time, demand for many of these services (such as denitrification and flood and storm protection) will increase as the climate crisis worsens, thus impacting on the well-being of many people.</p> <p>The challenge will be to develop an approach to protecting these areas that integrates environmental and socio-economic development perspectives to ensure sustainable wetland use.</p> <p><b><i>Our Creator designed wetlands with the utmost care to serve the environment (and ultimately us) – consider what actions we can all take to improve wetland security.</i></b></p>
<p><b>Saturday</b></p>	<p><b>3</b></p>	<p>“Walking beside the wetlands I see an egret's wings rise brilliant white from the water. It flies and settles further off in the grey early light, and I am awakened in a quite differently way than from my first cup of hot tea. I sense, smell, hear and see in a different way: I am more present. “</p> <p><b><i>Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee</i></b></p>
<p><b>Sunday</b></p>	<p><b>4</b></p>	<p>Creator God, we see your hand in your creation;  On the earth we see and feel your love and care for us;  Your earth feeds us and clothes us.  Lord forgive our greed and selfish use of your gifts.  May we learn to share the earth, to work it and to care for every part of it,  So that all who live now and, in the future, may enjoy its care for us.  Amen</p>



<p><b>Monday</b></p>	<p><b>5</b></p>	
<p><b>Tuesday</b></p>	<p><b>6</b></p>	<p><b>Encyclical Letter <i>Fratelli Tutti</i> of Pope Francis on the Fraternity and Social Friendship</b></p> <p><b>Chapter Three - Envisaging and engendering an open world</b></p>  <p><b><i>Beyond a World of "Associates"</i></b></p> <p>101. Let us now return to the parable of the Good Samaritan, for it still has much to say to us. An injured man lay on the roadside. The people walking by him did not heed their interior summons to act as neighbours; they were concerned with their duties, their social status, their professional position within society. They considered themselves important for the society of the time, and were anxious to play their proper part. The man on the roadside, bruised and abandoned, was a distraction, an interruption from all that; in any event, he was hardly important. He was a "nobody", undistinguished, irrelevant to their plans for the future. The Good Samaritan transcended these narrow classifications. He himself did not fit into any of those categories; he was simply a foreigner without a place in society. Free of every label and position, he was able to interrupt his journey, change his plans, and unexpectedly come to the aid of an injured person who needed his help.</p> <p>102. What would be the reaction to that same story nowadays, in a world that constantly witnesses the emergence and growth of social groups clinging to an identity that separates them from others? How would it affect those who organize themselves in a way that prevents any foreign presence that might threaten their identity and their closed and self-referential structures? There, even the possibility of acting as a neighbour is excluded; one is a neighbour only to those who serve their purpose. The word "neighbour" loses all meaning; there can only be "associates", partners in the pursuit of particular interests.<u>[80]</u></p> <p><b><i>Prayerfully consider how this is affecting our own Country</i></b></p>


<p><b>Wednesday</b></p>	<p><b>7</b></p>	<p><b>The Pattern of Evolution</b></p> <p>Perhaps the reason it is so hard for us to see the evolution of the Cosmic Christ in our individual lives and in the arc of history is that this groaning and this giving birth (see Romans 8:22) <i>proceeds by a process of losses and gains, and the losses are very real.</i> There is no doubt that history goes three steps forward and two steps backward, but thank God there always seems to be a net gain. Even though we continue to see war, racism, classism, genocide, and ignorance, violence is actually declining. We may be more aware of the world’s suffering now than ever before, but as compared with previous periods in history, we are living in a relatively peaceful time.</p>  <p>Historically and to this day, it seems that when a new level of maturity is found, there is an immediate and strong instinct to pull backward to the old and familiar. Thankfully, within churches and society at large there is always a leaven, a critical mass, a few people who carry the momentum toward greater inclusivity, compassion, and love. This is the Second Coming of Christ: Christ embodied by people who know that hatred and greed are always regressive, and who can no longer live fearfully or violently. There are always some who have touched upon Love and been touched by Love, which is to touch upon the Christ Mystery. This is the shape of “salvation.”</p> <p>Teilhard de Chardin writes: “Everything that rises must converge.” [2] In other words, higher levels of evolution are always a movement toward greater unity. Along the way there will be differentiation and complexity, but paradoxically, that increased complexity moves life to a greater level of unity, until in the end there is only God who is “all in all” (see 1 Corinthians 15:28). If it isn’t moving toward unity, it is not a higher level of consciousness.</p> <p>But along with differentiation and complexity there will also be an equal pushback, fear, and confusion. We see this in our current political climate in America and much of the world. The United States has suffered eight years of nonstop gridlock and opposition to any creative governance. It mirrors Newton’s Third Law of Motion that “every action elicits an equal and opposite reaction.” Today many people are reverting to tribal thinking, denial, fear, and hatred, rather than turning to compassionate, creative solutions to real challenges of poverty, climate change, and the many worldwide forms of injustice.</p> <p>I highly recommend here any of the writings of Thomas Berry, who in many ways brings Teilhard de Chardin realistically forward because he has sixty more years of science, and also sixty more years of planetary push back, to bring to the present conversation. [3] Berry is another prophet in our times.</p> <p><b>Gateway to Silence:</b> Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.</p> <p><b>From Richard Rohr’s Daily Meditations</b> <a href="http://www.cac.org">www.cac.org</a></p>
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<p><b>Thursday</b></p>	<p><b>8</b></p>	<p><b>James 3:1-12</b></p> <p><b>Taming the Tongue</b></p> <p><sup>1</sup>Not many of you should become teachers, my fellow believers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly. <sup>2</sup>We all stumble in many ways. Anyone who is never at fault in what they say is perfect, able to keep their whole body in check.</p> <p><sup>3</sup>When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. <sup>4</sup>Or take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go. <sup>5</sup>Likewise, the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. <sup>6</sup>The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole body, sets the whole course of one's life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell.</p> <p><sup>7</sup>All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and sea creatures are being tamed and have been tamed by mankind, <sup>8</sup>but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.</p> <p><sup>9</sup>With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God's likeness. <sup>10</sup>Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be. <sup>11</sup>Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? <sup>12</sup>My brothers and sisters, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water.</p>
<p><b>Friday</b></p>	<p><b>9</b></p>	

