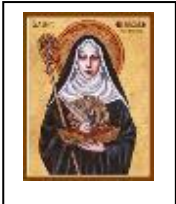






JAEI

June 2025 Environmental Prayer Diary

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

<p>Sunday</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Father, we praise you with all your creatures. They came forth from your all-powerful hand; they are yours, filled with your presence and your tender love. Praise be to you!</p> <p>Son of God, Jesus, through you all things were made. You were formed in the womb of Mary our Mother, you became part of this earth, and you gazed upon this world with human eyes. Today you are alive in every creature in your risen glory.</p> <p>Praise be to you!</p> <p>Holy Spirit, by your light you guide this world towards the Father's love and accompany creation as it groans in travail. You also dwell in our hearts and you inspire us to do what is good.</p> <p>Praise be to you!</p> <p>Triune Lord, wondrous community of infinite love, teach us to contemplate you in the beauty of the universe, for all things speak of you.</p> <p>Awaken our praise and thankfulness for every being that you have made.</p> <p>Give us the grace to feel profoundly joined to everything that is.</p> <p>God of love, show us our place in this world as channels of your love for all the creatures of this earth, for not one of them is forgotten in your sight.</p> <p>Enlighten those who possess power and money that they may avoid the sin of indifference, that they may love the common good, advance the weak, and care for this world in which we live.</p> <p>The poor and the earth are crying out.</p> <p>O Lord, seize us with your power and light, help us to protect all life, to prepare for a better future, for the coming of your Kingdom of justice, peace, love and beauty.</p> <p>Praise be to you!</p> <p>Amen.</p>
<p>Monday</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>A Prayer of Awareness</p> <p>God is the foundation for everything This God undertakes, God gives. Such that nothing that is necessary for life is lacking. Now humankind needs a body that at all times honours and praises God.</p> <p>This body is supported in every way through the earth. Thus the earth glorifies the power of God.</p> <p><i>Hildegard of Bingen</i></p> 

Tuesday	3	<p>Most gracious God, we come before you to pray for the wellbeing of the planet.</p> <p>You alone know the full extent of the destruction we have wrought to your beautiful handiwork, and what needs to be done to remedy it.</p> <p>We pray for the people around the globe who suffer because of environmental damage.</p> <p>We pray for the defenceless creatures harmed or made extinct by our selfishness and ignorance.</p> <p>We pray for the oceans, air, mountains, plants, and soil, that life and health may again pulse in them.</p> <p>We pray that we humans have a change of heart and stop harming the planet.</p> <p>Pour out your Holy Spirit on us that we may have the passion and wisdom to work effectively to restore your creation.</p> <p>Guide us in our personal, church and community efforts.</p> <p>Give us strength to continue on with this work when it is difficult and requires sacrifice.</p> <p>Bless the Earth and all its life in every way.</p> <p>We make this prayer through Christ, our Lord. Amen.</p>
Wednesday	4	
Thursday	5	<p>World Environment Day</p> <p><i>2025 Theme: “Putting an End to Global Plastic Pollution”.</i></p> <p>Plastic! It is an unfortunate fact that plastic is a necessary evil in our modern world. From the South Africa to the Arctic even to the heights of Mount Everest and the deepest ocean - plastic is everywhere. It takes a variety of forms, from synthetic fishing nets to single-use items like water bottles, rubbish bags and those pesky straws!</p> <p>Practically everything that we use or wear has an element of some form of plastic in it – from our snug winter fleece to food safety packaging and medical paraphernalia. We have become so accustomed to using plastic without realising the threats that it poses to our wellbeing and that well-being of the planet.</p> 

Plastics are not biodegradable, which means, unlike normal composting,



bacteria cannot break plastics down into a harmless state – they remain in the system for ever! Instead of decomposing harmlessly, plastic slowly breaks down into smaller pieces - microplastics (measuring less than 5 mm in diameter), which are even harder to clean up and have a more devastating effect on us and

our environment. The recycling of plastics is not straight forward. (**see below ...*) This is because plastics are composed of several different polymer types. Hence, it's almost impossible to recycle different plastics together as they melt at different temperatures. Before plastics can be recycled properly, they need to be separated. This is not only time consuming, but costly.

Environmental impacts of plastic pollution are vast!

- Plastic pollution is a major threat to wildlife, with large plastic items causing entanglement and smaller pieces, like microplastics, being ingested by animals, leading to harm and death.
- Abandoned fishing gear, or ghost gear, is estimated to comprise up to 10% of plastic waste in our oceans, by volume and is one of the most harmful form of plastic pollution to marine species - impacting 45% of all marine mammals on the Red List of Threatened Species.
- Plastic waste contaminates soil, water, and marine environments, damaging habitats and disrupting natural processes.
- Plastic production, use, and disposal contributes significantly to greenhouse gas emissions, exacerbating climate change, with plastic waste also contributing to climate change..
- Plastics break down into microplastics, which can accumulate in the environment and even enter the human food chain, posing potential health risks.

