

NOTRE DAME PARISH

22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

"Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me."



"Live for today." Our material culture uses this as a mantra. Enjoy life today and postpone pain until tomorrow. Doesn't that sound familiar?

The Christian life means life postponed for the good of others. That's what Jesus did as he walked to

Jerusalem and to the cross.

Why is it easier for us to focus on today than the future? Why do we make decisions for the future based upon today's needs?

What are the benefits of sacrifice? How does desire postponed bring you closer to Jesus?

MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday, August 29, 4PM

Joe Meel

Sunday, August 30, 9:30AM

Barbara Spade

Monday, August 31, 8AM

Colin Kutrovatz

Tuesday, September 1, 8AM

John Benish, Sr.

Wednesday, September 2, 8AM

John Benish, Sr.

Thursday, September 3, 8AM

Hedwig Macudzinski

Friday, September 4, 8AM

Robert Heybrun

Saturday, September 5, 8AM

Joan & Mike King

Saturday, September 5, 4PM

Alan Kalk & Thomas Doody

Oremus – Let Us Pray

- For the earth, our common home, as we celebrate the Season of Creation, September 1 through October 4
- For those affected by Hurricane Laura
- For an end to federally sanctioned executions fulfilled in Indiana
- For Elizabeth Marie McFadden, to be baptized this weekend
- For an end to hatred, violence, and racial injustice; for communication and dialogue
- For progress in finding a vaccine for COVID-19
- For caregivers and all who work in hospitals

Windows to the Soul

As a confessor, I have always found the practice of anonymity in confession – not seeing the “other – as difficult. It robs the confessor of the multiple ways humans communicate besides the use of words – body language, the face, the person’s age, and emotions. I know cases of distress, misunderstanding, and inappropriate counsel that resulted from a confessor’s inability to properly “size up” the penitent. Even so, I understand that anonymity can make the penitent more comfortable and honest.

It’s difficult during the present pandemic to have deep and extended conversations with other people. Social restrictions and masks force us to conceal one of the most revelatory aspects of being human: the face.

We can barely see the smile or the distress of someone wearing a mask.

Yet, we do see the eyes. But what do we see when we gaze into the eyes of another person? If we are calloused, we will see nothing. But if we pay attention, we will be touched by their soul.

When people are sad or worried, they furrow their brow which makes the eyes look smaller. When they are happy, they raise their eyebrows, which makes them look “bright-eyed.”

Eyes serve as more than receptors to take in information. They communicate outward, telling who we are and how we’re feeling.

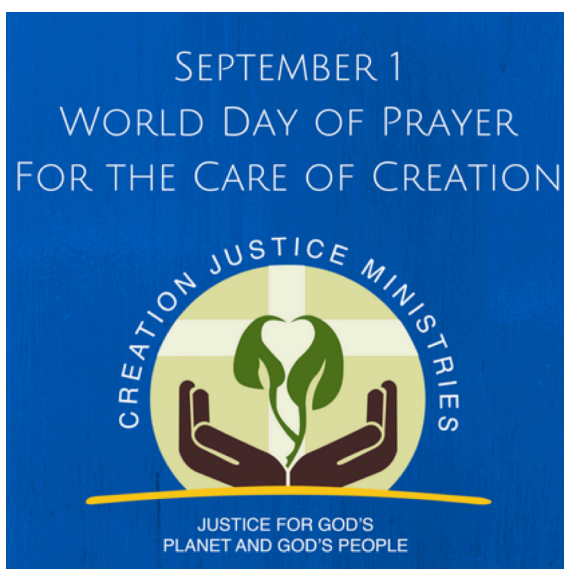
Jesus said, “the eye is the lamp of your body.” German theologian Helmut Thieckle spoke of all compassion as



beginning in the eyes. He was talking about what the eyes project and give off, not what they absorb or receive.

As we continue to practice the caution demanded by this pandemic, let’s pay attention to the cues the eyes are giving out – everything from corner wrinkles indicating a smile, to tears of sadness or joy, to heartfelt compassion. *Father Keith & Rocco*