<b>Saturday</b>	<b>10</b>	<p>Gracious God, your amazing love extends through time and space, to all parts of your creation, which you created and called good. Your covenant with the human family is remembered in every rainbow in the sky, symbolizing your promise of love and blessing to every living creature, and to all successive generations.</p> <p>In Jesus, you invite us to enter into a new covenant, in communion with all who seek to be faithful to you and to do justice. As people of faith, we are called into covenant. Your covenant of faithfulness and love extends to the whole creation. We pray for the healing of our planet that present and future generations may enjoy the fruits of creation and continue to glorify and praise you.</p> <p><b><i>Carlos J. Correa Bernie</i></b></p>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>11</b>	<p>God of creation, the earth is yours  With all its beauty and goodness  Its richness and overflowing provision</p> <p>But we have claimed it for our own  Plundered its beauty for profit  Grabbed its resources for ourselves</p> <p>God of creation forgive us  May we no longer abuse your trust  But care gently and with justice for your earth</p> <p>Amen</p>
<b>Monday</b>	<b>12</b>	<p>May the waters flow peacefully; may the herbs and plants grow peacefully; may all the divine powers bring unto us peace. May the rain come down in the proper time, may the earth yield plenty of corn, may the country be free from war. The supreme Lord is peace.</p> <p><b><i>Hindu prayer</i></b></p>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>13</b>	<p>”The Earth will not continue to offer its harvest, except with faithful stewardship. We cannot say we love the land and then take steps to destroy it for use by future generations.”</p> <p><b><i>Pope John Paul II</i></b></p>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>14</b>	<p><b>Ash Wednesday</b></p> <p>“The inspiration for the hymn “<i>Sing Out! We're Made of Common Dust</i> “ (<i>Lord, Speak to Me, That I May Speak</i>), comes from the scripture that is often used during Ash Wednesday worship services: “<i>Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return</i>” (<i>Genesis 3:19</i>).</p> <p>We do not ponder enough that we are created by God. Yet, God, you've placed your mark on us and so for you our spirits yearn.</p>



