

On Line and On Point

MARY MOTHER OF JESUS INCLUSIVE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

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HEARING GOD—"Listen to the Voice of Creation," listening to overlooked or unheard voices across nature is a central element for this year's Season of Creation, an annual period of Christian observance to pray and care for God's creation. The season began Sept. 1, the World Day of Prayer for Creation, and concludes Oct. 4, the feast day of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of ecology.

An ecumenical steering committee that includes the World Council of Churches, Laudato Si' Movement, Lutheran World Federation, World Methodist Council and the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, designated the "burning bush" from the Book of Exodus as the logo for this year's season — representing how extreme heat, wildfires and other impacts of climate

change are devastating communities and ecosystems, and serving as a symbol to hear God speaking through creation as Moses did when he encountered the burning bush.

In his 2015 encyclical "Laudato Si', on Care for Our Common Home," Francis said that ecological destruction is inseparable from questions of justice, urging all people to "hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor."

"At the mercy of our consumerist excesses, our sister Mother Earth groans and begs us to stop our abuse and her destruction," the pope said, [adding] hope this year's Season of Creation theme would "foster in everyone a concrete commitment to care for our common home."

"If we learn how to listen, we can hear in the voice of creation a kind of dissonance," Francis said in his message for the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, which was issued in July. "On the one hand, we can hear a sweet song in praise of our beloved Creator; on the other, an anguished plea, lamenting our mistreatment of this our common home." The pope said that the "sweet song of creation," which invites people to practice an ecological spirituality attentive to God's presence in the natural world, is "tragically" accompanied by "a chorus of cries of anguish" — from the earth, the poor and Indigenous and young people.

Mary Mother of Jesus Inclusive Catholic Community Mission Statement

We are a Christ-centered community of equals, consisting of women and men, ordained and non-ordained, empowered by the Spirit whose mission is to worship, to serve, to promote compassion, justice, peace and care for creation. Come join us.

Send articles/info by Wed to be published on weekend: rjbannerusa@gmail.com

John Mundell of Indianapolis, IN, considers it "an incredible honor" that he was recently chosen as the director of the worldwide effort to put Pope Francis' encyclical "*Laudato Si'*, on Care for Our Common Home" into action." The Season of Creation gives us a chance to stop, listen and feel our interconnection to everyone and everything, and to experience a deep sense of responsibility toward our global community and our common home," Mundell said. "This can only lead to positive action."—*from the daily blog of a parish priest*

OFFERINGS— We are grateful to everyone who has been so generous in supporting our community. Thanks so much. Please remember to make your regular donations to MMOJ, by sending your check to MMOJ % St. Andrew UCC, 6908 Beneva Road, Sarasota, FL 34238.

OUTREACH—The current recipient of our offered financial support is the **Community Foundation of Sarasota Season of Sharing**. As a vital safety net, Season of Sharing is a trusted way for neighbors to support one another, whatever the crisis, be it hurricanes, Red Tide, economic downturns or even a global pandemic.

MOVIE CORNER

Many thanks to Mary Montavon who found this gem of a movie and provided this week's review. **Abe**. It's about a 12 yr. old (Abe) growing up in Brooklyn in a Jewish, Palestinian family. Dinner conversations are contentious. He loves to cook and hopes to bring his family together with his fusion cooking. It is available for streaming on Hoopla through the library, Amazon Prime Freevee, and other streaming services.

I was especially taken by the music, much of it by Gui Amabis, a Brazilian composer. The actor (Seu Jorge) who portrays the cook who finally agrees to teach Abe is Brazilian and a musician. The movie ends with a song "Milonga del Moro Judio" by Jorge Drexler. "Yo soy un moro Judio que vive con los cristianos" which translates "I am a Moorish Jew who lives with the Christians." I was so taken by the song, I had to find out more about it. There is a Ted Talk (<https://youtu.be/C2p42GASnUo>) that Jorge Drexler gave some years ago about the origin of the song. What an impressive artist and music history. I learned so much about "décimas". Hope you enjoy this too!—*Beth Ponce*. Send your suggestions of movies to watch, to ponce.beth@gmail.com

FUTURE VISION—The Labor Day holiday gave me some extra time to pray, read and catch up on trends in the Catholic Movement. I listened to a talk by Richard Rohr about how Christianity has to change its definitions if it is going to survive. "Catholic" says Rohr, "means universal, for everybody. As soon as you say Roman Catholic you have created an oxymoron. That would be like describing the Roman universe versus the real universe."

I was drawn for some reason, to the name of his center, The Center For Action and Contemplation. Then I am reading a book and it talks about Diedrick Bonhoeffer, a German Lutheran Pastor, captured by the Nazis and executed in April of 1945 after two years a prisoner. Bonhoeffer believed that in the future, a new form of Christianity, stripped of it's religious garments would be limited to two things: contemplative prayer and righteous action in the world. Bonhoeffer believed that through contemplation and

action, the Christian would learn a new way of thinking and seeing: To view the world from the perspective of those from the bottom of society. There is not a Catholic way to feed the hungry. There is no Lutheran way to visit the sick. There is no Jewish way to comfort the sorrowful. There is no Methodist way to visit the imprisoned. And so on.

And finally I am finishing up *An Unorthodox Faith* by Kurt Struckmeyer and he writes this, "Today contemplative prayer is often defined as centering prayer....But that is not how Bonhoeffer used the term. For him it was not about achieving a state of consciousness focused on achieving inner peace and tranquility; it was about moving beyond ourselves into the lives of others. In contemplative prayer, Bonhoeffer said, "I move into the other person's place. I enter their life....their guilt and distress, I am afflicted by their sins and infirmity. Contemplation is a matter of opening one's heart and letting one's self be moved with compassion.

Clearly, those who say that religion and politics don't mix are sadly mistaken, for it is in the political world, among others, that people's guilt and distress, sins and infirmities are created. The health care system, education, redlining, prison reform, children in cages, the



unequal distribution of wealth, denigration of women, systemic racism, systemic poverty—these and other such topics are the stuff of contemplation. Not only do religion and politics mix, those who do not understand that do not understand what Christianity is all about.

Struckmeyer adds, "Going beyond friends, family, and acquaintances, contemplation should bring to mind those who are in need and who are suffering in our towns, our nation and our world. It is important to look deeply at current events from one's theological perspective and see how that might invoke a compassionate response." In other words, action.

So there it was, three different authors on three separate occasions speaking about action and contemplation. In Bonhoeffer's case, it was the impetus for his proposing a new kind of "religionless Christianity," one stripped of the baggage Christianity has taken on over the years. As more and more organized religions head for implosion, I think those who have a practice of contemplation and action will be best positioned to be church for a new world..—*from the daily blog of a parish priest*

STAFF—Russ Banner, editor; Joan Pesce and Dorothy Sadowski, text review; Beth Ponce and Dotty Shugrue, features