

Church News Ireland



Service of Thanksgiving for the life and legacy of HRH The Prince Philip

People and places



Belfast Service of Thanksgiving for the life and legacy of HRH The Prince Philip

A very special invitation from The Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award. says, "We are inviting DofE Award Holders to join us for a Service of Thanksgiving for the life and legacy of HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh at St Anne's Cathedral, Belfast on the morning of Thursday 6th October 2022.

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“We’d love to see Award holders from across the generations attending this special event, you may have completed your Award recently, or many years ago.”

To register to attend this special Service please complete this Form <https://forms.office.com/r/A546C79A3b>

Application must be submitted by no later than 12 noon on Friday 9th September 2022.

“There is limited seating capacity within the Cathedral and therefore applications will be taken on a first come first served basis. This means we may need to close the application process earlier than the advertised date if we reach our maximum capacity”.

Belfast performance by Chamber Choir Ireland of Tchaikovsky’s Liturgy of St John Chrysostom

Chamber Choir Ireland, conducted by Paul Hillier will be back in Belfast for the first time since 2018 as they present Tchaikovsky’s sublime Liturgy of St John Chrysostom – so rarely heard in its entirety on Saturday, 1 October 2022, at 7.30pm in St. Thomas’ Church (Eglantine Avenue)

Best known for his Romantic symphonies and ballets, Tchaikovsky was not devoutly religious. Nevertheless, he held a deep interest in the music of the Russian Orthodox Church, bringing all his characteristic emotional expressiveness to this sacred text, and producing some of

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his most personal and moving music in this large-scale work.

Chamber Choir Ireland concerts were a real jewel in our annual programme and it has felt like an age since we last welcomed them to Belfast. Taking place in the beautiful acoustics of St. Thomas' Church (Eglantine Avenue) they are truly special concerts – we can't recommend them highly enough. Come along!

St. Thomas' Church, Eglantine Avenue. Doors: 7.30pm.
Concert: 8pm. Duration: Approx. 1 hour

Concert in support of Kingston College Renovations for Ukrainian Refugees

A concert is being held in the Church of Our Lady Conceived without Sin in Mitchelstown, County Cork on Sunday 18th September at 8pm in support of the Kingston Charity Trust and the restoration work at Kingston College for Ukrainian refugees.

Hundreds of people have been involved in the task of renovating six houses in Kingston College, Mitchelstown so far for Ukrainian refugees. Six families were able to move in already. The concert will raise additional funds for the renovation, and hopefully two more houses can be completed.

Bishop Paul Colton commented:

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As trustees of Kingston College we are hugely grateful for the mammoth support and great generosity of countless people from all over the country, and most especially from Mitchelstown itself and the surrounding areas. Many thanks to all who are organising this concert to give us more support for our efforts. It is greatly appreciated.

Concert tickets can be bought locally, or online here

[\[https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/a-concert-in-solidarity-with-the-ukraine-tickets-380933060037\]](https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/a-concert-in-solidarity-with-the-ukraine-tickets-380933060037)

New members sought for Lisburn Community Orchestra

“As we prepare for the season ahead, Lisburn Community Orchestra are opening applications for new members in the following sections:

Strings 

- Violin
- Viola
- Cello
- Double bass

Woodwind 

- Oboe
- Bassoon

Brass 

- French horn
- Tuba

We would like applicants to be a minimum of ✨ Grade 5 standard or above ✨

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Rehearsals: Thursdays 7-8:30pm. Venue: Lisburn Cathedral.

The Orchestra says -If you are interested we look forward to hearing all about you via the application link below -

<https://www.lisburncommunityorchestra.com/join>

Belfast Islamic Centre opening its doors for Visit My Mosque Day

Belfast Islamic Centre will be one of over 250 mosques around the UK opening their doors to visitors this weekend to help people understand their faith.

The charity, which is affiliated to the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB), is currently based in Wellington Park in south Belfast

Visit My Mosque is a national initiative facilitated by the MCB encouraging mosques across the UK to hold open days to welcome in their neighbours from all faiths and none while also building bridges across communities.

