

teaching, and to learn to pray more naturally, more readily and more often, and always in his Name.
(Llewellyn Cummings)

Monday 28th April

The use of biomethane to power heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) has been restricted by a lack of public refuelling infrastructure and secure supplies of the gas. A governmental Task Force says that an increase in its use could reduce carbon emissions, reduce UK reliance on imported gas and provide greater fuel security. According to the Freight Transport Association, the cost of the refuelling infrastructure would be around £1 million, so preventing small operators from investing in the gas. Also, the current incentives for using biomethane mean that it is diverted to the heating and electricity sectors.

Tuesday 29th April

Today at Dorchester Abbey in Oxfordshire an event called "Reconnecting church and earth in the 21st century" takes place from 10 to 3.30. Hosted by the Bishop of Dorchester, the gathering will discover how the church can connect with issues facing the land and the environment, and in particular building a partnership with the Earth Trust. For details of the event go to www.earththingfaith.org/2014/03/reconnecting-church-and-earth

Wednesday 30th April

Unwanted bicycles in decent condition can now be donated at any branch of Halfords for repair, overhaul and shipping to Africa. Donors will get a 10% discount off a new bike. Last summer the partnership of Halfords and Re-Cycle donated

4,800 bikes to Africa, so diverting around 78 tonnes from landfill and offering African people a route out of poverty, giving them opportunities to travel to work, healthcare locations and schools.

Sources:

"Beyond the Window Frame"
by Marie Birkinshaw
Clean Slate (CAT)
Green Health Watch
Positive News
Environment (CIWEM)

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Picture on front cover: Tete a Tete by Poppy Pickard

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Prayer guide for the care of creation

April 2014



"The Lord is faithful to all his promises and loving towards all he has made.

The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food at the proper time.

You open your hand and satisfy the desires of every living thing."

(Psalm 145.13-16)

"Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up . . . He said: 'Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly.'" (Luke 18.1-8)

"... If two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven" (Matthew 18.19)



ChristianEcologyLink

Tuesday 1st April

"How can nature protect us against storm surges?" is a question addressed in a report from The Economics of Ecosystems & Biodiversity. Wild nature saves about £2.2 trillion by storing carbon in forests, wild genes support up to £190 billion (50%) of the US pharmaceuticals market and pollinating insects confer £150 billion of benefits to agriculture every year. How then can politicians and others claim that nature is in competition with the economy? What matters is what cannot be counted. Purchasing a gallon of petrol is counted in the economy, but the costs of burning it in terms of impaired health from fumes, injuries from accidents and climate change from carbon emissions amount to more than that. Bodies such as The B-Team and the Ellen MacArthur Foundation are making inroads into corporate sustainability, but it is a long process.

Wednesday 2nd April

Tony Juniper, author of "What has nature ever done for us?" recognises the danger of putting a price tag on nature, but believes that to quantify the economic value of nature can accentuate its intrinsic importance and counter the argument that "in an economic downturn we cannot afford to consider all this green stuff." He warns: "No matter how clever our financial systems, impressive our rates of economic growth or sophisticated our technology, there is no place to move to should we degrade our biosphere to the point where it can no longer meet our needs and sustain our economies."

Thursday 3rd April

Ian Cheshire, CE of Kingfisher, points out that we still run the world in an accounting regime that was invented in 12th century Venice. Tony

Juniper believes we need new accounting rules which demand additional social and ecological accounts. If Government led the way and introduced an ecological tax, there would be a level playing field for all. The Norwegians put 'nature' into their school curriculum, so that every child experiences nature as part of his/her training. So should we.

Friday 4th April

Adapting to climate change involves a variety of processes highlighted in the Adaptation Scotland programme – <http://tinyurl.com/adaptation-scotland>. The UK Climate Impacts Programme has developed adaptation planning processes, making available many free tools. According to the Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT) "Progressively transforming all levels of society will require widespread support and careful planning at every level, from the individual, small community and workplace to entire nations, so as to provide a framework for everyone to make positive changes and endeavour to be part of the cure."

