



# St Peter Julian's Newsletter

September 2017

Volume 10 Issue 9

## THE GOSPEL OF CREATION

### Mass Times

#### Saturday Vigil:

5.30pm

#### Sunday:

9.30, 11.00am (Chinese),  
12.30, 3.30, 5.00pm (Korean)

#### 1st Sunday:

1.30pm (Filipino)

#### 1st & 3rd Saturday:

2.15pm (Indonesian)

#### Monday to Friday:

7.30am, 12.10, 5.30pm

#### Saturday:

12.10pm & Vigil at 5.30pm

#### Public Holidays:

12.10pm



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Pope Francis has notched up an impressive list of "firsts." He's the first Pope to take the name "Francis." He's also the first to write an encyclical on ecology and climate. That was *Laudato si'* in 2015. But he's not first in everything. When he named September 1 as a World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, he came in a distant second to the Orthodox Church.

It was in 1989 that the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, Demetrios I, decided on that date for "The Day of Prayer for Creation." And his successor, Bartholomew, was proclaiming a "gospel of creation" long before Francis, so much so that he was nicknamed "the Green Patriarch."

To have the leaders of the Western and Eastern Churches join forces in calling for our "conversion to creation" is cause for celebration. They deserve our full attention, and the World Day of Prayer is a good occasion for it. Let's revisit the Pope's great letter to the world. We'll home in on just one chapter: Chapter Two, "The Gospel of Creation."

Here Francis explores the wisdom of the Bible. He begins with the creation story in the first chapter of the first book of the Bible, Genesis. It has a very positive message for us:

"After the creation of man and woman, 'God saw everything that he had made, and behold it was very good' (Gen 1:31). The Bible teaches

that every man and woman is created out of love and made in God's image and likeness (Gen 1:26). This shows us the immense dignity of each person. . . How wonderful is the certainty that each human life is not adrift in the midst of hopeless chaos, in a world ruled by pure chance or endlessly recurring cycles!" (65)

In that story, human beings are given "dominion over the earth" (Gen 1:28). For a long time this was interpreted to justify human exploitation of the earth and its creatures. Francis rejects this: "We are not God. The earth was here before us and it has been given to us. . . nowadays we must forcefully reject the notion that our being created in God's image and given dominion over the earth justifies absolute domination over other creatures." (67)

On the contrary, ". . . human beings, endowed with intelligence, must respect the laws of nature and the delicate equilibria existing between the creatures of this world." (68) This means that "together with our obligation to use the earth's goods responsibly, we are called to recognize that other living beings have a value of their own in God's eyes." (69)

The Jewish people had ancient traditions that respected the rhythms of nature and allowed for its renewal – the weekly Sabbath, the sabbatical year, and the Year of Jubilee. Francis recalls the origin of the Year of Jubilee: ". . . after seven weeks of years, which is to say forty-nine years, the Jubilee was celebrated as a year of general forgiveness and 'liberty throughout the land for all its inhabitants' (cf. Lev 25:10). . . It was an acknowledgment that the gift of the earth with its fruits belongs to everyone. Those who tilled and kept the land were obliged to share its fruits, especially with the poor, with widows, orphans and foreigners in their midst." (71)

*"To have the leaders of the Western and Eastern Churches join forces in calling for our "conversion to creation" is cause for celebration. They deserve our full attention, and the World Day of Prayer is a good occasion for it."*

This wise principle of return and renewal is based on belief in God as the Creator of all things. This, Francis argues, is what we need to recover: "The best way to restore men and women to their rightful place, putting an end to their claim to absolute dominion over the earth, is to speak once more of the figure of a Father who creates and who alone owns the world." (75)

From the Bible Francis turns to another "book of revelation" – the universe itself. In contrast to nature religions that saw creation as divine, the Judaeo-Christian tradition saw it as natural: "While continuing to admire its grandeur and immensity, it no longer saw nature as divine. In doing so, it emphasizes all the more our human responsibility for nature. . . A fragile world, entrusted by God to human care, challenges us to devise intelligent ways of directing, developing and limiting our power." (78)

