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Picture on front cover: Autumn Crocus
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Prayer guide for the care of creation

Oct 2014



“Store up for yourselves treasures in heaven . . . for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”
(Matthew 6.20-21)

“Keep yourselves from idols”.
(1 John 2.21)

“An idol is an expression of a universal tendency – to substitute something in the place of God. You don’t need to reject God openly to be an idolater; you become one simply when you put something or someone other than God at the centre and thus marginalise him. If he is not at the centre, then he no longer controls ones life; he just faintly influences it.”
(Selwyn Hughes)

“Prayer is the most important work in the kingdom of God.”
(O. Hallesby)

Wednesday 1st October

According to the World Meteorological Organisation's annual Greenhouse Gas Bulletin, the amount of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere reached a record high in 2013, propelled by a surge in levels of carbon dioxide, which increased at the quickest rate since 1984, suggesting that the earth's ability to absorb the gas may also be declining. Professor Dave Reay of Edinburgh University said: "Of particular concern is the indication that carbon storage in the world's forests and oceans may be faltering. So far these 'carbon sinks' have been locking away almost half of the CO2 we emit. If they begin to fall in the face of further warming, then our chances of avoiding dangerous climate change become very slim indeed."

Thursday 2nd October

According to the 4th Assessment Report of the IPCC: "There is high agreement and much evidence that with current climate change mitigation policies and related sustainable development practices, global GHG emissions will continue to grow over the next few decades." IPCC chairman R.K. Pachauri said: "This growth in emissions will exacerbate problems in

vulnerable developing states and could easily lead to economic and social turmoil, in turn posing an even greater threat to the environment, human life and global security. Therefore the current pattern of development pursued worldwide will continue to endanger the well-being not only of citizens in developing countries but also of those in the developed world."

Friday 3rd October

"Climate change, important as it is, is nevertheless a symptom of a greater malady, namely our fixation on unlimited growth of the economy as the solution to nearly all problems. Apply an anodyne to climate and, if growth continues, something else will soon burst through limits of past adaptation and finitude, thereby becoming the new crisis on which to focus our worries." (Professor Herman Daly, author of 'Steady-State Economics' and 'Beyond Growth')

Saturday 4th October

"The most important contribution of a human-scale economy is that it may allow for a transition from a paradigm based on greed, competition and accumulation, to one based on solidarity, co-operation and

saving private banks, could generate 270 years of a world without hunger. Would not a world without misery be a better world for everyone, even for the banks?"

Friday 31st October

While awareness of climate change is growing, governments everywhere tend to prioritise other pressing concerns such as education, health, housing and providing enough food for their peoples. Until people realise that global warming is intimately linked with all these concerns, and will vastly exacerbate the challenges if not tackled now, this is unlikely to change. Development groups believe that adaptation to climate change is about strengthening communities from the bottom up, building on their own coping strategies to live with climate change and helping them to participate in climate change policies. Giving a voice to people can help to develop their confidence, to use their local knowledge and to engage with science-based solutions.

Sources:

"Climate Change & Human Development" by Hannah Reid
Green Health Watch magazine
Living Earth (Soil Association)
Population Matters
www.edie.net

Additional Prayers

Monday 27th October

PM 2.5 particles from diesel vehicles are small enough (2.5 microns) to evade the body's defences and enter the lungs, causing ill health. A report from DEFRA has found that there is no safe level of exposure to PM 2.5s and that this human-made pollution cuts average life expectancy by 6-8 months. According to recent estimates, nearly 30,000 people die prematurely each year from exposure to air pollution. A pan-European study finds that the exposure of pregnant women to PM 2.5s increases the likelihood of low birth-weight in babies and life-long poorer health.

Tuesday 28th October

In an effort to take more than 150,000 polluting diesel cars off London's roads, Boris Johnson plans payments of up to £2,000 to encourage diesel car owners to switch to cleaner models. He acknowledged a "massive failure of policy" when people were told they were doing the environmentally-friendly thing in buying a diesel car. It will cost around £300 million to put the scheme into effect, but the savings in health costs could outweigh that. "There are great things we could do with low-carbon vehicles, by stimulating the market for

them." The reality is that only 1,400 electric car chargers have been installed in London since 2009 and people are still concerned over the limited range achievable from one battery charge.