Saturday 4th April

The Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) for domestic installations of biomass boilers, heat pumps and solar thermal will start this spring. It is only available after installation of loft or cavity wall insulation, and only for equipment installed after 15 July 2009. The subsidy is paid for seven years and is inflation-proofed. It provides 18.3 p/kWh for ground-source heat pumps, 12.2 p/kWh for biomass boilers and 19.2 p/kWh for solar thermal. According to CAT, a £15,000 log gasification biomass boiler could be paid off in 5-6 years. Key to the scheme's success will be access to affordable finance, and community finance schemes could play a role here. For

advocated by the World Cancer Research Fund, but health professionals have tended to prioritise treatment over prevention.

Wednesday 23rd April

The French Agency for Food, Environmental & Occupational Health (ANSES), after two years of gathering evidence on the biological effects of microwave/radiofrequency electromagnetic fields (MRFEMFs) recommends that: Public exposure to MRFEMFs from mobile phones and masts should be limited by Government; Mobile phone heavy users should use hands-free kits and only purchase models that emit the lowest strength of MRFEMFs; Parents and guardians should use every effort to limit children's exposure; Local authorities should raise awareness of the dangers by conducting MRFEMF awareness campaigns; No new technology or networks should be licensed until studies have shown what increase in public exposure may result.

Thursday 24th April

The European Commission has launched an initiative called "Mayors Adapt" to encourage cities to take action on climate change. At least 20% of the EU budget for 2014-2020 will be spent on climate action including adaptation, and part of this will support the new initiative. Cities signing up to it will commit to the aim of developing adaptation policies within 2 years of signing, and to review outcomes every two years.

Friday 25th April

A report called "Building Natural Capital" from the International Resource Panel and the UN programme for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation & Forest Degradation (REDD) shows how integrating forests into a Green Economy can boost the economic and social benefits that forests provide. Forests support the livelihoods of 1.6 billion people and the value of their ecosystem services is estimated at \$6,120 per hectare each year. Despite the clear economic case for conservation, forest loss averages 13 million hectares a year – equivalent to losing a football pitch every 3 seconds. Investing \$30 billion in REDD+ programmes will speed the transition to sustainable growth and ensure the long-term well-being of millions of people in developing countries. The Green Economy requires stronger private sector engagement and changes in fiscal incentives.

Saturday 26th April

The Green Investment Bank is launching an NHS energy efficiency finance programme to help Trusts and Health Boards implement energy efficiency measures. In 2012-13 NHS sites across England spent more than £630 million on energy. A pilot project at Barts Health NHS Trust in London saved £100,000 on its energy bills. Called Operation TLC, the project involving 15,000 employees reduced the number of lights left on in wards by up to 40%.

Sunday 27th April

Dear Father, prayer is a mystery. We do not understand how it works or how our feeble petitions reach you. But we know that Jesus prayed and opened the way into your presence. Help us to follow his example and

Friday 18th April.

Good Friday

Lord Jesus, as we dwell on your great love for humankind in treading the path of the Cross for our sakes, help us to take up our own crosses in the struggle to protect your beautiful world. Give us strength of purpose and the courage to go on, even when the path ahead seems beset with difficulties.

Saturday 19th April

Around 25% of the UK population is clinically obese, costing the UK economy £77 billion a year, while about the same number will experience a mental health problem this year. Numerous peer-reviewed studies have found that being outside in nature can help people manage their mental health and well-being. Addressing the problem is the Ecotherapy programme developed by Mind and supported by Public Health England. Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust's Garden Mentors scheme trains volunteers to help elderly or disabled tenants of the Severn Vale Housing society to transform their gardens into wildlife-friendly, low-maintenance, attractive spaces. It helps prevent poor health by encouraging physical activity and improving the mental health and well-being of those involved.

www.gloucestershirewildlifetrust.co.uk

Sunday 20th April. Easter Day.

Risen Saviour, you greet us on the shoreline.
Risen Saviour, you instruct us when we are at a loss.
Risen Saviour, you feed us with the bread of life.

