








JAEI

January 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>Monday</p>	<p>1</p>	
<p>Tuesday</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>Father of Creation, God of justice, We thank you that you are not indifferent to those who suffer injustice and oppression. In this time of climate breakdown, we ask that You would give us A holy rage and a righteous anger, which seeks to stand up, Speak out and oppose the machine of unrestrained capitalism.</p> <p>Father, in the name of your son, Let us be those who rebel against Evil which tramples on the vulnerable. Father, in the name of your son, Let us be those who rebel against systems that put profit before people. Father, in the name of your son, Let us be those who rebel against economic forces that put pleasure before ethics. Father, Give us courage.</p> <p>Father, we ask that, like Jesus, our anger would come from a wellspring of Holy love. We ask that our righteous love and holy anger Will always be good and never turn itself into violence. We pray for an increase in peaceful truth-speaking, campaigning and protest. We pray that it would be made clear to our governments that we will not be silent until we have plans put in place that do not jeopardise our futures and the wellbeing of the world's most vulnerable.</p> <p>Blessed are the peacemakers. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for justice. Lord have mercy. Christ have mercy. Amen</p>

<p>Wednesday</p>	<p>3</p>	
<p>Thursday</p>	<p>4</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><i>Inadequate understandings of universal love</i></p> <p>99. A love capable of transcending borders is the basis of what in every city and country can be called “social friendship”. Genuine social friendship within a society makes true universal openness possible. This is a far cry from the false universalism of those who constantly travel abroad because they cannot tolerate or love their own people. Those who look down on their own people tend to create within society categories of first and second class, people of greater or lesser dignity, people enjoying greater or fewer rights. In this way, they deny that there is room for everybody.</p> <p>100. I am certainly not proposing an authoritarian and abstract universalism, devised or planned by a small group and presented as an ideal for the sake of levelling, dominating and plundering. One model of globalization in fact “consciously aims at a one-dimensional uniformity and seeks to eliminate all differences and traditions in a superficial quest for unity... If a certain kind of globalization claims to make everyone uniform, to level everyone out, that globalization destroys the rich gifts and uniqueness of each person and each people”.^[78] This false universalism ends up depriving the world of its various colours, its beauty and, ultimately, its humanity. For “the future is not monochrome; if we are courageous, we can contemplate it in all the variety and diversity of what each individual person has to offer. How much our human family needs to learn to live together in harmony and peace, without all of us having to be the same!”^[79]</p> <p><i>Prayerfully consider how this is affecting our own Country</i></p>
<p>Friday</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>”Humankind has not woven the web of life. We are but one thread within it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves. All things are bound together ... all things connect.”</p> <p><i>Chief Seattle</i></p> 

<p>Saturday</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>Gracious God, your amazing love extends through all time and space, to all parts of your creation, which you created and called good. You made a covenant with Noah and his family, putting a rainbow in the sky to symbolize your promise of love and blessing to every living creature, and to all successive generations. You made a covenant with Abraham and Sarah, blessing them and their descendants throughout the generations. You made a covenant with Moses and the Israelite people to all generations, giving them the 10 commandments and challenging them to choose life. In Jesus, you invite us to enter into a new covenant, in communion with all who seek to be faithful to you.</p> <p>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 the earth, that present and future generations may enjoy the fruits of creation and continue to glorify and praise you.</p> <p><i>National Council of Churches</i></p>
<p>Sunday</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>Give us a love for this your world, dear Lord, and a yearning to be its stewards, as you intended from day one that we should be. We have become blind. Open our eyes to all that we can do now, in our own little way to make a difference, for the greater good of all, on this, our home and your precious garden.</p>
<p>Monday</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>“All the things in this world are gifts of God, created for us, to be the means by which we can come to know him better, love him more surely, and serve him more faithfully.”</p> <p><i>St Ignatius of Loyola</i></p>
<p>Tuesday</p>	<p>9</p>	



