
Prayer guide for the care of creation



March 2014

“Work for the Lord with untiring effort and with great earnestness of spirit. If you have hope, this will make you cheerful. Do not give up if trials come; keep on praying.”

(Romans 12.11-12)

“Act as if everything depended on you; wait as if everything depended on God.”

(St. Ignatius Loyola)

“God could do his work on earth without us, but he chooses not to because he wants it to be a team effort. Does that mean that if you and I don’t make ourselves available to him, then some things might just not get done? I wonder.”

(Selwyn Hughes)



Saturday 1st March

A John Ray Institute conference entitled "Sustainable Communities: What has the church got to offer?" meets today at Redcliffe College, Gloucester GL1 3PT from 9.30 to 4.30. The main speakers are Professor Tim Gorrige of Exeter University, Molly Scott Cato, Professor of Sustainability at Roehampton College, and Ruth Valerio, Church and Theology Director for A Rocha UK. To book a place, go to www.redcliffe.org/environment-conference or write to Diane Carter at Redcliffe College. The cost of £42 includes hot buffet lunch and refreshments.

Sunday 2nd March

Heavenly Father, you know, more than we, what is happening to us and our world. We know that the way we live exploits and degrades your creation. May your Holy Spirit enlighten us and guide us to use our gifts to engage with our local communities in joint initiatives to protect your creation. May our lives be renewed. May your Name be magnified. Amen.

Monday 3rd March

From today until the 9th Climate Week shines a spotlight on the many positive steps being taken by communities across Britain to meet today's climate challenge. Businesses, charities, schools, councils and individuals run events every March – such as workshops, talks, open discussions, exhibitions and parties. The prestigious Climate Week Awards are open to bodies and individuals in seven categories. For details go to: www.climateweek.com

Tuesday 4th March

Finding ways to store energy has become the Holy Grail of British industry in the light of the need to wean us off polluting fossil fuels and to rely more on renewable sources of energy, such as wind and solar, which are intermittent. Now the Government has awarded to two British companies more than £8 million to boost innovation in energy storage. Viridor Waste Management and Highview Power Storage will use the grant towards a technology to store air in a liquid form, which can then be used to supply electricity at times of high demand. The technology will be connected to the National Grid and

own sake. "To be without leisure, to do everything for the sake of something else – such as paying the bills, keeping fit, self-improvement etc. – is to be only half-alive." Christians are reminded of the institution of the Sabbath – God's gift to restless humanity. Leisure in its proper sense is as essential to us as work.

Sources:

Resurgence
www.edie.net

Additional Prayers

If you would like to receive the prayer diary each month by [email](mailto:prayer-guide@christian-ecology.org.uk) (free), please email prayer-guide@christian-ecology.org.uk

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Picture on front cover: Camellia by Poppy Pickard

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Fiscal reform, economic goals, investment in jobs and infrastructure; Tackling systemic inequality and redistributing employment hours and income;

Building social capital & dismantling consumer culture;

The imperatives in scripture and theology, with implications for the Churches' mission.

The conference, entitled "Joy in Enough" is an opportunity to provide Christian answers to troubling questions about the goals of our society, the ways in which they can be manipulated and the Churches' position on the economy

Saturday 29th March

More people are taking up the idea of time banking, whereby anyone wishing to give or receive services without any money passing can do so via one of the time banking organisations, which then record the hours banked for doing voluntary work, so entitling the giver to a service in return. The system brings together the generations, e.g. older people with experience of childcare can swap their skills with younger people who can do their shopping or tend their garden. Local schemes, such as Fair Shares (covering parts of Gloucestershire,

Oxfordshire and Wiltshire), have been set up around the country.

www.fairshares.org.uk & www.timebanking.org

Sunday 30th March

Loving Father, you know from the past how sinful humans are prone to ignore prophetic warnings which threaten comfortable lifestyles, and yet to magnify everyday risks. Raise up in this time of deep crisis people who are prepared to proclaim, without fear or favour, the message that we must make deep changes in our attitudes and lifestyles if humanity is to survive and flourish.