Impacts on human health are equally horrendous:

- Plastics contain or can release harmful chemicals, such as endocrine-disrupting chemicals, that can pose risks to human health, including reproductive problems and increased cancer risk.
- In countries with poor waste management, plastic waste can provide breeding grounds for mosquitoes and other vectors, increasing the risk of diseases like malaria.
- Microplastics and harmful chemicals from plastic can enter the human food chain through contaminated seafood and other sources, posing potential health risks.

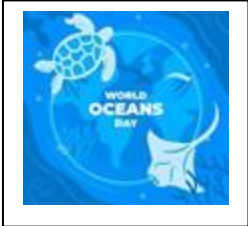
... this bring us to the economic costs of dealing with this issue:

- Plastic production relies heavily on fossil fuels, contributing to the depletion of natural resources and climate change.
- The costs associated with plastic waste management, cleanup, and remediation are significant.
- Plastic pollution can damage industries that rely on healthy ecosystems, such as fishing and tourism.

We can all act to decrease this problem by:


		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopting a more sustainable lifestyle that reduces single-use and non-essential plastic items is crucial. • Implementing better waste management system in our homes, offices, schools and communities, including recycling programs and strategies to capture plastic waste before it enters the environment, • Using biodegradable and sustainable alternatives to plastic is important. • Refuse to buy any product that uses <i>microbeads</i> • Challenge the way corporations deliver products to people with focus on refill and reuse • Ensure Waste Reclaimers and affected workers have a voice in designing a just transition to a reuse economy. <p>Global Plastic Treaty</p> <p>World Environment Day in 2025 will be a watershed moment for the conservation of the global environment as we expect to have concluded the global plastic agreement. Ridding the planet of plastic pollution is an important contribution to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, including those on climate action, sustainable production and consumption, protection of seas and oceans and repairing ecosystems and retaining biodiversity.</p> <p>South Africa, along with 175 other nations, is part of a global effort to create a legally binding international agreement to end plastic pollution, with the negotiations for the UN Global Plastics Treaty mandated by the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) and aiming for completion by 2024. South Africa is also actively involved in the SA Plastics Pact, a collaborative initiative focusing on circular economy solutions for plastics.</p> <p>South Africa hasn't formally signed the UN Global Plastics Treaty yet, but it is actively engaged in the negotiations and is committed to supporting a strong, legally binding international agreement to address plastic pollution.</p> <p>The South African government has stated its commitment to a global, legally binding treaty on plastic pollution, recognizing the threat it poses to the environment and human health and are actively involved in the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) process, which is working to draft the treaty. In this treaty, emphasis is being placed on a "lifecycle approach" to plastics, addressing the issue from production to waste management and also integrating waste reclaimers in the negotiations.</p> <p>Beyond the UN treaty, South Africa has also implemented the SA Plastics Pact, which is a positive platform to stimulate innovation and collaboration to unlock barriers and drive investment into circularity and job opportunities.</p> <p>SA Plastics Pact members have committed to four ambitious targets for 2025, each designed to tackle a different component of the plastic packaging value chain. Collectively, these targets will bring South Africa closer to a functional circular economy for plastic packaging.</p> <p>... So the best we can do as individuals, is to reduce our plastic consumption as much as possible and check on the recyclable possibilities before purchase. Be responsible before tossing plastic in into the rubbish bin</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • - Watch “Microplastics...it's FAR worse than you think” How To Cook That - Ann Reardon
--	--	---