Faith sees creation as God's handiwork and gift. It also reveals the choice before us. Francis spells it out: "Faith allows us to interpret the meaning and the mysterious beauty of what is unfolding. 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." (79)

*""We human beings are prone to put ourselves at the centre of the universe. Not so, Francis reminds us, it's Christ."*

We human beings are prone to put ourselves at the centre of the universe. Not so, Francis reminds us, it's Christ. Echoing Teilhard de Chardin he writes: "The ultimate purpose of other creatures is not to be found in us. Rather, all creatures are moving forward with us and through us towards a common point of arrival, which is God, in that transcendent fullness where the risen Christ embraces and illumines all things. Human beings . . . are called to lead all creatures back to their Creator." (83)

Before we can do this, we must tune in to the harmony of creation. Francis

puts this beautifully: "The entire material universe speaks of God's love, his boundless affection for us. Soil, water, mountains: everything is, as it were, a caress of God. . . Anyone who has grown up in the hills or used to sit by the spring to drink, or played outdoors in the neighbourhood square; going back to these places is a chance to recover something of their true selves." (84)

We can delight in creation because we and everything else that exists belong together in one great cosmic family: ". . . called into being by one Father, all of us are linked by unseen bonds and together form a kind of universal family, a sublime communion which fills us with a sacred, affectionate and humble respect." (89)

But Francis is alert to the danger of valuing other creatures and causes at the expense of our fellow human beings: "A sense of deep communion with the rest of nature cannot be real if our hearts lack tenderness, compassion and concern for our fellow human beings. It is clearly inconsistent to combat traffick-ing in endangered species while remaining completely indifferent to human trafficking, unconcerned about the poor, or undertaking to destroy another human being deemed unwanted." (91)

First and last, it is Jesus who inspires us to delight in our world. "The Lord was able to invite others to be attentive to the beauty that there is in the world because he himself was in constant touch with nature, lending it an attention full of fondness and wonder." (97)

There's more: "Jesus lived in full harmony with creation, and others were amazed: 'What sort of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?' (Mt 8:27). His appearance was not that of an ascetic set apart from the world, nor of an enemy to the pleasant things of life. Of himself he said: 'The Son of Man came eating and drinking and they say, "Look, a glutton and a drunkard!"' (Mt 11:19)." (98)

The earthly Jesus who was so much at home in our world is now present

throughout creation as risen and glorious Lord of all: “. . . the risen One is mysteriously holding [the creatures of this world] to himself and directing them towards fullness as their end. The very flowers of the field and the birds which his human eyes contemplated and admired are now imbued with his radiant presence.” (100)

Pope Francis concluded his prophetic appeal with two beautiful prayers which deserve to be prayed in full. Here we will have to be content with the last few words: “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.”

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**Br Gerard Develin SSS**  
4 Aug 1940— 9 July 2017

**Br Gerard Develin** and his twin sister were born in Sydney in 1940. Legally blind, he became a professed lay brother in the Blessed Sacrament Congregation in 1960. Over fifty years he served variously in the Toowoomba, Lower Plenty, Sydney and Melbourne communities. He engaged in ministry to the blind, played blind cricket, and grew to love the Jewish faith. His last years were spent in care until he died on 9 July 2017. For a longer obituary, go to the *Blessed Sacrament or St Peter Julian’s websites — News.*



**Fr John Morton SSS**  
2 Jan 1925—27 Aug 2017

**Fr John Morton** was born in Albury in 1925. After working in local government and serving in the RAAF, he joined the Blessed Sacrament Congregation and was ordained in 1960. He served around the Province as local leader, parish priest, and provincial treasurer and consultant. He supported the SSS mission in India and Sri Lanka and was a member of the Congregation’s international finance commission. After several years in care with multiple health issues, he died on 27 August 2017. For a longer obituary, go to the *Blessed Sacrament or St Peter Julian’s websites — News.*



