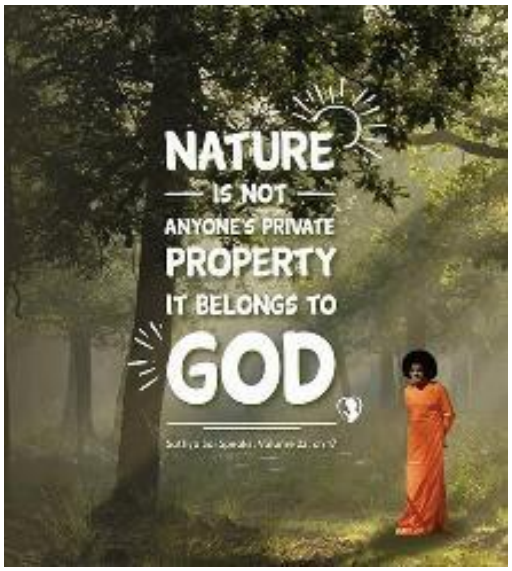
JAEI
October 2025 Environmental Prayer Diary

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

Wednesday	**1**	
Thursday	**2**	***Weedbuster"* Week/Invasive Species week** (*2nd week in October)* South Africa unwillingly hosts a vast number of alien species, with over 1400 alien species established outside of captivity, including many invasive ones. (Not all alien species are problematically – but can potentially become one.) While a precise, up-to-date total is difficult to pin down, there are at least 380 invasive alien plants and a smaller but significant number of invasive animals (including birds, reptiles, amphibians and insects) and fungi. These species pose substantial economic and environmental threats, consuming vast amounts of water and outcompeting native biodiversity. Climate change can (and will …) exacerbate the problem by creating conditions that favour the proliferation of invasive species and increase the mobility of species, allowing them to spread into new areas. A National Symposium on Biological Invasions will take place from 6-10 October 2025, hosted by the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) and Northwest University. This event will focus on the latest research and information related to biological invasions in South Africa. The South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) leads efforts to monitor, assess, and manage invasive species in South Africa through its Invasive Species Programme (ISP), which operates under the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (NEM: BA). SANBI's work includes developing national strategies, publishing triennial status reports on biological invasions, and coordinating early detection and rapid response initiatives to control species like water hyacinth, famine weed, and the polyphagous shot hole borer. The ISP provides crucial scientific advice, supports management efforts, and aims to mitigate the significant

		environmental and economic impacts of invasive species through regulations, public awareness, and collaborative efforts. Ridding the environment of invasive species is a huge challenge and it is up to every individual to ensure that their properties and communities are kept free of invasive species. Keep informed and educated on recognising these potential threats – visit Invasives.org to find out more. Of course, on the other side of the coin … the world's largest invasive species, remarkably enough, is currently the **African hippo** (*Hippopotamus amphibius*) in Colombia, South America! The notorious drug baron, Pablo Escobar, stocked his huge estate with hundreds of exotic animals, including zebras, giraffes, elephants, and a lake of hippos. When his ranch was abandoned, the hippos survived and reproduced in local rivers and favourable climatic conditions and now number close to 200. The cost of removing these animals will be upwards of $3.5million ***Action:*** ***Have a careful look at your garden and surrounds and remove any problematic alien vegetation.***
Friday	**3**	**World Teacher Day (5 October)** The UNESCO proclaimed 5 October to be World Teachers' Day in 1994, celebrating the great step made for teachers on 5 October 1966, when a special intergovernmental conference convened by UNESCO in Paris adopted the UNESCO/ILO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers, in cooperation with the ILO. Environmental educators play a crucial role in fostering environmental awareness and promoting sustainable practices. They educate diverse audiences, from schoolchildren to adults, about the natural world and how to protect it. Their work can involve teaching in classrooms, leading outdoor excursions, developing educational programs, and advocating for environmental initiatives. ***A Prayer for Teachers*** Almighty God, we thank you for our teachers, who tirelessly share their knowledge and passion with the next generation. We are grateful for their dedication, patience, and wisdom in nurturing young minds and characters. We pray for their strength, courage, and endurance to meet the challenges and stresses of their demanding work. Fill them with your peace to calm their anxieties and your joy to fuel their passion for teaching. Grant them the unique ability to see the potential in every child, to inspire a love of learning, and to instil values of kindness and perseverance. May they feel seen, valued, and appreciated for the profound and lasting influence they have on individuals and society. We trust you to guide, bless, and support them in their vital calling. In your name, we pray. Amen.