Whilst mosque open days in Britain have been taking place for decades, Visit My Mosque enables mosques to be a part of a nationwide event where mosques across the UK are able to open their door together on the same day.

The Visit My Mosque Belfast event takes place this Sunday, September 4 from 12 noon to 4pm at 38 Wellington Park

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when people are being encouraged to bring a friend and learn more about Islam.

"Come along and meet your local Muslim community, take a tour, attend our information and Q&A sessions, find out about our plans for the future and have a cup of tea!" a spokesperson said.

The Belfast Islamic Centre was established in 1978 by a group of Muslims from the local community to provide a focus for all Muslims living in Northern Ireland.

At present those who use the centre represent 42 nationalities. No-one is absolutely certain about the number of Muslims in Northern Ireland, however it is estimated that there are over 10,000 currently resident in the province.

We are all called to be caring stewards of creation - Archbishop of Armagh, Eamon Martin

The Primate of All Ireland and Archbishop of Armagh, Eamon Martin, reflected in his homily on Sunday on the upcoming Season of Creation, which runs from 1 September to 4 October.

“We cannot simply leave it to governments to solve these immense problems [of climate change]. Humility calls on each one of us to share both the burden and the search for solutions. In our personal lives at home, and in our schools, parishes and communities, the challenge rests with each and all of us.”



Grotto at St Malacky's, Armagh

Those were the words of the Primate of All Ireland and Archbishop of Armagh, Eamon Martin as he marked the beginning of the Season of Creation which kicks off on 1 September.

In his homily during Mass

on Sunday, Archbishop Martin took inspiration from the message of Pope Francis for the forthcoming Season of Creation which runs until 4 October.

The theme for this year is, Listening to the Voice of Creation.

The Archbishop noted that the month long celebration closes on the feast of Saint Francis of Assisi - the saint who

had a wonderful sense of all creation in harmony, blessing and praising God.

Climate impact

However, taking his cue from Pope Francis' message, he observed that scientists are warning of the destructive impact that climate change is having on the planet. "All of creation does not appear to be singing in harmony – there is dissonance, with many wrong notes," he said.

The Archbishop went on to say, "that dissonance, that lack of harmony and noise, can be heard especially in the cry of the poor in those parts of the world most impacted by the effects of climate change."

He pointed out that this summer "we have seen the devastation of forest fires, lost crops, homes and livelihoods destroyed, scorched earth, massive floods, and temperatures never before recorded. On top of this, war continues to disrupt the food chain, pollutes the atmosphere still further, and exacerbates the world's huge dependence on fossil fuels like oil and gas," Archbishop Martin said.

Caring stewards of creation

From a faith point of view, emphasised the Archbishop, "God is calling us today, more than ever, to be caring stewards of creation, to protect and nourish our planet and its resources, and not to selfishly waste them or ruthlessly and excessively exploit and destroy them."

In May this year, the 'State of the Global Climate 2021' report was published, which said the past seven years have been the hottest on record. This document will be used as

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an official document for the COP27 climate conference, taking place in Egypt in November.

But the Primate of All Ireland stressed it is up to everyone, not just governments, to care for our common home.

Ecological conversion

Pope Francis, he noted, speaks of “ecological conversion” and this begins by asking ourselves: how might I change my lifestyle? How can I use more respectfully the good things

Always remember that there is no
conversion to God if there is no
conversion to the oppressed.

Ignacio Ellacuría



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of this earth that God has given us? Can I make some personal sacrifices in answer to the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor that is knocking out of tune the harmony of the great cosmic choir? Can I accept that less is sometimes more?

Archbishop Martin recalled that last October, Pope Francis and other religious and faith leaders met with many scientists and experts, concluding that we are currently “at a moment of opportunity and truth”. “Future generations will never forgive us if we squander this precious opportunity”, they said. “We have inherited a beautiful garden; we must not leave a desert to our children”.

World news

Estimated '4-fold' fuel bill increases will make most housing estate churches unviable, says bishop

There are concerns that heating costs in some churches in low-income communities could lead to some of the buildings becoming unviable.

