

Eco-Spirituality Week

Monday 13 November

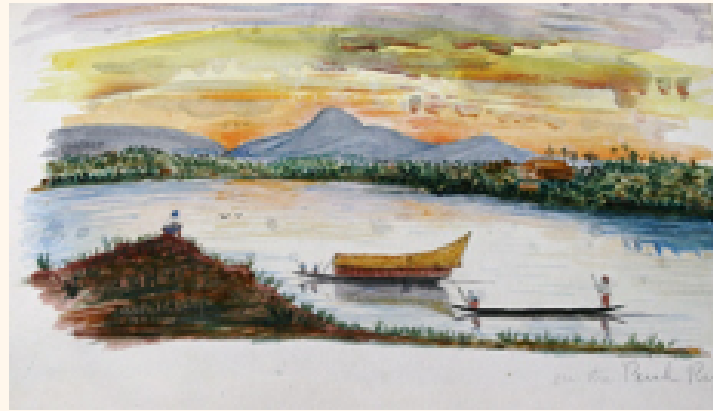
Welcome to Eco-Spirituality Week

We stand at a critical moment in Earth's history. We all have a role in caring for Earth, 'Our Common Home', and our responsibilities for present and future generations in the Web of Life.

Science, theology, and indeed, the ancient knowledges of aboriginal peoples throughout the world, stress the interconnected nature of everything, of all. This pivotal moment prompts us to respond, "to the awakening of a new reverence for life, the firm resolve to achieve sustainability, the quickening struggle for justice and peace, and the joyful celebration of life" (Earth Charter 2002) (Josephite Earth Sustainability Charter).

So what is Eco-Spirituality?

Eco-Spirituality exists when one listens and responds to the spiritual connection between human beings and their environment.



REFLECTION

Psalm 8

When I look up at the heavens at the work of Love's creation, at the infinite variety of your Plan, What is woman that You rejoice in her, And man that You do delight in him? You have made us in your image, You fill us with your Love; You have made us co-creators of the earth! guardians of the planet! to care for all your creatures, to tend the land, the sea, and the air we breathe; all that you have made, You have placed in our hands. O Love, my Beloved, How powerful is your name In all the earth!

ACTION: Set your alarm and see if you can wake up for a sunrise or catch a sunset.



PHOTO: Lava Blister, Williamstown
Taken by Carmel Cramer

Tuesday 14 November

The cries of Earth and of the poor can go unheard. "It is essential to seek comprehensive solutions which consider the interactions within natural systems themselves and with social systems. We are faced not with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather with one complex crisis which is both social and environmental. Strategies for a solution demand an integrated approach to combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature" (Pope Francis 2015, n 139).

REFLECTION:

All our discoveries enlarge our small ideas of the immensity of Omnipotence... Beneath the soil ... are secrets which are only known to us in part. But these revelations, small as they are, stretch far beyond our comprehension. We learn that the dust we tread upon was once alive, the rock on which we stand has lived and died - has been a thing of life and is now a stone: and this is a time that reaches so far back as only to be understood by the One who was from eternity ... and whether we search in earth, or sky, or sea, we are everywhere met by the visions of the Illimitable. (From J E Tenison Woods (1862), Geological Observations in South Australia.)

ACTION: Find time to lie on your back and look at the sky.

Wednesday 15 November

Strengthening Ecological Economics

Pope Francis appeals for urgent changes to notions of economy. Expectations of continual economic growth are unrealistic. We support his call for “economic ecology ... [and] a humanism capable of bringing together different fields of knowledge, including economics, in the service of a more integral and integrative vision” (Pope Francis 2015, n141).

REFLECTION

Sit quietly and reflect on the words of Father Julian Tenison Woods

All created things give us ideas and glimpses of the beauty of the infinitely beautiful Creator. (JTW 1881)

“Every rock, every leaf, every insect has something beautiful, nay, wonderful to tell.. a perfect fairyland of beauty will open to the gaze at every step. The flowers will unveil the hidden secrets of their beauty; the stones reveal their crystalline structure, and the tiniest insect display wonders of mechanism.. All new, varied and instructive, and tending to raise the mind to higher and nobler conceptions of what creation does to declare the glory of its author.

(JTW Notes made in North Australia Sydney Mail 17th July, 1880)



ACTION: Can we commit to reducing our ecological footprint?

Everyday gestures: recycling, making mindful choices regarding water, energy, food, transportation and other purchases.