Saturday	**4**	**World Animal Day (St Francis Day)** *2025 Theme: "**Save Animals, Save the Planet!"*** ***World Animal Day is also the Feast of St Francis***. In 1979, Pope John Paul II proclaimed Francis of Assisi the patron of ecology. The Pope cited him for being "an example of genuine and deep respect for the integrity of creation. "St. Francis," he added, "invited all creation—animals, plants, natural forces, even Brother Sun and Sister Moon—to give honour and praise to the Lord." The patron saint of Italy, Francis of Assisi was a poor little man who astounded and inspired the Church by taking the gospel literally—not in a narrow fundamentalist sense, but by actually following all that Jesus said and did, joyfully, without limit, and without a sense of self-importance. He used to praise God the Artist in every one of God's works. Whatever joy he found in things made he referred to their maker. He rejoiced in all the works of God's hands. Everything cried out to him, "He who made us is infinitely good!" He called animals "brother" or "sister," and he exhorted them to praise God. He would go through the streets and byways, inviting everyone to sing with him. And one time when he came upon an almond tree, he said, "Brother Almond, speak to me of God." And the almond tree blossomed. That is what St. Francis of Assisi did, and that is what he does for us once we are caught up in his life and teachings. He makes us blossom, wherever and whoever we are. We blossom because we see in Francis what could happen to us if we were to embrace the overflowing goodness of God revealed in everything that exists and let that embrace change us. **Why Francis Belongs on the Birdbath** People at times poke fun at some of the sappy images of Francis holding a rabbit or with birds flying around his head. And there are always those who like to belittle admirers of the saint when they place his statue in flower gardens or on a birdbath. The combination of "St. Francis" and "birdbath" refers to a popular garden statue or figurine of the Saint holding a birdbath, and this image of him symbolizes his love and care for all creatures. These statues are often placed in gardens to attract birds and create a peaceful, spiritual atmosphere. This figure has become so universal, could be discovered as easily in a Methodist's backyard or a Buddhist prayer garden as at a Franciscan retreat centre. Some may grumble that this birdbath image is too lowbrow and sentimental, but this depiction of St Francis with a birdbath in a flower garden is perhaps just a popular way of saying: "This man had a special link with all of God's creatures, and it's just like him to be standing there among them and we should be doing the same." Francis was in awe of the swallow and cricket and rabbit. "Where the modern cynic see something 'bug-like' in everything that exists," observed German writer-philosopher Max Scheler, "St. Francis saw even in a bug the sacredness of life."

		Another reason Francis should keep his place on the birdbath or amid the daffodils in that his being there helps us see, as Francis himself did, that the world of nature and the world of God are one. Francis did not fall into the trap of dualism, which creates an artificial wall between the natural world and the supernatural, the secular and the sacred. For Francis, every creature was sacred. The world he lived in was not something wicked to be rejected but a sacred ladder leading to its Creator. Francis would say that the birds coming to the birdbath are holy. Water is holy. Bugs are holy. Why shouldn't Francis be there in the garden where he can be pelted by rain or sleet or kissed by the sun and wind or a passing butterfly? Francis addressed creatures as "brother" and "sister"—as equals, not subjects to be dominated. And that's why the humble figure of Francis standing at the birdbath or among the plants and shrubs is so right for our day. He truly saw himself as a simple servant and steward of creation—little brother to the birds and the fish and the lowly ivy. St. Francis reminds us that we are a part of our environment and are called to love and protect it. So, on this Feast Day of St Francis, spend time in nature to praise God's creations**.** Carve some time out of your day to enjoy the outdoors; by caring for your garden, watching the birds or going for a walk or hike in nature.
Sunday	**5**	**A prayer of praise from St Francis** You are holy, Lord, the only God, and Your deeds are wonderful. You are strong. You are great. You are the Most High. You are Almighty. You, Holy Father are King of heaven and earth. You are Three and One, Lord God, all good. You are good, all good, supreme good, Lord God, living and true. You are love. You are wisdom. You are humility. You are endurance. You are rest. You are peace. You are joy and gladness. You are justice and moderation. You are all our riches, and You suffice for us. You are beauty. You are gentleness. You are our protector. You are our guardian and defender. You are our courage. You are our haven and our hope. You are our faith, our great consolation. You are our eternal life, great and wonderful Lord, God Almighty, Merciful Saviour.
Monday	**6**	**World Habitat Day** World Habitat Day was established in 1985 by the United Nations General Assembly through Resolution 40/202 and was first celebrated in 1986. The purpose of World Habitat Day is to reflect on the state of our towns and cities, and on the basic right of all to adequate shelter. It is also intended to remind the world that we all have the power and the responsibility to shape the future of our cities and towns. The 2025 Global Observance of World Habitat Day is linked to, "**Urban Crisis Response"**. The theme will focus on addressing multiple crises affecting urban areas, including climate and conflicts that are contributing to inequality, and promote existing tools and approaches to effective crisis response.