A new study being carried out by Dave Champness, the National Church of England's Estates Evangelism Consultant, is looking into the impact of the fuel crisis on estate churches.

So far, the research has found that the average fuel bill for a church on a social housing estate with more than 500

homes or in an income deprived community will increase from £4,579 in 2019 (6 per cent of income) to £21,000 (26 percent of income) this winter.

Rt Rev Lynne Cullens, Bishop of Barking and chair of the National Estate Churches Network, which is an ecumenical network for Christians living and working on UK housing estates, said "That's a four-fold increase. It will make most estate churches unviable, so unable to offer the services that will be demanded of them.

"Churches are anxious to offer warm hubs and warm spaces, but they don't have the funds to do so.

"We have 2,500 Church of England estate churches in this country, that's about a fifth of the total number of parishes and they are in areas on the whole that are low income communities.

"So we've gone as estate churches from offering cultural enhancement to emergency first aid.

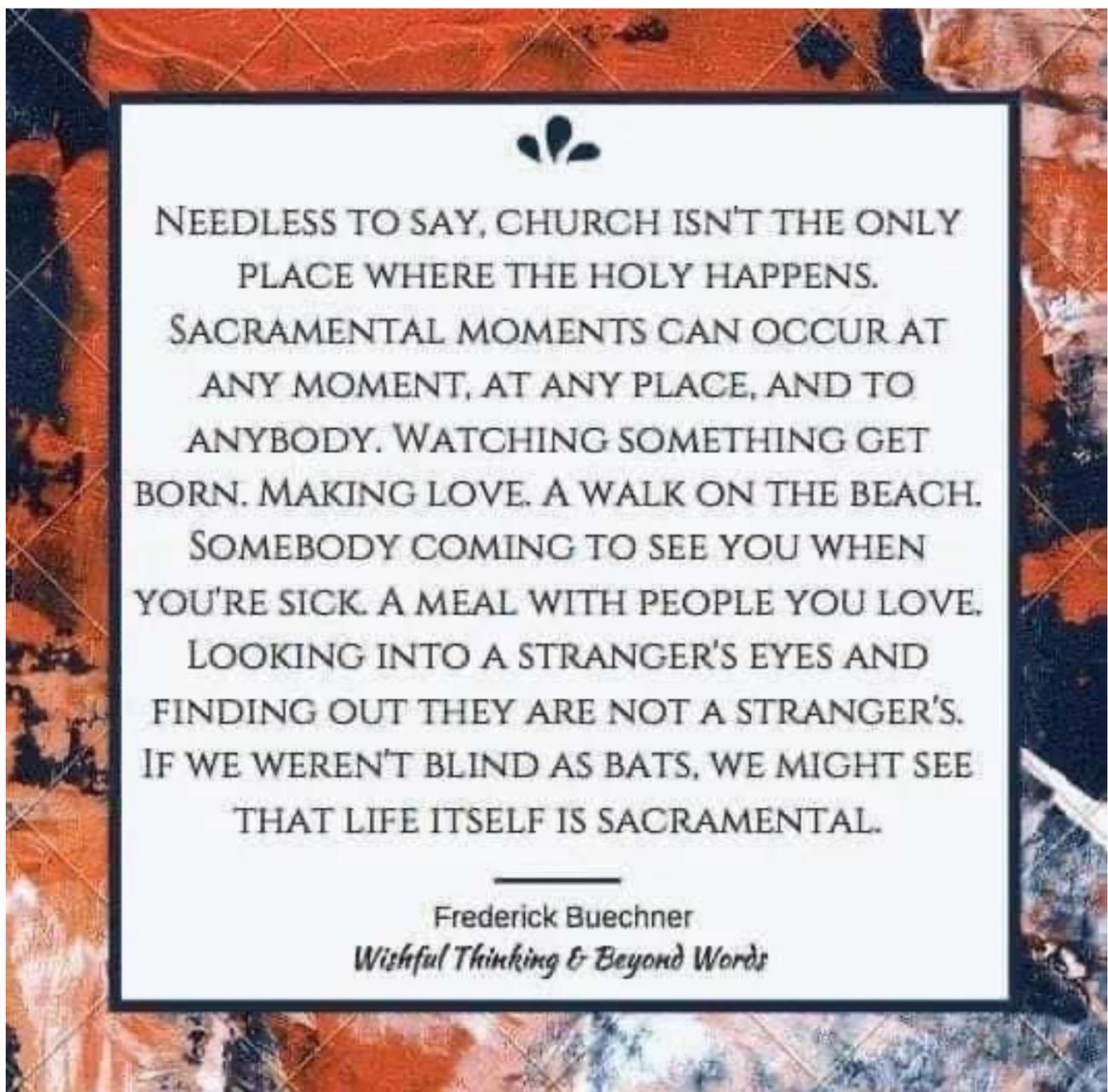
"They are providing support to some of the most vulnerable people in this country. So if those churches aren't viable and don't survive, then the communities that they serve will be in desperate need".

