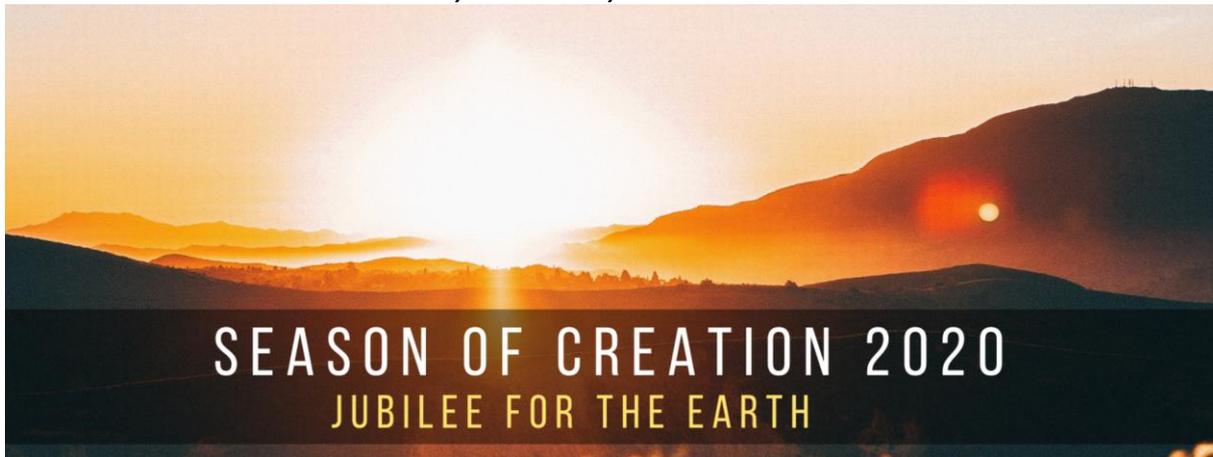


FEELING THE STORY – CARE FOR CREATION SUNDAY

27th Sunday in Ordinary time ~ 4 October 2020



VOLCANOES

On my shelf is a book on volcanoes.

It has impressive photos and descriptions of many prominent active volcanoes in the world. Each week I look at a few pages and take time to reflect on the continual act of creation.

Creation is not stationary.

The subduction of the edge of a tectonic plate under another plate leads to recycling and reforming of rocks.

In our understanding and caring for creation, it is important to understand and respect the ongoing dynamic processes of creation.

At the same time, it is essential that we protect the earth from human greed.

HUMAN GREED

We have a special calling to care for creation.

As we know, sometimes human greed can have devastating effects.

How do we protect the heritage, artwork, spirituality and ancient understandings of creation?

At the present time, there is a parliamentary [Inquiry into the destruction of 46,000 year old caves at the Juukan Gorge in the Pilbara region of Western Australia](#).

The Senate has agreed to a reporting extension for the Inquiry until 9th December 2020.

When we read about it or see an account of it in the media, do we feel the story?

Recently an Aboriginal person explained at a church meeting in the Archdiocese, that in listening to another, we need to feel the story.

Let us read the Gospel quietly.

GOSPEL OF MATTHEW 21:33-43

“Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watch-tower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country.

When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce.

But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way.

Finally he sent his son to them, saying, “They will respect my son.”

But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, “This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.” So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?’ They said to him, ‘He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time.’

Jesus said to them,

‘Have you never read in the scriptures:

“The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord’s doing, and it is amazing in our eyes”?

Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom.”

Could each of us feel the story?

*Could we feel the **pain of God** who sent prophet after prophet to the people?*

Prophets that were harassed, persecuted and some were killed.

*Could we feel the **pain of Jesus**?*

Jesus told this parable, knowing that he himself would suffer and be killed.

‘Finally he sent his son to them, saying, “They will respect my son.”

But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves,

“This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.” ‘

Do we feel the pain of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples when they are excluded or forgotten in our planning and consultations to care for the earth our common home?

Two brief papers, one from the World Bank and the other from the Vatican, were discussed at the recent Archdiocesan meeting.

On this Care for Creation Sunday, we share insights from both papers.

THE WORLD BANK – INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

The World Bank reminds us:

‘There are approximately 476 million Indigenous Peoples worldwide, in over 90 countries. Although they make up over 6 percent of the global population, they account for about 15 percent of the extreme poor. Indigenous Peoples’ life expectancy is up to 20 years lower than the life expectancy of non-indigenous people worldwide.’

‘While Indigenous Peoples own, occupy, or use a quarter of the world’s surface area, they safeguard 80 percent of the world’s remaining biodiversity. They hold vital ancestral knowledge and expertise on how to adapt, mitigate, and reduce climate and disaster risks...’

‘Much of the land occupied by Indigenous Peoples is under indigenous customary ownership, and yet many governments recognize only a fraction of this land as formally or legally belonging to Indigenous Peoples. Insecure land tenure is a driver of conflict, environmental degradation, and weak economic and social development. This threatens cultural survival and vital knowledge systems – both of which contribute to ecological integrity, biodiversity and environmental health upon which we all depend.’

[Reference: [THE WORLD BANK - INDIGENOUS PEOPLES](#)]

As we have read the words above, have we felt the story?

THE VATICAN

Recently the [Holy See spoke to the United Nations in Geneva on September 24th 2020](#), saying

‘The Delegation of the Holy See urges to give special care and attention to indigenous communities and their cultural traditions. They are not merely one minority among others. They are principal dialogue partners and should be included in all decision-making processes at the political level, especially those affecting them directly. Efforts to include their voices and concerns have been particularly lacking during COVID pandemic, where indigenous communities were often ignored and even forgotten in the responses to the pandemic. This current crisis is a wake-up call for all of us’

Do we feel the pain of Indigenous principal dialogue partners when they are ignored or forgotten in our discussions and planning and caring for creation?

Caring for creation includes our First Nations peoples as principal dialogue partners.

Thank you to [our parish Care for Creation Group](#) for organising our celebration today.

Thank you to the girls from [St John Fisher College](#) for the Prayers of the Faithful.

And we thank St Francis of Assisi, whose Feast Day we celebrate today.

CO-WORKERS IN THE CHURCH COMMUNITY IN PHILIPPI

In today's reading of St Paul to the Philippians, Paul implores the community to:

"Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you."

It is important to remember that St Paul, earlier in this chapter, had addressed two women who were co-workers in the faith community of Philippi.

He asked the community to support Euodia and Syntyche

'Yes, and I ask you also, my loyal companion, help these women, for they have struggled beside me in the work of the gospel, together with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life.'

We acknowledge *Euodia* and *Syntyche* and *Clement* today as we **feel the story** of the early church in Philippi.

Let us thank God and pray.

Fr Gerry

Readings: <https://universalis.com/Australia/20201004/mass.htm>

Other references / links:

Included in our 9am Livestream Mass is an [extract of a video between Aunty Cynthia Rowan and Archbishop Mark Coleridge](#). The dialogue is about Caring for God's Creation. The extract has been used with permission from the Archdiocese of Brisbane.

We have also included [a short YouTube video](#) reflection produced by our [parish Care for Creation group](#) reflecting on Pope Francis message - [World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation - 1 September 2020](#) - and for the Season of Creation 2020.



St. Paul | Rembrandt