<p>Friday</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>Psalm 104 (<i>The Message</i>)</p> <p>¹⁻¹⁴ O my soul, bless God!</p> <p>God, my God, how great you are! beautifully, gloriously robed, Dressed up in sunshine, and all heaven stretched out for your tent. You built your palace on the ocean deeps, made a chariot out of clouds and took off on wind-wings. You commandeered winds as messengers, appointed fire and flame as ambassadors. You set earth on a firm foundation so that nothing can shake it, ever. You blanketed earth with ocean, covered the mountains with deep waters; Then you roared and the water ran away - your thunder crash put it to flight. Mountains pushed up, valleys spread out in the places you assigned them. You set boundaries between earth and sea; never again will earth be flooded. You started the springs and rivers, sent them flowing among the hills. All the wild animals now drink their fill, wild donkeys quench their thirst. Along the riverbanks the birds build nests, ravens make their voices heard. You water the mountains from your heavenly reservoirs; earth is supplied with plenty of water. You make grass grow for the livestock, hay for the animals that plough the ground.</p> <p>¹⁴⁻²³ Oh yes, God brings grain from the land, wine to make people happy, Their faces glowing with health, a people well-fed and hearty. God's trees are well-watered - the Lebanon cedars he planted. Birds build their nests in those trees; look - the stork at home in the treetop. Mountain goats climb about the cliffs; badgers burrow among the rocks. The moon keeps track of the seasons, the sun is in charge of each day. When it's dark and night takes over, all the forest creatures come out. The young lions roar for their prey, clamouring to God for their supper. When the sun comes up, they vanish, lazily stretched out in their dens. Meanwhile, men and women go out to work, busy at their jobs until evening.</p> <p>²⁴⁻³⁰ What a wildly wonderful world, God!</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">You made it all, with Wisdom at your side, made earth overflow with your wonderful creations.</p> <p>Oh, look - the deep, wide sea, brimming with fish past counting, sardines and sharks and salmon.</p> <p>Ships plough those waters, and Leviathan, your pet dragon, romps in them. All the creatures look expectantly to you to give them their meals on time. You come, and they gather around; you open your hand and they eat from it. If you turned your back, they'd die in a minute - Take back your Spirit and they die, revert to original mud; Send out your Spirit and they spring to life- the whole countryside in bloom and blossom.</p> <p>³¹⁻³² The glory of God - let it last forever! Let God enjoy his creation! He takes one look at earth and triggers an earthquake, points a finger at the mountains, and volcanoes erupt.</p> <p>³³⁻³⁵ Oh, let me sing to God all my life long, sing hymns to my God as long as I live!</p> <p>Oh, let my song please him; I'm so pleased to be singing to God. But clear the ground of sinners - no more godless men and women!</p> <p>O my soul, bless God!</p>
---------------	----------	---



<p>Saturday</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>World Oceans Day (8 June)</p> <p><i>2025 Theme: "Wonder: Sustaining What Sustains Us"</i></p> <p>This theme focuses on the ocean's wonder and the need to protect it. From the marine life that contributes to our oxygen, medicines and food, to its natural infrastructures that sequester carbon and buffer shores, every diverse element of the ocean supports humanity in a multitude of ways.</p>  <p>Wonder is the foundation of scientific knowledge, the allure behind exploration, the curiosity that drives innovation, and the seed of traditional knowledge. In the face of increasingly daunting challenges, the act of wondering serves to remind us that we are part of something bigger.</p> <p>The ocean is our lungs and life source. At least 60 percent of the oxygen in the atmosphere has come from the ocean. This means every second breath you take comes from the ocean. The ocean contains about 97 percent of all the water on the Earth and it is from the ocean that we get our rainwater and ultimately our drinking water. The ocean is home to 80 percent of the Earth's organisms; from enormous whales and dolphins to microscopic plankton and bacteria. But scientists believe there are still millions of marine species yet to be discovered!</p> <p>The ocean has it all: from microscopic life to the largest animal that has ever lived on Earth, from the colourless to the iridescent, from the frozen to the boiling and from the sunlit to the mysterious dark of the deepest parts of the planet. The ocean is the largest ecosystem on Earth and provides 99 percent of the living space for life. It is a fascinating, but often little explored place. It is said that we know more about the surface of Mars than the deep ocean. The ocean affects us in many different ways. It provides us with an important source of food and other natural resources. It influences our climate and weather, provides us with space for recreation and gives us inspiration for stories, artwork and music. The list of benefits we get from the ocean is almost endless!</p> <p>But we are also affecting the ocean. Overfishing is reducing fish populations, threatening the supply of nutritious food and changing marine food webs. Our waste is found in massive floating garbage patches and plastics have been found from the Arctic to the bottom of the deepest places in the ocean. Climate change and its related impacts, such as ocean acidification, are affecting the survival of some marine species.</p> <p>Coastal development is destroying and degrading important marine habitats. Even recreation is known to impact marine habitats and species. We need a clean and healthy ocean to support our own health and survival, even if we don't live anywhere near it.</p> <p>Each and every one of us can also make a difference though. Here are just a few ideas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buy only sustainably harvested fish • Reduce our use of plastics • Choose nontoxic chemicals and dispose of herbicides, pesticides, and cleaning products properly. • Learn more about this incredible eco-system it's fascinating life within it <p><i>Spread the word and get involved.</i></p>
------------------------	-----------------	---


