

PATHWAYS: Hope for the Journey

Online Resource
Advent - Year C, 2018

Let us celebrate the liturgical seasons of Advent in the spirit of the environmental encyclical of Pope Francis *Laudato Si'* (LS). Meet Jesus on our pathway through life. He restores our joy and draws us forward in our ecological vocation to belong within the life giving rhythms of Earth itself.

December is observed throughout the Christian world as a month of prayer and giving to the less well off. Let us give from our substance and not just our excess. Advent celebrations remember a time between the first and second comings of Christ. They are meant to make us ask questions as we oscillate between dream and reality.

Central to the Advent Scripture Readings is a tone of waiting and preparing, longing and watching. They tell stories of searching for meaning to human existence. Church communities have special Advent hymns and practices - a crib, the Magi search. On four successive Advent Sundays we light candles to symbolise the journey. Let us make Advent a time of meaning for adults as well as joy for children.

We can fruitfully search for the presence of God in our world. God can be found revealed in Earth as well as in human history. This liturgical Year C we search for Pathways: Hope for the Journey.



**Advent increases our hope, a hope
which does not disappoint.
The Lord never lets us down".**

Pope Francis

Liberation

1st Sunday of Advent

Rejoice

2nd Sunday of Advent

Draw From God

3rd Sunday of Advent

The Face of God

4th Sunday of Advent

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Pathways: Hope for the Journey 1st Sunday Advent - Year C LIBERATION



Your way is true (Ps 24) Prayers and Sunday Scripture

*Eager to welcome heaven's call
Searching for light of the Word
Welcoming the light of his truth
Honesty and integrity in the land
City called Lord-our-integrity
Shows the path to those who stray
Confirm your hearts in holiness
Human race to love each other
Progress in kind of life meant to lead
Stand erect as liberation at hand
Not coarsened with cares of life
Stay awake, pray all times.*

Earth not bewildered

Ecology puts humanity within a comfortable Earthly home – Goldie Locks Planet. The evolution of life on Earth over eons is a complex and seemingly unknowable story. Yet its mystery has been probed over millennia by science and religion to create a marvellous revelation in our times. Locating ourselves within Earth's systems of nature puts us in a secure place. In that place we learn from its systems to grow new and sustainable ways of living. Humanity can progress without apocalyptic calamity or being bewildered.

Science and religion, with their distinctive approaches to understanding reality, can enter into intense dialogue fruitful to both. Pope Francis Laudato Si' #62

Dialogue

Advent is a time to search and appreciate other ways. Fifty years ago the Vatican II document on interfaith dialogue taught that the whole human family carries a spiritual impulse. All that is true and holy in religions and philosophies carries images of God. Mutual learning creates a common vision for the future. Pope Francis recently named dialogue with ecological scientists and campaigners as integral to God's mission and Catholic living.

Prayers of the Faithful

- Freedom** – God freed the People of Israel from slavery. That we will work to free ourselves from sin and grow freedom in nations ...
we pray
- Leaders** - God graces our lives with model leaders. That planners facing Climate Change will all act with vision and boldness ...
we pray
- Earth** - God has graced us with Earth as our common home. That we will respect and use it with love as Pope Francis asks ...
we pray
- Change** – God has set us in an evolving world. That we will be willing to change our thinking so we do not live in fear but can stand erect ... *we pray*
- Lifestyle** – In Jesus we have the power to be transformed. That we will not be lured into a self-centred lifestyle but choose to grow with others ...
we pray

Thomas Merton

He was a seeker. He began his search for meaning in his life as a lover of literature. Converted to God, he searched the Scriptures and became a Cistercian monk. A prolific writer about the mystical journey, he sought out the wisdom of other faiths through dialogue with prominent Asian spiritual figures. He grew his appreciation of Christ by relishing the practices of Zen Buddhism and communion with nature taught through Taoism.

Action

- Join an inter-faith group such as Faith and Ecology Network
- Read Laudato Si' or visit an inter-faith website like the Yale Forum

Mission's Wide Embrace

Pastors and the lay faithful who accompany their brothers and sisters in faith or on a journey of openness to God must always remember what the Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches quite clearly: "Imputability and responsibility for an action can be diminished or even nullified by ignorance, inadvertence, duress, fear, habit, inordinate attachments, and other psychological or social factors".... accompany with mercy and patience.

