



GO GREEN FOR LENT

WEEK ONE:
CREATION CARE

Bishop Helen-Ann reflects:

At the recent meeting of the General Synod in London, we heard a powerful speech by ++Marinez Rosa Dos Santos Bassotto (the Archbishop of Brazil) who spoke to the Synod about her ministry and mission context in the Diocese of the Amazon. She reminded us that churches can and should be a prophetic voice, and that as Synod members, we were in a position to encourage local churches and communities to focus on environmentally sustainable practices. Churches can act as bridges between different actors, as well as offering spiritual and pastoral support for people impacted by climate change. We can be agents of change; we cannot be observers. Our commitments should not be theoretical but a daily experience and shaped by the reality we live in. I was struck by the archbishop's opening words to Synod, greeting us on behalf of her 'people of the rivers and the forest.' The Diocese of the Amazon is 136 years old, and is (in the archbishop's own words), 'small but in missionary expansion'. Both these points immediately made me think of our own diocesan contexts of place and geography, and of our own diocesan age (144 years old this year). Archbishop Marinez offered a hope-filled and joyful rallying cry, one which will remain with us for the future.

Just before the archbishop spoke to Synod, during our morning worship, I was struck by an image in our prayers of God creating change. While we often resist change, I found the idea of the change being part of God's creative power and life in our midst very inspiring and affirming. We are part of that landscape of change, which is why this Lent I am inviting us to share in a process of change towards a more sustainable and climate conscious future.'

A prayer in the Franciscan tradition by Rachel McCarthy/CAFOD:

Living God,
have mercy on us,
for the times we forget
that we belong to each other.
You call us to be still,
to hear the whisper of our Sister Wind,
to feel the radiance of our Brother Sun,
and to be nourished by our Mother Earth.
Renew us in your healing love.
Inspire us to water the earth,
And nurture one another,
so all may flourish.
Together, as one family,
may we always sing your praise.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.