

**CARMELITES**  
**REFLECT ON**  
**SEASONS OF**  
**CREATION**  
**WEEK 5 –**  
**FEAST OF**  
**SAINT**  
**FRANCIS OF**  
**ASSISI**

4th October 2020



**‘PRAISE BE’ quoting the CANTICLE OF CREATION**

[Click here](#)

*Be praised my  
Lord, for Sister  
Earth, our  
Mother, who  
nourishes us and  
sustains us,  
bringing forth  
fruits and  
vegetables of  
many kinds and  
flowers of many  
colours.*

I believe that Saint Francis is the example par excellence of care for the vulnerable and of an integral ecology lived out joyfully and authentically. ...He was particularly concerned for God’s creation and for the poor and outcast...He shows us just how inseparable the bond is between concern for nature, justice for the poor, commitment to society, and interior peace. **Pope Francis Laudato Si #10**

Timor’s liberation and the story of Saint Francis’ liberation from materialism and his promotion of the integrity of all creation form a spiritual link to enhance a vision of living out the ‘kingdom’ here on Earth. Both the democratic freedom’s won by the East Timorese and the freedoms promoted by Saint Francis are about integrity, the integrity of the human person and the integrity of all creation.

## **MURDER, MAYHEM, AND MERCY**

### **A REFLECTION FOR 27 SUNDAY**

by Fr Brian Gleeson, Passionist and lecturer at Yarra Theological Union

### **Lest we forget!**

Thanks to the mass media, in 1999 the world became aware as never before, of the people of East Timor, Australia’s nearest neighbour. Many people cheered at the good news that 78.5% of the East Timorese had voted for their independence from Indonesia, whose armies had invaded and annexed their territory in 1975. Their hopes were shared across the world, that at long last they would be free to decide their own future, to choose their own leaders, and to govern themselves.

Within days, however, hopes for the world’s newest nation turned sour. A local minority, made up mainly of murderous militias, armed to the teeth by the occupying Indonesian army, would not accept the people’s vote. They therefore turned against the majority of their fellow-citizens with a ferocity equal to anything that has ever been perpetrated against innocent people anywhere. In Dili, the capital, and in other cities and towns throughout the territory, the combined enemy maimed and murdered thousands of pro-independence supporters, drove thousands of others from their homes, and forced thousands more to leave their own country as refugees. Once the people were gone from their homes, the enemy systematically looted and plundered the people’s possessions, before

### **CONTEMPLATING SCRIPTURE** **ECOLOGICALLY**

Is 5:1-7, Ps 79, Ph. 4:6-9,  
Mt 21:33-43

**The fifth Sunday continues** to invite us to prayer, petitions, and thanksgiving while issuing strong warnings to the leaders of faith communities and nations that they have been entrusted with care for Earth, are failing at it, and will be held responsible. It will be taken away from them and given to those who will produce its fruit.

## Bishop Barron on Pope Francis' Encyclical "Laudato Si"

[Click here to watch the video](#)

- an under 4 min video focusing on one of the central concepts of **Laudato Si**. It discusses the idea of the "cosmological framework" that we and all elements of creation are ontological beings related to each other because we are all coming from the same created source: The Creator God. Therefore, we can see ourselves as being siblings with nature. This perspective is so clearly understood by St. Francis and is why he writes "brother sun" and "sister moon" the Catholic world view at the time.  
(contributed by *Antonietta Skelton, Perth*)

## PRAYERFUL MEDITATION THROUGH MUSIC

**"Brother Sun and sister Moon"** by Donovan P. Leitch

[Click here to listen](#)

**"Breath of Creator"** by Amanda McKenna

[Click here to listen](#)



finally burning their houses, their shops, and many of their public buildings to the ground.

What the world witnessed, thanks to the extensive news coverage, was nothing less than the implementation of a 'scorched earth' policy. It was all as horrific as the sending of so many Jewish people to the gas chambers during World War II, the mysterious disappearances of hundreds of citizens in Argentina and Chile during the military dictatorships there, and the more recent campaigns of so-called 'ethnic cleansing' in Bosnia and Kosovo.

