

Who we are and how we are called

Bishop Jane Alexander

Second Week of Lent

Tuesday March 15

Scripture

Psalm 111: 2-5, 10

Great are the works of the Lord,
studied by all who delight in them.

Full of honour and majesty is his work,
and his righteousness endures forever.

He has gained renown by his wonderful deeds;
the Lord is gracious and merciful.

He provides food for those who fear him;
he is ever mindful of his covenant.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;
all those who practice it have a good understanding.

His praise endures forever

Reflection

Interconnectedness: As Christians throughout the world we are interconnected. One great family. What we do affects what others do. How we live affects how others live. The same is true in the natural world, everything has an effect on everything else. For example, floods might lead to agricultural damage, which lead to a loss of food security, perhaps an effect on trade, which in turn affects consumption and the economy.

Today I share with you a story from an Eco Bishops conference I attended in South Africa in 2015. Every attendee told stories of climate change in our countries. We were sobered beyond belief when we heard from Archbishop Winston from Melanesia. He said: “Some may see information on climate change on television and take it as interesting reading, as entertainment; some would read it in newspapers and treat it as something to occupy time, but for me – and especially for us in Melanesia — it is actually an urgent matter...The weather pattern throughout the year is no longer consistent, creating surprise cyclone seasons — we have more cyclones than before causing flash flooding. Some places where there [were] no floods we are getting flash flooding happening...the climate change is affecting the soil — the whole overall environment where you could plant two or three times before and you could harvest the same amount of food, is no longer there. Many Melanesians are subsistence farmers who can no longer grow crops to feed themselves and their families. The rising sea level is affecting some of our islands [which are] now under water. It is a serious issue. It is a serious concern.”

Today, 21% of the world’s population lives within 30 km of coastlines. The rise of sea levels , which could reach one metre or more by the end of this century, will profoundly affect low-lying areas in the most vulnerable countries like Bangladesh, resulting in the complete loss of fertile land, massive

migrations of human populations, and starvation. More intense storms and flooding along coasts and mountain valleys will create a staggering number of environmental refugees in search of food and shelter at re-location centres that most governments will be unable to provide.

Four sovereign states — Tuvalu, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, The Republic of Maldives, and Kiribati – are home to nearly a half million people whose habitable land will be completely inundated by the end of this century. The impact of increasingly severe coastal storms together with sea level rise would displace roughly 130 to 450 million people during this century. That is between three and 12 times the entire population of Canada. Each of those affected is a beloved child of God. Where will they go? How will they live? Who will welcome them?

Prayer

God of all the earth, where people suffer because of the actions of an authority motivated by ego, money and self-interest, by your mercy intervene and raise up leaders anointed by you with an authority that heals, that speaks truth to power, that silences lies, that is confident in you, that is faithful and just. For the sake of your earth, and all its people, Amen

Christian Aid

Project protects shorelines with mangrove planting

The Primate's World Relief and Development Fund is pleased to announce that the Manitoba Council for International Cooperation (MCIC) is supporting two ongoing projects in Bangladesh and India. The project in Bangladesh involves training locals in the coastal regions to be more resilient to the effects of climate change. The project in India will support refugees from the Sri Lankan civil war who have been living in camps in the Tamilnadu region to acquire civil documents and other requirements so they can return home to Sri Lanka. Fighting the effects of climate change in Bangladesh

Bangladesh has become increasingly vulnerable because of climate change. PWRDF has been working in climate vulnerable areas that have suffered visible effects of natural disasters, targeting 22,000 Bangladeshi farmers in 10 villages threatened by drought, floods and cyclones. MCIC has matched PWRDF's contributions on a 1:1 basis to support the second year of the three-year project.

The project has already made great progress in the first year thanks to PWRDF and its donors. Two villages have been prepared for mangrove regeneration in order to help protect the shorelines against erosion, flooding and high winds. The communities have been trained on how to protect these plants to ensure their survival and growth.

Bamboo bindings have been set up to redirect water and prevent river erosion and flooding of valuable farmland. Four of these bindings, locally known as chatkas, have been built. With the support of MCIC, PWRDF looks forward to assisting the local partner and communities in building more of these bindings, protecting more communities from flooding and river erosion.

PWRDF partner UBINIG has begun to set up farmers field schools in six villages in climate vulnerable areas. These schools are sharing knowledge about farming in drought and flood prone areas as well as discussing the challenges that climate change is presenting.

The project has a focus on increasing knowledge, as well as the capacity to adapt to climate change in the local communities. Men and women in disaster prone areas have gathered to discuss common concerns. Women have taken up the cause of seed preservation as a way to address the losses associated with natural disasters and extreme weather. These discussions help to share knowledge and identify the gaps as well as plan to take action to protect the communities and make them more aware of the effects of the changing climate.

Read the whole story on our website at

<https://pwrdf.org/mcic-projects-will-protect-environment-in-bangladesh-and-facilitate-sri-lankan-refugee-return>