Sunday	8	<p>We are sorry. - We have polluted Earth's waters with toxins, We have killed millions of species in the ocean. We have turned our greed into global warming. We have helped cause arctic regions to melt. We have devalued human life. We have loved progress more than the planet. We are sorry. We are sorry.</p>
Monday	9	<p>God of Wonders</p> <p>Lord of all creation Of water, earth and sky The heavens are your Tabernacle Glory to the Lord on high</p> <p>And God of wonders beyond our galaxy You are holy, holy The universe declares Your majesty You are holy, holy Lord of heaven and earth (x2)</p> <p>Early in the morning I will celebrate the light When I stumble in the darkness I will call your name by night</p> <p>God of wonders beyond our galaxy You are holy, holy The universe declares Your majesty You are holy, holy</p> <p>Lord of heaven and earth (x4) Hallelujah! To the Lord of heaven and earth (x3)</p> <p>The God of wonders beyond our galaxy (You) You are holy, holy Precious Lord, reveal Your heart to me Father, holy, holy (Lord God Almighty)</p> <p>The universe declares Your majesty (You are holy) You are holy (yes you are), holy (holy You are) Holy (Jesus saves), holy</p> <p>Hallelujah! To the Lord of heaven and earth (x6)</p> <p><i>"God of Wonders" is a song written by Steve Hindalong and Marc Byrd, of the Christian rock group The Choir. The song was originally recorded by Caedmon's Call and Third Day.</i></p> <p>Listen</p>
Tuesday	10	<p>May the glory of the Lord endure forever; May the Lord rejoice in His works. He looks on the earth, and it trembles; He touches the hills, and they smoke.</p> <p>Psalm 104: 31-35</p>


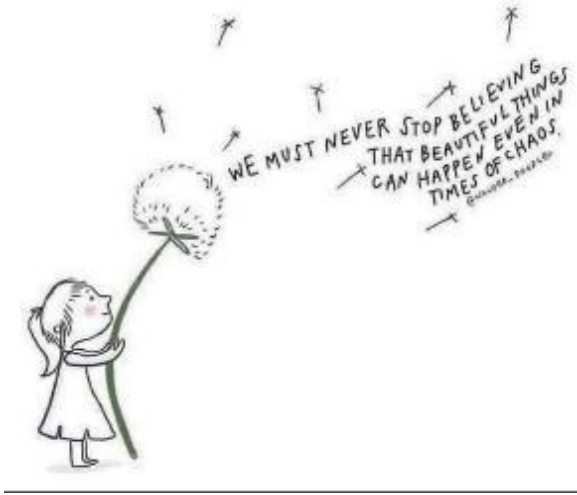




<p>Wednesday</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>Loving Fully</p> <p><i>How can my life be a reflection of divine love in this time and place? The classic Christian phrase for discipleship—the imitation of Christ—means that we were made by God to become like God, loving all others, loving universally. —Sallie McFague</i></p> <p>More than any historical figure I know, St. Francis of Assisi imitated Christ. Some call Francis the second Christ. His poverty of spirit, humility, and selflessness reveal a life lived in union. In his Encyclical <i>Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home</i>, Pope Francis writes:</p>  <p>"I believe that Saint Francis is the example par excellence of care for the vulnerable and of an integral ecology lived out joyfully and authentically. He is the patron saint of all who study and work in the area of ecology, and he is also much loved by non-Christians. He was particularly concerned for God's creation and for the poor and outcast. He loved, and was deeply loved for his joy, his generous self-giving, his openheartedness. He was a mystic and a pilgrim who lived in simplicity and in wonderful harmony with God, with others, with nature and with himself. He shows us just how inseparable the bond is between concern for nature, justice for the poor, commitment to society, and interior peace.</p> <p>[Saint Francis'] response to the world around him was so much more than intellectual appreciation or economic calculus [as in "What's in it for me?"]], for to him each and every creature was a sister united to him by bonds of affection. That is why he felt called to care for all that exists ... If we approach nature and the environment without this openness to awe and wonder, if we no longer speak the language of fraternity and beauty in our relationship with the world, our attitude will be that of masters, consumers, ruthless exploiters, unable to set limits on their immediate needs. By contrast, if we feel intimately united with all that exists, then sobriety and care will well up spontaneously. The poverty and austerity of Saint Francis were no mere veneer of asceticism, but something much more radical: a refusal to turn reality into an object simply to be used and controlled."</p> <p>Jesus told us, "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind" (Luke 10:27). He called us to a presence that is a broader and deeper kind of knowing than just cognitive thinking. Thinking knows things by objectifying them, capturing them as an object of knowledge. But presence knows things by refusing to objectify them; instead it shares in their very subjectivity. Presence allows full give and take, what Martin Buber (1878-1965) called the "I/Thou" relationship with things as opposed to the mere "I/it" relationship. Buber summed it up in his often-quoted phrase: "All real living is meeting."</p> <p>Gateway to Silence: Let it go; let it be.</p> <p><i>From Richard Rohr's daily meditations</i> www.cac.org</p>
-------------------------	------------------	---