		South Africa is urbanising rapidly: 63% of South Africans are already living in urban areas and the statistics will rise to 71% by 2030. By 2050, eight in 10 people will be living in urban areas and this will increase demand on basic infrastructure requirements. Given this reality, government has developed an Integrated Urban Development Framework (IUDF) - a policy framework on how the South African urban system can be reorganised, so that our cities and towns become more inclusive, resource efficient and good places to live, work, shop and play in, as per the vision outlined in the National Development Plan. The challenges of urbanisation are many: environment consequences (direct impact on nature conversation and natural habitats), unemployment, urban poverty (poor living conditions), criminality, loss of original fabric of society due to change in living conditions, negative impact on heritage and culture, urban congestion and increase in cost of living (utilities and basic services) We all have a part to play in reducing urban crises by actively participating in community initiatives, supporting sustainable practices, and advocating for positive change. ***Prayer for all World Leaders to respond favourably to calls for justice and transparency.***
Tuesday	**7**	**National Marine Week** *(2nd Week in October)* National Marine Week aims to raise awareness about the importance of the marine and coastal environment, promote its sustainable use and conservation, and benefit all generations, highlighting the vital role oceans play in daily life. It encourages responsible stewardship of these marine resources, whether living inland or on the coast. It encourages everyone to adopt sustainable practices to protect the marine environment, such as reducing plastic consumption, making informed seafood choices, and properly disposing of waste. Did you know that the world's oceans generates most of the oxygen we breathe as well as providing food and regulating our climate. It's a pretty big deal! In response to everything the marine environment does for us, it is only fitting that we do something in return. There is a lot that we can all do to ensure the health of our oceans: • Reduce your plastic consumption. The most frequently collected items during beach cleanups are made of plastic, think reusable shopping bags, water bottles and utensils. • Make informed seafood choices. Keep a copy of the sustainable seafood guide with you which indicate which species are green, red or orange. Green meaning you can buy these species legally, orange is that species threatened and red meaning that these species are collapsed therefore the selling and or buying of such species is illegal. • Dispose of chemicals properly. Never pour chemicals, pharmaceuticals, oil or paint into the drain or toilets. Check with your municipality's household hazardous waste program to properly dispose of or recycle chemicals and keep them out of rivers and oceans.