Pope Francis Joy of the Gospel #44



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Pathways:

Hope for the Journey

2nd Sunday Advent - Year C

REJOICE



Delivered from bondage,
laugh and sing (Ps 125)

Prayers and Sunday Scripture

*Son makes the night radiant
May the darkness not blind us
Judge wisely the things of Earth
Put on the beauty of God
As streams in dry land
On our lips there were songs
The name of God gives life
Walk in safety, in the forest shade
Finish good work begun in you
Love as Christ Jesus
Improve knowledge and perception
Voice cries, prepare the way
You give us bread from heaven.*

Laudato Si' #16 - Themes

- the poor and planet fragile
- all in the world is connected
- power derived from technology
- other ways to understand economy
- each creature has its own value
- human meaning of ecology
- need forthright and honest debate
- international and local policies
- throw-away culture and lifestyle.

The ultimate purpose of other creatures is not to be found in us. Rather, all creatures are moving forward, with us and through us, towards a common point of arrival, which is God. Pope Francis Laudato Si' #83

United Nations

Pope Francis' address to the UN. I pay homage to all those men and women whose loyalty and self-sacrifice have benefitted humanity as a whole in these past seventy years. He went on to say, we human beings are part of the environment ... (but) a selfish and boundless thirst for power and material prosperity leads both to the misuse of available natural resources and to the exclusion of the weak and disadvantaged. (25 Sep. 2015).

Prayers of the Faithful

1. **Self-centred** – Creation flows from a loving outpouring of God's own self. That we be freed from the bondage of self-centred greed ... *we pray*
2. **Choices** – In God's plan humans are free to rebel. That we repent of our negative choices and let God finish the work begun in us ... *we pray.*
3. **Prophets** – In both ancient and modern times God sends prophets. That we look for modern messages of God to prepare the way for God's Reign in Christ...*we pray*
4. **Joy** – the Psalms are songs of joy remembering God's works. That living the Gospel be a source of joy for all around us ... *we pray*
5. **Mission** – The abiding Spirit deepens our spiritual perception. That the mission work of our lives proclaim the mystery of God's presence ... *we pray*

Mary Evelyn Tucker

Mary Ellen was involved with the Earth Charter since its inception. Now at Yale University she works in both the Schools of the Environment and Divinity. With her husband John Grim they direct the Forum on Religion and Ecology. The enc-crisis led them to organize conferences on World Religions and Ecology at Harvard (1995-1998) and edit the output. Their interdisciplinary way of work was inspired by studies with Thomas Berry. They worked with evolutionary philosopher, Brian Swimme, to create a multi-media project called Journey of the Earth. Tucker and Grim promote the environmental encyclical of Pope Francis.

Action

1. Join the Sunday choir to better proclaim God's deeds
2. Join a committee welcoming refugees
3. Give a copy of Laudato Si' as a Christmas present

Mission's Warm Embrace

Jesus himself is the model of this method of evangelization ... when he speaks to someone, he looks into their eyes with deep love and concern: ... Enter fully into the fabric of society, sharing the lives of all, listening to their concerns, helping them materially and spiritually.

Pope Francis Joy of the Gospel' #269

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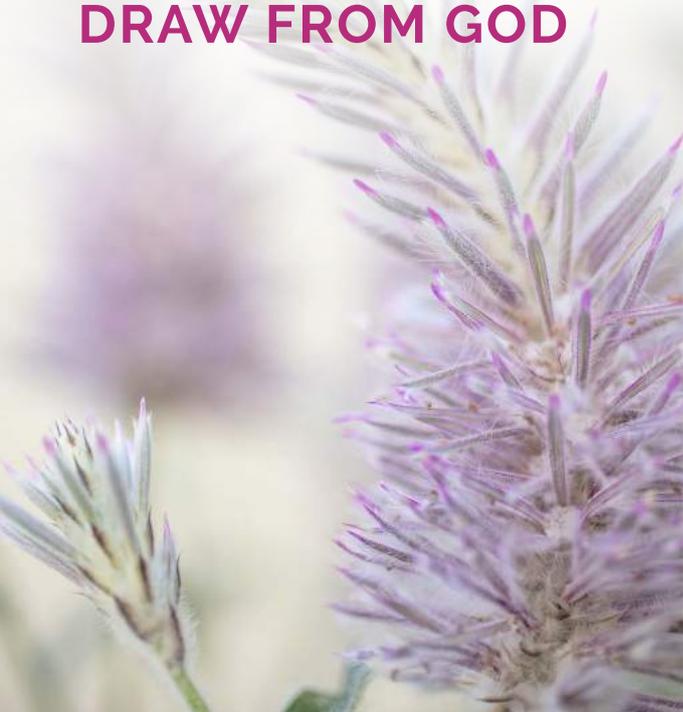
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Pathways:

Hope for the Journey

3rd Sunday Advent - Year C

DRAW FROM GOD



Draw water from the wells of salvation (Is 12:3)

Prayers and Sunday Scripture

*Look forward to Christ's birthday
Father faithful to promises
Earth rejoices, prepare hearts
God is in your midst
Renew you by God's love
No fear and limp limbs, dance
Want you to be happy,
Have a need, pray for it
Peace of God guards your thoughts
Sent to bring Good News to the poor
Expectancy had grown among the people
Baptise with Holy Spirit and fire.*

Mercy

Two Scriptural words for mercy are *hesed* and *rahamim* – the loving kindness of God and the love welling up from the gut. “Can a mother forget her infant, be without tenderness for the child of her womb? Even should she forget, I will never forget you” (Is 49:15). Luke chapter 15 has three parables about mercy. Loving kindness is the way God acts.

*Saint Francis shows us just how inseparable is the bond between concern for nature, justice for the poor, commitment to society and interior peace.
Pope Francis Laudato Si #10*

Big History

The Big History Project was created at Macquarie University. At the beginning of their university life, students are invited to situate their studies and their personal expectations within the history of the universe. This frees them to break out of boxes of specialisation and be in awe at their place on their wonderful blue planet. Modules have also been prepared for high schools.

<https://www.bighistoryproject.com/home>

Prayers of the Faithful

1. **Searching** - God has set a divine yearning deep in our hearts. That the Church be restless and never waver in its search, expecting to find ... *we pray*
2. **History** – God is present in all history. That our parish seek to find the presence of God's own self in our historical time ... *we pray*
3. **Leaders** – God faithfully raises leaders in Church and society. That they will serve the common good in word and deed ... *we pray*
4. **Obedience** – Jesus was baptised by the Holy Spirit. That we will be obedient to the call of the Spirit in our lives ... *we pray*
5. **Generous** – God gave Israel land to dwell in and to enjoy peace. That we generously welcome those who have no country of their own ... *we pray*

Julian Tenison Woods

Prominent in Australian Church history for helping Mother Mary McKillop found the Josephite Sisters, a lesser known part of his story was as a writer on natural history. Born in London, walking in the Jersey forests as a youth and then working on a newspaper in Docks area he learnt many sides of life. A migrant to Australia he was ordained in 1857 then appointed the first parish priest at Penola. Travelling on horseback between churches, he would stop under a tree and in the contemplative silence of the bush write his scientific articles on local geology. He combined pastoral care for people with knowledge of the ecological issues of his time.

Action

1. Affirm people of good will with letters of praise for their work
2. Learn about Australian Church heroes and their work

Mission's Loving Embrace

The kingdom, already present and growing in our midst ... Our mandate is to “go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation” (Mk 16:15), for “the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God” (Rom 8:19) ... hope, which seeks the eschatological kingdom, always generates history.