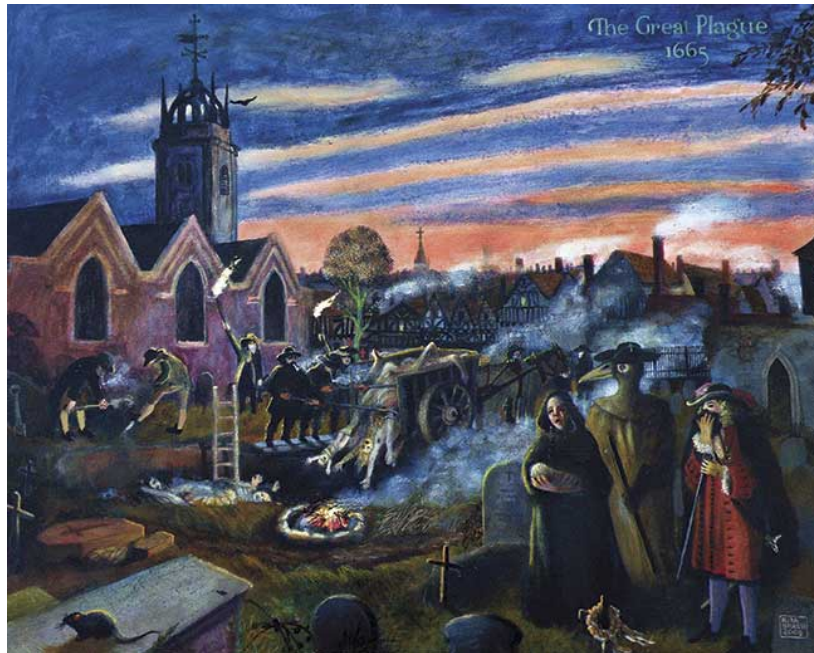
September 1: World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation



Climate change is a result of the intersection of greed, inequality and destruction of God’s Earth. The theme of Jubilee is chosen for this year’s Season of Creation (September 1 – October 4) as it reflects those three interlocking themes. Jubilee is a time to renounce overconsumption and economic systems based on constant economic growth at the cost of the Earth and those who are poor. Jubilee is a time when those who have consumed the most must make restitution to those who have suffered the most. Jubilee is a time of rest for the land from constant exploitation, to restore ecosystems and people.

The concept of Jubilee is rooted in the holy wisdom that there must exist a just and sustainable balance between social, economic and

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Christians & Pandemics: A Long History

On March 12, 2020, our local theater was preparing for the second weekend of our production of Bertolt Brecht's *The Good Person* (often known as *The Good Woman of Szechuan*). Attendance the first weekend had been sparse, and we were hoping for better results this time around. But it became clear in the course of the evening that at least half the cast had serious misgivings about going forward in light of the unfolding coronavirus pandemic. We canceled the play. Soon the governor of Kentucky would close schools and theaters as well as other places where large groups gather. Ironically, love of neighbor cut us off from our neighbors.

In 1623 a disease that contemporaries called the "spotted fever" or "relapsing fever" swept through London. Some modern scholars believe that it was typhus. Among the sufferers was dean of St. Paul's Cathedral John Donne (1572-1631), then in his early forties. While recovering he wrote a series of meditations, one for each of the 23 days he had been sick, and published them the next year as *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions*. The most famous is "Meditation 17," which contains two phrases that have become clichés: "No man is an island" and

"Never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee." "Meditation 17" is one of the most eloquent and concise examples of a very old Christian genre: writing inspired by the threat of death, specifically death from infectious disease.

Plagues of various kinds were a common feature of life for most of human history before the development of vaccines and antibiotics. Particularly in times of population growth and urban development, the crowded and unsanitary conditions in which most people lived fostered frequent and devastating epidemics. In traditional Christian societies, these epidemics were typically seen as expressions of God's wrath against human sinfulness.

Care for plague victims had been an important part of Christian discipleship from the very beginning. Early Christians gained moral authority in the ancient world because they cared for their own sick and even for victims outside the Christian community. Basil the Great pioneered hospitals, and the medieval church developed these institutions further – though often they were what we would now call "hospices," where the dying were made comfortable, rather than institutions that could

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actually cure diseases.

Catholics and Protestants alike in the early modern period called for fasting and prayer in response to plagues. Clergy were often judged by their response: while fleeing plague might be justifiable under some circumstances, people in positions of spiritual authority who fled too readily and failed to care for the sick were criticized, while those who remained and risked their lives were seen as heroes.

At the same time, what we are now calling “social distancing” was also a reality. Charles Borromeo (1538–1584), bishop of Milan in the late sixteenth century, closed churches but organized open-air celebrations of the Mass which people could watch from their windows, because for Catholics simply seeing the consecrated host was believed to be of great spiritual value.

He sent priests from door to door to give communion and hear confessions, putting the clergy at risk while attempting to minimize the danger of transmitting the disease. As a result, even though normal public worship was interrupted, the city was, in the words of one Catholic author, transformed into something like a monastery.

