

JAEI June 2024 Environmental Prayer Diary

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

Saturday	1	" The destruction of Earth's environment is the human rights challenge of our time. Archbishop Desmond Tutu
Sunday	2	Prayer - based on Psalm 67 Creator God, you know us better than ourselves and it is only through your mercy, your kindness that we can turn from our own selfish desires to see your will, and see the blessings that surround us each day as your gift. May we honour that gift so that all may see the blessing of life you have given the world. May every voice be used to celebrate God's gift of life! If your voice was listened for and followed, life would be just, peace would reign, happiness and joy would fill our daily lives, the life of our community, our country, and the world. May every voice be used to celebrate God's gift of life! The blessing of life fills the air we breathe, the ground we walk on, the rain, the heat of the sun. Your world provides everything we need but is harmed by what we want. May we live out your blessing so that all may share in it. May every voice be used to celebrate God's gift of life!
Monday	3	 " In my view, the best way to develop a culture of caring for the environment is to create opportunities for people to experience nature and awaken them to its stories. This interest can then lead to a loving concern." Elizabeth Martins Founder of The CLT Environmental Education Programme.

Tuesday	4	Gracious God, today we pray with people everywhere observing World Environment Day.
,	-	You call us to be in solidarity – through our prayer and actions – with people adversely affected by climate change.
		We recognise that Earth will only be our home as long as we learn to respect and care for the whole community of life and learn humility about our place in it, that we take action to protect and restore the integrity of life systems, and that we work for sustainable development for all people.
		Change our hearts. Fill our hearts with a burning desire for your 'kingdom' where you live and reign for ever and ever,
		Amen.
		World Environment Day
Wednesday	5	2024 Theme: "Accelerating Land Restoration, Drought Resilience & Desertification Progress."
		Humanity is facing a worrying intensification of the triple planetary crisis: the crisis of climate change, the crisis of nature and biodiversity loss, and the crisis of pollution and waste. This crisis is placing the world's ecosystems under assault.
		World Environment Day 2024 is focusing on land restoration, desertification and drought resilience. Billions of hectares of land are degraded, affecting almost half of the world's population and threatening half of global GDP. rural communities, smallholder farmers and the extremely poor are hit hardest.
		Land restoration can reverse the creeping tide of land degradation, drought and desertification and is a key pillar of the <u>UN Decade on Ecosystem</u> <u>Restoration</u> . Restoration boosts livelihoods, lowers poverty and builds resilience to extreme weather. Restoration increases carbon storage and slows climate change. Restoring just 15 per cent of land and halting further conversion could avoid up to 60 per cent of expected species extinctions.
		Nature underpins the functions and health of the planet and thereby the existence and health of humankind. The only way to ensure a resilient future for our planet and communities is through the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of nature.
		Restoring land without tackling climate change would be like giving with one hand and taking away with the other, so G20 (<i>South Africa is part of the G20</i>) nations must show leadership across the whole climate agenda.
		<i>Prayerfully consider what you can do to contribute to our environment in this regard.</i>
Thursday	6	"Progress is measured by the speed at which we destroy the conditions that sustain life." <i>George Monbiot</i>