Pope Francis Joy of the Gospel #181

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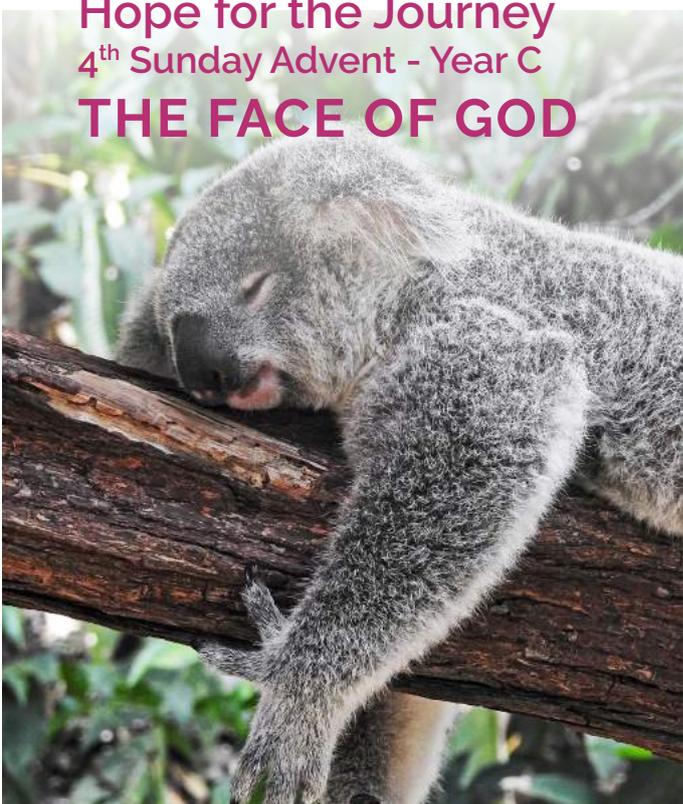
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Pathways:

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4th Sunday Advent - Year C

THE FACE OF GOD



See your face and be saved (Ps 79)

Prayers and Sunday Scripture

*Fill our hearts with love,
Eternal Word took flesh on Earth
Power of Spirit sanctifies Mary,
Celebrate Christ coming as Saviour
The exiled remnant come
Live secure: he will be our peace
The shepherd, the vine carer
Not sacrifice or holocaust
May God's will be done to me
Blessed is the fruit of your womb
Blessed is she who believed the promise.*

Habitat and Chinese Philosophy

Habitat is a key word in the science of ecology. Plants and animals are 'happy' if their habitat is right and secure. For the human habitat: Chinese philosophy about right living has helped their culture survive and prosper for thousands of years – the Confucian idea of humanity and nature as one; the Daoist view of humanity reflecting nature's lessons; the Buddhist belief that all living things are equally important. Pope Francis' 'integral ecology' has a similar message.

All is not lost. Human beings, while capable of the worst, are also capable of rising above themselves, choosing again what is good, and making a new start.
Pope Francis *Laudato Si'* #205

Contradictions

Ecology teaches about the cycles of dying and rising in the natural world, mysterious evolution and transitions to new things. Likewise, Scripture presents us with contradictions in stories of an exiled remnant people (Israel) that flourished in a barren land. The message for us in these stories is one of hope. We can find God present with us in the often messy contradictions of modern life - *Emmanuel*.

Prayers of the Faithful

1. **Transformation** – In Earth itself God teaches about cycles of dying and new growth. That we view trials as stepping stones to transformation ... *we pray*
2. **Renewal** - God never abandoned the exiled remnant of Israel. That in God's Spirit we create the Church anew in every age ... *we pray*
3. **Will of God** - God does not want sacrifice but for us to do God's will. That we accept Jesus as the light guiding our lives ... *we pray*
4. **Imagination** - God does greater works than we can imagine. That we let our hearts and minds be expanded, giving us courage to find hope in life ... *we pray*
5. **Solstice** – God punctuates Earth with seasons. That the birth of Jesus at the solstice help us look for the actions of the Trinity on Earth ... *we pray*

Dame Marie Roslyn Bashir

She was born in Narrandera and educated at the local Catholic school and University of Sydney. From 1956 onwards she held various medical positions, with a particular emphasis in psychiatry. From 1993 she was Clinical Director of Mental Health Services for the Central Sydney Area Health Service until appointed Governor of NSW 2001-2012. She was also Chancellor of the University of Sydney 2007–2012. She is known as a person of compassion and joy.

Action

1. Give a copy of *Laudato Si'* as a Christmas present
2. Eat together as a family and give thanks before meals

Mission's Warm Embrace

The history of the Church shows that Christianity does not have simply one cultural expression ... the Church expresses her genuine catholicity and shows forth the "beauty of her varied face" ... Through inculturation, the Church "introduces peoples, together with their cultures, into her own community".
Pope Francis *Joy of the Gospel* #116

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