		• Choose green detergents and household cleaners or make your own! Besides being better for your own health, these products are safer for the environment since what goes down the drain can end up in our oceans. • Get the dirt on your beachside retreat. Before you stay in a hotel on the coast, ask staff what happens to their sewage and swimming pool water, and if they source their restaurant fish from sustainable sources. • Find out the source of your food. Buying local, organic food reduces your carbon footprint, supports the local economy and reduces the amount of pesticides and fertilisers that end up not just in your stomach, but as run-off in rivers and oceans, too. • Fill your yard with indigenous species. Reducing the amount of grass in your lawn by planting indigenous shrubs and flower beds will provide a better habitat for birds and other wildlife and require far less water and fertiliser, which can seep into the oceans. ***Prayerfully consider ways you can contribute to the health of our oceans.***
Wednesday	**8**	**International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction** *2025 Theme: **"Fighting inequality for a resilient future".*** This theme emphasizes the importance of ensuring that everyone has access to early warnings and the necessary information and resources to mitigate disaster risks. The focus on inequality highlights the disproportionate impact of disasters on vulnerable populations and the need to address systemic inequalities to build more resilient communities. Everyone deserves access to early warnings and resources to reduce disaster risk. Disasters disproportionately affect marginalised communities due to various factors like poverty, lack of access to information, and inadequate infrastructure. Disaster risk reduction (DRR) in Johannesburg is a multi-faceted effort by the City and national government. Disaster risk efforts in Johannesburg show mixed success, with the city participating in global discussions and implementing community-focused initiatives but facing significant challenges like urban sprawl into vulnerable areas, limited resources, and gaps in comprehensive, proactive data collection. While efforts exist to enhance resilience through nature-based solutions and partnerships, the reality of "everyday disasters" for poor urban dwellers remains a persistent and often overlooked issue, indicating that while some progress is made, the overarching success is limited by underlying socio-economic vulnerabilities and systemic challenges. The City is however exploring the potential nature-based solutions, such as restoring wetlands to absorb floodwaters, as a cost-effective and beneficial approach to risk mitigation. There is recognition of the resilience of informal communities and a growing understanding of the need to enhance their adaptive capacity to cope with disasters. The city has also implemented initiatives like community emergency volunteer recruitment and training in high-risk informal settlements, collaborating with partners like Oxfam South Africa. ***Prayerfully consider ways in which you can contribute to fighting inequality***

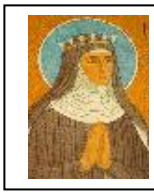
Thursday	**9**	**All creatures of our God and King** All creatures of our God and King, Lift up your voice and let us sing; Alleluia! Alleluia! Bright burning sun with golden beam, Pale silver moon with softer gleam, O praise him! O praise him! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Great rushing winds that are so strong, White clouds above that sail along, O praise him! Alleluia! Fair rising morn, in praise rejoice; O stars of evening, find a voice! O praise him! O praise him! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Swift flowing water, pure and clear, Make music for your Lord to hear, Alleluia! Alleluia! Fierce fire so masterful and bright, Providing us both warmth and light, O praise him! O praise him! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Dear mother earth, who day by day Unfolds rich blessings on our way, O praise him! Alleluia! The flow’rs and fruits that in you grow, Let them his glory also show! O praise him! O praise him! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! All you that are of tender heart, Forgiving others, take your part. Sing his praises! Alleluia! All you that pain and sorrow bear, Praise God, and on him cast your care! O praise him! O praise him! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! And you, most kind and gentle death, Waiting to hush our final breath, O praise him! Alleluia! You lead back home the child of God, Where Christ our Lord the way has trod: O praise him! O praise him! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Let all things their Creator bless And worship him in humbleness! O praise him! Alleluia! Praise God the Father, praise the Son, And praise the Spirit, Three-in-One:

		O praise him! O praise him! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! ***History**. The hymn "All Creatures of Our God and King" is based on "Canticle of the Sun," a poem written by St. Francis of Assisi in 1225. This poem, also known as "Laudes Creaturarum" or "Canticle of the Creatures," is a hymn of praise to God for all of creation. The hymn's lyrics, as we know them today, were adapted from St. Francis's poem by William Henry Draper (who at the time was rector of a Church of England parish church at Adel near Leeds) in the early 1900s, and the tune was arranged by Ralph Vaughan Williams in 1909 based on the German hymn from 1623 - "Lasst Uns Erfreuen,"* Listen
Friday	**10**	**African Penguin Awareness Day** ***(11 October)*** This special Penguin Day is dedicated to raising awareness about the critically endangered African penguin and the challenges they face. The number of African Penguins has declined dramatically in the last century. The current estimates suggest a grim number, with only 60,000–70,000 individual birds left in the wild. Scientists estimate that these birds will become extinct in the wild within the next 15 to 20 years. The availability of a sufficient food source is one of the biggest threats these birds face at the moment. The African Penguin relies heavily on small fish such as anchovies and sardines, which are in short supply due to overfishing as well as the changes in the marine ecosystem caused by climate change. The adult penguins have to swim further and further away from their nesting grounds to find food, which is potentially dangerous for the offspring, as well as the adult birds. Other factors such as pollution, habitat loss, predation by marine and terrestrial animals, disease, and other human interventions are also contributing to the continued decline in penguin numbers. The African Penguin Biodiversity Management Plan (BMP) is a conservation strategy aimed at improving the status of the African penguin and ensuring its long-term survival in the wild. BirdLife South Africa is actively involved in implementing this plan, focusing on habitat restoration, creating new colonies, and advocating for policy changes to protect foraging areas. The plan aims to increase penguin numbers, prevent colony extinctions, and maintain the socio-economic benefits derived from the species ***On this special Penguin day, you are encouraged to "Wear Black and White" – showing your support and solidarity with this bird and raising awareness about their plight. The day also serves as a reminder of the critical conservation efforts needed to protect these special birds from extinction.***

