

## Prayer points – April 2025



### The sufferings of Christ and of our world

from the Franciscan Friars Conventual JPIC Commission, [Ecological Stations of the Cross](#)

*“Lord Jesus, [in Lent and Passiontide] we join you in your Passion, accompanying you through your greatest trial. Grant us the courage to keep our eyes open, our ears listening, and our senses aware of what you experience. May we recognize how your Passion continues in the plight of our sisters and brothers who seek refuge during these unsettling times, fleeing violence, conflict, persecution, and environmental destruction.”*

### The sufferings of the earth

As we recall Christ’s suffering, we acknowledge the current groaning of all creation, battered by the impacts of global heating. The [World Meteorological Association recorded](#) 152 unprecedented and 297 unusual extreme events in 2024. March saw [the lowest recorded peak Arctic sea ice](#), floods in Greek islands and [Australia](#), the [worst wildfires in Korean history](#) and significant [wildfires in Japan](#) and the [southeastern US](#). The US fires [fed on timber from trees brought down by last year’s Hurricane Helene](#) - a reminder of the way one crisis can create the conditions for another. We lament the destruction and lift up all affected. Acknowledging what climate activist Yeb Sano identifies as the [arrogance, apathy, and avarice](#) underlying our failure to tackle climate change, we pray that humans will recognise God as creator and Lord of all and turn from the sins that are causing so much destruction.

### The sufferings of nature – bees

For many years now, beekeepers in America [have noticed honeybee colonies collapsing](#): this year, a survey of [major beekeepers suggested average colony losses at an unprecedented 62%](#). Scientists [are investigating to see if they can find explanations](#) for the bee deaths: it’s already known that climate change, changing land use, and pesticides are among the factors harming bees – but is there something else involved? Whatever the cause, the losses call us to hear the cry of nature as it suffers ... and also the cry of people vulnerable to food insecurity. Honeybees [pollinate half of all US crops: their disappearance is causing food price increases](#) .. and could cause crop failures in the future. Lord, we pray for scientists and their investigations, for the revival of bee colonies, for the farmers and beekeepers whose livelihoods are imperilled, and for all suffering food insecurity.

### The sufferings of people in poverty

We know that climate impacts often hit the poorest people first and worst, but it’s vital to ensure that the search for climate solutions doesn’t also hurt them. That’s the message from southern Africa as countries race to mine rare earth minerals. Bantathi Sekwala [points to the horrific impacts of lead mining in Kabwe, Zambia](#), which left lead concentrations in the soil 300 times the safe limit. [Ninety-five percent of children tested in the area had elevated levels of lead in their blood, and significant numbers of children face memory loss, stunted growth and other symptoms of lead poisoning](#). Lord, we lament the way exploitation of natural resources has harmed our brothers and sisters. As we seek ways to avert climate crisis, we pray that these efforts will not bring further injustices and harms, but will be managed to provide justice, sustainability, and a healthy environment for all.

### From ‘Jesus died to save the planet’ by Paul Kunert

*“By his blood shed on the cross, Jesus was not only paying the price for the sins of the whole world but also making peace with all things. And in rising, he was not only showing that death is defeated but also that new creation is begun. The one who in crucifixion, resurrection, ascension, and outpoured Spirit has become King of all the earth has made peace with all things and is making the whole earth – in all its lush fruitfulness, its teeming, swarming, swooping, creeping splendour – new. Faithful discipleship, allegiance to this King, means living at peace with one another and with all things ...*

*Living and working for the flourishing of the whole earth is integral to our discipleship, then, to our walking in the way of the King. For all of us, in the whole of life ... As individuals, businesses, governments, and societies, we must ask what impact each action, commitment, and policy has on the flourishing of the living world and the good of our neighbour, not as an afterthought, but intrinsically, at the beginning.”*

## Choices in finance

Recent months have seen financial institutions make a worrying retreat from their climate commitments. In the US, [banks are withdrawing net zero pledges in the light of government opposition to them](#) and [many have left the Net Zero Banking Alliance](#). More broadly, the [Financial Times says](#) that financial institutions are arguing that they “cannot decarbonise their lending and dealbooks any faster than the wider economy.” We pray that financial institutions will consider the impact of their actions on the living world and prioritise sustaining life. We pray, too, that individual and institutional investors will choose to invest with those who maintain climate commitments.

## Election choices and consequences

As recent events have shown, [elections can have profound consequences for climate policies and practice](#). We pray for people who will be making choices in the recently called [Canadian](#) (April 28<sup>th</sup>) and [Australian](#) (May 3<sup>rd</sup>) elections. May God guide voters to think of the common good, ask questions about parties’ climate intentions, and factor these into their vote; may God guide candidates to commit themselves to climate action. In the US, we pray for all who are working to sustain climate action in the face of the Trump administration’s [revocation of climate policies](#), [scientific agencies](#), and [scientific funding](#).

## Small and large choices for change

Around the world, [community energy projects are enabling](#) people to take control of energy production locally, helping to provide resilience in energy supply and to further a just transition. In the UK, [Parliament is holding an enquiry](#) to look at the regulatory and financial barriers that currently limit such endeavours: we pray this leads to action that enables more communities to participate.

On a large scale, China has recently announced key elements of its plan to peak carbon dioxide emissions by 2030 and to reach net zero by 2060. [These include](#) heavy investment in renewables, grid integration, and increased monitoring. We pray that it will live up to its ambitions and implement them in a way that is just.

## Choosing to purchase ethically

In the US, the [Catholic Ethical Purchasing Alliance](#) (CEPA) offers Catholic communities a way to “integrate the principles of [Catholic Social Teaching](#) into the purchasing decisions of their church, school, college or university.” It not only has created ethical purchasing platforms, but also provides educational resources and opportunities for networking, advocacy, and mentorship. Participants might, for example, be invited to visit an ethical factory– and be offered training on how to communicate the importance of fair production to their peers.

In the UK, the [Meaningful Chocolate Company](#) is celebrating its 15<sup>th</sup> year of selling Fairtrade chocolate eggs that tell the Easter story. It has sold 2 million eggs – each with a Gospel-based booklet, donated £420,000 to charity, and helped Fairtrade farmers improve their communities through paying fair prices and the Fairtrade premium.

Lord, we thank you for these initiative and pray that they will inspire others.

## Landscapes of hope

The Resurrected Christ first appears to Mary Magdalene in a garden – the Creator revealing His risen self amidst the beauty of creation. As we approach Easter, we give thanks for all who are restoring threatened environments – from [Dorset woods](#) to [Ghanaian and Kenyan forests](#), to [urban green spaces in Lebanon](#). We give thanks especially for [A Rocha worldwide](#): may all involved continue to live out their calling to care for creation and equip others to do so.

## A blessing from Venantius Fortunatus’ hymn [Hail thee, festival day \(adapted\)](#)

*God the Creator, the Lord, You who rule the earth and the heavens, guard us from harm without, cleanse us from evil within:*

*Jesus the health of the world, enlighten our minds, O Redeemer, Son of the Father supreme, only-begotten of God:*

*Spirit of life and of power, now flow in us, fount of our being, light that enlightens all, life that in all abides:*

*Praise to the Giver of good! You Love who are author of concord, pour out your balm on our souls, order our ways in your peace.*

[www.prayandfastfortheclimate.org.uk](http://www.prayandfastfortheclimate.org.uk)