



A Catholic Season of Creation – Sundays of September

26th Sunday of Ordinary Time – September 28th 2014

NO. 4 Rivers

The angel showed me the river of life rising from the throne of God.

Revelation 22:2

Earth is our common home.

Pope Benedict XVI Peace Day Message 2008

Greeting

Today the Readings invite us to celebrate the grace of being filled with the life of God's kingdom. Jesus emptied himself of divinity. We are to empty ourselves of sin so that the integrity of God flows into our world like a river. Losing our integrity makes us like parched deserts. We are sorry for the times we have diminished water as a sign of God's Reign and ask forgiveness for the loss of integrity in our daily living.

Prayers of the Faithful

- That we have wisdom in our efforts to use the Murray Darling, the Great Artesian Basin and all rivers with ecological respect and human equity.
- That we will curb our water-waste and extraction industries will take care not to pollute our rivers and aquifers.
- That Australia will be generous in helping all nations provide clean water for their peoples at reasonable prices.

Hymns

Songs to Celebrate with Creation.

www.willowconnection.com.au James McAuley composed hymns about the Australian land and animals.

- By the Rivers of Babylon
- Song of Waters
- Mother Earth, Our Mother Birthing

Dismissal

We have celebrated with joy that the Reign of God flows like a river of blessing through our lives and our land. Emptied of self-importance and filled with the integrity God gives, let us go forth on our mission to find and proclaim the kingdom wherever we find it knowing that, like water, it is abundant if we look.

Lectionary and Worship Phrases (Ez, Ps 24, Phil, Mt)

Join in the joys of your kingdom
 The beauty of your power
 Upright person renounces integrity to commit sin ... dies
 Renounces sin to become law-abiding ... live
 teach me your paths
 Do not remember the sins of my youth
 Be united in your convictions and united in your love
 Nobody thinks of his own interests first
 Your minds must be the same as Jesus Christ
 His state was divine but he did not cling to his equality with God
 My sheep listen to my voice
 Prostitutes will make their way into the kingdom of God before you
 Accept our offering and make it a source of blessing
 Christ gave up his life for us.



‘inter-generational justice’ and ‘inter-generational solidarity,’
 Pope Benedict XVI Caritas in Veritate #51
 Peace Message 2010 #8

Season of Creation

The Season of Creation runs during the Sundays of September. Combining the insights of ecology and scriptural scholarship reveals deeper meanings in the Lord's Prayer. (Mt 6:9-13) <http://seasonofcreation.com> Vicky Balabanski says that the Our Father is a window into Christian aspirations as well as a focus for worship. *Readings from the Perspective of Earth* p151f, ed. N C Habel 2000.

The Lord's Prayer was written within an ancient three tiered cosmos. Astromony now shows that the image of a split between heaven and earth is false. God is present and active on earth establishing the Reign of God.

Petitions in the Lord's Prayer are about bread, debt and our being put on trial. Earth is our focus if we believe all people and species need food; our overuse of earth resources put us into a debt which must be paid; un-serviceable loans and over-development test nature's life support systems and put us on trial.

Connecting Justice, Peace and Care for Earth (JPIC)

Columban JPIC believes that there is an intimate connection between the action of social justice, growing peace and care for earth. We cannot properly work for one without caring for all three. Its magazine takes the name *Connections*. www.columban.org.au

Injustice towards the life giving cycle of water on earth takes many forms. Overseas there are Australian companies competing in Chile and elsewhere to control rights over water. In Australia we often mismanage water resources, be it the Murray Darling Basin or the Great Artesian Basin. The impact of mining and the chemicals used in coal seam drilling often pollute rivers or aquifers essential for agriculture.

ABC clips: *The River Lovers* 21/02/14 *Hidden Resource* 3/11/13 www.abc.net.au

Global climate change has already impacted ... of immediate concern are environmental refugees coming from our Pacific neighbours.

Bishop's Committee JDEP 2005
On Holy Ground p15

The Christ we encounter in the Eucharist is the risen one in whom in whom all things were created and are reconciled.

Fr Denis Edwards 2005, quoted on
On Holy Ground p13

Lectionary's Hidden Voices

Earth serves humanity as a teacher and leader. Natural systems of atmospheric winds and ocean currents, changing seasons and slowly evolving genetics are the context for human life. Earth teaches us to plan within its limits, showing what does and does not work.

The Lectionary often leaves out the teaching and leadership role of women. In the continuous reading from Romans, Phoebe as deaconess is omitted. During the Easter Sundays the sending of Mary Magdalene as a messenger to the disciples is left out. (John 20:17) These omissions alert us to look for the teaching role of the earth in God's plans.

Church Teaching and Belief

Worldwide conferences of Catholic Bishops have taught on the connection between faith and environmental issues. The US bishops have set up an office to address climate change. www.catholicclimatecovenant.org

The Federation of Latin American and Caribbean Bishops Conferences have spoken on how genetically modified cropping has caused poverty and damaged health. www.worldmission.ph Religious and Mission groups explore international social and environmental justice. www.columbans.co.uk



We are losing the attitude of wonder, contemplation, listening to creation. The implications of living in a horizontal manner [are that] we have moved away from God, we no longer read His signs.

Pope Francis 5.06.13 World Environment Day

Ecological Insight

The CSIRO has been an iconic research unit for nearly a century. Its science shows that rivers and coastal systems are under pressure from their misuse and climate fluctuations; groundwater dependent ecosystems are at risk. At stake are deteriorating water quality, modified natural habitats, disrupted food webs, and reduced ecosystem services.

The CSIRO's Catchment Biogeochemistry and Aquatic Ecology Research Program collects the scientific knowledge to form management strategies to protect and improve Australia's aquatic systems. Research focuses on how the basic life forms of ecosystems interact in rivers, floodplains, wetlands, water storages and estuaries. www.csiro.au

What can I do?

- Contact your local water management authorities to find out what they do.
- Contact Caritas about overseas water aid projects.
- Find out about Pacific islands losing their fresh water lagoons.