

Additional Prayers

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

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Picture on front cover: Catkins in Roding Valley, Epping, Isabel Bala 2011

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Prayer guide for the care of creation

May 2012



“And God saw everything that he had made and, behold, it was very good.”
(Genesis 1.31)

“The Lord is faithful to all his promises and loving towards all he has made . . .
The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food at the proper time.
You open your hand and satisfy the desires of every living thing.”

(Psalm 145. 13-16)

“The world specially made for the use of man? Certainly not. No dogma taught by the present civilisation forms so ineroperable an obstacle to a right understanding of the relations which human culture sustains to wildness. Every animal, plant and crystal converts it in the plainest terms. Yet it is taught from century to century as something ever new and precious, and in the resulting darkness the enormous conceit is allowed to go unchallenged.”

(John Muir)



Tuesday 1st May

In 2009 the Eden Project launched the Big Lunch in the belief that we are better equipped to tackle the challenges we face when we face them together. Last year over a million took part. This year it takes place on Sunday 3rd June and provides a great excuse to get out and meet the people with whom we share a street, estate or block of flats. Statistics show that:

- We have more rich, poor and ethnic ghettos than ever before
- There will be 2 million more single-person households by 2019
- From 2003 to 2005 there was a 7% drop in trust between neighbours.

You might think a street party the last thing we need to tackle crime, domestic violence, homelessness and children in poverty, but the Big Lunch can be the start of facing up to tough issues. For more information, go to: www.thebiglunch.com

Wednesday 2nd May

As drought restrictions spread across England, WWF calls on the Government and water companies to lead the way by reforming out-of-date

abstraction laws and rolling out universal water metering, neither of which is mentioned in the recent White Paper, even though the Government's own figures suggest that universal water metering could save the country £1.5 billion. "Parts of drought-stricken US and Australia are light years ahead of us in using a combination of water meters, rewards for water saving, efficiency kits and intermittent restrictions, to save up to 30% of water demand. Hosepipe bans are a quick fix that won't solve the long-term problems. Unless Government acts with urgency, we might face the harsh consequences of losing unique wildlife in the near future."

Thursday 3rd May

Veolia Water has saved more than 1.5 million litres of water a day and nearly £100,000 a year following the roll-out of i20's water monitoring system across 31 of its UK sites. Smart pressure controllers and sensors are deployed into the water network, allowing remote monitoring and control of water pressure, so reducing water leakage and burst mains. Currently the UK loses 3.3 billion litres of water every day through leakage.

products.

www.wwf.org.uk/whatwoodyouchoose

Wednesday 30th May

Gabon has decided to burn its entire stock of elephant ivory as a symbol of its commitment to tackle the growing trade in illegal ivory. Currently between 5,000 and 12,000 elephants are slaughtered annually for their tusks, to be made into carvings and ornaments in Asia. WWF-Gabon's director said: "We urgently need concrete and realistic solutions that can be implemented immediately to halt the carnage. All too often, poaching arrests in the field are not followed up with robust prosecutions and strong sentences, and hence provide no deterrent to wildlife criminals." Possible solutions include disrupting sophisticated criminal syndicates, investing in sustainable economic opportunities, tackling corruption and increasing support from the global community.

Thursday 31st May

Between 2002 and 2009 the UK cut the amount of waste going to landfill from 464 kg per head to 259 kg. Despite this, the UK still lags behind

Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Austria and Sweden, who all landfilled less than 3% of their municipal waste compared to the UK's 48%. EC Commissioner Janez Potocnik said:

"Six member states now combine virtually zero landfilling and high recycling rates. Not only do they exploit the value of the waste, they have created thriving industries . . . by making prevention, re-use and recycling more economically attractive through a selection of economic instruments."

Sources:

"Man Swarm" by Dave Foreman
CIWEM Business Briefing
www.edie.net

under schedule. WWF comments: "If the Government backed the renewables industry to the hilt instead of flogging the nuclear horse, the UK could become a world leader in a sector that is already seeing massive growth." Its Positive Energy report shows how renewable energy could supply well over 60% of UK electricity by 2030. This would meet our carbon targets while massively reducing our dependence on imported gas.

