



# Current Issues in Prayer

September 2024

Welcome! The Pope invites people of good will to come together and pray **that each of us listen with our hearts to the cry of the Earth and of the victims of environmental disasters and the climate crisis, making a personal commitment to care for the world we inhabit.**



## Getting started:

I sit down comfortably and calm down. I become aware that God is with me and that He loves me. I recognize His gift of our planet earth, a place we call home but which we have ravaged over time.



## Short story:

Deforestation has increased drastically over the years. According to the UN, each year 130,000 square kilometres of the world's forests are destroyed. One of the devastating effects of deforestation is mudslides since soil is no longer held together by the roots of the trees. For instance, in 2006, in just two minutes, a mudslide completely covered Guinsaugon in the Philippines, and killed 57 people. In Port-au-Prince, Haiti, months before the disastrous 2010 earthquake, torrential rains triggered a mudslide which destroyed a hillside home. In 1999, in Central America, numerous deaths occurred when Hurricane Mitch set off mudslides and flooding.

Returning home after a long period abroad, Sebastião Ribeiro Salgado and his wife Lélia discovered that a once lush forest around their home in Brazil had been cleared and that what remained was a barren landscape. However, the damaged environment sparked inspiration in Salgado's wife Lélia, who came up with the idea to replant the forest. What sounded like an impossible feat was realized through the creation of

an environmental organization dedicated to the sustainable development of the area of the valley which they called home. Through this organisation a concerted effort was made to replant the forest, and in twelve years more than two million trees were planted. The healthy ecosystem of the new forest has not only facilitated the regrowth of hundreds of species of plants and the return of wildlife, but has also stabilised the valley walls, seen the return of fresh water springs and protected the local community from extreme weather events.



## Time to reflect:

In recent years, the worst ten natural disasters have resulted in the death of over one million people.



## Let us pray:

Dear Lord, thank you for giving us the Earth, the planet which provides us with all our needs. Help us to realise that it is up to us to take care of the planet and of each other.



## Inspiration:

Living well is all about keeping good relations with Mother Earth and not living by domination or extraction.

*Tauli Corpuz*



## Hands on:

I support one concrete action to combat climate change for the long term. As much as possible, I purchase only products that help sustainability.