

Season of Creation

“a season of increased prayer and effort on behalf of our common home.”

Pope Francis

August
2021

Welcome to our Caritas publication produced to coincide with the Season of Creation.



The season starts on 1st September, the Day of Prayer for Creation, and ends on 4th October, the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of ecology.

We have joined with Laudato Si groups in the diocese and with CAFOD to bring you news about the work going on now in the diocese, and being planned for later, on environment and climate change.

Why should we be concerned about the environment and climate change?

The climate crisis is accelerating ecological instability, which results in the loss of habitats that are homes for millions of species, including humans, whose homes are at risk due to climate conflict, loss and damage.

Caritas has chosen to focus this year, and next, on threats to biodiversity as part of the climate crisis; in particular on insect pollinators as indicators of biodiversity, and on the role these small creatures play in world food security.

Details of our first major direct action work.... the diocesan wide **Bee Highway** are on the next few pages.

Please join in if you can.

We can make a difference; the more parishes who join in, the more difference we will make.

Environment survey news

Thank you to all who completed our digital survey.

We had a great response and are now analysing the results ready to use them in preparing the diocesan Environmental Strategy which will go to Bishop Philip and Trustees for approval shortly.

Join with existing diocese Laudato Si groups in prayer and action for our common home.



We now have a network of people from across the diocese who meet monthly for information updates and for support from Caritas and CAFOD.

Our next meeting will be on 2nd September from 6 to 7pm. Contact Maureen Thompson for the link to join in: mthompson@cafod.co.uk

We have a speaker from the Ecological Conversion Group coming to tell us about the launch of their fabulous new resource website to help parishes take action to respond to the Pope's invitation to:

“work with generosity and tenderness in protecting this world which God has entrusted to us”

The diocese Laudato Si groups encourage ecological conversion through prayer. Have you thought about asking your parish priest if you could have a Climate Sunday service. www.climatesunday.org



“Together, we pledge our commitment to raising awareness about the stewardship of creation.”

- Pope Francis



Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth (reg. charity no. 246871)

“Bringing people closer to Jesus Christ through his Church”

Bees and other pollinator insects are in decline in the UK and throughout the world.

We have lost entire species....
as well as large drops in numbers of most species.

Why is this?

Since 1970, the UK has lost **90%** of hay meadows, a rich source of food for pollinator insects.

This fact, when added to fragmentation of habitat, industrialisation of agriculture and the over use of insecticides and other pesticides...all have resulted in this threat to this significant part of our biodiversity.

Why does it matter?

Reports have shown that around 75% of our food crops, particularly fruit and vegetables, are pollinated for free by pollinating insects.

The diversity of bees (over 250 bee species in the UK alone) ensures we have suitable bees for many different climates, and therefore these little creatures contribute to our own food security.

What can we do about this?

As part of our Care for Creation, our gardens can be an increasingly important habitat for pollinators.

Help to increase the number of pollen and nectar rich flowers...

- Don't mow your lawn so frequently
- Plant bee friendly plants
- Don't be too tidy: provide/leave undisturbed nest areas

Bumblebees can forage up to 5km from their nests.

So, if as a diocese we can join up bee friendly parish and parishioner spaces ...

We can create our own diocese-wide Bee Highway

Join Caritas in a wildlife friendly programme of planting enhancements for parishes and parishioners in 2022.