<p>Wednesday</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>Celebrating Birds of Prey</p> <p>In the US, the 10th of January is designated as “Save the Eagles Day” as a reminder of the majestic raptors that soar above the Earth. In South Africa, we have no such day, but this gives us an opportunity none the less, of celebrating our own magnificent array of raptors occurring here at home.</p> <p>Our Birds of Prey – also known as raptors - are the majestic lords of the skies and South Africa is fortunate to host 83 species – some resident and some migrants.</p> <p>The term “birds of prey” (raptors) include a wide variety of species that regularly occur in southern Africa and fall into various groups - Falcons and Kestrels Goshawks and Sparrowhawks, Harriers, Kites, Owls and Owlets, Snake Eagles and Vultures.</p> <p>However, our magnificent birds of prey face a wide range of threats. Poisoning, in particular, is driving many species towards extinction in the wild. They are also threatened by habitat loss and fragmentation, collisions and electrocutions on energy infrastructure, and persecution. Birds of prey, particularly vultures, are some of the most threatened animals on the planet. Of the six regionally Critically Endangered species in South Africa, four are vultures (Bearded, Hooded, White-backed and White-headed Vultures), along with the Taita Falcon and Southern Banded Snake Eagle.</p> <p><i>How we can help birds of prey</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent the unnecessary poisoning of birds of prey - Do not use rodenticides, even if they claim to be raptor friendly • Hunters and Fishermen - use non-lead hunting ammunition and fishing tackle. • Plant indigenous thus providing habitat and cover and reduces the need for pesticides. While raptors don’t directly rely on plants for food, they may rely on other animals that do. Healthy biodiversity means healthier ecosystems, and seeing a raptor or owl is a sign that an ecosystem is thriving. • Be particular about waste disposal. • Report any injured or killed raptors on powerlines to the EWT toll-free number 0860 111 535 or email EWT to trigger the Eskom Wildlife Incident Management Process • Report sightings of tagged raptors, including ringed raptors, GPS tagged, or wing tagged vultures, by emailing EWT <p>It is our duty to protect these magnificent birds – so special in God’s Creation! <i>Enjoy and marvel at our majestic lords of the skies!</i></p>	
<p>Thursday</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>“Those who trust in the Lord for help will find their strength renewed. They will rise on wings like eagles; they will run and not get weary; they will walk and not grow weak.” Isaiah 40:31</p>	

<p>Friday</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>God of the universe, We thank You for Your many good gifts - For the beauty of Creation and its rich and varied fruits, For clean water and fresh air, for food and shelter, animals and plants. Forgive us for the times we have taken the earth's resources for granted And wasted what You have given us.</p> <p>Transform our hearts and minds So that we would learn to care and share, To touch the earth with gentleness and with love, Respecting all living things.</p>
<p>Saturday</p>	<p>13</p>	
<p>Sunday</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>Lord God, our desire is that we might hand over a healthy, productive world to our children and future generations. Enable us to play our part in the way we live our lives and encourage others to engage in the long-term stewardship of a world that has been sadly neglected. For the sake of all creation, we pray. Amen.</p>
<p>Monday</p>	<p>15</p>	<p>Rise Up, Rooted Like Trees</p> <p><i>How surely gravity's law, strong as an ocean current, takes hold of even the smallest thing and pulls it toward the heart of the world.</i></p> <p><i>Each thing— each stone, blossom, child— is held in place.</i></p> <p><i>Only we, in our arrogance, push out beyond what we each belong to for some empty freedom.</i></p> <p><i>If we surrendered</i></p> 

*to earth's intelligence
we could rise up rooted, like trees.*

*Instead we entangle ourselves
in knots of our own making
and struggle, lonely and confused.*

*So, like children, we begin again
to learn from the things,
because they are in God's heart;
they have never left [God].*

*This is what the things can teach us:
to fall,
patiently to trust our heaviness.
Even a bird has to do that
before he can fly.*

—**Rainer Maria Rilke**

In my work with men's initiation, I've found that all great spiritual wisdom, all true soul wisdom, can be found in nature. I do believe that's true. St. Francis didn't learn by only reading Bibles and books, but by observing the natural world, which we call "the first Bible" (see Romans 1:20).

When you sit quietly and for extended times in nature, you see that everything changes. If you stay longer, you see that everything dies or erodes. Nothing stays in the same shape or form for long. Plants and animals seem to accept this dying. All of the natural world seems to accept the change of seasons. Nature fights for life but does not resist dying. It learns gravity's fall, as it were. Only one species resists this natural movement: humans—you and me. The very freedom that can lead us into intimacy with an utterly free God who invites our cooperation and participation also allows us to resist, oppose, or deny Love. We are free to cling to our own egoic resources, to climb instead of to descend. But we must fall if we are ever to fly.