Last week, the energy regulator said the price cap for millions of households in Britain would jump 80 per cent to an average of £3,549 a year from October, but with no cap for businesses some have reported facing hikes of more than 300 per cent on their energy bills.

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Britain's pub and brewing industry on Tuesday called on the government to outline an urgent support package to prevent eye-watering increases in energy costs causing irreversible damage to the sector.

Bishop Lynne said something must be done to prepare and help churches for what's to come. "At diocesan and national level, I think there's a need to consider how best we equip our parishes generally, to serve in this time of crisis," he said.



"What support local and national government are able to offer - we are key stakeholders as church and we should be bold in asking for what we need to support the communities we serve. I think also the diocese needs to consider how we protect our income deprived communities and what central funding might be available.

"We also need to look at how we speak into the issues of social injustice and the growing inequality that we have in the country. God's vision is to fill the hungry with good things and for the rich to be sent away empty. But our current system of taxation, coupled with increasing constraints on benefits does precisely the opposite of that. So how do we speak into those issues of inequality that cause crises like this to be so much more acutely felt by those on low incomes?"

Bishop Lynne, who is also chair of the Church of England's Estates Evangelism Task Group, said there are practical things people can do to reduce the amount their church has to spend on heating.

Her ideas include joining together in one church for worship rather than in several, creating a warm hub that alternates between churches and meeting in smaller rooms at church. She would also like to see congregation members knit or donate socks, gloves, scarves and hats and put them in boxes in churches for people to take away.

Dave Champness is asking for more estate churches to send in projected gas and electricity bills for their church buildings compared with the same period last year. You can email them to dave.champness@blackburn.anglican.org

Outgoing Anglican secretary general reflects on his seven-year term and the Lambeth Conference

The first ever African to hold the post as the secretary general of the Anglican Communion is stepping down from his role.

As his seven-year term comes to an end, Most Rev Dr Josiah Atkins Idowu-Fearon said it had been a "privilege and honour" to serve in one of the most senior leadership roles of the Anglican Communion.

Being able to witness the creation of four new provinces and developing personal relationships with bishops around the Communion, were among his personal highs during his time.

But there's something he regrets: not being able to get some of the bishops from Rwanda, Uganda and Nigeria to attend the Lambeth conference.

"I regret that and more so, I regret the lack of openness to what we believe the Lord is doing within the Communion," he commented.

The Archbishops of those countries rejected the invitation to attend the Lambeth Conference arguing they couldn't share communion with bishops from provinces who bless same-sex marriage.



Not being able to help soften that relationship is something he is remorseful about.

"This is my family and if you have a family, and there is misunderstanding which has made some members of the family to sort of abstain from family gatherings or family activities. There is that hiatus. It's a gap that cannot be filled by any other person. So I'm really hoping, I'm praying that there will be a breakthrough," he continued.

When Archbishop Josiah took up the role in 2015, he shared his prayer was to become a "bridge-builder". When asked if that prayer had been answered, especially during the Lambeth Conference, he said: "It is being answered."