Wednesday 29th October

Mayor Johnson has promised that every London taxi will be all-electric or hydrogen fuel cell-electric by 2018 and that the number of electric charge points will quadruple. From 2020, only zero-emission vehicles will be allowed into Central London. Frazer-Nash, Karsan, Nissan and Mercedes-Benz have all unveiled plans for a zero-emission London taxi.

Thursday 30th October

The World Bank has estimated that the annual costs for developing countries to adapt to projected climate change are likely to be \$70-100 billion a year from 2010 to 2050. By contrast, global subsidies to the fossil fuel industries which stoke climate change were \$557 billion in 2008 alone. During 2008 US federal government money injected into financial markets in order to save private banks totalled \$8.5 trillion, i.e. \$8,150,000 million. Professor Manfred Max-Neef comments "\$8,150,000 , instead of

compassion. Such a transition would allow for greater happiness, not only among those who have been marginalised, but also among those responsible for marginalising them, despite what they may believe. . . . While 1 billion people suffer from hunger, and nearly 3 billion live on less than \$2 a day, we witness the obscene concentration of monetary wealth. The wealth of the 400 richest Americans is more than twice the GDP of sub-Saharan Africa, which hosts 800 million people Today's rich are not related to the growth of the real economy. The new fortunes are, on the contrary, based on the destruction of the real economy. A deep change is not only urgent, but inevitable." (Prof. Manfred Max-Neef)

Sunday 5th October

Too long have I worried about so many things and yet, my Lord, so few are needed.

May I today live more simply that others may simply live. Amen.

Monday 6th October

A report from Cambridge Econometrics led by Professor Paul Ekins of UCL finds that meeting the carbon budgets recommended by the Committee on Climate Change would

benefit the UK economy, with net increases in GDP, levels of employment and household incomes. In particular:

- An additional 190,000 jobs would be created by 2030
- Average annual household incomes would increase by £565 by 2030
- Reduced consumption of fossil fuels and a reduction in oil and gas imports would benefit the UK by £8.5 billion a year by 2030
- The resulting stronger economy would increase Government revenues by £5-7 bn./year from increased VAT and tax income
- Improved air quality due to reductions in road transport emissions would lead to a reduction in healthcare expenditure by £69-288 million annually.

Tuesday 7th October

An unambitious EU target of a 30% reduction in energy consumption by 2030 has been countered by a report from the International Energy Agency quantifying the benefits of energy efficiency. "The report lays out the case for governments to invest more time in measuring the impacts of

energy efficiency so as to improve understanding of its role in boosting economic and social development. The uptake of economically-viable energy efficiency could boost economic output through 2035 by \$18 trillion - larger than the current size of the economies of the US, Canada and Mexico combined. If the EU ignores the evidence in favour of a higher and binding energy savings target, Europe will miss a critical opportunity to drive energy savings in the coming decade.”

Wednesday 8th October

“Agricultural Good Practice Guidance for Solar Farms” is a report from BRE National Solar Centre and the NFU which shows how solar farms can be multifunctional, meeting food and energy needs as well as enhancing biodiversity. “Solar farms are often used for sheep grazing and can be particularly suited to fattening young, hill-bred lambs.” At Newlands Farm, Axminster, 13 hectares of land was leased for a 4.2 MW. solar panel installation. The farm now produces enough electricity to power 1,285 average homes – half the homes of Axminster – saving around 2,192 tonnes of carbon a year compared to traditional energy generation. Farmer Gilbert Churchill said: “It’s

environmentally-friendly and suits the farmers’ industry very much because it give them a regular income.”

Thursday 9th October

Today at 7.30 in St. Mary’s Church, Aylesbury HP20 2JJ, the Bishop of Buckingham will introduce a gathering on “Developing an Eco-friendly Parish”. The aim is to showcase the resources that churches have found useful and examples of how they approach environmental issues. To book a place, register at www.earthingfaith.org/gatherings, call 01865 208745 or email environment@oxford.anglican.org

Friday 10th October

The Department of Energy & Climate Change recently announced plans to end the Renewable Obligation scheme (which supports renewable energy projects) two years ahead of schedule. Four of the UK’s biggest solar firms together with Friends of the Earth have launched a Judicial Review, claiming that the sudden withdrawal of support for solar energy through the RO was unlawful. The claimants say that the decision retrospectively to pull the plug on the scheme could cost large numbers of jobs and will rob the solar industry of

- Neonicotinoids persist in the soil for years and have caused large-scale contamination of soils, water sources and even untreated plants
- They pose a serious threat to a wide range of species including earthworms, insects, marine invertebrates such as water snails, birds and reptiles.