Thursday	12	
Friday	13	<p>"I believe that religious experience begins with awe and wonder. That is the first step in the spiritual journey. Awe is the beginning of wisdom."</p> <p>Matthew Fox <i>Advocate of Creation Spirituality</i></p> 
Saturday	14	<p>World Sea Turtle Day (16 June)</p> <p>Rising temperatures caused by Climate Change are causing some sea turtle populations to have almost all female offspring.</p> <p>Sea turtles, like some other reptiles, don't have sex chromosomes. Their sex is determined by the temperature of the nest. So if the egg is below around 27° C, the turtle will hatch male. If above 31°C, it will hatch female. If somewhere in between, the sex could go either way. So the warmer the sand, the higher the ration of female turtles. In Australia, the beaches are so hot that 99% of the green turtle hatchlings are female. Turtles in parts of Africa are seeing the same. To make things worse, chemical pollutants that mimic certain hormones are also leading to more female turtles. When sex ratios get out of balance like this, it can make it difficult for turtles to find mating partners in the future and sea turtle populations are already under threat.</p>   <p>Continually re-assess your environmental footprint & pray for all working to conserve these amazing creatures!</p>

<p>Sunday</p>	<p>15</p>	<p>Father's Day</p> <p>Heavenly Father, as we celebrate Father's Day, we thank You that You are our Father. In your grace and care, You are the Father to the fatherless. You are perfect, holy, and loving. We praise you for fathers who model your love and kindness.</p> <p>For fathers who serve and sacrifice, who comfort and live courageously, who give grace and point us to You, we give you thanks and praise.</p> <p>For those who became fathers for the first time, fill their hearts with joy and their bodies with rest.</p> <p>For those waiting new life and the joy of being a father next year, we pray for a healthy birth in the year ahead and great celebration next Father's Day.</p> <p>For those who long to be fathers and grandfathers, but issues of marriage, infertility, miscarriage and life not happening on our time, we ask for Your peace and presence in the pain and Your plan and purpose for their present and future life.</p> <p>For fathers who will become empty nesters in the year ahead, we pray for great memories and moments that will launch their child into the future and fulfil their joy in this new season of parenting.</p> <p>For those who lost fathers, we ask for Your comfort and peace.</p> <p>For foster dads, mentor dads, and spiritual dads, we thank You for their wisdom and praise You for their love.</p> <p>Heavenly Father, we thank you for your great love in Jesus. When the storms come in parenting, turn our eyes to Jesus so that dads and moms can lead their families to know and praise Jesus.</p> <p>In Jesus' name. Amen.</p> 
<p>Monday</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>Youth Day</p> <p>Young people are not only victims of the environmental and climate crises, but they are also powerful agents of change that contribute to achieving a more sustainable planet, SDGs, equality and respect of human rights. Humanity depends on the boundless energy, ideas and contributions of youth everywhere.</p> <p>With climate change causing increasing destruction in communities - from long dry seasons leading to droughts to sudden heavy rains resulting in floods, young people face unprecedented environmental challenges. This generation is the first to experience the full impact of climate change, including loss, displacement, and natural disasters.</p> <p>Young people in South Africa are playing a key role in environmental protection and are increasingly stepping up to protect the environment through</p> 