		<p>This gift of ashes we receive reminds us we belong to you. You call us to repent, believe, and seek your Way in all we do.</p> <p>The dust and dirt of children's play, of youthful times, of working years Are part of life - and life's decay; we wash the dust with sorrow's tears.</p> <p>We sing, O God, of what you give: this ash reminds us we are yours. In life we're claimed, in death we live! In Christ our life, your love endures.</p> <p>As we start the season of Lent, it is good to be reminded that life is a wonderful, awe-inspiring gift from God and that we are made of matter (we are more than spiritual beings). God uses the most common, tiny material to give us life. "A grain of house dust is roughly halfway in size between a subatomic particle and the planet earth" - <i>Jeffery Burton Russell in Dust: A History of the Small and the Invisible by Joseph A. Amato</i>. A visit to the hospital can be a reminder of how fragile and mortal life is. As we are reminded of the gift that we have been given, we respond in gratitude by loving God, loving our neighbours, and loving creation. These acts of thankfulness give purpose and meaning to our lives. In the limited time we have in this mortal life, we need to ponder how we can better love all that God has given us. We are called to be stewards of God's creation, caring for it when far too much is being destroyed and the whole planet is suffering."</p> <p><b>Prayer</b> : Loving God, thank you creating us out of so little and blessing us with life. Help us to treasure each day as a gift from you. Guide us as we seek to care for all that you have created. We pray in the name of Jesus, who lived, died and lives again, offering us life in all of its fullness now and forever. Amen.</p> <p><b>Carolyn Winfrey Gillette</b>  <a href="https://presbyearthcare.org/devotional-and-worship-aids/">https://presbyearthcare.org/devotional-and-worship-aids/</a></p>
<p><b>Thursday</b></p>	<p><b>15</b></p>	<p><b>World Hippo Day</b></p> <p>The hippo, nicknamed the "river horse" by the ancient Greeks, is the third largest land animal. Although they look cumbersome and clumsy, they are quite capable of reaching speeds of up to 36km/h. Despite their large canine teeth, hippos are grazers will and leave the water after sunset to enjoy their grassy meals.</p> <p>Hippos are important to the aquatic ecosystems they live in as they help maintain river channels, moving soil and modifying the underwater landscape, helping to create complex habitats that support numerous other species. Their dung is vital in maintaining the aquatic ecosystems in which they live. (... and no, - they don't eat fish!)</p> <p>Currently listed as <i>Vulnerable</i> on the IUCN Red List, hippo populations have been decreasing as their habitats shrink. The cumulative threats of climate change, drought, habitat loss and the unregulated trade in their teeth and meat are major threats to them. Human overpopulation also leads to encroachment</p> <div data-bbox="991 1429 1497 1749" data-label="Image"> <p>Photo credit: Chad Cocking</p> </div>

		<p>on hippo habitats causing human-wildlife conflict. Hippos have attacked and killed people, which in turn leads to the retaliatory killing of the hippos.</p> <p>Hippo teeth can reach up to 50cm in length and are a source of ivory considered easier to carve and also easier to obtain and transport in comparison with elephant ivory. The trade in hippo ivory is regulated by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and hippos have been listed on CITES Appendix II since 1995.</p> <p>It has become vital for game reserves and protected areas to provide a safe haven for these misunderstood creatures. It is also vital for people to do what they can to protect these magnificent animals by ensuring that we do what we can to protect their habitats such as wetlands. Our actions should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don't litter!</li> <li>• Don't pour oil down the drain</li> <li>• Don't use pesticides and fertilizers indiscriminately</li> <li>• .... and don't buy any ivory ornaments or trinkets !</li> </ul> <p><b><i>The Hippo Song (for kids)</i></b></p> <p>In the beginning God made the seas and the forest filled with trees.  He made the mountains up so high and at the top He placed the skies.  His fingerprints are everywhere just to show how much He cares.  And in the middle He had lots of fun! He made a hippo that weighs a ton.</p> <p>Hip, hip, hip, hippopotamus. Hip, hip hooray God made all of us.  Hip, hip, hip, hippopotamus. Hip, hip hooray God made all of us.</p> <p><a href="#">Listen</a></p>
<p><b>Friday</b></p>	<p><b>16</b></p>	
<p><b>Saturday</b></p>	<p><b>17</b></p>	<p><b>World Pangolin Day</b></p> <p>"Even in the most improbable of situations, conservation works. We just need to do more of it." - <b>Jon Paul Rodríguez</b>, Chair of the IUCN's Species Survival Commission</p>

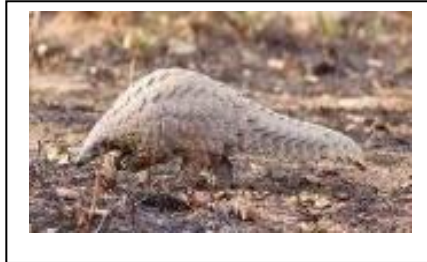


Pangolin - the venerable 'wise old man' of the African bush - is said to be a totem of good luck and the bringer of rain. This enigmatic creature that holds the secrets of 85 million years of evolution is now the most poached mammal on the planet and is now facing extinction.



Pangolins have become a conservation priority globally in recent years as they're the most highly trafficked wild mammal, with upwards of 200,000 consumed annually for their meat and scales in parts of Asia.

Pangolins are especially vulnerable to poaching because of their slow reproductive rate, their sensitivity to capture-induced stress, and their instinct to curl into a ball when threatened rather than try to escape.



Though some laws exist to protect these endangered animals, far more education on the pangolin's predicament is needed. There are organisations that are focusing their efforts on behaviour change


campaigns in places like China and Vietnam designed to educate consumers and make the consumption of pangolin products socially unacceptable, and this campaign is paying dividends (albeit small), and in China, there has been a slight decrease in the perceived medicinal value of pangolin scales. The more public awareness of the plight of the pangolin is increased, the better conservation efforts can be made to protect these remarkable animals from extinction.