"Let me share: even amongst those who had made up their mind not to take communion. I can tell you that at least a bishop shared with me of his conversation with one of the bishops that chose to abstain from Eucharist and through their discussion, he changed his mind and partook of the Eucharist. Because it's the Eucharist, it is not what I gave you, it is the body out of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ by faith, is not what Josiah does.

"It is the giver, who is Christ and I felt that was a high point for me and this bishop shared it with me in the presence of another Archbishop. So my prayer is being answered."

Archbishop Josiah will now take on a role in the Anglican Diocese of Texas - he will become an assistant bishop focussing on mission and evangelism, church growth and global partnership.

He will be succeeded by Most Rev Anthony Poggo, the Archbishop of Canterbury's current adviser on Anglican Communion Affairs.

Dean of Truro

The Very Revd Roger Bush, the Dean of Truro, announced earlier this month that he will retire at the end of September.

The Bishop of Truro has subsequently announced that he is appointing Fr Simon Robinson SMMS as Interim Dean of Truro for the period of one year from 9 October.

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“It is intended that he will fulfil this role for a full year, with the process of the appointment of a new Dean, in succession to the Very Rev. Roger Bush, taking place in parallel.”

In the media

Bishop criticises synthesis report sent to Rome on behalf of Irish Catholic Church

Document contains challenges to church teaching ‘which she has held since the beginning’

Catholic bishop has said the national synthesis sent to Rome earlier this month revealed “an attitude to what could be termed ‘traditional’ faith which is mildly dismissive.” Bishop of Waterford and Lismore Phonsie Cullinan also felt that the synodal process which led to the synthesis “was somewhat rushed. The time limitation given by those tasked to oversee the Synod in Rome was insufficient, Patsy McGarry writes in the Irish Times.

“Discussions or parish conversations or listening sessions or whatever one wishes to call them were completed under a certain pressure with little time to ensure deep reflection, have meaningful conversations and prayerful consideration of the questions posed on the themes of communion, participation and mission.”

It was also the case that “a number of things emerge from the synthesis which challenge church teaching which she has held since the beginning”, added Bishop Cullinan.

The process to which he referred began in Ireland’s 26 Catholic dioceses, as elsewhere in the Catholic world, last October when consultations about church reform began at parish level with findings published in a report on each Irish diocese’s website last June. These, along with a further 29 submissions from various Catholic organisations and individuals, were considered in Athlone at a national assembly of the Catholic Church in Ireland last June.

Synod of Bishops

Subsequently, a steering committee prepared the Irish synthesis report which was sent to Rome on August 15th in preparation for a Synod of Bishops there in October 2023.

Among other matters, the synthesis report called for equality for women in the church, up to and including ordination, an embrace of LGBTI+ people, the divorced and remarried, as well as of single parents, and removal of the mandatory celibacy rule for priests.

Bishop Cullinan, believed to be the only Irish bishop who is a member of the Catholic Church’s conservative Opus Dei organisation, said that “from my own interaction with some ‘conservative’ or traditional’ believers it was clear that many did not engage with the synodal process at a parish level”.

In a posting on his diocesan website he continued: “It would be interesting to research why this was so. Is it because

they themselves feel marginalised? Or because they felt that Church teaching cannot be changed and that there was no need for this synodal process and that little fruit would ensue? Or perhaps they felt they simply had better things to do with their time?”

He suggested that “if the Church in Ireland is worried about groups on the margins of Irish society then we will have to dialogue in a more serious way with what might be termed ‘traditional Catholics’”.

On the national assembly in Athlone, which he attended with other Catholic bishops, he said “there was far too much introspection”. He left it “realising that we had heard very little on mission and the missionary outreach of the church”.

He wondered “where was the challenge to the prevailing culture of individualism and secularism? Are we just giving in to current trends and forgetting about the wisdom of past generations and the long tradition of the church?”

Final synthesis

Bishop Cullinan also felt that “generally speaking many of the submissions from the 26 dioceses show a difference in emphases to the final synthesis”. This was, he said, “my subjective take on it and I do accept that there will always be different subjective attitudes at play in the writing up of any summary of people’s views.”