As contemporary commentators have pointed out, the present crisis calls us to think about the common good and find ways to practice solidarity while physically distancing ourselves. Donne is 400 years ahead of us. His famous remark about the bell tolling for everyone is not just a reminder

that we are all mortal. It affirms our solidarity as members of the human race and, for Christians, as members of the church:

The church is catholic, universal, so are all her actions; all that she does, belongs to all. When she baptizes a child, that action concerns me; for that child is thereby connected to that head, which is my head too, and [engraved] into that body, whereof I am a member. And when she buries a man, that action concerns me; all mankind is of one author, and is one volume; when one man dies, one chapter is not torn out of the book, but translated into a better language; and every chapter must be so translated; God employs several translators; some pieces are translated by age, some by sickness, some by war, some by justice; but God’s hand is in every translation, and his hand shall bind up all our scattered leaves again, for that library where every book shall lie open to one another.

“No man is an island” – not just because we are all interconnected in our existence on this planet, but because we as Christians have been “grafted” into the body of which Christ is the head. In baptism we have already died and risen with Christ. And thus the death, and the hope of resurrection, of every other Christian – and indeed of every other human being created and redeemed by the divine Logos – is ours too.

Donne plays on the still-current sense of translating from one language to another as well as the now archaic sense of the word as a euphemism for death.

(The King James Version uses the term for Enoch’s deathless transition from this life to the life to come.) Now we speak different languages, not just in the literal sense but in far more painful and divisive senses. But God’s ultimate purpose is to “translate” us into the language of his kingdom, in which we will all be intelligible to each other.

One of the ironies of the pandemic is that we must express our solidarity with one another by limiting our physical interaction. But the related paradox is that the Internet, which so many of us have long deplored as a cold substitute for real human interaction, has become a vital means to express that solidarity. It is not the same as seeing and touching one another, and God help us if we forget that. But it does, at its best, foreshadow the heavenly intertextuality to which Donne points us.

I can hear and empathize with the anguish of people who are being touched by this virus in ways that my family and I have not yet been touched. And people who are living closer to the front lines can warn the rest of us. Yes these warnings can cause anxiety and fear, and the Internet can become a toxic, demonic force. But it can also be a means of grace, a means of affirming our solidarity as peninsulas of that great continent centered on the point where heaven touches earth in the Incarnate Word. +

This article, written by Edwin Woodruff Taft, excerpted from Christian History magazine

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ecological realities. When one variable is exploited to maximize growth of another, the whole system will eventually suffer. When one part of the Earth community is stressed, every part is affected. In 2020, the novel coronavirus pandemic demonstrated this reality on a global scale. While the experience of living with the COVID-19 outbreak points back to this need to maintain justice, the lessons that we learn may point us towards the need for a Jubilee and motivate us to restore balance to the very systems that sustain life.

And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year and you shall proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you: you shall return, every one of you, to your property and every one of you to your family. (Leviticus 25:10, NRSV)

Jubilee means “a ram’s horn”. It was blown to mark the start of a time of universal redemption. The year of Jubilee involved release from indebtedness, when injustices of the past fifty years were to be restored. It was also a time for rest for the land.

The theme of Jubilee has clear links to the root paradigms fueling unjust exploitation, such as neoliberal and capitalist approaches to the world economy. It brings together the need for a prophetic voice on climate injustice and actions for the restoration of the Earth. The theme of Jubilee affirms the need for equality, justice and sustainability, and a transition to sustainable economies. It honours the Jubilee 2000 Campaign, which successfully called for an amnesty on debt for global South countries and redistribution of wealth. And 2020 marks 50 years since the first Earth Day when the environmental movement was born.

We are in the midst of a climate emergency. Several studies have indicated that the world is nowhere near meeting pledged emission reduction rate targets. The latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report highlights that “only with rapid

and far-reaching” transitions in the world economy, on a scale and at a rate without historical precedent, can the 1.5°C limit be achieved. It is therefore a time to reconcile ourselves with creation through concrete repentance and urgent action. The Season of Creation is a time to acknowledge that tipping points are being reached, threatening the lives of the most vulnerable and putting the lives of future generations in jeopardy. As people of faith, we are being called to stand up against climate injustice in prophetic ways.