**MONTHLY MASSES & EVENTS**

**Catholic Indonesian Community Mass,**  
1st & 3rd Saturdays (**2 & 16 Sept**) at 2.15pm  
Harry Liong 0425 918 925.

**Chinese Community Mass (Cantonese) Mass every Sunday at 11.00am.**  
Simon Liu 0411 377 618.

**Korean Community Mass every Sunday at 5.00pm.**  
Lucian Jin Young Noh 0451 465 857.

**Filipino Community Mass,** 1st Sunday (**3 Sept**) at 1.30pm. Juliet Byrne 0437 045 945.

**Holy Trinity Community (Adoration).** Eucharistic Adoration **2nd & 4th Saturdays (9 & 23 Sept)** at 3.00pm. Jence Oesman 0414 506 770.

**Mass of Anointing** every 1st Saturday (**2 Sept**) (**Feb-Dec**) at 12.10pm.

**Associates of the Blessed Sacrament Congregation,** 2nd Saturday (**9 Sept**) at 12.10pm  
Mass followed by meeting. Fr Marcellus Glynn SSS (02) 9211 4100 or (02) 9270 6900.

**Life in the Eucharist (LITE)** every 4th Saturday (**Next meeting 23 Sept**) in the Hall at 2.15pm.

**St Peter Julian’s Altar Auxiliary.** The 12.10pm **Thursday** Eucharist is offered for members of the St Peter Julian’s Altar Auxiliary. (For information on becoming a member please speak to the Receptionist.)



## LIFE IN THE EUCHARIST (LITE) MEETING.

At earlier gatherings of the LITE group, Fr Rosario presented the various models of Holiness and our last report was in relation to our session on one of the characteristics of the *wholeness* model – *Integration of Opposites*. The next session was **Integration of Mind, Body and Spirit**.

There are people who are wrapped up in their own thoughts and hardly pay any attention to their bodily needs. There are others who have concern for the body in paying attention to diet and exercise but not for intellectual pursuits or for the world of the spirit. So-called religious people may, following the Hermit or Angelic models of holiness, scorn what is of the 'world and the flesh', and are interested only in mystical experiences.

Through the wholeness model one learns to respect the body and yet to respond to the spirit, to live in the world and yet be open to the transcendent; to be a believer and yet to value one's mind and the need to ask questions, find answers, to depend on God and decide for oneself.

A person who has integrated mind, body and spirit, experiences a harmony and genuineness and a basic consistency in one's whole being. There are some who have repressed their bodily needs and emotions, or denied the questions that surge in their unbelieving minds. To them the body never tells a lie and the discrepancy and tension is evident in their faces and in their entire bearing. But with those who experience the wholeness, there is a basic harmony between the body, mind and spirit, as well as a sense of relaxation and freedom. The holy person, according to this model, will befriend the body and take care of it paying attention to physical fitness, proper diet, exercise, medical care and so forth.

The holy person also develops the mind. One learns to think for oneself, to raise doubts and to question even radically in one's search for truth. The holy person is open to transcendent experiences. One learns to go beyond thought through meditation and especially through love.

Scripture emphasizes that the body is worthy of respect as a temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:19). Jesus himself paid attention to bodily needs at the wedding feast at Cana (Jn 2:1-11) or when he went as a guest to the house of Zacchaeus (Lk 19:5-7).

Jesus showed his feelings. He shed tears (Jn 11:35) and expressed anger (Jn 2:14-17). Jesus exercised his mind. He asked questions as a boy in the temple (Lk 2:41-52) and taught with wisdom (Mt 13:54f). He was addressed as Teacher and showed great mental agility in his responses (Mt 22:15-22).

Jesus was open to the spirit. He went to the mountain to pray (Mt 14:23). He was quite emphatic that his kingship was not of this world (Jn 18:36) and he challenged people not to fear those who can kill the body but cannot kill the soul (Mt 10:28).

To conclude this section we look at a text from Paul (1 Thess 5:23). "May the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ".

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**The LITE group meets on the fourth Saturday of each month and the next meeting will be at 2.15 pm on Saturday 23 September in the hall at St Peter Julian's church. All are welcome.**