

Water and Fire:

Life in the Balance

Rev. Patrick Stephens

Third Week of Lent

Monday March 21

Scripture

Isaiah 45:12, 18

I made the earth, and created humankind upon it; it was my hands that stretched out the heavens, and I commanded all their host. For thus says the Lord, who created the heavens (he is God!), who formed the earth and made it. He established it; he did not create it a chaos, he formed it to be inhabited!

Reflection

During my twenties, I changed residences many times. Over the course of a decade, I must have lived in at least a dozen homes. School, work, family, and finances each had a pull on my life, causing frequent changes in housing. Though some of my housing arrangements during that transitional time were much more suitable than others, I am thankful that my homes were generally safe, healthy and relatively comfortable.

When I think of what makes a good home, a few basic needs come to mind: warmth, access to clean water and other basic utilities, shelter from the elements, and general security from outside threats. Additional features can make a home much more comfortable and appealing: extra space, quality construction, a favourable location and an attractive design.

As members of the human species, creatures of God, we have been collectively provided with a very well-appointed home. The world in which we live is a truly magnificent setting. Among the planets within our understanding, earth alone provides the specific needs for human life. Heat from the sun and the abundant presence of water are often identified as important features for life on earth. Whatever landscape the peoples of earth live in, we all share the same household of this planet. And everything we require to live and thrive is right here.

Despite the imagination of some outer space enthusiasts, there is no “Plan B” to this home. rough creation, God has provided a well-appointed home. It is our responsibility and vocation to care for it. is stewardship involves both conservation and sharing of resources. As creatures of God, we live here together. And this is our collective home.

Prayer

Creator God, we enjoy the abundant fruits of the earth,
Yet, we acknowledge that we in the developed world,

have often wasted the gifts of the earth, taking more than our share,
leaving our sisters and brothers in other places in poverty and need.
Renew our minds and transform us into servants of the earth,
so that her richness and bounty will sustain, not only us,
but generations to come after us.
In gratitude let us pray to the Lord
We give you thanks, O God.
Karen Turner, for the Diocese of Toronto, Earth Sunday 2018

From the ground up

It all started with a pair of piglets.

Josephine Kizza Aliddeki and her husband John were teachers in Kampala, Uganda in the early '80s. But teaching didn't pay much, so they decided to improve their lot by becoming produce marketers. It was 1984 and they began by buying cereals, maize and beans and selling them at the local markets. One year later, to make more money, they decided to add value to their products by buying a mill and selling ground maize.

Then in August 1985, war broke out. Concerned for their parents in their hometown of Masaka, about three hours west of Kampala, they decided they should travel along the highway to check in on them. While they were there, the highway bridge (Katonga bridge) back to Kampala was bombed and they were completely cut off from their home.

"We had no money," recalls Josephine. "We had used it all on our parents." Kiganda culture does not allow daughters-in-law to freely share a homestead with fathers-in-law, forcing daughters in-law to live in complete hideouts, she explains. "Despite having been welcomed at my husband's family, I thought it better to start an independent home of our own; John had a piece of farmland that was handed down to him from his grandfather." This land came with a squatter, an elderly man who was in need of a shelter.

Josephine finally convinced John to utilize the inherited land from his grandfather, which she says showed her power as a woman. "This was the beginning of our lives together," says Josephine. "We prayed a lot to St. Jude then, the patron saint of lost causes.

” Read the whole story on our website at
<https://pwrdf.org/from-the-ground-up/>