There are a number of organisations dedicated to the welfare of pangolins, from rehabilitation of rescued pangolins to education programmes. The [African Pangolin Working Group](#) are focussed on the conservation of Africa's pangolins through research, engagement with law enforcement and judiciary agencies and are actively engaged in the rescue, rehabilitation and release of pangolins from the trade.

What you can do to help pangolins on World Pangolin Day and beyond:

- Spread the word about the plight of pangolins – especially to children
- Support conservation efforts as much as possible
- Share pangolin information on your social media networks
- Inform traditional medicine prescribers that the use of pangolin scales is illegal (and there are no proven health benefits to consuming scales - they are made of keratin, just like fingernails!)
- Notify the authorities if you see pangolins for sale or if you know of anyone capturing or possessing pangolins.

**PRAY** for Conservationists involved in the protection of this iconic species and **PRAY** for law enforcement officials to be diligent in their efforts to prevent the illegal trade.

<p><b>Sunday</b></p>	<p><b>18</b></p>	<p><b>First Sunday in Lent</b></p> <p><b>Our Time in the Wilderness</b></p> <p><i>A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord." Isaiah 40:3a</i></p> <p>"Walking in Montana wilderness means breathing pine-coned forests and hearing waterfalls but one is always aware of meeting a bear, falling from a rocky crag, or in winter suffocating under an avalanche. A prairie walk brings desert flowers but also rattlesnakes.</p> <p>During the past few years many of us have wandered in a darkened wilderness with too many loved ones ill or dying in a culture gone mad with fear, distrust, anger, and violence. We are often heart-broken, tired, and lonely. We have lost connections with our work, with nature, our values, and with each other.</p> <p>In Lent, our church calendar of 40 days, we are asked to take time to meditate on past confusions, to turn to focus on God, and to "prepare the way of the Lord" and the resurrection of Life with us and within us.</p> <p>To turn from darkness to Light, Luke's (4:1-13) description of Jesus being led by the Spirit for 40 days in the wilderness is instructive. The devil tempts Jesus three times and Jesus teaches us that living is more than daily survival - there is a spiritual as well as a material world ("<i>One does not live by bread alone.</i>")</p> <p>Even though we humans think we can solve everything, we cannot. ("<i>Worship the Lord your God and serve only him.</i>") We need to do the right thing when we can and not just throw up our hands and say it's in God's hands ("<i>Do not put your Lord God to the test.</i>")</p> <p>As we pray for the entire eco-system of plants, animals, and us to flourish, it is time to stop our wilful wandering in a drought-filled desert and centre on rich spiritual renewal. If we listen closely, we'll hear what God is calling us to do, individually and as a community of the faithful. "</p> <p><b>Prayer:</b> "Hymn of Promise": In the bulb there is a flower; in the seed, an apple tree; in cocoons, a hidden promise, butterflies will soon be free! In the cold and snow of winter there's a spring that waits to be, unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.</p> <p><b>Betty Whiting</b>  <a href="https://presbyearthcare.org/devotional-and-worship-aid">https://presbyearthcare.org/devotional-and-worship-aid</a></p>
<p><b>Monday</b></p>	<p><b>19</b></p>	<p><b>World Whale Day (18 February)</b></p> <p>World Whale Day is dedicated to the celebration of these beloved sea mammals. This day also advocates for the conservation of whales, by promoting awareness surrounding the challenges they face in oceans across the globe, and how to help them.</p>  <p>Even though some of South Africa's whale population has recently made a comeback, the threats posed against whales have not been eradicated, and will continue to devastate the population until they are addressed.</p>



Ocean plastic pollution harms marine life in two ways: through ingestion and entanglement. Globally, more than 240 wildlife species, including whales, are known to have ingested plastic, which can result in internal injuries and death.

Commercial whaling, pollution, ozone depletion, whale watching and climate change have a major negative affect on whales, as does the rising noise levels produced by sonar devices and seismic testing. Because the ocean is now such a loud place, it reduces whales' ability to use sound to perform essential life functions such as foraging, finding a mate, communicating with one another, and evading predators.

Over the past few decades, noise pollution in the marine environment has increased dramatically and is threatening the natural soundscape of the marine environment.