Meister Eckhart said, "God is not found in the soul by adding anything, but by a process of subtraction." In our consumer culture, religion and spirituality have very often become a matter of addition: earning points with God, attaining enlightenment, producing moral behaviour. Yet authentic spirituality is not about getting, attaining, achieving, performing, or succeeding—all of which tend to pander to the ego. It is much more about letting go—letting go of what we don't need anyway, although we don't know that ahead of time. On the mental level, it is more "the shedding of thoughts," as the Desert Fathers called it, than piling on more thoughts.

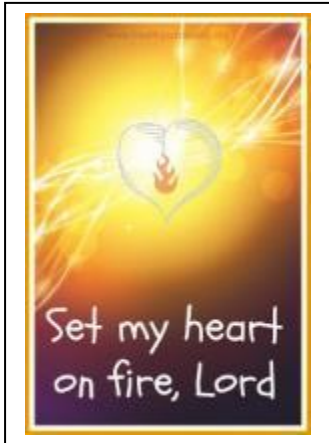
Gateway to Silence:
Let be. Let love.

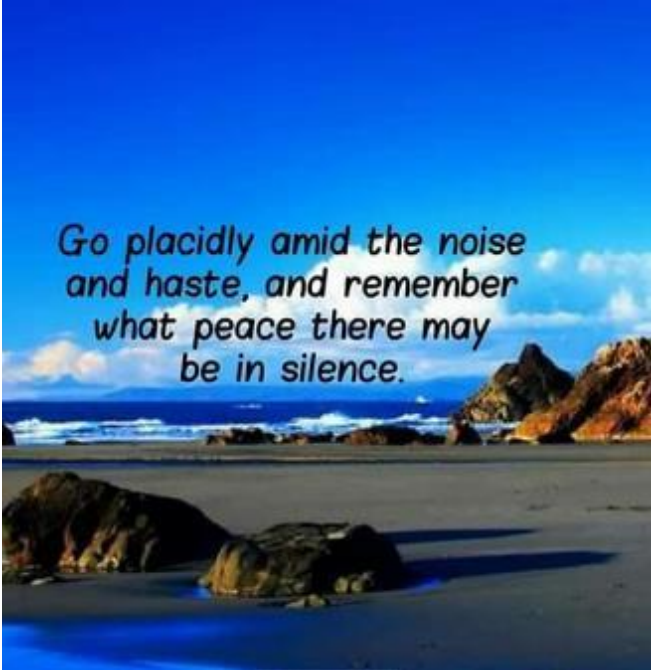
From Richard Rohr's Daily Meditations

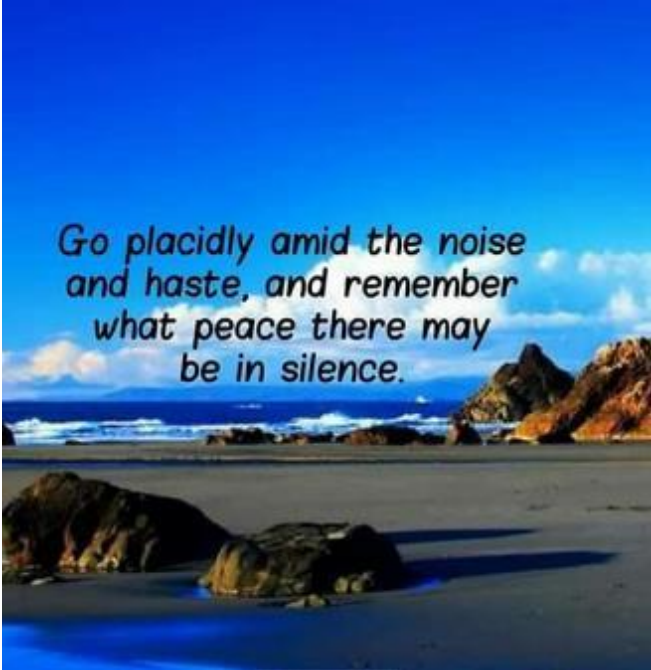
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<p>Tuesday</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>Prayer of creation</p> <p>O Lord our God, Creator of the cosmos and the universe, We bless you for all the creation. We have not truly kept all things which are in the earth, in the water or even in the sky; For all that we request your mercy O Lord.</p> <p>We often take creation like our own property and we do everything what we want; God, forgive us for that. Today, the earth and all creation has become men’s affair, in which God, the creator is ignored; O Lord our God, have mercy and repair our errors.</p> <p>Those mistakes we have done to nature because of our poor management have caused serious consequences in the life of the entire humanity, such as desertification, global warming, floods, in short, serious natural disasters. Our world needs to be renewed and that is not possible without God, the creator, That is why; we should beseech his mercy and his grace on all creation. Give us guidance, O, Lord our Creator.</p> <p>Give us power to restore the creation according to your only will We ask this in the name of Jesus-Christ, in whom all was created.</p> <p>Amen!</p> <p>Rev. Dr Simon K. Dossou, <i>Director for Theology, Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations, All Africa Conference of Churches)</i></p>
<p>Wednesday</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>Birdlife Bird of the Year 2024</p> <p>Birdlife SA has named the majestic Bateleur as Bird of the Year 2024.</p> <p>Known as the <i>berghaan</i> in Afrikaans, <i>ingqungqulu</i> in Zulu and <i>Ingqanga</i> in Xhosa, the bateleur is famous for its striking appearance and remarkable aerial behaviour. The eagle’s English name, bateleur, was coined by François Le Vaillant, a famed 18th-century French explorer, writer and ornithologist, and is said to be French for a “tumbler” or “tightrope walker”. This “aptly describes this bird’s graceful, aerial acrobatics.</p> <p>The bateleur is a truly charismatic and eye-catching bird of prey, with its distinctive plumage - and combination of black, white and vibrant red-orange on the face and legs, it is equally at home in the bushveld of the Kruger National Park and the arid Kalahari.</p>