		<p>activism, advocacy, and community action. By practicing sustainable habits like reducing, reusing, and recycling, educating themselves and others about environmental issues, volunteering for cleanups, supporting environmentally conscious businesses, advocating for policy change, and making conscious choices regarding transportation and consumption patterns, our young people are taking the call to care for God's creation as part of living out our faith very seriously.</p>
Tuesday	17	<p>World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought</p> <p>World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought is an international observance dedicated to raising awareness about the challenges of desertification, land degradation, and drought. This day emphasises the importance of sustainable land management practices and global efforts to prevent and reverse the degradation of land. It serves as a call to action to protect and restore ecosystems, particularly in arid and semi-arid regions, to ensure food security, biodiversity, and the well-being of communities.</p>  <p>Desertification, the degradation of land in arid, semi-arid, and dry sub-humid areas, is a significant environmental challenge in South Africa, particularly in areas like the Northern Cape, Karoo and part of the Eastern Cape where over 90% of the land is potentially susceptible.</p> <p>Among the most pressing causes are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate change: Climate variations, including more frequent and severe droughts, are major drivers of desertification. • Human activities: Unsustainable farming practices, overgrazing, deforestation, and poor resource management contribute to land degradation. • Overcultivation: Cultivating land that is not suitable for agriculture can lead to soil degradation and desertification. • Invasive plants: The spread of invasive plants, like eucalyptus trees, can deplete water resources and disrupt ecosystems, leading to soil erosion. <p>Desertification results in significant loss of biodiversity, water scarcity and economic impacts as a result of reduced agricultural productivity leading to food shortages and malnutrition, reduced agricultural yields, income losses, and increased poverty.</p> <p>In order to combat this land degradation, sustainable land management practices need to be adopted. Planting trees and restoring degraded land can help to combat desertification. Efficient water management practices can help to ensure that water resources are used sustainably.</p> <p>As individuals and communities, we need to raise awareness about desertification, land degradation, and drought and support reforestation and conservation efforts. We need to learn about the causes and impacts of desertification and drought and share this knowledge with others.</p> <p><i>Understanding the issues is the first step toward making a difference.</i></p>

Wednesday	18	<p>"Deforestation is yet another reminder that human health and the health of our environment are deeply intertwined."</p> <p>Audrey Azoulay, Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)</p> 
Thursday	19	
Friday	20	<p>The Earth is the Lord's</p> <p>This we know: the earth does not belong to us. The earth is the Lord's and so are all its people.</p> <p>This we know: we did not weave the web of life. The earth is the Lord's and so is all that breathes on it.</p> <p>This we know: we are called to till and work the earth. The earth is the Lord's and so are all who work the land.</p> <p>This we know: that we are called to take care of creation. The earth is the Lord's yet we have polluted and abused it.</p> <p>This we know: that whatever befalls the earth, Befalls the sons and daughters of the earth This we know: that the earth is the Lord's. And so we will serve Him in it. Amen</p> <p>Bishop Eric Pike, Diocese of Port Elizabeth (South Africa)</p>
Saturday	21	<p>World Giraffe Day</p> <p>Giraffes are fascinating animals inside and out. We are responsible for ensuring that our children get to marvel at their beauty in years to come.</p> <p>While giraffe populations in southern Africa are thriving, the world's tallest animal is under severe pressure in some of its core ranges across East, Central and West Africa. It may come as a shock that three of the currently recognised nine subspecies are now considered 'Critically</p> 

		<p>Endangered' and have been reduced to small fragment populations. The most critical aspect of protecting them is protecting their natural habitat.</p> <p>So this year, for World Giraffe Day 2025 #StandTallForGiraffe on 21st June, the longest night of the year (or day, if you happen to be in the northern hemisphere for some reason!)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give grateful thanks that the South African giraffe population is stable and pray that it remains so. • Pray for the plight of giraffe in the rest of Africa, and for the scientists who are working so hard to protect them. • Pray that local communities would respect and conserve these amazing gentle giants.
Sunday	22	<p>Let us give thanks for the world around us Thanks for all the creatures, stones and plants, Let us learn their lessons and seek their truths, So that their path might be ours, And we might live in harmony, a better life. May the Earth continue to live, May the heavens above continue to live, May the rains continue to dampen the land, May the wet forests continue to grow, Then the flowers shall bloom And we people shall live again.</p> <p><i>Hawaiian indigenous prayer</i></p>
Monday	23	<p>World Rainforest Day (22 June)</p> <p>World Rainforest Day was established by the Rainforest Partnership in 2017 in a global effort to raise awareness about the vital importance of rainforests for climate control, biodiversity, culture, and livelihoods and to mobilize action for their protection and restoration.</p>  <p>Tropical rainforests are found in Central and South America, western and central Africa, western India, Southeast Asia, the island of New Guinea, and Australia.</p> <p>As well as the vivid beauty that comes with great diversity in plants and animals, rainforests also play a practical role in keeping our planet healthy. Rainforests are natural air filters. They store and filter excess carbon and other pollutants from the atmosphere and release oxygen through photosynthesis. Without rainforests, our planet is unable to mitigate excess greenhouse gas emissions, which destabilizes the Earth's climate, further driving climate change. According to scientists, around 230 billion tons of carbon is stored in the dense vegetation of tropical rainforests.</p> <p>Rainforests are repositories of invaluable knowledge, traditions, and cultural diversity. The Amazon Rainforest alone is home to over 30 million people, including 350 Indigenous and ethnic groups with distinct cultural identities and traditions. In Papua New Guinea, a rainforest country of 10 million, over 800</p>

languages are spoken. The rainforests of Central Africa, including the Congo Basin, are also linguistic and cultural hotspots. Many of these people directly depend on the rainforest for their livelihoods. Activities like farming, fishing, and hunting are deeply intertwined with cultural traditions and social structures

Rainforests face multiple, interconnected threats, including deforestation which is driven by factors such as rising human demand for food, fibre, and fuel. In many areas these critical areas are also threatened by ranching, agriculture, logging, and mining. Climate change and its impact on ecosystems and wildlife further threatens these crucial forests.