Monday 31st March

"There are many people in our society" writes Edward Skidelsky in Resurgence "such as the unemployed and partially employed who would dearly like to work more. But there are equally many people who would dearly like to work less. The obvious solution is for all adults to work, but to work shorter hours. It is only our devotion to the 40-hour week that condemns a large sector of the population to the grim fate of unemployment." Leisure, for the ancient Greeks, was not just time off, but a distinct form of activity for its

used for stored energy to balance supply and demand.

Wednesday 5th March.

Ash Wednesday.

We thank you, dear Father, for those days in the desert when, through prayer and fasting, Jesus discovered your will for his life and overcame the temptations of the easy way out, as presented by the Evil One. Help us, during these days of Lent, to come closer to you and to listen to your voice. Give us the strength to overcome the temptation to live for ourselves only. This we ask for Jesus' sake. Amen

Thursday 6th March

Planning permission has been sought for the world's first tidal lagoon power plant, which, together with five other similar plants, could provide 10% of the UK's domestic electricity by 2023, i.e. before any new nuclear plants could come on-stream. The project will include a 9.5 kilometre sea wall across Swansea Bay to capture enough renewable energy from rising and falling tides to power more than 120,000 homes for 120 years. If given the go-ahead, construction of the £850 million project will begin early in 2015, with power being generated from 2018

onwards. The CEO of Tidal Lagoon Power said: "The UK has the 2nd highest tidal range in the world and this development will prove that tidal resources can be harnessed in a way that makes economic, environmental and social sense. Tidal lagoons offer renewable energy on a nuclear scale and thus the investment of hundreds of millions of pounds in UK industries and coastal communities."

Friday 7th March

Two wind turbines, built by Ecotricity in 2006 at Michelin's Dundee factory, have produced 50 million kWh of electricity since installation and provided around 25% of the electricity required to power the factory. Two further wind turbines have been approved for its Ballymena factory and are expected to cut carbon emissions by 4,146 tonnes a year. In the UK as a whole, wind power produced more than 6.1 gigawatts of energy on a single day in December, while throughout November wind power contributed 22.4% of total UK electricity generation.

Saturday 8th March

Shale gas firm Cuadrilla has plans to 'frack' for gas in the Irish Sea through its new venture Nebula Resources.

The British Geological Survey's seismic analyst Nigel Smith comments: "I'm delighted a company has taken the plunge, but the challenges to extract will be as immense as the potential rewards. However, I think the British public will be happier, or disinterested, with such exploration because they have grown accustomed to getting their energy offshore."

Sunday 9th March

Father God, we pray that your people, whether they be ministers, scientists or lay people, may find the strength and courage to give clear witness of the need to care for the world that your created. May they speak out courageously on the changes in lifestyle that are now seen to be necessary to protect your creation. Amen

Monday 10th March

Research for Population Matters notes that the Office of National Statistics foresees the UK population in 2050 as being between 68.7 million and 87.7 million, yet we are legally committed to cutting carbon emissions by 2050 by 80% below 1990 levels. The energy and cost implications for a population of 87.7 million would be:

- New power stations costing between £380 billion and £1.02 trillion
- 260,000 more wind turbines, or 20 new turbines a day
- Additional renewable energy sources for 450,000 people a year
- Massive investment in energy storage technology to overcome the intermittency of renewables.

www.populationmatters.org/document/s/population_infrastructure_summary.pdf

Tuesday 11th March

Plans for Phase 2 of the London Array of wind turbines have been scrapped. The developers have said that it would take three years to collect data on the effects of the turbines on over-wintering birds in the Thames Estuary and that it was technically more challenging than Phase 1 because a larger area was in shallow water and there was an exclusion zone for recovering aggregates. Where, one might ask, is the overarching authority to bang heads together and to demand "action this day"?

industries associated with fossil fuels (coal, gas and oil), military capability (arms manufacturers), food supply (massive agribusinesses) and health requirements (drug manufacturers) exert huge influence over governments, even to the point of blackmail if a national emergency is to be avoided. Meanwhile the most damaged countries, such as Haiti and the Philippines, are left to pay the price of the industrialisation from which they are excluded. "The modern Pharaoh once again hardens his heart and will not give up the way of life to which he is addicted."