Friday	7	In your time, Creator God, this world was put in place and in your time became beautiful through the craftsmanship of your love. Remind us always as we look at sunrise, landscape or tiny child to look beyond the artist brush or created thing to the artist and creator. For the beauty of a country scene <i>We praise you Lord for sight</i> For the coolness of a mountain stream <i>We praise you Lord for touch</i> For birds in tuneful flow <i>We praise you Lord for ears</i> For the taste of fruit that we have grown <i>We praise you Lord for senses</i>
		World Oceans Day
Saturday	8	2024 Theme: "Awaken New Depths"
		It is no secret that we are currently facing one of the greatest threats ever to our blue planet and all its inhabitants: the climate crisis. It is all too clear that we need a healthy ocean for a healthy climate, and vice versa.
		The ocean sustains humanity and all life on earth. Nonetheless, despite our utter reliance on it, we have only ever explored less than 10% of it. While we know little of the ocean compared to its immense vastness, what we do know is that the consequences of our actions are evident throughout its waters. The knowledge on the ocean's dire state is clear. Still, each year humanity continues to make shallow and short-sighted decisions that further the likelihood of the ocean's, as well as our own, demise.
		We don't have time for <i>"out of sight, out of mind."</i> Our relationship to the ocean needs to urgently change, and our efforts have only skimmed the surface to date. To motivate widespread momentum for the ocean, we need to <i>awaken new depths</i> .
		Whilst most of the major actions are out of our hands, there are many small actions that each one of us can do every day. These include watching our consumption and disposal of all forms of plastic, ensuring that we are sustainable when it comes to seafood consumption, and being super careful about caring for our waterways by not pouring toxins or non-biodegradable ingredients into the drains
		Whether you enjoy diving, surfing, or relaxing on the beach, always clean up after yourself. Explore and appreciate the ocean without interfering with wildlife or removing rocks, shells and coral. Go even further by encouraging others to respect the marine environment or by participating in local beach cleanups if you are holidaying in the area.
		Find ways in your everyday life to protect out oceans!

Sunday	9	O Guardian of the Earth, we recognize that we must deal seriously with the ramifications of climate change before it is too late for the oceans. Help us to find ways to preserve and protect our sacred and life-affirming oceans and all the beings that live in these waters.
Monday	10	Encyclical Letter Fratelli Tutti of Pope Francis on the Fraternity and Social Friendship Chapter Three - Envisaging and engendering an open worldImage: Chapter Three - Envisaging and engendering an open
		A universal love that promotes persons
		109. Some people are born into economically stable families, receive a fine education, grow up well nourished, or naturally possess great talent. They will certainly not need a proactive state; they need only claim their freedom. Yet the same rule clearly does not apply to a disabled person, to someone born in dire poverty, to those lacking a good education and with little access to adequate health care. If a society is governed primarily by the criteria of market freedom and efficiency, there is no place for such persons, and fraternity will remain just another vague ideal.
		110. Indeed, "to claim economic freedom while real conditions bar many people from actual access to it, and while possibilities for employment continue to shrink, is to practise doublespeak".[83] Words like freedom, democracy or fraternity prove meaningless, for the fact is that "only when our economic and social system no longer produces even a single victim, a single person cast aside, will we be able to celebrate the feast of universal fraternity".[84] A truly human and fraternal society will be capable of ensuring in an efficient and stable way that each of its members is accompanied at every stage of life. Not only by providing for their basic needs, but by enabling them to give the best of themselves, even though their performance may be less than optimum, their pace slow or their efficiency limited.
		 111. The human person, with his or her inalienable rights, is by nature open to relationship. Implanted deep within us is the call to transcend ourselves through an encounter with others. For this reason, "care must be taken not to fall into certain errors which can arise from a misunderstanding of the concept of human rights and from its misuse. Today there is a tendency to claim ever broader individual – I am tempted to say individualistic – rights. Underlying this is a conception of the human person as detached from all social and anthropological contexts, as if the person were a "monad" (monás), increasingly unconcerned with others Unless the rights of each individual are harmoniously ordered to the greater good, those rights will end up being considered limitless and consequently will become a source of conflicts and violence".[85]

Tuesday	11	"Even if you never have the chance to see or touch the ocean, the ocean touches you with every breath you take, every drop of water you drink, every bite you consume. Everyone, everywhere is inextricably connected to and utterly dependent upon the existence of the sea." Dr. Sylvia Earle Marine Biologist, Oceanographer and author of The World is Blue
Wednesday	12	Jesus, you taught your followers to travel lightly through life; call our consumer culture to a change of heart - to values that lead to life. Please pray for wisdom for those in authority who are trying to alleviate poverty. Especially pray for job creation.
Thursday	13	And forget not that the earth delights to feel your bare feet and the winds long to play with your hair. Khalil Gibran
Friday	14	Father's Day (16th June)Bless all fathers and grandfathers as they care for their families. Give them strength and wisdom, tenderness and patience, give them ability to love in a way that reflects your love. Support them in the work they have to do, protecting those who look to them, as we look to you for love and salvation.