It has been as totally baffling and as totally unexpected that in our own time, human beings could treat one another with such hatred and violence. As baffling and as unexpected as what the enemies of Jesus did to him, when God sent Jesus to his own people, to show and tell them just how much God loves them, and to show and tell them just how much God expects of them in return. God expected their leaders, most of all, to yield a harvest of ripe grapes, but it was sour grapes (vinegar) only, that they produced. So, as we have heard in the gospel today:

Finally, [God] sent his son to them. "They will respect my son" he said. But when the tenants saw the son, they said to each other, "This is the heir. Come on, let us kill him and take over his inheritance." So they seized him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him (Mt 21:37-39)

In East Timor, known also as Timor-Leste, the torture, the suffering, and the crucifixion of Jesus happened all over again. Night after night, television screens displayed scenes of undiminished horror, and left viewers wondering: Is there any hope for these poor broken people? Does anyone care?' Perhaps some even wondered: 'Does God care?'

It was just then, when all was seemingly lost, and after both the humanitarian agencies of the International Committee of the Red Cross and that of the United Nations were thrown out of the country, that the world became aware of two marvellous initiatives and developments. In the midst of the carnage and destruction all around, the first powerful ray of hope was from the leaders of the Church. Priests, nuns, and other church workers, constantly supported the people, 98% Catholic, in their quest for human rights, democracy, and self-determination. (Church support and protection for freedom and justice, in fact, went back to the days when Timor-Leste had been a colony of Portugal). This time, for that love and loyalty towards their people, many church persons paid the ultimate price. They too were expelled from their homes. They too were mutilated. They too were murdered. They too saw their own houses, and the church buildings of their people, ransacked, robbed, and burnt to cinders. But the great expectations which God had of them during that darkest period of their history, were not disappointed. Put to the test, they have yielded an abundant harvest for God and for God's people.

The second powerful ray of hope, one which arrived later, was the preparation and deployment of the Interfet (the International Force for

## Meditating for World Healing Sunday 4 October 2020

The Missionary Sisters of Service invite all people who meditate or pray to unite with one intention: **to inundate the world with the energies of love.**

*“Whatever your faith tradition – or none – please join us in spirit and intention during your usual meditation or prayer practice. You don’t need to sign up. The world is suffering, people are suffering, Earth itself is suffering. We can reach out in compassion, sending out **the energies of love** to bring healing to the world.”*

[Click here to visit the website](#)

East Timor), led by Australian troops. At enormous personal risk, this Interfet force went in to protect the surviving East Timorese from further murder and mayhem, and to prepare for the re-building of their country almost from zero. Viewers became amazed at the integrity, the decency, the humanity, the generosity and the restraint of the troops, who, under mandate of the United Nations, entered East Timor not as aggressors but as peace-keepers and Good Samaritans, indeed as agents of divine mercy and compassion.

Finally, Timor-Leste’s struggle for independence was firmly established on May 20, 2002. Further good news is that bit by bit its relationship with its former enemy has been steadily improving. Today the relationship is quite peaceful and harmonious, and Indonesia is Timor-Leste’s main trading partner, and regularly contributes to its development.

For all the achievements and signs of hope just outlined in commemoration, would you please join me in praising and thanking God during the rest of our shared prayer today? And would you also please join me in praying that God will continue to bless and protect its government, its peace-keeping forces, its Church leaders and workers, and the people of God entrusted to their care? Will you, please?

East **Timor** first declared itself **independent** from Portugal on **28 November 1975**, but was invaded by neighbouring Indonesia nine days later. ... On 30 August 1999, in a UN-sponsored referendum, an overwhelming majority of East **Timorese** voted for **independence** from Indonesia. **Independence Day** is celebrated 28 November each year.

## Solemn Blessing

Our Creator God is the ultimate source of everything, the loving and self communicating foundation of all that exists.

May God bless us with deep gratitude for our relationships with all creatures in the vast web of life. **Amen.**

Christ, the Word through whom all things were created, took flesh through Mary, becoming part of the vast web of life on Earth.

May Christ help us to be good news to the poor, to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this Earth. **Amen.**

The Spirit, infinite bond of love, is intimately present at the very heart of the universe, inspiring and bringing new pathways.

May this Holy Spirit bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it, that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction. **Amen.**

And may God bless us with a spirit of global solidarity flowing from the Mystery of the Trinity, Creator, Word and Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Based upon *Laudato Si*, ## 238-240, and “A Prayer for Our Earth” by Pope Francis