An estimated 7.3 million hectares of forest - roughly the size of Panama - are lost each year, according to the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization.

There are potentially millions of animal and plant species that are yet to be discovered. If deforestation continues at the current rate, not even a quarter of these will be discovered before they are destroyed.

South Africa does not have true tropical rainforests like those found in the Amazon or the Congo Basin. However, it does have several regions with lush vegetation and high biodiversity that can resemble rainforest-like environments and are part of the larger Afromontane ecosystem - mountain forests that are found in isolated pockets, like "forest islands", in mountainous regions, particularly along the Drakensberg Range and in the Western Cape. They are known for their evergreen trees and preference for well-watered areas like ravines and south-facing slopes.

An unlikely example of a "rain forest" in South Africa can be found in the Lowveld National Botanical Gardens in Nelspruit, Mpumalanga. The reasons for introducing a rainforest were twofold - to promote awareness of the fast-disappearing rainforests and to provide a glimpse of forest magnificence to visitors who might not have any chance to venture further into Africa to see the 'real' thing.




The Garden has cleverly simulated the forest by planting pioneer trees as quick-growers to provide the initial protective canopy, allowing the true forest to emerge underneath. Growing rapidly, once the big slow-growing emergent layer trees have grown, these pioneers naturally die. Below these layers is the understory layer, where little sunshine reaches and plants need larger leaves, down to the forest floor, where it is dark, damp and rich in invertebrates stimulating fast decay, creating compost from fallen leaves and other debris in record time.

It is sobering thought to realise that rain forests are cleared at rate 40 hectares per minute. It takes roughly 1000 years for them to re-colonise a devastated area.



Now is the time to ensure that we only buy responsibly sourced products and make a firm commitment to reducing our carbon footprint.

Now is the time we must strive to protect our beautiful rainforests so that they will be there for future generations on this planet as well as for our own sake!

Tuesday	24	<p>Prayer of Praise</p> <p>Leader: "The Earth is a sparkling blue and white jewel, laced with slowly swirling veils of white like a small pearl in a thick sea of black mystery." (<i>Edgar Mitchell, US Astronaut</i>)</p> <p>All: "All creation is a song of praise to God." (<i>Hildegard of Bingen</i>)</p> <p>Leader: "O moving force of Wisdom, you encircle the wheel of the cosmos, you encompass all that is, all that has life, in one vast circle." (<i>Hildegard of Bingen</i>)</p> <p>All: "All creation is a song of praise to God." (<i>Hildegard of Bingen</i>)</p> <p>Leader: "It could be that God has not absconded but spread, as our vision and understanding of the universe have spread, to a fabric of spirit and sense so grand and subtle, powerful in a new way, that we can only feel blindly of its hem." (<i>Annie Dillard, naturalist writer</i>)</p> <p>All: "All creation is a song of praise to God." (<i>Hildegard of Bingen</i>)</p> <p>Leader: ". . . stardust is not just fairy-tale magic; it is what we are really made of. . ." (<i>Elisabet Sahtouris, Ecofeminist</i>)</p> <p>All: "All creation is a song of praise to God." (<i>Hildegard of Bingen</i>)</p> <p>Leader: "Great Spirit, . . . give me the strength to walk the soft earth, a relative to all that is! . . . all over the earth the faces of living things are all alike. . . This is my prayer; hear me!" (<i>Black Elk, Oglala Sioux</i>)</p> <p>All: "All creation is a song of praise to God." (<i>Hildegard of Bingen</i>)</p> <p>Leader: "There is not anything new to be born. It has been within you from the beginningless beginning. It has only to be awakened, to become aware of itself in you." (<i>Zen saying</i>)</p> <p>All: "All creation is a song of praise to God." (<i>Hildegard of Bingen</i>)</p> <p>Leader: ". . . for in God we live/ and move/ and have our being." (<i>Acts 17:28</i>)</p> <p>All: "All creation is a song of praise to God." (<i>Hildegard of Bingen</i>)</p> <p>Leader: ". . . When you stand in the presence of the moon, you become a new creation. . . The elementary particles of your body have absorbed an influence and in that sense they--and you--are brand spanking new, a human being resonating everywhere with moonlight." (<i>Brian Swimme, physicist</i>)</p> <p>All: "All creation is a song of praise to God." (<i>Hildegard of Bingen</i>)</p> <p>Leader: "We shall not cease from exploration/ And the end of all our exploring/ Will be to arrive where we started/ And know the place for the first time." (<i>T. S. Eliot, poet</i>)</p> <p>All: "All creation is a song of praise to God." (<i>Hildegard of Bingen</i>)</p> <p>Source unknown</p>
Wednesday	25	<p>"We are treating our planet in an inhuman, godless manner precisely because we fail to see it as a gift inherited from above. Our original sin with regard to the natural environment lies in our refusal to accept the world as a sacrament of communion, as a way of sharing with God and neighbour on a global scale. It is our humble conviction that divine and human meet in the slightest detail contained in the seamless garment of God's creation, in the last speck of dust."</p> <p>His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew</p> 