		Global Wind Day
Saturday	15	Historically, we owe the wind a debt of gratitude as without wind, there would not have been sea transport and the exploration and discovery of the world. Windmills ground much of the wheat and corn in past times, and windpumps drew life giving water from the ground (<i>well, they still do, in many areas!</i>). Wind pollination is vital for many plant species, and moving clouds are essential for the water cycle. Wind can shape landscapes over time. Gentle breezes cool us down on hot summer days, and enables large birds soar effortlessly in the sky.
		Today we can harness wind energy as a source of renewable energy. It does not contaminate, it is inexhaustible and reduces the use of fossil fuels, which are the origin of greenhouse gasses that cause global warming.
		All in all, wind is pretty awesome! The wind is truly an amazing creation! It is all around us and it make us as human beings become humble and understand that we are just on this planet for a reason to live our life the very best and enjoy life.
		Source of all blessings, you bless us with wind. Gentle, fierce, warm and humid or icy or hot and dry, may it caress my skin and make it tingle, refresh my spirit and make it wide awake so that I might to pass on light-heartedness to everyone I meet.
		Youth Day
Sunday	16	Nothing compares to that childhood feeling of total awe in nature – the fluttering birds, the towering trees, the itty-bitty bugs - when everything seems like a new and exciting opportunity for exploration. But with children spending less time outdoors than ever before, some children rarely have this opportunity anymore. The absence of nature can impact their health, creativity and social skills.
		Studies show outdoor time helps children grow lean and strong, enhances imaginations and spend time in nature regularly are shown to become better stewards of the environment.
		Prayerfully consider how you can encourage more children love nature.
		Lord, Shine your truth into our hearts. May we hear you in music, see you in art and experience you through the love and care of family, friends and teachers. Build your hope into our lives. May we sense this hope rise in our hearts as we encounter the power of nature, the majesty of the oceans and the beauty in creation. Amen

		World Desertification Day
Monday	17	2024 Theme: "United for Land: Our Legacy. Our Future."
		The objective underpinning this years' theme is to mobilise all sections of society in support of sustainable land stewardship.
		Today's world is at cross-roads. At no other point in history has humanity faced such an array of risks and hazards, interacting in a hyper-connected and rapidly changing reality.
		Every second, an equivalent of four football fields of healthy land becomes degraded – adding up to a total of 100 million hectares every year. Involving this and future generations is more important than ever to halt and reverse these alarming trends and meet global commitments to restore 1 billion hectares of degraded land by 2030. It's scary to learn that up to 40 per cent of the world's land is already degraded, affecting close to half of humanity. Land restoration lifts people out of poverty and builds resilience to climate change. It is time to
		unite for land and show a red card to land loss and degradation worldwide. Around a quarter of the world's population is affected by drought and the condition of our soils globally continue to deteriorate rapidly. Protecting soil and land is a global challenge. We need to take action together today so that the generations to come can have access to vital natural resources.
		Desertification is the process by which fertile land in drylands becomes unproductive land and with very few exceptions, humanity is to blame. Desertification is one of the many important environmental challenges we face today. Some consequences of desertification are the loss of animal and plant species, food insecurity, poverty, forced migrations, climatic phenomena such as floods, hurricanes and water pollution.
		We who live comfortably in a city hardly ever think of the problem of Desertification and soil degradation. We don't have large lands of crops, raise livestock or cut down trees for firewood – all causing the disappearance of the vegetation cover that maintains the fertile layer of the soil. But we do, however, sit up and take notice when we see the price of food sky-rocking! Again, we realise just how interconnected everything is – again, it is our environmental, carbon and water footprints that are foundation to practically all of the environmental woes of today including Desertification. By all of us just simply reducing our impact on the environment, many environmental woes will be addressed <i>including Desertification!</i>
		Walk lightly
		Walk lightly Each leaf, each petal, each grain, each person, sings your praises, Creator God. Each creature on the earth, all the mountains and great seas show your glory, Spirit of love.