It is not only the external noise of sonar and seismic activities that are causing noise pollution under the waves – straight shipping does its fair share of harm as well. Worldwide, the international commercial fleet numbers over 100,000 ships. It is perhaps no surprise then, that commercial shipping is the primary contributor to underwater noise pollution in the ocean. What makes this problem complicated is that noise pollution from ships come in many forms, so



it's not just as easy as putting a muffler on the back of the boat. Their engines do make noise as they burn fuel. But different kinds of machinery are also constantly rattling against the hull, which sends vibrations into the sea. The part of the ship that typically makes the most noise isn't the engine itself – it's the propeller. As the propellers turn through the

water, they create bubbles that pop in a process called cavitation. When ships are moving fast, all those popping bubbles get especially loud. You might not think of popping bubbles as especially noisy, but on some ships, cavitation can be louder than a motorcycle roaring by, and the sound is constant while the propellers are running. ([Watch \*There's A New Pollution Problem in The Arctic. Can We Fix It?\*](#) )

Advancements in new technologies, such as quieter propellers, have already been developed and can be installed on new and existing ships. Vessels can also maintain polished, clean hulls and propellers, insulate engines, or easiest of all, just slow down to reduce noise.

We praise you for the creation of the world and all the living creatures in the earth, sky, and sea.

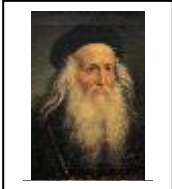

We are thankful, O God, for the grace of dolphins, and the magnificence of whales. Help us to keep them safe.



We are thankful, O God, for the bond between all living creatures created by the same author, and for the memory of our kinship to the animal world kindled each time a rainbow appears.



Keep us mindful of the vision of the peaceable kingdom in which all living

		<p>creatures dwell in harmony.          Give us a voice to speak in protest when any of your beloved creatures are treated cruelly. Help us to be advocates for those innocents who cannot speak for themselves.          Give us speech, O God.          Give us ears to hear the cries of those creatures suffering through humankind in the name of economy.          Let us hear their cries, O God.          Give us eyes to see our responsibilities, not just to the human community, but to the community of all living creatures. Help us to see, O God.          We pray this, O Lord. Help us to be kind and gentle like our Lord Jesus. And may we remember St. Francis's love of animals whenever we see one of your creations hurt, suffering, and in need of help.</p> <p><b>Andrew Linzey</b></p>
<p><b>Tuesday</b></p>	<p><b>20</b></p>	<p><b><i>Why not use these Lent actions to make your lifestyle greener and shrink your carbon footprint?</i></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. “Fast: from eating too much meat and seafood.</b> - Eating vegetarian a couple of days in the week will help the planet and <b>your budget</b>.</li> <li><b>2. “Fast” from plastic.</b> - See how little garbage (including recycling!) you can generate between now and Easter (and beyond).</li> <li><b>3. “Fast” from food waste.</b> - Strive to use all the food you buy before any goes bad. Try to cook through the contents of your pantry and freezer, places where food items often get forgotten.</li> <li><b>4. “Fast” from fast foods.</b> - Commit to "slow" food for Lent. If you find yourself rarely connecting with a friend or family member during mealtimes, commit to being present with someone while you eat. For families, pack paper sack dinners for the car and have a "parking lot picnic." Talk to one another instead of running through the drive-thru to eat quickly on the way to activities</li> <li><b>5. “Fast” from carbon miles – buy local.</b> - <b>Try the 100-mile diet.</b> For Lent, source ingredients that come from within a 100-kilometre radius of your home. An added challenge is expanding that criterion to all aspects of your life, i.e. clothes, household accessories, etc.</li> <li><b>6. "Fast" from excess water use.</b> - Pay close attention to your water footprint and try to eliminate it as much as possible through conservation, collecting rainwater, and reusing grey water.</li> <li><b>8. “Fast” from impulsive shopping.</b> <b>Try a buy-nothing challenge.</b> Become a conscious consumer, asking yourself, “Do I really need this?”</li> <li><b>9. “Fast” from consumerism.</b> <b>Be a minimalist.</b> - Purge your house and get rid of excess clutter.</li> <li><b>10. “Fast” from excess car trips.</b> - Plan your shopping and errand trips carefully to avoid unnecessary travel. Commit to cutting out short rides.</li> <li><b>11. “Fast” from ignorance</b> - learn the facts about the climate crisis and other environmental issues.</li> <li><b>12. “Fast” from digital.</b> - Set strict parameters for use of personal devices, i.e. phone off during the workday or during evenings when you’re with family, limit TV viewing, checking email and social media at designated times each day, etc.</li> </ol>