Saturday	**11**	**World Migratory Bird Day (2nd of 2)** This is the second World Migratory Bird Day of this year when we welcome the migratory birds back to the warm south. This year, WMBD has raised awareness about the many challenges migratory birds face due to human activities and expanding urban development. The campaign advocates for strategic urban planning and conservation efforts that incorporate bird-friendly practices, making sure that our communities become havens for these remarkable travellers. Urban expansion and man-made environments, if not managed properly, pose significant threats to these birds, leading to habitat loss and increasing the risks like fatal collisions with buildings and glass. Through good upstream planning for sustainable urban development that avoids sprawl and destruction of habitat as well as collaborative efforts with neighbours, schools, and local organisations, everyone can protect birds and raise awareness about their importance to the health of the planet and its ecosystems. By bringing nature back into our cities and working together, citizens and elected officials alike can help our natural environments and lessen the negative effects of urbanisation on biodiversity. ***Today – plant a shrub or tree that will benefit our precious birds!***
Sunday	**12**	**National Garden Day** Garden Day is an opportunity for green-fingered and non-green fingered folk to celebrate and appreciate their gardens, whether they are sprawling lawns or small balconies filled with plants. Garden Day is a chance to relax, celebrate, and connect with nature. *Bless the gardens of the world, the soil and rain and sunshine, and the work of all who sow and reap. Give abundant harvests and teach us to share them with justice. God of grace, hear our prayer. Bless the gardens of our community, the shelter of families, the fragrance of friendship.*
Monday	**13**	

Tuesday	**14**	*"The actions we take today will directly impact the future. We must produce more with less. Let's work towards a future that is more inclusive and more equitable.".* ***FAO Director-General, QU Dongyu,*** *World Food Forum*
Wednesday	**15**	Creator God, this earth is miraculous and beautiful. Forgive our confusion and inaction as we confront the challenges of climate change. In the light of your truth, seen so clearly in the life and teaching of Jesus, help us to re-examine ourselves and our lifestyle choices and ee clearly the implications of how we live on all that sustains life on this earth. May we follow your leading in caring for every aspect of this precious world, which you made, and love. We pray for world leaders to work together to protect our fragile world for future generations. Throughout history you have moved people to do amazing things for the sake of their neighbours. Inspire us now to work together, as your people, to change priorities in the way we live, so that we build a fair and safe world for all your creation; a world where your will is done as it is in heaven. Amen
Thursday	**16**	**World Food Day** *2025 Theme:* ***Hand in Hand for Better Foods and a Better Future*** World Food Day 2025 marks the 80th anniversary of the FAO, highlighting the organisation's role in global food security. The World Food Day them 2025 is calling for global collaboration in creating a peaceful, sustainable, prosperous, and food-secure future. By working together, across governments, organisations, sectors, and communities, we can transform agrifood systems to ensure that everyone has access to a healthy diet, living in harmony with the planet. Despite global food production, many people still experience hunger and malnutrition and aims to raise awareness and inspire action to address these issues. In some places, the severity of food insecurity is overwhelming. An estimated 673 million people are living with hunger. Elsewhere, rising levels of obesity and widespread food waste point to a system out of balance—where abundance and absence coexist, often side by side. The SDG Goal 2 is about creating a world free of hunger by 2030. The global issue of hunger and food insecurity has shown an alarming increase since 2015, a trend exacerbated by a combination of factors including the pandemic, conflict, climate change, and deepening inequalities. As a global community, we all need to get involved. Governments, the private sector, farmers, academia, civil society and individuals, including youth, need