Findings in the report published by Waterford and Lismore diocese itself last June, following consultations at parish level, were broadly in line with those of other dioceses. It

said that as an issue gender equality was “very visible throughout the conversations”.

Women, it said, “were considered to be powerhouses of the organisation but undervalued in their role within the Church.” It was asked “that women be allowed to be priests and deacons in the future”.

Young people asked that “the Church be more welcoming of the LGBTQ+ community” and were open “to the idea that the sacraments would be taught through a ‘Sunday School’ model in parishes” rather than “through the current school structure. Students said that the schools were doing the work of the Church.”

Lay involvement was seen as “a crucial element” to church and parish survival, “allowing the clergy to focus on the pastoral & sacramental side of parish life”. It was also noted, “that when Our Lady appeared in Knock, Fatima and Lourdes, she appeared to lay people and not to priests”.

As with the other dioceses, people in Waterford and Lismore also believed “priests should be allowed to marry if they wish”.

And, as in the other 25 dioceses, there too “the vast majority of those who gathered for the faith conversations were of the midlife to senior generations.” They concluded, “the hierarchical Church must now LISTEN [their emphasis], and, more importantly, ACT [their emphasis] on what has been said during these faith conversations”.

Courtesy The Irish Times Tue Aug 30 2022

Perspective

Pope's Message for World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation

Today Thursday, 1st September is the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation. The Holy Father has released a special message for it.

Dear brothers and sisters! "Listen to the voice of creation" is the theme and invitation of this year's Season of Creation. The ecumenical phase begins on 1 September with the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation and concludes on 4 October with the feast of Saint Francis. It is a special time for all Christians to pray and work together to care for our common home. Originally inspired by the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, this Season is an opportunity to cultivate our "ecological conversion", a conversion encouraged by Saint John Paul II as a response to the "ecological catastrophe" predicted by Saint Paul VI back in 1970. If we learn how to listen, we can hear in the voice of creation a kind of dissonance. On the one hand, we can hear a sweet song in praise of our beloved Creator; on the other, an anguished plea, lamenting our mistreatment of this our common home.

The sweet song of creation invites us to practise an "ecological spirituality," attentive to God's presence in the natural world. It is a summons to base our spirituality on the "loving awareness that we are not disconnected from the rest of creatures, but joined in a splendid universal communion". For the followers of Christ in particular, this

luminous experience reinforces our awareness that "all things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being" (Jn 1:3). In this Season of Creation, we pray once more in the great cathedral of creation, and revel in the "grandiose cosmic choir" made up of countless creatures, all singing the praises of God. Let us join Saint Francis of Assisi in singing: "Praise be to you, my Lord, for all your creatures" (cf. Canticle of Brother Sun). Let us join the psalmist in singing, "Let everything that breathes praise the Lord!" (Ps 150:6).

Tragically, that sweet song is accompanied by a cry of anguish. Or even better: a chorus of cries of anguish. In the first place, it is our sister, mother earth, who cries out. Prey to our consumerist excesses, she weeps and implores us to put an end to our abuses and to her destruction. Then too, there are all those different creatures who cry out. At the mercy of a "tyrannical anthropocentrism" (Laudato Si', 68), completely at odds with Christ's centrality in the work of creation, countless species are dying out and their hymns of praise silenced. There are also the poorest among us who are crying out. Exposed to the climate crisis, the poor feel even more gravely the impact of the drought, flooding, hurricanes and heat waves that are becoming ever more intense and frequent. Likewise, our brothers and sisters of the native peoples are crying out. As a result of predatory economic interests, their ancestral lands are being invaded and devastated on all sides, "provoking a cry that rises up to heaven" (Querida Amazonia, 9). Finally, there is the plea of our children. Feeling menaced by shortsighted and selfish actions, today's young people are crying out, anxiously asking us adults to do everything possible to prevent, or at least limit, the collapse of our planet's ecosystems.