	<p><b>13. “Fast” from pesticides.</b> - Sprinkling diatomaceous earth where pests occur in the home is a good remedy.</p> <p><b>14. “Fast” from fertilizers.</b> - Start a compost heap.</p> <p><b>15. “Fast” from invasive species.</b> - Ensure that your garden and surrounds are invasive free.</p> <p><b>16. “Fast” from biodiversity loss.</b> - Invite wildlife into your garden.</p> <p><b>17. “Fast” from excessive energy usage.</b> - Switch of lights and appliances when not in use.</p> <p><b>18. “Fast” from plastic shopping bags.</b> - Take your own reusable shopping bags.</p> <p><b>19. “Fast” from non-biodegradable cleaning products.</b> - Read the labels on products, or make your own natural cleaning products</p> <p><b>20. “Fast” from clutter</b> - Decluttering is the process of intentionally arranging your living space and getting rid of unnecessary items. It helps create a more organized home. And because it also reduces waste and promotes more responsible consumer habits, it's eco-friendly</p> <p><b>21. “Fast” from disposable cups.</b> - Take your own reusable mug to coffee shops and to the office.</p> <p><b>22. “Fast” from quick fashion trends.</b> - Ensure your wardrobe is sustainable from year to year.</p> <p><b>23. “Fast” from unethical manufacturing.</b> - Don't be afraid to ask a retailer if their products were produced ethically. If a brand doesn't know where the raw materials for their products come from, they probably aren't very ethical. Support “Fair-trade” whenever possible.</p> <p><b>24. “Fast” from unnecessary kettle boiling.</b> - Boil just enough water for your immediate use.</p> <p><b>25. “Fast” from too much indoor time.</b> - Spend time outdoors in nature appreciating God's Creation.</p> <p><b>26. “Fast” from a disposable item you use daily.</b> - Replacing it with something reusable.</p> <p><b>27. “Fast” from unethical investments.</b> - Support financial institutions which invests in renewables</p> <p><b>28. “Fast” from believing myths.</b> - Myths around the evil of creatures like frogs, bats, owls, snakes, spiders and chameleons are just that! ... <i>myths</i>. Find out how these incredible creatures are crucial to the health of the planet and our own health.</p> <p><b>29. “Fast” from throwing oil and hazardous chemicals into the drain.</b> - Oil will clog you drains and create huge problems to streams and rivers.</p> <p><b>30. “Fast” from throwing outbroken or damaged items</b> - Reuse items: repair them, donate them, sell them. Reusing is even better than recycling because recycling is not cost-effective in a lot of instances.</p> <p><b>31. “Fast” from Binge Watching.</b> - If you find your television gluing you to the couch for hours at a time, be intentional about breaking the binge during Use a kitchen timer or phone alarm to remind you to get up after an episode and take a walk, call a friend or do a chore you have been putting off.</p> <p><b>32. “Fast” from App addiction.</b> - If you obsess over a social media app, consider deleting it and adding a devotional app with daily inspiration and reflection topics in its place. If you won't completely let yourself remove the app, move it to an obscure location on your home screen and commit to only checking it once a day or once a week</p>
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		<p><b>33. “Fast” from speeding.</b> - Driving at a higher speed than you need to – or than you should be, according to the law - contributes to the general wear and tear of the engine and tyres, increasing the likelihood of faults occurring, which can be dangerous as well as costly. Much more fuel will also be used which will certainly be evident in the budget.</p> <p><b>34. “Fast” from individually packaged beverages</b> - Bottled water, drinks in disposable cups. All those small packages add up to more resources than fewer, larger packages or a washable cup or reusable water bottle. Even if you’ve been recycling bottles and cans, a lot of energy goes into manufacturing, recycling, and transporting them.</p> <p><b>35. “Fast” from crisis cooking - Plan More, Waste Less</b> - If you have found yourself trashing a lot of food because you have overbought or under-planned (or both), use this time to plan well-balanced meals. Be intentional to consume fruits and veggies right away, make smaller batches so there are fewer leftovers (or make snacks that can be frozen later).</p> <p><b>36. “Fast” from energy inefficient light bulbs</b> - Change to LED lights which are far more energy efficient as they convert their energy to light waves, not heat thus using far less wattage.</p> <p><b>37. “Fast” from using a dryer</b> - Wash your clothes on the cold cycle and hang to dry on the line instead of using the dryer.</p> <p><b>38. “Fast” from Negativity</b> - It may be time to break away from negativity and snapping back at people. Focus on the words that come out of your mouth and your body language. Try only posting things on social media that are inspiring or encouraging for the month, focus less on you and more on others.</p> <p><b>39. “Fast” from procrastination</b> – The climate and the many environmental crises need urgent and positive action NOW! - be decisive and timeous with your actions for Creation Care.</p> <p><b>40. “Fast” from becoming distant from God.</b> - Connect with God as Creator and celebrate his creation in different ways over the Lenten period.</p>
Wednesday	21	<p>”We know more about the movement of celestial bodies than about the soil underfoot.”</p> <p><i>Leonardo Da Vinci</i></p> 
Thursday	22	 <p>When GOD wanted to create fish, HE spoke to the sea. When GOD wanted to create trees, HE spoke to the earth. But, when GOD wanted to create man, HE turned to himself. Then, GOD said "Let us make man in our image and in our likeness."</p> <p>If you take a fish out of water, it will die; and when you remove a tree from soil, it will also die. Likewise, when man is disconnected from GOD, he dies.</p> <p>GOD is our natural environment. We were created to live in HIS presence. We have to be connected to HIM because it is only in HIM that life exists. Let us stay connected to GOD.</p>