		to work together to ensure all people have access to enough diverse, nutritious, affordable and safe foods. Achieving the goal of ***Hand in Hand for Better Foods and a Better Future*** beings with each of us. There is an enormous amount each of us can do! • Contribute non-perishable food items to food banks or vulnerable communities. • Spend time at local soup kitchens, helping to serve meals to those in need. • Neatly pack and offer any uneaten leftovers to homeless or underprivileged people. • Encourage the establishment of community gardens to provide fresh, nutritious produce to vulnerable populations. • Where possible, buy produce from local markets that source from small-scale farmers and community gardens. • Use social media to share statistics and information about food insecurity and food waste, using hashtags like #WorldFoodDay and #FoodHeroes. • Support calls for expanded social grant systems, the school nutrition programme, and other policies that address food insecurity. • Reduce our own food waste. Plan meals carefully, don't buy more fresh produce than you can use, and store food properly to extend its shelf life. • Don't discard "ugly" produce. Embrace irregularly shaped fruits and vegetables, which are just as nutritious as their "perfect" counterparts. ***Support local food drives.***
Friday	**17**	**International Day for the Eradication of Poverty** International Day for the Eradication of Poverty in 2025 is focuses on the general umbrella theme established for the 2024-2025 period which is ***"Ending social and institutional maltreatment."***. This theme aims to address the hidden barriers like social stigma and discrimination that prevent individuals in poverty from achieving a better life. The goal is to raise awareness and highlight the need for action to create just, peaceful, and inclusive societies for all. The observance of the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty can be traced back to 17 October 1987. On that day, over a hundred thousand people gathered at the Trocadéro in Paris, where the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was signed in 1948, to honour the victims of extreme poverty, violence and hunger. They proclaimed that poverty is a violation of human rights and affirmed the need to come together to ensure that these rights are respected. Since then, people of all backgrounds, beliefs and social origins have gathered every year on October 17th to renew their commitment and show their solidarity with the poor. UNESCO is convinced that the sustainable fight against poverty requires the strengthening of individuals' capacities through education, science and support for a creative economy, which are sources of employment as well as of pride and dignity. UNESCO puts all its expertise at the service of the 2030 Agenda

		for Sustainable Development, and in particular Goal 1 "End poverty in all its forms everywhere ". Ending poverty is not just helping the poor – it is giving every woman and man the chance to live with dignity. By eradicating poverty, all humanity will be transformed The International Day for the Eradication of Poverty aligns with several of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly: • SDG 1: No Poverty – Ending poverty in all its forms everywhere. • SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities – Ensuring equal opportunities and reducing disparities within and among countries. • SDG 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions – Promoting inclusive societies and access to justice for all. ***Action!*** Ending poverty requires a multifaceted approach involving everyone. Actions can be a simple as giving a desperate person a sandwich to volunteering at a school and ensuring fair wages and working conditions. Support industries that are environmentally friendly and create long-term, stable jobs that can contribute to both economic and environmental well-being – those who are registered as a "Fairtrade Partner"*. Additionally, promoting gender equality, addressing climate change's impact on vulnerable populations, and fostering sustainable development are crucial components of poverty reduction – in other words maintaining a simple, sustainable lifestyle. **FairTrade is an established a system that prioritizes fair prices, decent working conditions, and sustainable practices for farmers and workers in developing countries. It achieves this through a unique pricing model, rigorous standards, producer support networks, and advocacy for fairer trade policies. The FAIRTRADE Mark is a registered certification label for products sourced from producers in lower income countries. The Mark is used only on products certified in accordance with Fairtrade Standards and on promotional materials to encourage people to buy Fairtrade products.*
Saturday	**18**	"Humanity, take a good look at yourself. Inside, you've got heaven and earth, and all of creation. You're a world - everything is hidden in you." ***St Hildegard of Bingen*** 
Sunday	**19**	Spirit of the living God. Apart from you, we can do nothing. Transform your Church into the image of Jesus Christ. Release your power to bring healing to the sick, freedom to the oppressed and comfort to those who mourn. Pour your love into our hearts and fill us with compassion to answer the call of the homeless and the hungry. And to enfold orphans, widows and the elderly in your care. Give us wisdom and insight for the complex problems we face today. Help us to use the resources of the earth for the well-being of all. Holy Spirit, we need your comfort and guidance. Transform our hearts. ***Global Day of Prayer, Transformations Ireland***