Resurrected Lord, you invite us to share in your work.
Resurrected Lord, you challenge us to action.
Resurrected Lord, you send us out to the harvest.
Marie Birkinshaw

Monday 21st April

A study at Flinders University, Adelaide, using 168 just-weaned piglets, found that those fed on GM soya and maize for 5 months more than doubled their risk of severe stomach inflammation in the female piglets and nearly quadrupled the risk in male piglets, compared to a nil result for equal numbers of a control group. Piglets have a similar digestive system to humans. US farmer Howard Vlieger commented: "For as long as GM crops have been in animal feeds, we have seen increasing digestive and reproductive problems, experienced increased production costs involving antibiotic use and seen higher rates of spontaneous abortions, deformed new-born, aggressiveness and death rates."

Tuesday 22nd April

The WHO World Cancer Report 2014 warns that, by 2035, 24 million people will be diagnosed with cancer each year, compared to 12 million in 2012. It finally accepted that neither an 'after-the-event' nor a 'profit-led' approach is now appropriate to this 'tidal wave of cancer'. "If we look at the cost of treatment of cancers, it is spiralling out of control, even for the high-income countries. Prevention is absolutely critical *and it has been somewhat neglected*." The report then referred to some well-known preventative measures such as "restrictions on alcohol and sugar", "tackling smoking and drinking", "diet's role in cancer" and "obesity and inactivity" These measures have long been

more information ring CAT on 01654 705989 or email info@cat.org.uk

Sunday 6th April

I take my bag of worries –
Pour them on the floor.
I try to work out this and that
And see what each is for.
I lay them down before the Lord
And ask him for his peace.
I know he'll help me with each one,
Tho' worries never cease.
Each day has worries of its own,
I'll trust him for today
I turn my heart unto the Lord
And wait for what he'll say.
Marie Birkinshaw

Monday 7th April

The UK Community Energy Strategy has been launched to help local communities generate their own renewable energy and take on the Big Six energy companies. The plans include:

- A £10 m. Urban Community Energy Fund to kickstart community energy projects in England
- £1 m. Big Energy Saving Network funding to support volunteers helping vulnerable consumers cut their energy costs
- A competition offering £100,000 to communities developing innovative approaches to saving energy and money
- An information resource for people interested in developing community energy projects.

The Green Party commented that the funding was only sufficient for 70 local schemes over 7 years. In Germany 51% of its renewable energy capacity is community-owned. Germany has 1,100 electricity suppliers, yet the UK has only 30

and the Big Six account for 98% of the UK market. Clearly we have a long way to go.

Tuesday 8th April

New figures from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation & Development (OECD) find that the British are the most generous charitable givers in the world, with 72% of us making a charitable donation every month. Ireland comes next with 71%. This partly explains the rise of the sharing economy, whereby people band together, share their resources and get by with less. Websites for sharers include: Airbnb.com for renting spare rooms around the world; CasseroleClub.com for sharing home-cooked food with those who can't easily cook for themselves; Liftshare.com – a car-sharing site driven by mission rather than profit; ParkatmyHouse.com to find a spare parking place; Storemates.co.uk to share your storage space or to find somewhere to stash your stuff; Streetbank.com to share with your neighbours anything and everything from apples to appliances.

Wednesday 9th April

The Norwegian Government has mandated its Sovereign Wealth Fund, the largest in the world, to invest up to 5% of its funds in renewable energy infrastructure. This will have a global impact and will set a new standard for international investors. The World Bank, European Investment Bank and European Bank for Reconstruction & Development have all committed to virtually end their investments in coal. Norwegian pension provider Storebrand has also divested from 29 coal and tar sands

companies because of their obvious carbon exposure. WWF comments: "We now look to Norway's leaders to commit to renewable energy investment at a scale that will make a global difference. This will be their legacy, and we are watching."

Thursday 10th April

The 1987 Montreal Protocol banned 13 CFCs and HCFCs found to be destroying the ozone layer. New research at the University of East Anglia has revealed four chemicals that were not banned, but are extremely potent greenhouse gases, and they are leaking into the atmosphere over Antarctica. At least 74,000 tonnes of these chemicals have already been emitted. Concentrations of one of them, CFC113a, are rising at an accelerating rate." There are quite a few loopholes in the protocol" said Dr. Laube, the project leader, "and we hope some of these are tightened. The good news is that we have picked up these four early."