Sunday 27th May

Almighty God, who alone canst order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men, grant unto thy people that they may love the thing which thou commandest, and desire that which thou dost promise, that so, amongst the sundry and manifold changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed where true joys are to be found, through Jesus Christ our Lord. (The Book of Common Prayer)

Monday 28th May

The Government has set a target for 4 million solar-powered homes by 2020, but has yet to explain how this is to be achieved. A coalition of groups including the TUC, Federation of

Small Businesses and the Country Land & Business Association has proposed measures to achieve this, including:
Setting tariff rates suited to meet the 2020 target;
Providing certainty about future tariff rates;
Requiring loft and cavity wall insulation, but nothing else, before receiving the tariff.
We need a booming solar industry to get us off the fossil-fuel hook. Stop-go policies on tariffs will not achieve this.

Tuesday 29th May

The UK is the 3rd highest importer in Europe of wood products made from illegal timber. More than half of local authorities have no sustainable timber procurement policy and only 16 out of 433 are implementing the policy effectively. Others claim lack of resources, a lack of priority and a lack of information. From next March the EU Timber Regulation will ban illegally-harvested timber products from the UK. By then, every local authority must have a legal and sustainable procurement policy. The simplest way to achieve this is to purchase only FSC-certified wood

Friday 4th May

The Committee on Climate Change has proposed the inclusion of aviation and shipping emissions in the UK carbon budget for 2050. But WWF points out that:

- 1) Aviation is getting an easy ride by only having to stabilise its CO2 emissions at around 2005 levels by 2050 and
- 2) The CCC report ignores the non-CO2 impacts of aviation such as water vapour and nitrous oxide. "Including aviation and shipping emissions in carbon budgets is an essential step in managing fast-growing greenhouse gas emissions. The Government should accept these recommendations as soon as possible."

Saturday 5th May

Mexico has become the only country after Britain to pass a climate law requiring it to reduce carbon emissions by 50% by 2050. Mexico is the world's 11th biggest economy and is likely to become the 5th by 2050. The new law aims to:

- 1) Phase out fossil fuel subsidies
- 2) Make renewable power competitive with oil, gas and coal

- 3) Cut carbon emissions by 30% by 2030
- 4) Ensure that 24% of its electricity comes from clean sources by 2024
- 5) Conserve Mexico's environment
- 6) Ensure full citizen participation.

40% of Mexicans live in poverty, yet its government and congress see that ending poverty and growing the economy will be that much harder unless they cut greenhouse gas emissions and develop renewable energy resources.

Sunday 6th May

Father, help us to understand how we and all your creation depend utterly on your goodness and our willingness to unite in that belief. Teach us how to be good stewards of all that you have given us, and help us to banish from our words and deeds all greed, selfishness and short-term views.

Monday 7th May

From today until the 18th a series of seminars will take place at London venues on the Emergence of a Commons-based Economy. Global decline affecting oceans, rainforests and the climate provides examples of

what happens when there is a free-for-all in exploiting them. Organised by the School for Commoning, the seminars will address such questions as:

Who owns what? How can we reconcile individual and collective wealth? How can we democratise the global commons? What does it mean to be a Christian and a steward of the commons? For more information, go to:

www.schoolofcommoning.com/content/overview-seminar-series

Tuesday 8th May

The new BP Energy Outlook 2030 forecasts a growth in energy demand of 39% by 2030, when fossil fuels will account for 81% of global energy demand, despite an annual rise of 8% in renewable energy use. Demand for hydrocarbons will rise to 103 million barrels a day – up 18% from the 2010 figure. Global CO2 emissions are likely to rise by 28% by 2030 and could decline after that.

Surprisingly, there is no mention of population growth as a strong driver of increasing energy demand.

Wednesday 9th May

Today and tomorrow a conference called “Communicating Hope”, organised by A Rocha and the John Ray Institute, aims at resourcing all who are engaged in encouraging others to spread the environmental message.

“The aim is to help all of us who are so passionate about these issues to learn and discover what it means to have Christ-centred hope in such desperate times. It’s easy to get discouraged if you’re trying to motivate others, so we hope the gathering will bring a dose of encouragement to all who come.”

Venue: *High Leigh Conference Centre, Hertfordshire.*

Main speakers: *Ruth Valerio (A Rocha) and Martin Hodson (JRI)*
Cost: £80-90.