Monday	**20**	
Tuesday	**21**	**National Reptile Day** Whilst not necessarily an internationally observed day, this day can be dedicated to raising awareness about reptiles and their importance in ecosystems. It's a chance to learn about the challenges they face, like habitat loss and poaching, and to celebrate their unique adaptations. One of our most endearing reptiles must be the quirky little geckos! – such special little creatures! Geckos play a vital role in garden ecosystems and they will often venture indoors as well. These little natural pest controllers primarily feed on insects, including mosquitoes, moths, and other garden pests, helping to keep populations in check and reducing the need for chemical pesticides. Geckos are an important part of the natural food chain and help to maintain a balanced ecosystem within the garden. Their presence contributes to biodiversity and the overall health of the garden environment. Geckos are totally harmless to humans and don't pose any threat to people or pets. They are not venomous and generally avoid confrontation while they carry out their free duties. You can create a gecko-friendly environment by providing hiding places like rocks, bushes, and mulch. Leaving a sunny spot for them to bask in the sun can also encourage their presence. Avoiding the use of harmful pesticides and weed killers will also make your garden more attractive to geckos and other beneficial insects. If they come indoors – it's time to roll out the welcome mat and enjoy their company!
Wednesday	**22**	"And the world cannot be discovered by a journey of miles, no matter how long, but only by a spiritual journey, a journey of one inch, very arduous and humbling and joyful, by which we arrive at the ground at our own feet, and learn to be at home." ***Wendell Berry***

Thursday	**23**	
Friday	**24**	**Encyclical Letter *Fratelli Tutti* of Pope Francis on the Fraternity and Social Friendship** **Chapter Four** **A gratuitousness open to others** 139. Even so, I do not wish to limit this presentation to a kind of utilitarian approach. There is always the factor of "gratuitousness": the ability to do some things simply because they are good in themselves, without concern for personal gain or recompense. Gratuitousness makes it possible for us to welcome the stranger, even though this brings us no immediate tangible benefit. Some countries, though, presume to accept only scientists or investors. 140. Life without fraternal gratuitousness becomes a form of frenetic commerce, in which we are constantly weighing up what we give and what we get back in return. God, on the other hand, gives freely, to the point of helping even those who are unfaithful; he "makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good" (Mt 5:45). There is a reason why Jesus told us: "When you give alms, do not let your right hand know what your left hand is doing, so that your alms may be in secret" (Mt 6:3-4). We received life freely; we paid nothing for it. Consequently, all of us are able to give without expecting anything in return, to do good to others without demanding that they treat us well in return. As Jesus told his disciples: "Without cost you have received, without cost you are to give" (Mt 10:8). 141. The true worth of the different countries of our world is measured by their ability to think not simply as a country but also as part of the larger human family. This is seen especially in times of crisis. Narrow forms of nationalism are an extreme expression of an inability to grasp the meaning of this gratuitousness. They err in thinking that they can develop on their own, heedless of the ruin of others, that by closing their doors to others they will be better protected. Immigrants are seen as usurpers who have nothing to offer. This leads to the simplistic belief that the poor are dangerous and useless, while the powerful are generous benefactors. Only a social and political culture that readily and "gratuitously" welcomes others will have a future. ***Prayerfully consider how this affects our Country***