Friday 24th October

Neonicotinoids are a nerve poison, their effects ranging from instant and lethal to chronic. Unlike other pesticides, they are used as a preventative, with seeds routinely treated, rather than addressing specific problems. 75% of our food crops are pollinated by insects. Any further decline in insect pollinators, particularly bees, would have devastating effects on food production. Simon Crichton, manager at Triodos Bank comments: “The agrochemical companies have a vested interest in perpetuating the idea that they provide a silver bullet, that their sprays can solve all farmers’ problems. But there is no silver bullet, just a vicious circle compounding the problem.”

Saturday 25th October

Annual sales of neonicotinoids are worth about £1.5 billion to companies such as Syngenta, Bayer and BASF. A ban on them would necessitate changes in the way farmers grow their crops. Crichton explains: “We need to move from short-termism to methods that work with nature. That means crop rotation, alternative cultivation methods and mixed crop varieties. This cultivates a healthy and diverse population of natural predators to ensure the environment remains in balance. It’s completely at odds with the monoculture that has developed over the last 40-50 years.” Crucially, consumers need to make a conscious choice of what they buy. The alternative – living in a world without pollinating insects – doesn’t bear thinking about.

Sunday 26th October

Loving Father, please teach us how to live more simply, to be more sensitive to your creation and to care for all living creatures. Help us to turn from our arrogant ways. Redeem us, redeem your world, heal its wounds and dry its tears, for the sake of your dear Son, who died for us all.

decisions are based. Vandana Shiva comments: "If we are to survive as a species, we need to reclaim our commons – of seeds and climate knowledge – and to resist the privatisation of every aspect of life."

Tuesday 21st October

Jeremy Rifkin in "The Zero Margin Cost Society" traces the rise of what he calls the "Collaborative Economy", a sharing economy based on principles of using, not owning. In Berlin, the Borrowing Shop's 500 members can borrow and return any of 2,000 items from toys and kitchen appliances to boats and bicycles. Each member brings an item to share, and that is their membership fee. A time of return is agreed. The unit of exchange is trust.

Wednesday 22nd October

10 NGOs including the Soil Association have produced a report on food and farming called "Square Meal: why we need a new recipe for farming, wildlife, food and public health." It aims to provoke public discussion on:

- Improving health and getting a grip on the obesity crisis

- Ensuring the availability of good food in the face of rising prices, poverty and inequality
- Supporting a sustainable and resilient farming system that can withstand climate change, resource and population pressures, while providing an income for farmers
- Enhancing nature by protecting soil, creating a strong, connected ecological network and championing effective rural and urban planning policies.

The report suggests some of the solutions and aims to start a debate on how we can achieve them.

Thursday 23rd October

Neonicotinoids account for about 40% of global insecticide use and some of them are 5,000-10,000 times more toxic to bees than DDT. These are among the findings of a Worldwide Integrated Assessment of systemic insecticides, carried out by 29 independent scientists and peer-reviewed in over 800 publications. It has revealed damage by neonicotinoids and fipronil across whole ecosystems. Their impact on bees and other pollinators is just the tip of an iceberg. Key findings include:

hundreds of millions of pounds' worth of business. FoE said: "This is not saying that support systems for solar cannot change, but about making sure it is done in a transparent and timely way. Solar power is now the 2nd cheapest low-carbon power source and, with firm government support, could be a major contributor to Britain's energy future."

Saturday 11th October

FoE has launched a competition inviting primary school pupils to submit an artwork or film demonstrating why they would love their school to be powered by solar energy. The winning school, chosen by public vote at the start of 2015, will receive a solar installation free of charge. The panels will make thousands of pounds every year for the school – meaning more money to spend on playgrounds, libraries, trips etc. Anyone can nominate any school as a competitor. Nominations close on October 24th. Entries must be submitted by December 15th, but only online as photos, films or sideshows. See <http://photolibrary.foe.co.uk/?c=1118&k=bf674c2480>

Sunday 12th October

Dear Lord and Father, you alone are the source of all truth and understanding. Guide by your Holy Spirit all those engaged in scientific research, that as they uncover more of the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, they may further the deep purposes of your love. Amen.