		And yet the hand of greed has patented and plundered your splendour,
		has taken and not shared your gift, has lived as owner of the earth, not guest.
		And so the ice is cracked
		the rivers dry, the valleys flooded
		and the snowcaps melt.
		God our Father, show us how to step gently,
		how to live simply,
		how to walk lightly
		with respect and love
		for all that you have made. Amen
		Linda Jones/CAFOD
Tuesday	18	Lord God, we pray that your holy and life-giving Spirit may so move in the hearts of men and women and among those who govern the nations that the barriers of fear, suspicion and hatred which separate us may crumble, and the body of humankind may be healed of its divisions and be united in addressing
		the serious problems of resource depletion, overpopulation and climate change all of which problems lead to the desertification of our land and ultimately food insecurity. Lead us to truth and action.
		The deep sea currents and coral reefs,
Wednesday	19	The mountain peaks on the ocean floor.
		We celebrate with the surging seas.
		The icebergs that break off from the South Pole, The calm waters that caress the equator.
		We join all ocean life in songs of praise,
		Whales and dolphins dancing on the surface,
		And choirs of angel fish assembled below.
		We summon the seashore to magnify the Lord,
		The pelican, the stingray, the silver gull, The white caps and waves that splash in praise.
		Oceans, seas and watery deeps,
		We celebrate with all that lives within you,
		And roar in praise with surging sea.
		We celebrate the song of the ocean!
		Roar, ocean, roar! Roar in praise of our Creator God! O Guardian of the Earth, we recognize that we must deal seriously with the
		ramifications of climate change before it is too late for the oceans.
		Guide us to the truth and enable us to act. In your Name we ask this.

Thursday	20	If Christianity is against Science why are 35 craters on the moon named after Jesuit Priests?
		World Giraffe Day
Friday	21	Giraffes are quite sociable creatures – a dynamic that is riveting to witness when watching them in the wild. So sociable that they get together with other giraffes and form little groups that join up and disband throughout the day, based on unknown giraffe social cues. This socialisation is referred to as fission-fusion dynamics, which sounds like something an atom would do, but is actually what giraffes do. But how are these bonds formed?
		Females, in particular, like to form close-knit communities with other possibly related females, whereas the young males tend to disperse and form loose coalitions (bachelor gangs), and the older males are more independent and roam alone, searching for receptive females (the equivalent of a mature gent cruising for ladies). Girl giraffes need their best friends, as they have higher survival rates when hanging together in herds. Also, hanging out with the girls means that mom has a babysitter to take care of the kids when she wants to get a drink at the waterhole. Studies show that females share nonparental offspring care in giraffe 'creches' (aka babysitting).
		Research has shown that the shape of spots was mainly a predictor of female pairing or grouping. Females preferred to mingle with other females of similar spot shapes. The visual cue of coat spot pattern may enable kin recognition in general and potentially individual identification of familiar giraffes.
		This is an exciting theory, and further research would identify whether giraffes are using smell to identify relatives (and not spots) or whether these similarities are genetic in origin. Meanwhile, let's enjoy the idea that giraffes choose besties based on their sense of dress; polka dots are the 'in-thing' in giraffe fashion this year!
		There is a never ending treasure trove of incredible interactions within God's awesome Creation!
		God, our Creator of heaven and earth, how blessed we are to be surrounded by the beauty of your creation. We lift our prayer of gratitude as we see the charismatic giraffe in its savannah home.