Thursday 27th March

Campaigner Donnachadh McCarthy suggests these ways of combatting the democratic deficit in our society:

- Stop feeding the corporate giants with our money. Buy local products, use green energy, invest ethically, eat organic food from farmers' markets. "Every penny we remove from the corporate world helps cut the funds from the lobbyists who are undermining our democracy"
- Join movements fighting for change, such as Unlock Democracy, the Alliance for

Lobbying Transparency, FoE, Greenpeace etc.

- Call on civic society organisations (churches, trade unions, the National Trust etc.) to campaign for a new Lobbying Act which would bar politicians from becoming lobbyists, hobble the five billionaires who dominate our media, free academia from corporate interference and close all tax havens.

"We can and must cleanse the temples of our democracy and restore them to their prime task of promoting our common social, economic and environmental justice."

Friday 28th March

Tomorrow a Christian Ecology Link conference takes place in Birmingham to seek answers to these questions: What might a genuinely sustainable economy look like?

How can the Churches make it happen?

Dan O'Neill, co-author of "Enough is Enough", will outline his view of a sustainable economy. Working groups will discuss:

International co-operation over resource and emission caps;

FoodCycle's 1200 volunteers run 28 community projects across the country and in 2013 alone served 28,000 meals. Since 2009 FoodCycle has reclaimed over 28,000 kg. of surplus food, so saving 380 tonnes of CO2 emissions. www.foodcycle.org.uk

Sunday 23rd March

Loving Father, as we begin to see the radical transformations needed in our society in order to meet the crisis of climate change, we pray that you will raise up and empower leaders of the future who will challenge the forces of inertia and inspire us all to think and act as if we bear full responsibility for the lifestyle changes that we must all make in the interests of coming generations.

Monday 24th March

Another finalist was Liftshare, which enables people to share car journeys for regular commutes or one-off trips. Its 600,000 members share 108,000 car trips a week, saving 28,000 tonnes of CO2 a year. As well as generating environmental benefits, Liftshare enables people to network with each other, so helping to build stronger communities. www.liftshare.com

Tuesday 25th March

Sweden has been producing energy from waste since the 1940s, and has to import waste from Norway to incinerate in its combine heat and power plants in order to keep them running. EU rules mean that particulate emissions from incineration have been reduced by almost 99% since the early days of incineration. Over 50% of Sweden's waste is now incinerated, an amount equivalent 1.1 million cu. metres of oil a year, so reducing carbon emissions by 2.2 million tonnes annually. www.avfallsverige.se

Wednesday 26th March

The devastating floods of 2010 in Pakistan destroyed 1.5 million acres of cropland and ruined the livelihoods of over 20 million people. The 2011 drought in East Africa affected 13 million people and caused famine in Somalia. The 2012 drought in Russia destroyed nearly a quarter of the grain harvest. Out of control fires have consumed vast areas in Australia and the US. The total damage caused by extreme weather last year is reckoned to exceed \$2.5 trillion. What more evidence of climate change do we need? And yet, according to Michael Meacher MP writing in Resurgence,

Wednesday 12th March

Coffee establishments in London throw away 200,000 tonnes of coffee waste a year. A company called Bio-bean has now developed technology to convert this waste product into biomass pellets for use in boilers. The coffee grounds are dried, the oil is extracted and the remaining 80-95% is turned into biomass pellets. A large waste-processing site in Edmonton, North London, will be capable, by the end of the year, of processing 30,000 tonnes of coffee waste a year.

Thursday 13th March

The fermented wastewater from processing juices can be turned into biodegradable packaging in a EU-funded project called PHBOTTLE. The wastewater, when fermented, is said to be moisture- and vapour-resistant, will not dissolve in contact with water, has see-through properties and offers protection against oxygen. Plastic packaging made from the fermented wastewater from processed juices could save industry millions in production costs and tap into growing consumer demand for environmentally-friendly products.