<p><b>Friday</b></p>	<p><b>23</b></p>	<p><b>All Heaven Declares</b></p> <p>All Heaven declares The glory of the risen Lord Who can compare With the beauty of the Lord</p> <p>Forever He will be The lamb upon the throne I gladly bow to Thee And worship Him alone</p> <p>I will proclaim The glory of the risen Lord Who once was slain To reconcile man to God</p> <p>Forever You will be The lamb upon the throne I gladly bow to Thee And worship You alone</p> <p>Forever You will be The lamb upon the throne I gladly bow to Thee And worship You alone Lord, I worship You alone</p> <p><b>Song by Noel Richards and Tricia Richards</b></p> <p><a href="#">Listen</a></p>	
<p><b>Saturday</b></p>	<p><b>24</b></p>	<p>“Do not despise the fish because they are absolutely unable to speak or to reason, but fear lest you may be even more unreasonable than they by resisting the command of the Creator. Listen to the fish, who through their actions all but utter this word: ‘We set out on this long journey for the perpetuation of our species.’”</p> <p><b>Saint Basil of Caesarea (4<sup>th</sup> century)</b></p>	
<p><b>Sunday</b></p>	<p><b>25</b></p>	<p><b>Second Sunday in Lent</b></p> <p>“The Creator made a covenant with Abraham and said, “I give this land....” How have we cared for that gift?</p> <p>While the religious establishment has been late to the environmental justice movement, people of faith since the beginning have recognized a moral obligation to protect fragile ecosystems that sustain life. If we have failed in that obligation, we can join the movement now with a commitment to change what we can where we can.</p> <p><i>‘We are called to understand that climate change is a moral challenge... We are called to honour our duties of justice, to prevent the enormities of climate change, as the price of the lifestyles of the privileged is paid by millions of poor</i></p>	

		<p>people, in the loss of their livelihoods and their lives. We are called to honour our duties of compassion, to prevent the suffering of millions of innocent people, especially the hungry children... In matters of climate change, as in all our lives, our obligation is clear: we must do unto others as we would wish them to do unto us.' - <b>Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu</b>, 2010 in Foreword to 'Moral Ground: Ethical Action for a Planet in Peril.'</p> <p>"Doing unto others" is similar to "loving thy neighbour." Is our choice of entertainment systems, cars, fuels, travel, appliances, and recycling habits simply a lifestyle or a spiritual consideration?</p> <p>And who is my neighbour? Consider the Good Samaritan. We are called to actions that consider the plight of our neighbours, including those who suffer the consequences of our wasteful choices. By shopping local, carpooling, hanging clothes to dry, changing light bulbs, keeping phones a while longer, refusing plastic straws, refusing Styrofoam, taking our coffee cups to church, eating less meat, using cloth napkins, and choosing reusable shopping bags, we impact the lives of people around the world we will never meet – our neighbours."</p> <p><b>Prayer.</b> Creator God, as the Psalmist writes "Teach me thy way, O Lord; and lead me on a level path..."</p> <p>We are people on a path toward you. Forgive us for our wasteful neglect along the way. Remind us to care for your precious gift – a home created with perfectly balanced ecosystems. Open our eyes to the wonders around us. Amen.</p> <p><b>Scharmél Rousse</b>  <a href="https://presbyearthcare.org/devotional-and-worship-aids/">https://presbyearthcare.org/devotional-and-worship-aids/</a></p>
<b>Monday</b>	<b>26</b>	<p>Living God, you call us to be good stewards of this earthly home, strengthen us to care for your creation; forgive us when, through our greed and indifference we abuse its beauty and damage its potential. Empower us, through your Spirit to so nurture and love the world, that all creation sings to your glory.</p> <p>Amen</p>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>27</b>	<p>"We have forgotten how to be good guests, how to walk lightly on the earth as its other creatures do."</p> <p><b>Barbara Ward</b></p> 
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>28</b>	<p><b>Leap Day for Frogs</b></p> <p><i>Leap Day for Frogs</i> is one day of the year when ordinary South Africans can take a leap of action and do something to appreciate and protect one of the most threatened group of animals on Earth: Frogs!</p> <p>Frogs are not just long-limbed long-leapers, they are an indicator species. This means that if the air, water, or food source in a frog's environment is polluted, the frogs will have</p> 



symptoms, including being prone to diseases and abnormalities in offspring that let people know that something is wrong. Frogs are important to human beings. (An indicator species is an organism whose presence, absence or abundance reflects a specific environmental condition. Indicator species can signal a change in the biological condition of a particular ecosystem, and thus may be used as a proxy to diagnose the health of an ecosystem.)