		World Rainforest Day
Saturday	22	World Rainforest Day is observed annually on June 22 every year globally. This day is set aside to raise awareness about rainforests and also about all the biotic species that live in them. The Day aims to encourage people to learn more about rainforests and take action to protect and preserve these forests for generations to come. Rainforests are disappearing and are taking the rich diversity of flora and fauna with them because of increasing deforestation and climate change, among other causes.
		The rainforest is not just a pretty face! As well as the vivid beauty that comes with great diversity in plants and animals, rainforests play a practical role in keeping our planet healthy. By absorbing carbon dioxide and releasing the oxygen that we depend on for our survival and they also help maintain global weather patterns and rainfall.
		The closest rainforest to South Africa is in the Congo Basin – almost 3000km away! – so why should we care if they disappear? - this is a complicated, interwoven story!
		Trees act as "geysers", propelling water into the air – when, during photosynthesis, pores in the leaves open, the leaves lose water. This water goes from the leaves up into the atmosphere and collects there to form the 'river in the sky. ' The sheer amount of water produced is what makes this process so essential and there needs to be a lot of trees to successfully make this happen!
		East Africa is much drier than other tropical land regions. The geography of East Africa was always thought to make the region dry and susceptible to drought, but the precise mechanism has been elusive until now. Research has now demonstrated the east to west river valleys are a crucial factor in the low annual rainfall thus limiting the crucial rainfall in the rainforests of the Congo basin less water means less trees! Unsustainable and illegal logging in the Congo Basin forest - by both big and small companies - is leading to deforestation, destruction of wildlife habitat, diminished resilience to climate change, and damaging local communities – which further compounds the problem.
		The Congo Air Boundary (CAB) is a weather system that has been identified as a key importance to southern African rainfall, particularly in the southern DRC Angola, Zambia and, of course, South Africa. The CAB is a line where the humidity rapidly changes from very humid to very dry over the space of a couple of hundred kilometres. This means that the CAB marks the border between the humid, tropical airmass that encompasses the Congo rainforest, and the arid subtropical airmass further south.
		Research has shown that between August and November each year, the CAB steadily moves south from the Congo basin towards southern Angola and further south along an east-west oriented line. As it does so, it brings the summer rains, since tropical rainfall cannot fall from the dry, cloudless skies to the south of the

		 CAB. Starting in mid-October to around November, spells of weather frequently occur in which the CAB breaks down, and the humidity gradient becomes a lot more gradual. During these spells, gaps appear in the CAB. the tropical airmass can move south through these gaps without restriction, mixing with humid air brought inland from the Indian Ocean and creating storms across southern Africa. The CAB is as a result of the crucial rainforest in the Congo Basin and, should that rainforest be affected by harmful deforestation and destruction, the weather systems in South and Southern Africa will be negatively affected. So, should we be concerned about destruction of Rainforests (especially in Africa)? – ABSOLUTELY!! Actions to consider: Eliminate, or substantially reduce, deforestation from your diet.
		 Eliminate, of substantially reduce, deforestation from your diet. Choosing sustainably-produced foods and products forces companies to change their practices. Beef and palm oil are major drivers of deforestation
		 Choose ethically and sustainably source wood products. Choose products that are ethically produced and sustainably grown and do not impact on any of the global rainforests such as coffee beans.
		 Reduce your carbon and environmental footprint
		 Become informed as to what is happening to rainforests.
Sunday	23	God of heaven and earth, you are calling us to play our part in the care of your creation and to manage carefully the land you have given us to tend. We pray for wisdom as we seek an agriculture designed, not for money-making, but for feeding the world. Guide our policy-makers, planners and farmers, and help us all to understand that we hold land, not in perpetuity, but in trust for generations to come.
Monday	24	"WE DON'T INHERIT THE EARTH FROM OUR ANCESTORS, WE BORROW IT FROM OUR CHILDREN." - NATIVE AMERICAN PROVERB

And I know And this p And if you You'll find In this place There are If you care Make a litt Make a be He Ma Fo The If you wan There's low Love is str It only care Make He Ma Fo The If you wan There's low Love is str It only care Make He Ma Fo The If you wan There's low Love is str It only care The it fee The it fee	place in your heart w that it is love lace it was brighter than tomorrow really try there's no need to cry
There's low Love is str It only care If we try, w In this blist Fear of dre Then it fee	be you'll feel there's no hurt or sorrow ways to get there enough for the living le space
Make a be So make a	es of joyful giving ve shall see s we cannot feel ead, we stop existing and start living els that always ough for us growing
And the dr And the w Then why Wound thi	ream we were conceived in will reveal a joyful face orld we once believed in will shine again in grace do we keep strangling life s earth, crucify its soul? s plain to see, this world is heavenly low
Let our sp In my hear Create a v Together v See the na We could If you care	irits never die rt I feel you are all my brothers vorld with no fear we cry happy tears ations turn their swords into plowshares really get there ed enough for the living
Make a litt To make a He Song by I	le space a better place