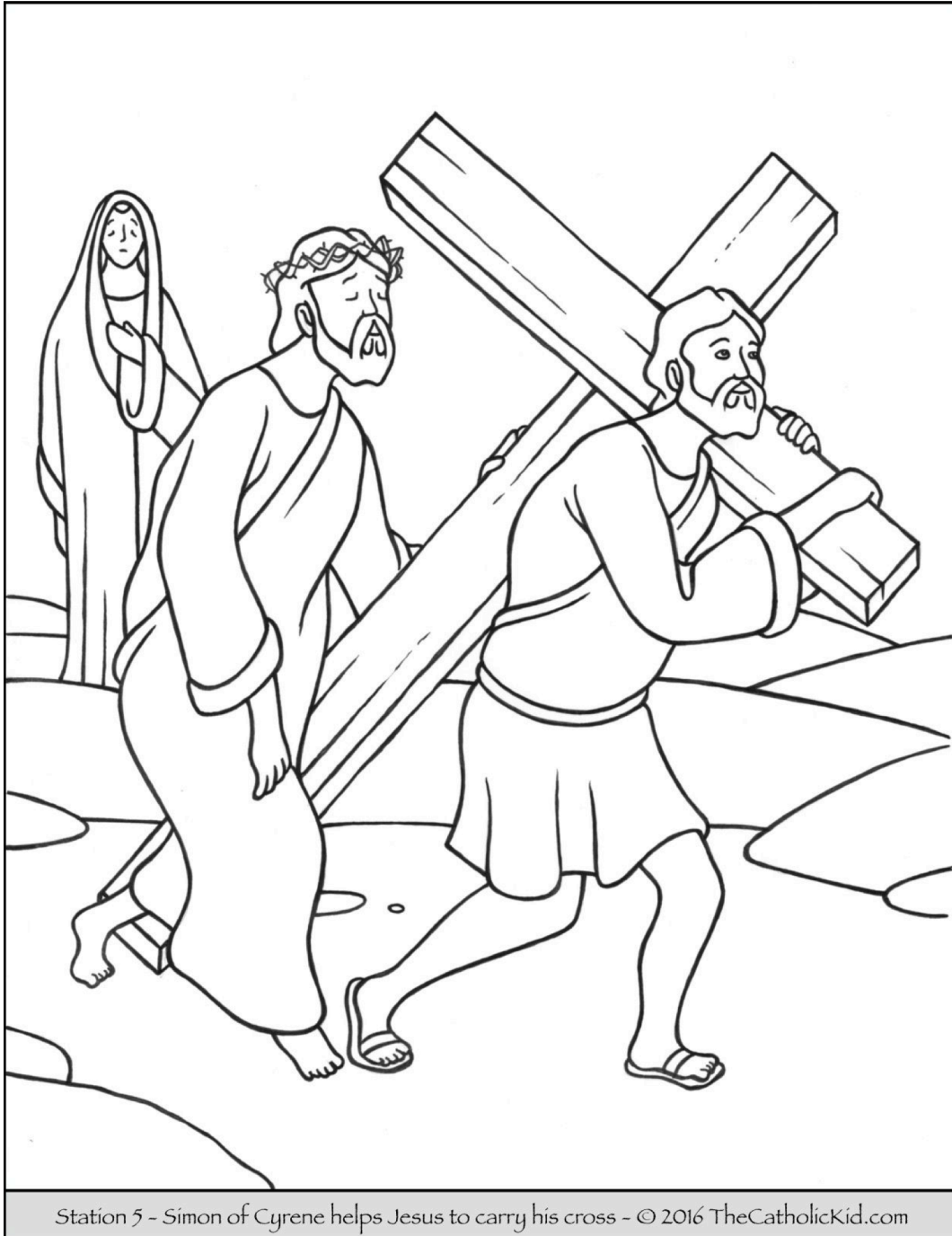
The Season of Creation 2020 will also be an important moment for the Christian family to raise a united voice for rapid and radical ambitious action ahead of the 26th annual United Nations Conference of the Parties (COP) to address the climate crisis. COP 26 is particularly significant, as parties are due to announce how they will implement the Paris Climate Agreement (and whether they will fall short). It is a time when faith communities are called to support and challenge their countries’ leadership to implement visionary and significant goals. It is also a time when we must listen to the prophetic voices of young people.

Then you shall have the trumpet sounded loud; on the tenth day of the seventh month – on the Day of Atonement – you shall have the trumpet sounded throughout all your land. (Leviticus 25:9, NRSV)

As people of faith we are called to sound a voice of hope, like the Jubilee. We lament, for everywhere we hear the groaning of creation. So we act as carriers of creation, and we sound the horn of hope, for the Earth and all they that live in it belong to the Lord. We know that God has promised the renewal of this earth. +

This article is excerpted from the Season of Creation Study Guide.

Jesus said, "Take up your cross and follow me."



Station 5 - Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus to carry his cross - © 2016 TheCatholicKid.com