Friday 14th March

The Business Minister Michael Fallon has opened Britain's first shopping bag and plastic film recycling facility in Woolwich. PlasRecycle's plant converts the plastic into a granulate which can be used for making new bags, so replacing virgin materials. For every tonne of plastic packaging that is reprocessed and recycled, there is a saving of 1.5 tonnes of CO2 emissions. Said PlasRecycle's chairman: "With this new solution, local authorities can now ask their residents to put plastic carrier bags and other films into their recycling bins."

Saturday 15th March

53 textile manufacturers, retailers and charities including Next, Tesco and Stella McCartney have joined a Sustainable Clothing Action Plan which has pledged a 15% reduction by 2020 in carbon, water and waste to landfill, plus a 3.5% reduction in waste per tonne of clothing produced. The actions required to achieve these targets are:

- Use of lower-impact fibres
- Extending the active life of clothes
- An increase in re-use and recycling.

The average UK household owns around £40,000-worth of clothes, of which about 30% have not been worn for over a year. WRAP has launched a website called www.loveyourclothes.org.uk which offers tips on choosing clothes designed to last longer or requiring less energy-intensive laundering, buying pre-owned clothes, repairing and altering, donating and selling unwanted clothes, and recycling.

Sunday 16th March

Loving Father, show us how to use your gifts of inventiveness in science and technology in the service of your world and all its creatures. May we acknowledge you as the source and inspiration of all that we can achieve in the protection of your world.

Amen.

Monday 17th March

Excessive demand for natural resources can be curbed either by reduced consumption patterns or by a reduced population or both. Population Matters has compared the relative costs of family planning versus low-carbon technologies. Its findings: Family planning costs £4 to avoid 1 tonne of carbon emissions.

Low-carbon technologies cost £19 to do the same.

According to the UN Population Fund, there are 215 million people with an unmet demand for family planning. PM research finds that meeting this demand would save 34 billion tonnes of carbon emissions over the period 2012 to 2050.

www.populationmatters.org/documents/reducing_emissions.pdf

Tuesday 18th March

A report on the oceans from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change stresses that the whole oceanic food chain for marine animals is based on the numbers of phytoplankton. Their bodies are built up from a form of calcium carbonate called aragonite. But increasing emissions of CO₂ are causing the oceans to become more acidic and therefore more corrosive to the aragonite which phytoplankton need. A reduction in their numbers could cause massive disruption to our food supplies, especially for the billion people who depend on fisheries for their sustenance. However, if we cut carbon emissions, we can still prevent the worst of the damage. Further details can be found at:

www.bit.ly/IPCC-analysis

Wednesday 19th March

Following last month's meeting on the illegal wildlife trade attended by heads of state, ministers and NGOs from 48 countries, the resulting 'London Declaration' included commitments:

- To eradicate the market for illegal wildlife products
- To strengthen the enforcement efforts and ensure effective legal frameworks and deterrents
- To promote sustainable livelihoods through positive engagement with local communities.

Steven Broad, director of TRAFFIC, said: "The London Declaration was a clear call to arms for countries to play their part in bringing down the organised criminal networks that are destroying the world's iconic wildlife and destabilising national and international security. Key to supporting those efforts are the actions targeting the consumer end of the supply chain, where reducing the demand for wildlife products is an essential part of the process."

Thursday 20th March

Today is World Water Day. This year's theme is the connection between water and energy and focuses on case studies showing how integrated

solutions to water and energy can achieve greater social and economic benefits. A 2-day conference at UNU headquarters in Tokyo sees the launch of the UN World Water Development Report, presentation of the 2014 Water for Life awards and the announcement of the Stockholm Water Prize.

Friday 21st March

Among the finalists for the Climate Week Awards is the director of the Love Food Hate Waste campaign. UK consumers throw away 7 million tonnes of food and drink from our homes every year, most of which could have been eaten or drunk. It is costing us £12.5 billion a year and causes unnecessary pollution. The website contains tips about purchasing and storing food and disposing of unwanted food in an environmentally-friendly way.

www.england.lovefoodhatewaste.com

Saturday 22nd March

Another finalist for the Climate Week Awards was FoodCycle, which makes use of perfectly edible food that would otherwise be wasted and turns it into nutritious three-course meals for vulnerable people, helping them to feel part of the community.