Larger Strategies: Appraise and adopt technologies which benefit Earth and the Earth community. These may include fitting solar panels, purchasing energy from renewable sources, transiting the car to hybrid or electric vehicles.

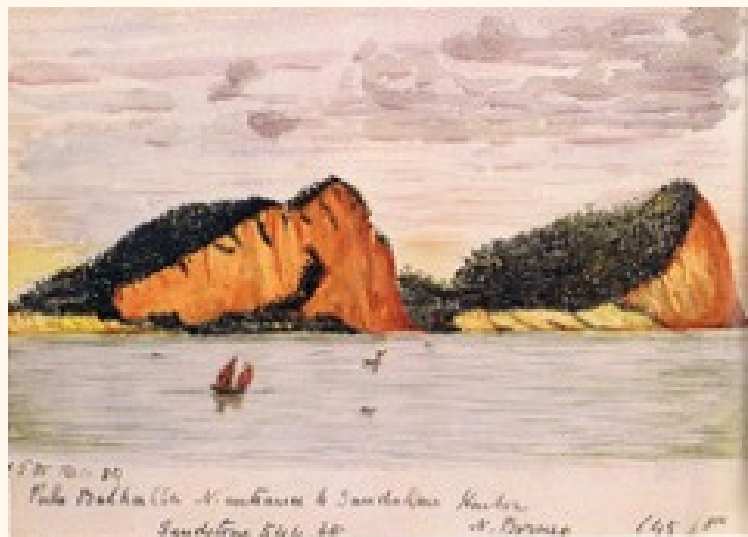
Thursday 16 November

A Leader in Eco-Spirituality – Father Julian Tenison Woods, co-founder of the Sisters of St Joseph

The priest-scientist Fr Julian Tenison Woods expressed and shared his deep love and appreciation for the beauty and wonder of Earth with the Sisters. He understood and brought the devastation wrought upon Aboriginal people through dispossession and colonisation before the public and government authorities.

In responding to the healthcare needs of First Nations people he mixed medicines using his extensive botanical knowledge with his limited medical knowledge and used a hut near the Penola presbytery as a clinic for his patients. To fund the purchase of medicines he “managed to skim a little extra sustenance from literary and scientific pursuits” (Press, J. Tenison-Woods 1983).

In order to stem the diminishment of the fisheries of the New South Wales colony. Tenison Woods’ called for “a wise enactment of the law [that] nets only of a particular gauge in the meshes (be) allowed to be fished with” (Tenison-Woods 1882, 84) Drawing on the anecdotal evidence of fishermen, he concluded that the greater Sydney Harbour has been adversely affected.....not so much to pollution of its waters by the sewage of a large city, or their constant disturbance by the traffic of innumerable vessels, as it is to the ceaseless and often wanton process of netting to which every bay and flat has been subjected for the past fifteen or twenty years. The wholesale destruction within the harbour caused by stake nets and seines with meshes almost small enough for a naturalist’s hand-net (Tenison-Woods 1882, 128-9).



[1] Julian Tenison Woods was awarded a Gold Medal for this volume, Fish and Fisheries of New South Wales which was released in conjunction with the “great Fish Exhibition of 1883” (Tenison-Woods 1882, Preface).

Explore ~ Embrace ~ Embody Laudato Si’ Action Plan 2022

The early Sisters of St Joseph were awakened to the plight of Earth by Fr Julian Tenison Woods, their co-founder in the 1860s and 70s, when he highlighted the danger of losing old growth forests in Tasmania and lamented the unsustainable fishing practices in NSW. St Mary MacKillop and the Sisters who have followed in her footsteps have lived simple lives leaving a light ecological foot-print. They have continued to find new ways of responding to the needs of those made poor in ever-changing contexts.

REFLECTION:

Julian, you opened our eyes and hearts to the beauty of our cosmos and of our planet

Open our hearts to give thanks

Julian, you taught us to recognise that Earth is being stripped of its riches That creatures are slowly dying, and people are suffering And that changes in climate have damaged many systems

Open our eyes to see Julian,

your influence and ministry continue to this day. You challenged us to find a balance between a healthy economy and a healthy environment To live simply for the common good And to respond generously to the needs of those made poor