		<p>The bateleur is sexually dimorphic, meaning that males and females can be differentiated based on their plumage or appearance. This is most easily done when they are in flight by looking at their underwing pattern</p> <p>Bateleurs are however in trouble, being classified as regionally endangered with an estimated population reduction of more than 50% over the past 40 years. The regional population size is estimated at fewer than 1 000 mature individuals. Their decline is due to loss of habitat, habitat transformation which has led to a decrease in their available prey base, especially outside protected areas. The tendency of bateleurs to scavenge, too, puts them at particular risk from indiscriminate poisoning, especially by small stock farmers. Indiscriminate illegal killing for use in the muti trade is another recent trend which is concerning.</p> <p><i>Pray for all concerned in conserving and protecting this magnificent bird. Challenge yourself to find out more about it so that you too can do all you can to protect this incredible bird!</i></p>
<p>Thursday</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>Shine Jesus Shine</p> <p>Lord, the light of your love is shining In the midst of the darkness, shining Jesus, Light of the world, shine upon us Set us free by the truth you now bring us Shine on me, shine on me</p> <p>Shine, Jesus, shine Fill this land with the Father's glory Blaze, Spirit, blaze Set our hearts on fire Flow, river, flow Flood the nations with grace and mercy Send forth your word Lord, and let there be light</p> <p>Lord, I come to your awesome presence From the shadows into your radiance By the blood I may enter your brightness Search me, try me, consume all my darkness Shine on me, shine on me</p> <p>Shine, Jesus, shine</p> <p>As we gaze on your kingly brightness So our faces display your likeness Ever changing from glory to glory Mirrored here may our lives tell your story Shine on me, shine on me</p> <p>Shine, Jesus, shine ...</p> <p><i>Song by Graham Kendrick</i> Listen</p> 

<p>Friday</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>The Lord's Prayer: Māori & Polynesia</p> <p>Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Pain bearer, Life-giver, Source of all that is and that shall be, Father and Mother of us all, Loving God, in whom is heaven:</p> <p>The hallowing of your name echo through the universe; The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world; Your heavenly will be done by all created beings; Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come on earth.</p> <p>With the bread we need for today, feed us. In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us. In times of temptation and test, strengthen us. From trial too great to endure, spare us. From the grip of all that is evil, free us. For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and forever. Amen.</p> <p><i>The New Zealand Book of Prayer He Karakia Mihinare o Aotearoa</i></p>
<p>Saturday</p>	<p>20</p>	
<p>Sunday</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>Lord, make us people who recognise, nurture and act towards a more sustainable world for the benefit of all who draw life from this planet. Raise up campaigners who will speak out for wisdom, restraint and compassion. And teach us to partner you in protecting this precious world and the lives of our most vulnerable global neighbours. Amen</p>



