



Current Issues in Prayer

September 2020

Welcome! The Pope invites people of good will to come together and pray **that the planet's resources will not be plundered, but shared in a just and respectful manner.**



Getting started:

I sit down comfortably and calm down. I breathe in and out gently. In silence, I recognize that God is with me and that He loves me. I recognize 'earth' as God's gift to mankind, a place we call home and its capacity to provide us with all that we need.



Short story:

Across the globe, as mining and oil firms race for dwindling resources, indigenous peoples are battling to defend their lands. In some of the worst violence seen in Peru in the past 20 years, several thousand Awajun and Wambis Indians, wearing war paint and armed with primitive spears, bows and arrows, have taken on national police brandishing the latest military equipment. Peru is just one of many countries in open conflict with its indigenous people over natural resources. Barely reported in the international press, there have been major protests around mines, oil, logging and mineral exploitation in Africa, Latin America, Asia and North America. Hydroelectric dams, biofuel plantations as well as coal, copper, gold and bauxite mines are all at the centre of major land rights disputes.



Indigenous leaders want an immediate cessation to mining on their lands. Last month, a conference on mining and indigenous peoples in Manila called on governments to appoint an ombudsman or an international court system to handle indigenous peoples' complaints. However, most indigenous peoples barely have resources to ensure their basic survival, much less to bring their cases to court. But as the complaints grow, so does the chance that peaceful protests will grow into intractable conflicts as they have in Nigeria, West Papua and now Peru.



Time to reflect:

In the past four decades alone, the numbers of animals, birds and fish has declined by 52 percent; 95 percent of coral reefs are in danger of dying out due to pollution, coastal development and overfishing; and only 15 percent of the world's forests remain intact. Am I aware of the impacts my personal lifestyle has on our planet?



Let us pray:

Dear Lord, thank you for giving us the Earth, the planet which somehow manages to provide us with all that we require. Help us to realise that Earth's resources are finite and that their distribution is currently unbalanced.



Inspiration:

Living well is all about keeping good relations with Mother Earth and not living by domination or extraction.

Tauli Corpuz



Hands on:

I strive to change my lifestyle to lower my carbon footprint on the Earth's resources. Are the products that I use and the food that I eat coming from sustainable sources?