Open our hearts to act Julian,

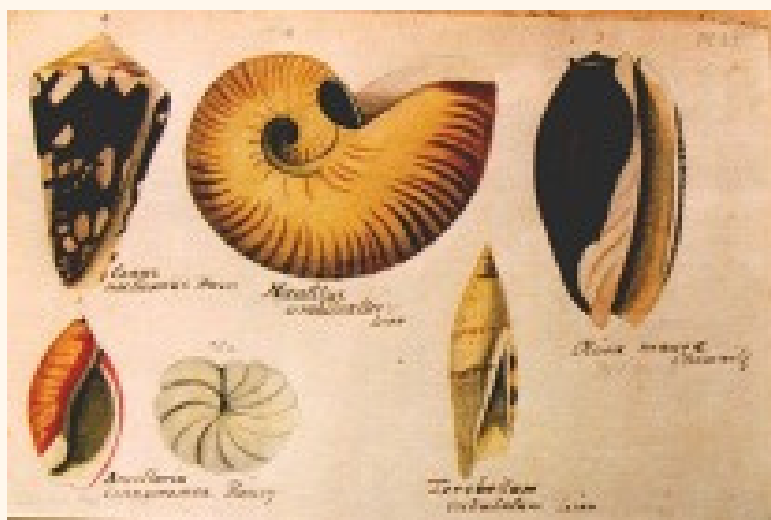
your exploration of the natural world taught you to treasure its diversity You challenge us to make sacrifices to protect Earth's fragile beauty And to respond to the needs of those suffering or made poor by the crises affecting Earth

Be with us now.

ACTION:

Introduce your children to an appreciation of our 'common home'. Click [here](#) and take time to discover the wonder of our earth.

Or type the following link in your browser https://www.sosj.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/170318-JTW-Anniv_Activity-Book-FINAL.pdf



In Laudato Si' Pope Francis asked us to care for creation and to reconcile our relationship with God, creation and one another.

REFLECTION AND ACTION

Borrowing from the great Ignatian tradition of examens, this Ecological Examen asks you to reflect on your personal relationship with creation, to acknowledge and amend your ways and to promote ecological justice by standing in solidarity with those most impacted by environmental harm.

Developed by St. Ignatius Loyola, the Examen is a technique of prayerful reflection on the events of the day in order to detect God's presence and discern God's direction for us. Begin the Examen by placing yourself or your group in a posture that allows you to be open to the ways the Spirit is working in you. There are six steps in the Examen and we invite you to pray with the audio from [here](#).

Or type the following into your browser <https://pray-as-you-go.org/player/prayer%20tools/ecologicalexamen>

Friday 17 November

Gratitude

I give thanks to God for creation and for being wonderfully made. (Where did I feel God's presence in creation today?) Awareness I ask for the grace to see creation as God does – in all its splendor and suffering. (Do I see the beauty of creation and hear the cries of the earth and the poor?)

Understanding

I ask for the grace to look closely to see how my life choices impact creation and the poor and vulnerable. (What challenges or joys do I experience as I recall my care for creation? How can I turn away from a throwaway culture and instead stand in solidarity with creation and the poor?)

Conversion

I ask for the grace of conversion towards ecological justice and reconciliation. (Where have I fallen short in caring for creation and my brothers and sisters? How do I ask for a conversion of heart?)

Reconciliation

I ask for the grace to reconcile my relationship with God, creation, and humanity, and to stand in solidarity through my actions. (How can I repair my relationship with creation and make choices consistent with my desire for reconciliation with creation?)

Closing Prayer

I offer a closing prayer for the earth and the most vulnerable in our world.

Click [Ecological Examen © Ignatian Solidarity Network](#) to find out more.

Or type the following in your browser <http://www.ecologicalexamen.org/eco-examen-resource>

Saturday 18 November

Tomorrow, 19th November we hope to welcome you to St Joseph's By The Sea Williamstown, Open Garden Day.

Click [here](#) to get an introduction to the day.
Or type the following in your browser
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FzzEXJXDJyM>

ACTION: Visit St Joseph's By The Sea Open Garden Day and learn more about how to care for our 'common home'.



Sunday 19 November

A Day in the Garden with the SJBTS Team 19 November 23

Sunday 19 November 2023, time: 10:00am – 4:00pm

We welcome you to join us for a Day in the Garden. An event filled with blissful bites, fascinating concepts on sustainability, cosmology, wellness and beauty.

Come and enjoy...
Wicking bed demonstrations, Garden Tours,
Reflexology/seated massage, Heartwarming refreshments at the Bee-Hive CAFE, and so much more.

Paintings on this document: by J. T Woods