<p>Monday</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>Isaiah 35</p> <p>Joy of the Redeemed</p> <p>35 The desert and the parched land will be glad; the wilderness will rejoice and blossom. Like the crocus, ² it will burst into bloom; it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy. The glory of Lebanon will be given to it, the splendour of Carmel and Sharon; they will see the glory of the LORD, the splendour of our God.</p> <p>³ Strengthen the feeble hands, steady the knees that give way; ⁴ say to those with fearful hearts, “Be strong, do not fear; your God will come, he will come with vengeance; with divine retribution he will come to save you.”</p> <p>⁵ Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. ⁶ Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy. Water will gush forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert.</p> <p>⁷ The burning sand will become a pool, the thirsty ground bubbling springs. In the haunts where jackals once lay, grass and reeds and papyrus will grow.</p> <p>⁸ And a highway will be there; it will be called the Way of Holiness; it will be for those who walk on that Way. The unclean will not journey on it; wicked fools will not go about on it.</p> <p>⁹ No lion will be there, nor any ravenous beast; they will not be found there. But only the redeemed will walk there, ¹⁰ and those the LORD has rescued will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.</p>
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<p>Tuesday</p>	<p>23</p>	
<p>Wednesday</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>We pray for people living with the effects of climate change now:</p> <p>For the sake of those facing rising temperatures, drought and water shortages, <i>Creator God, in your mercy, renew this damaged world.</i></p> <p>For the sake of those facing unpredictable weather, disrupted seasons and failed crops, <i>Creator God, in your mercy, renew this damaged world.</i></p> <p>For the sake of those facing flooding, land loss and salination of vital water supplies, <i>Creator God, in your mercy, renew this damaged world.</i></p> <p>For the sake of all those who fear the changing climate, <i>Creator God, in your mercy, renew this damaged world.</i></p> <p>For the sake of the poor, the vulnerable, and the refugee <i>Creator God, in your mercy, renew this damaged world.</i></p> <p>For the sake of us all, Creator God, in your mercy, recreate our hearts that we might partner with you to renew this damaged world.</p>
<p>Thursday</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>Consider:</p> <p>A significant part of our problem is that we have lost the understanding that the earth is the Lord's, and with it the biblical sense that there is a life-giving triangle of relationships between God, the earth and humanity: that we humans are part of Nature and dependent on Nature for our wellbeing, but that we also have responsibility under God to care for God's creation on God's behalf.</p>

<p>Friday</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>God's Grandeur</p> <p>The world is charged with the grandeur of God. It will flame out, like shining from shook foil; It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil Crushed. Why do men then now not reckon his rod? Generations have trod, have trod, have trod; And all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toil; And wears man's smudge and shares man's smell: the soil Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod.</p> <p>And for all this, nature is never spent; There lives the dearest freshness deep down things; And though the last lights off the black West went Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs - Because the Holy Ghost over the bent World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.</p> <p>Gerard Manley Hopkins</p>	
<p>Saturday</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>"The best remedy for those who are afraid, lonely or unhappy is to go outside, somewhere where they can be quiet, alone with the heavens, nature and God. Because only then does one feel that all is as it should be and that God wishes to see people happy, amidst the simple beauty of nature. "</p> <p>Anne Frank</p>	
<p>Sunday</p>	<p>28</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>Monday</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>"Humankind must begin to learn that the life of an animal is in no way less precious than our own." - Paul Oxtor / Wild Heart Wildlife Foundation</p> 	

<p>Tuesday</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>Oh sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth! Sing to the Lord, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day. Declare his glory among the nations, his marvellous works among all the peoples! For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; he is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the peoples are worthless idols, but the Lord made the heavens.</p> <p><i>Psalm 96:1-13</i></p>	
<p>Wednesday</p>	<p>31</p>	<p>International Zebra Day</p> <p>Today is Zebra Day – today take the time to give thanks for our two species of Zebra in Southern Africa, the Plains (previously called Burchell's Zebra) and the Mountain Zebra. As the names suggest they occur in vastly differing habitats, although they are known to occur together in places where plains and mountains overlap.</p> <div data-bbox="435 734 786 992" data-label="Image"> </div> <p><i>Give thanks for these striped horses of the bush!</i></p>	<div data-bbox="1217 421 1497 656" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>Zebras also have very different temperaments to horses, being far more aggressive and a lot more dangerous. Zebras are sturdy, spirited animals that are a study in contrasts: willful and playful, social and standoffish, resilient and vulnerable. Their life in a herd can be complex, yet they also find safety in numbers, but a joy to watch.</p>