Creator God, teach us to
care for your creation
and help us to live lightly
on the earth.
Amen

Listening to these anguished cries, we must repent and modify our lifestyles and destructive systems. From its very first pages, the Gospel calls us to "repent, because the kingdom of heaven has come near" (Mt 3:2); it summons us to a new relationship with God, and also entails a different relationship with others and with creation. The present state of decay of our common home merits the same attention as other global challenges such as grave health crises and wars. "Living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience" (Laudato Si', 217).

As persons of faith, we feel ourselves even more responsible for acting each day in accordance with the summons to conversion. Nor is that summons simply individual: "the ecological conversion needed to bring about

lasting change is also a community conversion" (ibid., 219). In this regard, commitment and action, in a spirit of maximum cooperation, is likewise demanded of the community of nations, especially in the meetings of the United Nations devoted to the environmental question.

The COP27 conference on climate change, to be held in Egypt in November 2022 represents the next opportunity for all to join in promoting the effective implementation of the Paris Agreement. For this reason too, I recently authorized the Holy See, in the name of and on behalf of the Vatican City State, to accede to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement, in the hope that the humanity of the 21st century "will be remembered for having generously shouldered its grave responsibilities" (ibid., 65). The effort to achieve the Paris goal of limiting temperature increase to 1.5°C is quite demanding; it calls for responsible cooperation between all nations in presenting climate plans or more ambitious nationally determined contributions in order to reduce to zero, as quickly as possible, net greenhouse gas emissions. This means "converting" models of consumption and production, as well as lifestyles, in a way more respectful of creation and the integral human development of all peoples, present and future, a development grounded in responsibility, prudence/precaution, solidarity, concern for the poor and for future generations. Underlying all this, there is need for a covenant between human beings and the environment, which, for us believers, is a mirror reflecting "the creative love of God, from whom we come and towards whom we are journeying". The transition brought about by this conversion cannot neglect the demands of justice,

especially for those workers who are most affected by the impact of climate change.

For its part, the COP15 summit on biodiversity, to be held in Canada in December, will offer to the goodwill of governments a significant opportunity to adopt a new multilateral agreement to halt the destruction of ecosystems and the extinction of species. According to the ancient wisdom of the Jubilee, we need to "remember, return, rest and restore". In order to halt the further collapse of biodiversity, our God-given "network of life", let us pray and urge nations to reach agreement on four key principles: 1. to construct a clear ethical basis for the changes needed to save biodiversity; 2. to combat the loss of biodiversity, to support conservation and cooperation, and to satisfy people's needs in a sustainable way; 3. to promote global solidarity in light of the fact that biodiversity is a global common good demanding a shared commitment; and 4. to give priority to people in situations of vulnerability, including those most affected by the loss of biodiversity, such as indigenous peoples, the elderly and the young.

Let me repeat: "In the name of God, I ask the great extractive industries - mining, oil, forestry, real estate, agribusiness - to stop destroying forests, wetlands, and mountains, to stop polluting rivers and seas, to stop poisoning food and people".

How can we fail to acknowledge the existence of an "ecological debt" (Laudato Si', 51) incurred by the economically richer countries, who have polluted most in the last two centuries; this demands that they take more ambitious steps at COP27 and at COP15. In addition to

determined action within their borders, this means keeping their promises of financial and technical support for the economically poorer nations, which are already experiencing most of the burden of the climate crisis. It would also be fitting to give urgent consideration to further financial support for the conservation of biodiversity. Even the economically less wealthy countries have significant albeit "diversified" responsibilities (cf. *ibid.*, 52) in this regard; delay on the part of others can never justify our own failure to act. It is necessary for all of us to act decisively. For we are reaching "a breaking point" (cf. *ibid.*, 61).

During this Season of Creation, let us pray that COP27 and COP15 can serve to unite the human family (cf. *ibid.*, 13) in effectively confronting the double crisis of climate change and the reduction of biodiversity. Mindful of the exhortation of Saint Paul to rejoice with those who rejoice and to weep with those who weep (cf. Rom 12:15), let us weep with the anguished plea of creation. Let us hear that plea and respond to it with deeds, so that we and future generations can continue to rejoice in creation's sweet song of life and hope.

Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

Church News Ireland

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