		Bringing the Outside In
Wednesday	26	Richard Rohr finds clear and unambiguous respect for creation in both Jesus and his own Franciscan tradition:
		Creation itself—not ritual or spaces constructed by human hands—was the primary cathedral for Francis of Assisi (1182–1226). It is no accident that the majority of Jesus' stories and metaphors are based on human and natural observations, not classroom theology. It is not unimportant that both Jesus and Francis were peripatetic teachers— talking while walking—on the road of the world. In our own time, major teachers like Thomas Berry and Ilia Delio have rediscovered this natural and universal theology.
		The gospel transforms us by putting us in touch with that which is much more constant and satisfying, literally the "ground of our being," and has much more "reality" to it than theological concepts or the mere ritualization of reality. Daily cosmic events in the sky and on the earth are the Reality above our heads and beneath our feet every minute of our lives: a continuous sacrament. I find that a preoccupation with religious rituals tends to increase the more we remain untouched by Reality Itself—to which the best rituals can only point.
		Jesus himself commonly points to things like the red sky, a hen, lilies, the fig tree, a donkey caught in a pit, the birds of the air, the grass in the field, the temple animals that he released from their cages, and on and on. He was clearly looking at the seemingly "nonreligious" world, ordinary things all around him, and appeared to do most of his teaching outside. Francis said, "Wherever we are or wherever we travel, we have a cell with us. Brother Body is our cell, and the soul is the hermit who remains inside the cell to pray to God If the soul does not remain in quiet and solitude in its cell, a cell made by hands does little good to a religious."
		Both Jesus and Francis knew that everything created was a message about the nature of God. Nature was not empty of divinity. Seeing nature as secular or merely functional created much of the loneliness and seeming meaninglessness in our contemporary worldview.
		In the five-day Men's Rites of Passage (MROP) —which was a focus of my work for fifteen years—so many men felt that prayers and rituals inside of human-scale buildings were rather domesticated and controlled. They often perceived that the salvation offered inside these artificial constructs was also "small" and churchy. Almost without exception, the greatest breakthroughs for our men occurred during <i>extended times of silence in nature, where the human</i> <i>and the merely verbal were not in control, or during rituals that were raw and</i> <i>earthy.</i>
		From Richard Rohr's Daily Meditations
		www.cac.org

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Thursday\	27	Gracious God share with us your heart for creation. That we may cherish all life, working together to heal the damage we have done. Knowing that in all our struggles you are beside us, to inspire, strengthen and transform us.
		Chris Polhill (From "A Heart for Creation")
		Luke 6:1-5
Friday	28	Jesus Is Lord of the Sabbath
		One Sabbath Jesus was going through the grainfields, and his disciples began to pick some heads of grain, rub them in their hands and eat the kernels. ² Some of the Pharisees asked, "Why are you doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?"
		³ Jesus answered them, "Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry? ⁴ He entered the house of God, and taking the consecrated bread, he ate what is lawful only for priests to eat. And he also gave some to his companions." ⁵ Then Jesus said to them, "The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."
Saturday	29	"nature once determined how we survive, now we determine how nature survives" Sir David Attenborough
Sunday	30	Dear Lord Thank you for making this amazing world. Thank you for making it so beautiful. Thank you for loving every person you've made in the whole world. Please help us to look after the world. Please help us to look after each other. Please stop climate change hurting people and all your creatures. Please help us not to be greedy, and trust you to give us enough. Please help us to share what you've given us. Thank you because today thousands of people around the world are praying these prayers. Amen
		From Tearfund "Hope for Creation "