To book a place email: admin@jri.org.uk

Website: www.arocha.org/gb-en/12072-DSY.html

Thursday 10th May

“The massive growth in human population through the 20th century has had more impact on biodiversity than any other single factor.” (Sir David King, former Chief Scientist)

costs £160 and will pay for itself in 2 years. The forthcoming Green Deal is designed to meet the upfront costs of insulation and recoup the costs by savings on future bills. There will be a £1.3 billion subsidy towards energy costs for people in fuel poverty and for hard-to-insulate houses. The scheme will create 65,000 new jobs by 2015.

Wednesday 23rd May

To meet objections to the Green Deal, the Treasury has promised £200 million to prime the pump for the first 18 months and is considering reductions in council tax or stamp duty. Cutting VAT on energy-saving measures would also help. Better still, the government could use the £4 billion due annually from the carbon levy to take 90% of homes out of fuel poverty and support up to 200,000 new jobs.

Thursday 24th May

A report from Transform UK highlights the Government’s statutory obligation to eradicate fuel poverty by 2016 and to reduce CO2 emissions by 80% below 1990 levels by 2050 and by 50% by 2023-7. Given that buildings account for 37% of UK greenhouse

gas emissions and homes for 25%, driving down energy demand in buildings is critical to meeting these ambitious targets.

Friday 25th May

A Government report on the extraction of shale gas outlines measures to mitigate the risks of seismic tremors. However, the International Energy Agency in its Golden Age of Gas report says: “An increased share of natural gas in the global energy mix is far from enough to put us on a carbon emissions path for a rise in global temperatures of no more than 2 degrees C.” The Government’s gas generation strategy in the autumn will focus on energy security. WWF believes it should also consider whether its recent concessions to the gas industry do not scupper the UK’s efforts to reduce emissions, as required by the Climate Change Act, and to decarbonise the power sector by 2030.

Saturday 26th May

Three major utilities have pulled out of nuclear plans in the UK and the only two reactors under construction in Europe are massively over budget and

“Unlike plagues of the dark ages or contemporary diseases that we do not understand, the modern plague of overpopulation is soluble by means we have discovered and with resources we possess. What is lacking is not sufficient knowledge of the solution, but universal consciousness of the gravity of the problem and education of the billions who are its victims.”

A year earlier President Lyndon Johnson told the UN:

“Five dollars invested in population control is worth one hundred invested in economic growth.”

A 2006 article in *The Lancet* highlighted past successes in international family planning and showed how lowering the birth rate can improve health and reduce poverty. “What is currently lacking is political willingness to incorporate family planning into the development arena.”

Sunday 20th May

God of truth and love, give us the wisdom to know what is right, the strength to do it and the courage to declare it, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour.

Monday 21st May

A study by a team from Conservation International called “Global Biodiversity and the Alleviation of Poverty” finds that protecting high-biodiversity wilderness areas is essential to support the impoverished, ensure continued broad access to nature’s services and meet the UN Millennium Development Goals. “Developed and developing economies cannot continue to ask the world’s poor to shoulder the burden of protecting these globally important ecosystem services for the rest of the world’s benefit, without compensation in return.”

Tuesday 22nd May

Fewer than half Britain’s homes are properly insulated. This is not just a massive waste of money at a time when fuel bills are rapidly increasing. It exacerbates fuel poverty that blights over 4 million households. Treating people made ill by cold housing costs the NHS £850 million a year. Four times as many people die each year from lack of heat as from road accidents.. Yet according to the Energy Saving Trust, installing cavity wall insulation in a 3-bedroom semi

Biologists call this the Sixth Great Extinction. The previous five were caused by cosmic collisions and geological upheavals. This one is caused by one form of life, the human, warring against all the others. For every *Homo sapiens* alive 50,000 years ago, there are 1 million alive today. Never before in the earth’s history has one kind of life gobbled up so much other life – and continues to do so.

Friday 11th May

Warren Hern, writing in the journal *Population and Environment* for 1999, said: “As of 1993, we have added more humans to the world’s population in the past 40 years than we added in the previous 3 million years. Between 7% and 8% of all human beings ever born are alive today.”

While Italy, Japan and Russia may have stopped their growth, forlorn Ethiopia is one of many countries where population growth continues at a rapid rate. In 1950 Ethiopia had less than 19 million souls, in 1984 it had 40 million, today it has 85 million and by 2040 it will have 174 million. Worse, gains in human longevity will continue to contribute to population expansion

for at least half a century, regardless of whatever progress might be made in reducing human fertility.