Monday 13th October

A report from the World Resources Institute on Global Shale Gas Development finds that drilling and fracturing shale gas wells poses a significant risk to freshwater supplies across the globe. In China more than 60% of shale resources are in areas of high to extremely high baseline water stress. Argentina, on the other hand, has the world's second largest recoverable shale gas resources and 72% of them are in areas of low or medium water stress. In the UK many shale gas deposits overlap with major water aquifers and the report suggests the Government will need to manage water-related risks if shale drilling and hydraulic fracking expands. More than 45,000 people have joined moves to use trespass laws to block energy companies from fracking under their property, but the Government has removed the requirement for

homeowners to be notified of planning applications to drill or frack beneath their homes.

Tuesday 14th October

New Government guidance issued in July said that unconventional oil and gas developments in National Parks, the Broads, AONBs and World Heritage sites should be refused other than in exceptional circumstances and in the public interest. The South Downs National Park Authority has turned down two planning applications for exploratory drilling within the Park, though Celtique, the developers, are considering an appeal. Mike Daly, a former head of exploration at BP, said: “An advertised 1,300 trillion cubic feet in northern England, forecasts of over 4,000 well completions to come and investment of £3 billion over 18 years are numbers that are hard to take seriously when not a single shale well has produced economic quantities of gas. And the lauded potential to create 60,000 – 70,000 jobs over the same period – all point to a “gold mine” of epic proportions. . . The reality is that British shale is a long-term research project.

Wednesday 15th October

Biomethane is 50% more carbon-efficient than average gas supplies and is generated by anaerobic digestion (AD) of farm waste. Marks & Spencer has signed up to receive biogas from the £6 million Vulcan AD plant near Doncaster, using non-commercial crops from farms across Yorkshire and the North East. Its purchase of biomethane certificates will reduce its carbon footprint by more than 6,400 tonnes and will help generate the energy needed to heat 15 M & S Simply Food stores all year round. The target of its Plan A programme is to source 50% of its energy use in the UK and Ireland from small-scale renewables by 2020.

Thursday 16th October

In the USA during January and February 91.9% of the 568 MW. of its new electricity-generating capacity came from renewable energy (biomass, geothermal, solar, water and wind) while 1% came from natural gas and ‘other’ while none at all came from coal, oil and nuclear. Jonathon Porritt points out that the transition to renewables in the USA is slowed only by the over-hyped fracking bubble, but the signs of a change are already there and it is capital markets, not

governments, that are setting the pace.

Friday 17th October

Timber usage is expected to triple by 2050, yet deforestation is rife, due to the enhanced value of cleared land for other uses. Now Ikea, Tetrapak and Kingfisher have become partners in a ‘Value and Impact’ initiative which aims to promote the benefits of legal, responsibly-sourced, sustainable timber. The group supports the development of a methodology to assess the positive impacts of forest management by the Forest Stewardship Council, aiming to bring expert forest management to the 266 million hectares of tropical forest currently without a sustainable plan.

Saturday 18th October

Bristol Fair Trade is host to an Ethical Finance conference called “Make Your Money Count” today at Engineers’ House, Bristol BS8 3NB. The conference will look at the power of money to facilitate more than financial wealth. It is open to all and is aimed at anyone interested in where their money is invested and how the often-secretive world of money can be made more open, honest and ethical.

Keynote speaker: Catherine Howarth, chief executive of ShareAction.

Sunday 19th October

Lord Jesus, you have called us to be your witnesses on earth. Help us to proclaim, by word and deed, the message of your love to all humankind, and to declare your lordship over creation and our responsibility as your stewards.

Monday 20th October

Transnational corporations such as Monsanto have taken out around 1,500 patents on climate-resilient seeds. For them, climate change spells a commercial opportunity. As owners of these patents, they can control access to climate-resilient seeds because the patents give them exclusive rights to produce, distribute and sell the patented product. Farmers’ traditional right to save and share seed is now defined as ‘intellectual property crime’ or, in a word, ‘theft’. Now Monsanto has bought for \$1 billion the US-based Climate Corporation, which controls vast data on climate. So they not only have the exclusive right to sell to the farmers the seeds adapted to their chemicals: they can also sell the climate data on which agricultural