Our amphibious frog and toad friends are a critical link in the food chain – they are a key ‘pest’ controller, as most frogs eat millions of insects. As such, they



are important for safeguarding our food sources and controlling harmful insects like mosquitos and flies, protecting us from diseases and ensuring our food security. Frogs eat mosquitoes; provide us with medical advances; serve as food for birds, fish and monkeys and sometimes even humans; and their tadpoles filter our drinking water .... and frogs

look and sound cool, and kids love them -- so there are lots of reasons to save the frogs! The disappearance of this central link in ecosystems will have far-reaching negative consequences.

Thanks to mankind, frogs are encountering many new perils - some shared with other species, many unique to frogs. Unfortunately, habitat destruction, increasing levels of pollution in freshwater systems, disease and changes in climate, are starting to have noticeable effects on amphibian communities globally. Despite their crucial role, amphibians are currently experiencing massive population declines. 32% of all species are Red Listed as threatened - compared with 12% of birds and 23% of mammals

Frog populations have been declining worldwide at unprecedented rates, and nearly one-third of the world’s amphibian species are threatened with extinction and *South Africa is certainly not immune to our frogs being threatened with extinction – and some are critically so.* Frogs and toads in southern Africa are threatened by habitat destruction and alteration, and fragmentation, pollution, the pet trade, climate change, Infectious diseases (*chytridiomycosis* - a fungus that attacks the frog’s skin), invasive species and the misunderstanding of frogs by people.

*The Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT) have a [Threatened Amphibian Programme](#) which aims to Implement specific conservation to tackle direct threats to South Africa’s most threatened frog species; bridge the gap between academic research and conservation action; and raise public awareness about the importance and plight of frogs through education and public initiatives.*

#### ***How can we all help?***

There is a lot we can all do to stem the tide of frog destruction.

- Learn more! Get a [frog field guide](#) and become familiar with South African species and their calls.
- Build a frog pond in your garden with indigenous plants around the edge
- Avoid the use of harmful chemicals and pesticides in your home and garden.
- Oppose habitat destruction that causes urban and suburban sprawl.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support stricter infectious-disease screening in the frog pet, food, bait and laboratory trades.</li> <li>• Fight the introduction of invasive species.</li> <li>• Reduce your environmental footprint.</li> <li>• Don't keep frogs as pets</li> <li>• Go frogging to learn more about your local frogs.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Thursday</b></p>	<p><b>29</b></p>	<p><b><i>A Wisdom Story .....</i></b></p> <p>Brother Bruno was saying his prayers, but he could hear frogs vying with each other by the intensity of their croaking. He tried to concentrate on his crucifix. In an attempt to drown out the racket he recited his prayers aloud, in an increasingly loud voice, but it was useless. The obsessive croaking of the frogs was upsetting his concentration as he was praying. He exclaimed, "Silence! I am praying!"</p> <p>He was a saint and his orders inspired respect. At once, nature became silent, just as a fire goes out; and complete silence reigned over the marsh. Brother Bruno noted from his window that the toads had stopped croaking, that the herons' beaks were closed, and the flies that remained quite still on the reeds no longer dared to buzz in a wind that had fallen silent.</p> <p>Contented, he returned to his prayers. But another voice was heard - an inner voice. This small voice said to him: "And what if God derived greater pleasure in the croaking of the frogs than in the chanting of your psalms?"</p> <p>Shocked, the saint replied, "But what can God find so pleasurable in the croaking of a frog? And what's more, at full volume... Why did God invent noise?"</p> <p>Saint Bruno returned to his window and allowed nature to resume its course. The insects and frogs filled the silence of the night with their subdued rhythm. Bruno listened to this chant, no longer resisting it, and at once his heartbeat in accord with the universe.</p> <p>From that day on he prayed ceaselessly; his days passed in continuous prayer. He was constantly reminded of God by the croaking of the frogs.</p> <p><b><i>Consider this:</i></b></p> <p>Stop resisting. Reframe. Try a different angle, a minor shift in perspective. In the new frame the croaking frog was no longer an interruption. In the moment of finally listening to the language of the world around him, Bruno learned for the first time in his life what it really meant to pray. Letting go of his quest for silence, Bruno found a deeper prayer in the noises and the sounds of the world around him.</p> 