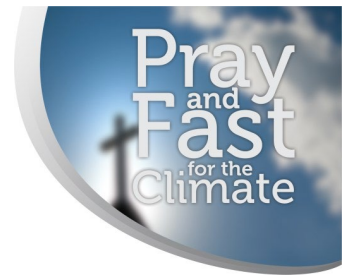


Prayer points – October 2022



Noru and Ian

In the past week, Super Typhoon Noru has left a trail of destruction in Southeast Asia, as has Hurricane Ian in Cuba and the United States. Noru hit the Philippines with 125 mph winds and drenching rains, [displaced](#) over 900,000 people, and damaged or destroyed over 57,000 homes and hundreds of thousands of acres of crops. It then moved on to Vietnam and Thailand, where [its rains caused further flooding](#). Ian first crossed Cuba and then made landfall in Southwest Florida. With winds of 150 mph at the time of its Florida landfall, intense rain, and a catastrophic storm surge, it killed dozens of people and destroyed thousands of homes and businesses: initial estimates of [the damage](#) costs range from [tens of billions](#) to [over \\$210 billion](#).

Both of these storms underwent rapid intensification, gaining strength swiftly as they passed over warm ocean water. Climate change is increasing the oceans' heat content, providing the conditions in which rapid intensification can happen more frequently and [raising the likelihood of major storms with catastrophic impacts](#). We pray for all who have been affected by Noru, Ian, and other recent storms and for all who are working on rescue, relief and recovery. We pray, too, for climate action that will slow the heating of the oceans.

Food Crisis in East Africa

The La Nina phenomenon, in which the surface of the Pacific Ocean near the Equator cools, historically [causes](#) heavy rains in Indonesia, Australia and the Northwest coast of the US, while leaving other parts of the US, South America and Africa drier. It's now entering its third year, which is bad news for communities [experiencing its rain impacts](#) and for parts of East Africa, where successive years of climate-exacerbated drought, alongside conflict and high food prices, have left many people facing crisis levels of hunger.

Large parts of Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti, South Sudan, and Somalia [are projected to be in a food emergency situation](#) this winter, with parts of Somalia potentially facing famine. *"Starvation,"* one woman [said](#), *"has become our companion."* The UN estimates that [half the population of Somalia is affected](#) by the drought, and the need for humanitarian assistance is intense. We pray for all suffering from lack of access to food and all working to alleviate that suffering. We ask God to inspire people and governments around the world to fund appeals for the region, so that the necessary aid can be provided.

Energy crisis and moves towards a greener world

All of us, wherever we are, are feeling the impact of the energy crisis. We pray for each person working out how to respond, and especially for everyone who is vulnerable economically and facing difficult choices. We pray, too, for governments working out how to help households, businesses, and society as a whole: may they be guided in interventions that provide security for the most vulnerable, encourage energy saving, and prioritise a transition to a fairer, greener future. Where, as in the UK, the interventions turn [backwards towards increased production of fossil fuels](#), we pray for a change of heart.

A [new study states](#) that transitioning the world to renewables could pay for itself in about six years, as well as providing environmental benefits. The falling cost of renewables and obvious unsustainability of the status quo are leading to widespread calls for change. Fatih Birol, Executive Director of the International Energy Agency, [wrote](#): *"We have the chance to make this a historic turning point towards a cleaner, more affordable and more secure energy system."* We give thanks for the growing consensus that a green transition is economically, as well as environmentally, advantageous, and pray this will inspire change on the scale needed to avert climate disaster.

A call to care and protect

"We are free to apply our intelligence towards things evolving positively, or towards adding new ills, new causes of suffering and real setbacks. This is what makes for the excitement and drama of human history, in which freedom, growth, salvation and love can blossom, or lead towards decadence and mutual destruction. The work of the Church seeks not only to remind everyone of the duty to care for nature, but at the same time 'she must above all protect mankind from self-destruction'." *Pope Francis, Laudato Si' 79*

Prayer from Laudato Si'

The poor and the earth are crying out.
O Lord, seize us with your power and light,
help us to protect all life,
to prepare for a better future,
for the coming of your Kingdom
of justice, peace, love and beauty.
Praise be to you! Amen.

Christians raising their voice for justice

September saw the inaugural meeting of [Climate YES](#), an ecumenical gathering of young Christians calling for climate justice. Meetings in the UK, Italy, Germany, South Africa, Malawi, Kenya, Tanzania and the Seychelles enabled young people to “learn, pray and act together to hold politicians to account for action on climate change.” Christians were also active in the global day of action around loss and damage, adding their voices to the call for adequate funding to compensate people who are suffering because of climate impacts, despite contributing little to climate change. Writing in the Church Times, the Anglican Bishop of Reading, Olivia Graham, [said](#): “*The lived experience of our sisters and brothers across the globe compels us, as Christians, to be at the forefront of urging the Government to take its climate responsibilities seriously, and to push for a loss and damage fund to be created at the COP27 UN Climate talks.*” We give thanks for these and all Christian voices calling for justice – and pray more will join them.

Brazil's election

On Sunday, October 2nd, Brazilians will elect their president, choosing between the incumbent, Jair Bolsonaro, and his predecessor, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (Lula). Because of the candidates' attitudes towards Amazon deforestation, the election has been described as one of the most significant in the world for the climate. During his time in office, [Bolsonaro has presided over a sharp increase in deforestation, whereas deforestation rates plummeted when Lula was president](#). Please pray for wisdom for all who are voting – and that whoever wins, the Brazilian government will take action to preserve its forests.

Governments moving forward

In a rare bipartisan win, the US Congress [has ratified the Kigali Amendment](#), which aims to phase down superpolluting hydrofluorocarbons. This was the first international climate treaty to receive congressional ratification in thirty years. Scientists estimate that successful elimination of hydrofluorocarbons could prevent 0.5 degrees of warming by the end of the century.

Meanwhile, at state level, California [passed climate legislation](#) which sets a net zero target of 2045 and commits \$54 billion dollars to spending on climate programmes, including almost \$21 billion on electric vehicles and climate-friendly transport projects.

The Australian parliament [has also passed new climate legislation](#), again with support that went beyond the governing party. The legislation increases Australia's planned emission cuts to 43% by 2030 and sets a 2050 net zero target.

Kenyan climate activist [Elizabeth Wathuti speaks at the Lambeth Conference](#)

“I used my speech at COP26 to share real human stories from people who are rarely given a voice in decision making processes ... not to shock or blame anyone, but rather in the hope and with the prayer that we might truly allow ourselves to feel the immense suffering that our way of doing things is causing. Because I believe that an open heart is where the seed of true action lies within each of us ... What is holding us back from dealing with the interconnected climate, nature and pollution crises is not a lack of scientific knowledge or technology. These are human problems ... I believe in our human capacity to care deeply and to act collectively. I believe in our ability to do what is right if we let ourselves feel it in our hearts. And I believe that we can absolutely find our way out of the planetary crisis we face, but to do so, we will need to change our way of thinking and start telling new stories about what is important and what is possible.”