<p>Thursday</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>Encyclical Letter <i>Fratelli Tutti</i> of Pope Francis on the Fraternity and Social Friendship</p> <p>Chapter Four</p> <p><i>Reciprocal Gifts</i></p> <p>5. Here I would mention some examples that I have used in the past. Latino culture is “a ferment of values and possibilities that can greatly enrich the United States”, for “intense immigration always ends up influencing and transforming the culture of a place... In Argentina, intense immigration from Italy has left a mark on the culture of the society, and the presence of some 200,000 Jews has a great effect on the cultural ‘style’ of Buenos Aires. Immigrants, if they are helped to integrate, are a blessing, a source of enrichment and new gift that encourages a society to grow”.[118]</p> <p>136. On an even broader scale, Grand Imam Ahmad Al-Tayyeb and I have observed that “good relations between East and West are indisputably necessary for both. They must not be neglected, so that each can be enriched by the other’s culture through fruitful exchange and dialogue. The West can discover in the East remedies for those spiritual and religious maladies that are caused by a prevailing materialism. And the East can find in the West many elements that can help free it from weakness, division, conflict and scientific, technical and cultural decline. It is important to pay attention to religious, cultural and historical differences that are a vital component in shaping the character, culture and civilization of the East. It is likewise important to reinforce the bond of fundamental human rights in order to help ensure a dignified life for all the men and women of East and West, avoiding the politics of double standards”.[119]</p> <p><i>Prayerfully consider how this affects our Country</i></p>
<p>Friday</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>Eternal God, whose Spirit moved over the face of the deep bringing forth light and life; by that same Spirit, renew your creation, and restore your image in your people.</p> <p>Turn us from careless tenants to faithful stewards, that your threefold blessing of clean air, pure water and rich earth may be the inheritance of everything that has the breath of life and one generation may proclaim to another the wonder of your works; through Jesus Christ, your living Word, in whom the fullness of your glory is revealed.</p> <p>Amen.</p> <p><i>Rt Revd Libby Lane</i> <i>Bishop of Stockport</i></p>



<p>Saturday</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>"Say, Pooh, why aren't you busy?" I said. "Because it's a nice day," said Pooh. "Yes, but ---" "Why ruin it?" he said. "But you could be doing something important," I said. "I am, " said Pooh. "Oh? Doing what?" "Listening," he said. "Listening to what?" "To the birds. And that squirrel over there." "What are they saying?" I asked. "That it's a nice day," said Pooh. "But you know that already," I said. "Yes, but it's always good to hear that somebody else thinks so, too," he replied.</p> <p><i>Stop and take time to listen today! It's a beautiful day!</i></p>
<p>Sunday</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>Traditional Jewish prayer</p> <p>How wonderful, O Lord, are the works of your hands! The heavens declare your glory; the arch of sky displays your handiwork. In your love you have given us the power to behold the beauty of your world robed in all its splendour.</p> <p>The sun and the stars, the valleys and hills, the rivers and lakes all disclose your presence. The roaring breakers of the seas tell of your awesome might; the beasts of the field and the birds of the air speak of your wondrous will.</p> <p>In your goodness you have made us able to hear the music of the world. You are in our midst. A divine voice sings through all creation.</p>
<p>Monday</p>	<p>30</p>	<div data-bbox="668 1285 1265 2024">   <p>God bless you with holy wonder, That you may behold and bear witness to the majestic and the mundane, the minuscule and the magnificent. That through the eyes of hope you may see God reflected in all, with all, and on all, knowing deep in your being, that Love multiplies love. God bless you with holy wonder. Amen.</p> <p><small>Bishop Deon K. Johnson</small></p> </div>