Saturday	**25**	**Psalm 96** [1] Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth. [2] Sing to the LORD, praise his name; proclaim his salvation day after day. [3] Declare his glory among the nations, his marvellous deeds among all peoples. [4] For great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; he is to be feared above all gods. [5] For all the gods of the nations are idols, but the LORD made the heavens. [6] Splendour and majesty are before him; strength and glory are in his sanctuary. [7] Ascribe to the LORD, all you families of nations, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. [8] Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; bring an offering and come into his courts. [9] Worship the LORD in the splendour of his holiness; tremble before him, all the earth. [10] Say among the nations, "The LORD reigns." The world is firmly established, it cannot be moved; he will judge the peoples with equity. [11] Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad; let the sea resound, and all that is in it. [12] Let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them; let all the trees of the forest sing for joy. [13] Let all creation rejoice before the LORD, for he comes, he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples in his faithfulness.
Sunday	**26**	**Prayer from UN Environmental Sabbath Programme** *We join with the earth and with each other* To bring new life to the land, to restore the waters, to refresh the air. *We join with the earth and with each other* To renew the forests, to care for the plants, to protect the creatures. *We join with the earth and with each other* To celebrate the seas, to rejoice in the sunlight, to sing the song of the stars. *We join with the earth and with each other* To recreate the human community, to promote justice and peace, to remember our children. *We join with the earth and with each other* We join together as many and diverse expressions of one loving mystery: for the healing of the earth and renewal of all life. Amen

Monday	**27**	**Earthworm Day (26 October)** Yes, there is a special day to celebrate our wriggly friends! World Earthworm Day is celebrated annually to appreciate the vital role earthworms play in our ecosystem. Earthworms are beneficial to soil health, helping with aeration, drainage, and nutrient cycling. They improve soil structure by burrowing, which allows for better air and water movement, and they also contribute to nutrient cycling through their castings (poop). They play a crucial role in decomposing organic matter, making nutrients available for plants, and supporting a healthy soil ecosystem. Earthworms can be used in vermicomposting, which is a sustainable way to manage food waste. Earthworms are a food source for many animals and also contribute to the overall biodiversity of the soil. ***Did you know?*** - South Africa is home to the African giant earthworm (*Microchaetus rappi*), which is the largest earthworm species in the world. While typically averaging around 1.4 meters, they can grow to be much larger, with a documented specimen reaching nearly seven meters. They are known for their impressive size and the large castings they produce. These earthworms are found in the Karoo and Eastern Cape and is a particularly sought-after siting in the Mountain Zebra National Park near Cradock. ***Celebrate World Earthworm Day by learning more about earthworms, starting a worm farm, or simply appreciating the work they do in your garden.***
Tuesday	**28**	O merciful Creator, your hand is open wide to satisfy the needs of every living creature: Make us always thankful for your loving providence; and grant that we, remembering the account that we must one day give, may be faithful stewards of your good gifts; through Jesus Christ our Lord**.**
Wednesday	**29**	We pray for all who make their living from the land. Help them to contend with the vagaries of the weather and with the variability of the economic climate. Defend them from the threat of disease, and help them to protect the animals and crops in their care.
Thursday	**30**	Schedule spending time in nature and appreciate its beauty. Commit to an environmental action for the coming month, like reducing waste or supporting conservation efforts.

Friday	**31**	**World Cities Day** **You're the God of this city** You're the God of this city You're the King of these people You're the Lord of this nation You are You're the light in this darkness You're the hope to the hopeless You're the peace to the restless You are There is no one like our God; There is no one like our God For greater things have yet to come And greater things are still to be done in this city Greater things have yet to come And greater things are still to be done in this city You're the God of this city You're the King of these people You're the Lord of this nation You are You're the light in this darkness You're the hope to the hopeless You're the peace to the restless You are There is no one like our God; There is no one like our God For greater things have yet to come And greater things are still to be done in this city Greater things have yet to come And greater things are still to be done in this city Greater things have yet to come And greater things are still to be done here There is no one like our God; There is no one like you, God For greater things have yet to come And greater things are still to be done in this city Greater things have yet to come And greater things are still to be done We believe, we believe in you, God Greater things have yet to come And greater things are still to be done in this city Greater things have yet to come And greater things are still to be done here Greater things, still to be done here Ooh ***Songwriters: Aaron Boyd / Andrew Mccann / Ian Jordan / Peter Comfort / Peter Kernaghan / Richard Bleakley*** **Listen**