

God as an outpouring of love. But these crucial life support systems are now gravely threatened by global warming and climate change. Pope Francis definitely considers this a global climate emergency.

Pope Francis is greatly alarmed at the environmental brokenness of the

world today, which threatens us with 'catastrophic' disasters. Invoking St Francis of Assisi, he has urged us to do all we can personally, and as nations together, to reduce greenhouse emissions to avoid unimaginable distress for many millions of people.

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We Respond ...

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON (or a hymn)

All the earth shall bow down before you,
O God, and shall sing to your name, O
Most High!

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (Ps 39)

ANTIPHON: Here I am, Lord; I come to do
your will.

RESPONSE: Here I am, Lord; I come to do
your will.

LECTOR: I waited, I waited for the Lord and
he stooped down to me; he heard my
cry. He put a new song into my mouth,
praise of our God. **R.**

LECTOR: You do not ask for sacrifice and
offerings, but an open ear. You do not ask
for holocaust and victim. Instead, here
am I. **R.**

LECTOR: In the scroll of the book it stands
written that I should do your will. My
God, I delight in your law in the depth of
my heart. **R.**

LECTOR: Your justice I have proclaimed
in the great assembly. My lips I have not
sealed; you know it, O Lord. **R.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION Alleluia,
alleluia! The Word of God became flesh
and dwelt among us. He enabled those
who accepted him to become the
children of God. Alleluia!

COMMUNION ANTIPHON (or a
hymn)

You have prepared a table before me,
and how precious is the chalice that
quenches my thirst

Or

We have come to know and to believe in
the love that God has for us.

TODAY'S READINGS Isaiah 49:3, 5-6;
I Corinthians 1:1-3; John 1:29-34

NEXT WEEK (3rd Sunday of Year A)
Isaiah 8:23 – 9:3; Ps 26; I Corinthians
1:10-13, 17; Matt 4:12-23

Let's Figure out Families Together

All families have issues and are dysfunctional to some extent. A new podcast series, *Figuring out Families*, looks at the issues facing families today. Produced by Majellan Media, experts in a variety of fields are interviewed about the specific issues and what type of assistance is available to wounded families. Some of those interviewed to date include Denis Fitzgerald from Catholic Social Services, Robyn Miller from Mackillop Family Services and Juli Sharpe from Genesis Pregnancy Support. Those podcasts and others are now available at www.majellan.media



An Earth crying out



At every Mass before communion, we hear the words from John witnessing to Jesus: 'Behold the lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world.' Anyone unfamiliar with church worship would wonder what on earth we were talking about. Why would we use such words – 'lamb' especially?

For the early Christians, the words 'lamb of God' had tremendous resonance. Everyone was then familiar with animal sacrifice. But the early Christians instantly recalled the Jewish Passover from Egypt, when the Hebrew people marked their doorframes with the blood of a lamb to save them from the angel killing the first-born males of humans and cattle to force Pharaoh to release them from bondage. The blood of the lamb rescued the first-born of the Hebrews from death.

No wonder the early Christians treasured the words 'lamb of God' when speaking of Jesus who gave his life's blood that all might live. Passages from the prophets and especially Isaiah add further power to the word 'lamb': 'He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the

slaughter' (Is 53, 7).

In his gospel, John deliberately used the word 'sin' in the singular, not 'sins' in the plural, i.e. our individual sins. John is referring to the collective 'brokenness' of our world, in a collective sense, and perhaps also in a cosmic sense. For John set his gospel in a cosmic context: 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being.' (John 1, 1-3).

We have always recognised the brokenness of the world of course, especially in times of acute hardship, war, famine or natural disasters. But Pope Francis stresses the urgency of 'care for our common home', the earth itself and its environment. It's as if we need to smear the blood of the lamb over all the earth, with a renewed sense of reverence and wonder for the beauty and fragility of our earth, invoking God's Word to sustain creation.

In his encyclical *Laudato Si'*, and recently with the Amazon Synod, Pope Francis stressed that our planet and its life systems were created by