Friday 11th April

More than 50 organisations have written to the Communities Secretary, Eric Pickles, asking him not to scrap the Merton Rule, which requires new developments to generate at least 10% of their energy from on-site renewables. The Rule enables local authorities to require higher energy standards for new homes than do the National Building Regulations. The letter says that scrapping the Rule would damage the on-site renewables industry, weaken local democracy and lead to higher energy bills in new homes. "Until full Zero Carbon standards begin to be applied in 2016, the Merton Rule is essential for sustaining jobs and skills in the new-build renewables industry and low-carbon construction."

Saturday 12th April

The Chancellor, pursuing the aim of cutting household energy bills, has announced a cap on the Carbon Price Floor, which was originally designed to penalise companies that create pollution. The cap will save energy-intensive companies around £15,000 a year and households £15 a year. The director of the Green Building Council commented: "It is deeply disappointing that the Chancellor does not recognise a growth opportunity when he sees one. There continues to be a complete blind spot on the role that energy efficiency has to play in reducing consumer bills over the long term and generating home-grown jobs. A one-off £15 cut in household bills will soon be forgotten. What is needed are long-term incentives to reduce the demand for energy in the first place."

Sunday 13th April

O God of earth and altar, bow down and hear our cry,
Our earthly leaders falter, our people drift and die.
The walls of gold entomb us, the swords of scorn divide;
Take not thy thunder from us, but take away our pride.
From all that terror teaches, from lies of tongue and pen,
From all the easy speeches that comfort cruel men,
From sale and profanation of honour and the sword,
From sleep and from damnation, deliver us, good Lord.

(G.K. Chesterton)

Monday 14th April

A report from the European Wind Energy Association claims that nuclear, coal and gas plants in Europe use 45 billion cu. metres of water a year – equivalent to the water consumption of 82 million EU citizens. The energy industries account for 44% of water use, far exceeding agriculture (24%, public water supply (21%) and industry (11%). By contrast, wind energy uses no water, so saving the use of 1.2 billion cu. metres of water a year and 2.4 billion euros. The director of RenewableUK said: "One of the many benefits of wind energy is that it requires hardly any water to keep generating. This report is a timely reminder of the environmental impact of other technologies which use vast amounts of water for cooling. It's not just the carbon footprint that matters, but also the water swallowed up by these other thirsty generators."

Tuesday 15th April

Researchers from Newcastle University's School of Civil Engineering have warned that water shortages are likely in future to impact energy generation. "The high dependency on water in electricity generation implies a possibility that within a few decades some power stations may be forced to decrease production or shut down if there are the water shortages expected with changes in climate and a growing population. . . Clustered sites of Carbon Capture & Storage (CCS) power stations, as recommended by the Government, could contribute towards localised water shortages."

Wednesday 16th April

Addressing CIWEM's 2013 conference, consultant David Weight said: "Three-quarters of the water we use is imported from other nations in the items we buy. We can't rely on that for ever." (Many such nations are already water-stressed – Ed.) Using the canal system to transfer water from the Southern Highlands of Scotland would be an efficient way to manage water resources across the country. Most of the UK's renewable energy is generated in Scotland. Using pipes in canals to transfer this energy would be less prone to damage and more efficient than transporting it by pipes in the sea under current plans.

Thursday 17th April

A study from Aalto University, Finland, has found that the proportion of people who get enough food (2,500 calories a day) nearly doubled between 1965 and 2005. But the proportion of people in countries that are significant net importers of food more than tripled in the same period. North Africa and the Middle East have become increasingly dependent on imported food. However, Brazilian food production has grown exponentially since 1965 and Brazil is now one of the world's leading food producers. In the same period the proportion of people consuming large amounts of animal-based nutrition has increased from 33% to more than 50%. This, together with over-consumption of calories in many countries, is putting increased pressure on the earth's limited natural resources.