

# Encouragement Encouragement

August 2019 – Issue 97

*Creatures, Creation and Prayer...*

THE HOST APOSTOLATE  
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Who can dispute the sheer magnificence of the planet that we all call home and inhabit? Its diversity, colour, peoples, and animals all reflect the grandeur of both the Creator and the created. A popular hymn, often indeed sung at funerals, reflecting I think that life goes on, is ‘Oh Lord my God, when I in awesome, consider all the worlds thy hand has made’ – then ends with the refrain ‘Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to Thee.’ Who can argue this song of the spirit, raised up in delight at the sheer beauty of all we behold? Yet how can we not be aware of our responsibility for maintaining that beauty, and the resources that it provides for us, food, water, warmth, and healing as well as people and animals.

We are all called to be good stewards of all that has been provided for us to use and enjoy. Today we can scarcely avoid the whole subject of protecting the environment and the cost of not doing so. We speak of climate change, pollution, carbon emissions, shortages, population growth, growth of certain illnesses, as well as cataclysmic events which seem to take many lives. In order not to bury our heads in the sand we have to be aware of the effects all that is occurring has on us – but perhaps even more crucially, on subsequent generations, our children and grandchildren, for most surely they will be affected and change is already upon us unless we act. We are called to be good stewards.

Pope Francis, in his encyclical ‘Laudato Si’ (Praise be to You, my Lord) reminds us of our responsibility not just because of the beauty of the Earth, but our responsibility to share resources, provide for those who are lacking in basic provisions and ensure that governments and authorities act in accordance with the principle of justice for all people. While water, for example is readily accessible to the western world, children die for lack of it, or its pollutants. He urges governments to act together to safeguard the future and assume collective responsibility.

Yet you may think that – apart from the obvious - recycling schemes, controlling our greed and avoiding excessive consumerism, there is very little we can do. Interestingly Jesus tells us not to be burdened by things – ‘Don’t carry a purse or haversack, have two coats etc.’, and of course often uses examples from nature to give weight to his parables, ‘lilies of the field, mustard seeds, vines and water etc.

But of course there is something that we can do. At Minsteracres there is a ‘Peace Garden’ where people can go to pray, surrounded by growing things both edible and providing our co-inhabitants, the birds and bees etc., with food too.

The following writing (D.M) reflects this call to prayer, which is crucial to our understanding of our rôle as intercessors in this whole debate.....

‘God created the world and everything in it out of love, and appointed humankind to look after it and care for it for our good and His glory. We have failed to do this and climate change and global warming are the result. Over the half the ice has now melted on the Polar caps and 97% of the world’s top scientists estimate that we have 11 years to turn it around before the ‘tipping point’ is reached and global warming is unstoppable (Anna-Lisa Mills). Already half of our world’s trees have gone, 80% of the world land wildlife, 90% of our oceans’ wildlife, not to mention thousands – possibly hundreds of thousands – of innocent human lives in third world countries (and elsewhere) due to extreme climate. These people are our brothers and sisters: God will hold us accountable for their suffering and death.

This has taken humankind by surprise and we are still dragging our heels, mainly due to our greed, corporate and individual, but it has not taken God by surprise. God has given His people a secret, but sadly undervalued, weapon – the power of *believing prayer*. When Christians pray, together or maybe

individually, in God's Name (which I take to mean agreeing with Him in prayer for His will to be done – whatever that will may be), God acts redemptively. I believe if we Christians rise up and there is an outpouring of prayer, pleading with God to intervene on behalf of our world, then He will act.

He has a plan for undoing the damage we have done and we can agree together with Him for that plan to come to pass, secure in the knowledge that it will. Isn't it wonderful, that without understanding God's way, or how prayer really works, or what is going to happen we can still pray, because our God reigns. God is Love and Love will win. I have no idea how this will all end, and prayer for God's will to be done does not guarantee happy endings. But it *does* guarantee that God's will *is* done'. **Diane Murphy**



A week or two ago I had a visitor – we usually go to sit by a local reservoir – which is surrounded by beautiful trees and various birds and small creatures. It is a peaceful place and we often sit and ponder many things, both temporal and spiritual. On this occasion the weather was very changeable. I noticed that the ducks were all sleeping and resting and did not, as usual, try to come to the car to get food. But as I watched I observed something which I felt was a good lesson. At one point the sun broke through but only one section of the foregathered ducks was illuminated. Immediately they arose and started to preen and clean themselves. The others, in the darkness, did not stir. I watched in wonder. I realised that we too only act if we are in the light, enlightened by God's Light. If we stay in the dark we are helpless and unable to respond, thus moving into that light, by prayer, empowers us. This was indeed a teaching through nature and a cry of the heart for God's never ending light to guide us.

We must not bury our heads in the sand or feel helpless or ignore the signs of the times – but pray ceaselessly for changes that will enable us all to live in peace with each other and all of creation.

Halina Holman

## **Pope Francis..... My appeal ...**

The urgent challenge to protect our common home includes a concern to bring the whole human family together to seek a sustainable and integral development, for we know that things can change. The Creator does not abandon us; he never forsakes his loving plan or repents of having created us. Humanity still has the ability to work together in building our common home. Here I want to recognize, encourage and thank all those striving in countless ways to guarantee the protection of the home which we share. Particular appreciation is owed to those who tirelessly seek to resolve the tragic effects of environmental degradation on the lives of the world's poorest. Young people demand change. They wonder how anyone can claim to be building a better future without thinking of the environmental crisis and the sufferings of the excluded. I urgently appeal, then, for a new dialogue about how we are shaping the future of our planet. We need a conversation which includes everyone, since the environmental challenge we are undergoing, and its human roots, concern and affect us all.

*Laudato Si...* 13-14 May 25 2015

## **Prayer**

O Holy Trinity, whose promise is of a life where all will flourish and be respected,

We pray that, as we live by Grace and sharing,

We may be lead to use less energy, share resources more wisely and compel our politicians to speak out for climate justice. For we are each one of us one in a million:

**Together we stand strong**

## **Feasts in August**

1<sup>st</sup> St Alphonsus Liguori

2<sup>nd</sup> St Peter Julian Eymard

4<sup>th</sup> 18<sup>th</sup> **Sunday in Ordinary time**

5<sup>th</sup> Dedication of Basilica of St Maria Maggiore

6<sup>th</sup> Transfiguration of the Lord

8<sup>th</sup> St Dominic and St Mary MacKillop

9<sup>th</sup> St. Teresa Benedicta (Edith Stein)

11<sup>th</sup> 19<sup>th</sup> **Sunday in Ordinary time**

14<sup>th</sup> St Maximilian Kolbe

15<sup>th</sup> **Assumption of the Bl. Virgin Mary HD Obligation**

16<sup>th</sup> St Stephen of Hungary

17<sup>th</sup> **Our Lady of Knock**

18<sup>th</sup> 20<sup>th</sup> **Sunday in Ordinary time**

19<sup>th</sup> St John Eudes, 20<sup>th</sup> St Bernard, 21<sup>st</sup> St Pius X

22<sup>nd</sup> **Queenship of Mary**

23<sup>rd</sup> St Rose of Lima 24<sup>th</sup> St Bartholomew Apostle

25<sup>th</sup> 21<sup>st</sup> **Sunday in Ordinary time**

26<sup>th</sup> Bl. Dominic Barberi

27<sup>th</sup> St Monica 28<sup>th</sup> St Augustine of Hippo

29<sup>th</sup> Beheading of John the Baptist

30<sup>th</sup> St Margaret Clitheroe,

31<sup>st</sup> St. Aidan