Image by TD Lucas



from this.....in one summerto this

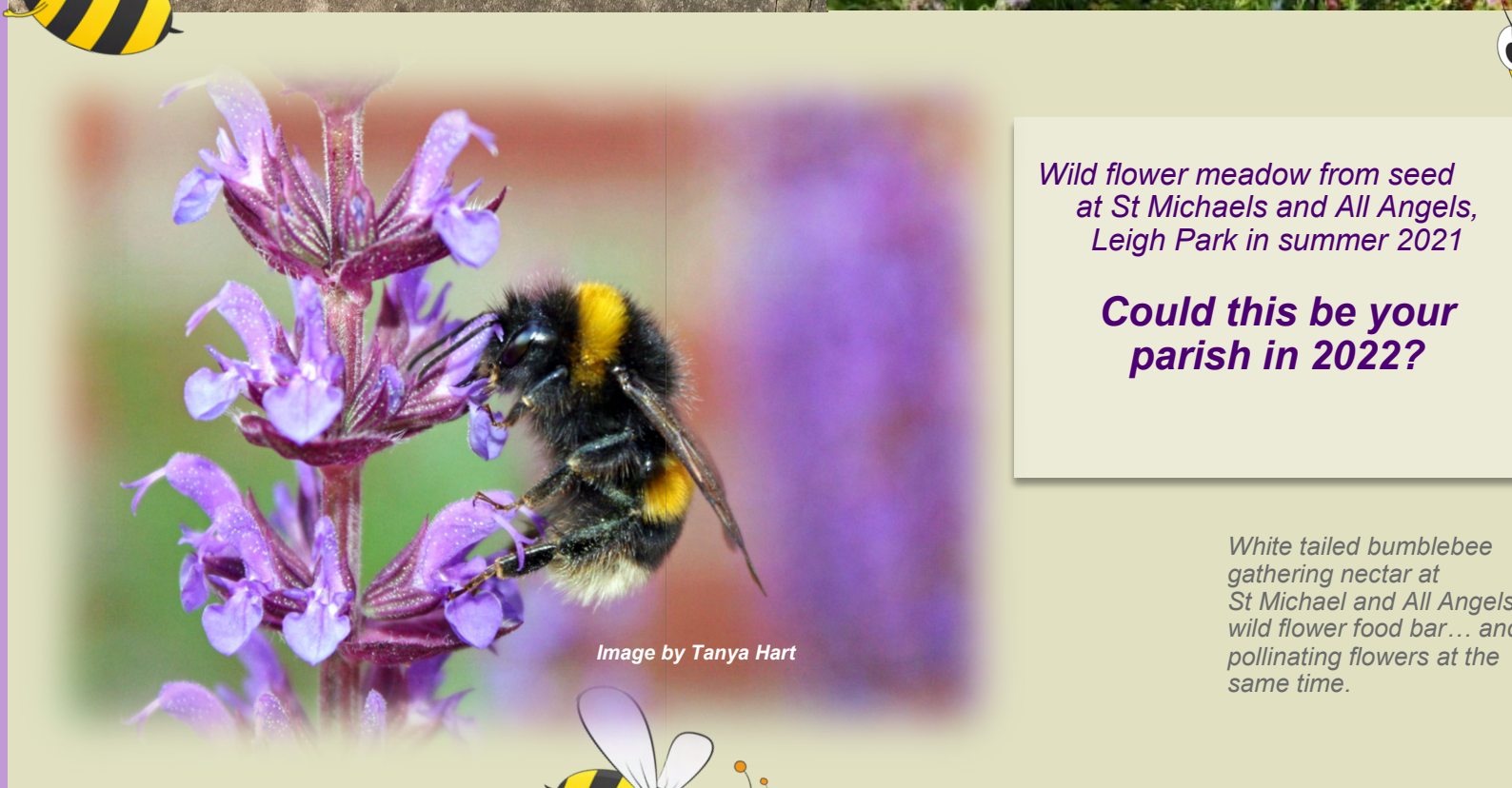


Image by Tanya Hart

Wild flower meadow from seed at St Michaels and All Angels, Leigh Park in summer 2021

Could this be your parish in 2022?

White tailed bumblebee gathering nectar at St Michael and All Angels wild flower food bar... and pollinating flowers at the same time.



Next steps

Interested parishes should get in touch with Caritas (contact details on the right) to register their interest in becoming part of the Bee Highway project.

We will work together to:

- identify suitable areas in your parish grounds to create a bee friendly space
- help identify which nectar rich plants may grow best in your area
- help find volunteers to create and look after the parish space
- help publicise the project to engage parishioners to take part, in their own spaces

Caritas are working with interested parishioners to produce plants and seed for parishes to use for this project in late spring 2022.

If you are interested in helping with this work, please get in touch.

"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

Contact details:
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Caritas
Diocese of Portsmouth

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CAFOD Harvest Family Fast Day 2021 Friday 1st October

As we emerge from the pandemic, Pope Francis calls us all:

“at this critical juncture, it is our duty to rethink the future of our common home and our common project.”

In the last year and a half, the coronavirus pandemic pushed millions of people around the world into poverty and deepened inequality. The poorest and most vulnerable people in the world are also being hit hardest by the climate crisis.

The climate crisis will affect each one of us. It is a crisis that is damaging our world, our common home, God’s creation.



In Brazil, Ivanilde, a mother, a grandmother, and a farmer, is on the frontline of the struggle to protect our common home. She lives in a small patch of rainforest in one of the most heavily deforested regions of the Amazon rainforest. More than once, Ivanilde’s home has been ravaged by fires started on land owned by wealthy cattle ranchers and she has lost trees on whose fruits her family rely on to survive. Local experts from our church network have stood alongside Ivanilde in legal cases to win rights to stay on the land and she has replanted and restored her land.

At Harvest Family Fast Day on Friday 1 October, CAFOD is raising money for its Climate Crisis Appeal. CAFOD works with local experts to help people around the world to adapt to the changing climate and protect our common home.

All over the world, people are doing their bit to fight the worst effects of climate change.

In Ethiopia, water experts supported by CAFOD are helping to build solar powered pumps to help communities struggling with drought.

In Bangladesh, CAFOD’s local climate experts are helping people protect their homes and livelihoods from ever more devastating cyclones.

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Or why not Go Green in October....

and ask your family and friends to sponsor you to “go cycling, go veggie and go plastic-free”.

In this way, we can make choices in our everyday lives that will help to restore our common home and through CAFOD’s Climate Crisis Appeal, support our sisters and brothers overseas.

By donating to CAFOD this Family Fast Day, you can help communities affected by the worst impacts of the climate crisis. You can give in your parish or online at <https://cafod.org.uk/Give>.

For more information on CAFOD Harvest family fast day and how you can help in your parish please contact Jo Lewry portsmouth@cafod.org.uk

01-12 NOV 2021
GLASGOW

COP26

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ITALY



In November this year, the UK will host COP26, the annual United Nations climate conference.

As [our Bishops](#) have told us, this conference will bring together leaders who have “the power to make defining choices and policies which will help us build back better, provide for our brothers and sisters, and take care of our common home.”

CAFOD is encouraging people to sign its [petition](#) to the Prime Minister and urge Boris Johnson to make sure communities most vulnerable to the impacts of the climate crisis are at the heart of the talks.