Saturday 12th May

Tomorrow is Rogation Sunday, when traditionally the ceremony of Beating the Bounds of every parish was preceded by a prayer for the harvest and a blessing from the vicar. Linton parish in Kent

(www.lintonpc.kentparishes.gov.uk)

is one of many parishes reviving the custom, for many reasons:

- 1) It brings together the secular and religious elements of the community
- 2) It focuses on nature’s bounty and the seasons
- 3) It shows participants the beauty of their parish and its landscapes
- 4) It teaches a little about history and local tradition
- 5) It is great fun to do.

Sunday 13th May

Give us, dear Lord, a deeper understanding of your purposes, that we may be steadfast amid the turmoil of our times. May our faith never fail, nor our love grow cold, nor our hope become faint. So may we look up and

lift our heads as your Kingdom draws near, through Jesus Christ our Friend and Redeemer.

Monday 14th May

William Catton in "Overshoot" writes: "The past four centuries of magnificent progress were made possible by two non-repeatable events:

The discovery of a second hemisphere, and the development of means to exploit the planet's long-stored bounty – its fossil fuels. The resulting opportunities for economic and demographic exuberance convinced people that it was natural for the future to be better than the past. . . Unfortunately homo sapiens mistook the withdrawal of savings deposits – fossil fuels – for a rise in income."

Tuesday 15th May

"What" asks Dave Foreman in 'Man Swarm' " is the carrying capacity of a landscape? If iron, timber, clean air, land and oil are there in abundance, but the country runs out of water, it has overshoot its carrying capacity. 175 million Indians consume grain produced with water from irrigation that will soon be exhausted. What will

those 175 million (or perhaps 275 million given its rate of population growth) do when water and grain run out? Where will the people go? When deadly hunger hits that land again (as it has done repeatedly in the past) there will be twice as many empty bellies – unless food aid comes with hard-nosed, unyielding birth-control goals."

Wednesday 16th May

In a 2007 study, Population Matters (then Optimum Population Trust) concluded that forgoing children was the best way to reduce the UK's greenhouse gas emissions. "Each new UK citizen less means a lifetime CO2 saving of nearly 750 tonnes, a climate impact equivalent to 620 return flights between London and New York." Based on a 'social cost' of \$85 a tonne, the report estimated the climate cost of each new Briton over their lifetime at roughly £30,000. The lifetime costs of the extras 10 million people projected for the UK by 2074 would therefore be over £300 billion. "Population limitation should therefore be seen as the most cost-effective carbon-offsetting strategy available to individuals and nations – a strategy that applies with even more force to

developed nations such as the UK because of their higher consumption levels."

Wednesday 16th May

According to Dave Foreman, free-marketism, like Marxism, has swapped God for Man in the belief that:

Man is rational.

Man is an economic being.

The world is a warehouse.

Growth is good.

Progress is foretold.

There are no limits that cannot be overcome by technology.

David Ehrenfeld in "The Arrogance of Humanism" adds additional beliefs, such as:

When the chips are down, we will apply ourselves and work together for a solution before it is too late.

All finite and limited resources have substitutes.

Human civilisation will survive.

Thursday 17th May

Advocates of social justice are inclined to scold rich countries for urging a lower birth rate in poor countries. Some call this "genocide". But if a country is poor and powerless because it already has too many

children for its resources, it will become even poorer and more powerless if it breeds more. If these people have their way, poor countries will be ruined. The problem of poverty is usually seen as one of shortages – shortages of supply. But poverty can just as logically be seen as a problem of longages - longages of demand.

Friday 18th May

"Falling birth rates create a pension crisis" say some economists. But pension arrangements can be changed. What is harder to change is the pressure of numbers on natural resources. Dave Foreman writes:

"Women are choosing for their own good to have fewer children. It's a big step backwards for governments again to see women as brood-mums for more taxpayers. . . Oldsters are not the only ones who lean on working-

age men and women. Babies and children do, too. For reckoning percentages of working and non-working adults, the birth-dearthers unaccountably leave out children."

Saturday 19th May

In 1966 the Rev. Martin Luther King said in a speech at the Margaret Sanger Award on Human Rights: