

**Lectionary**  
Readings for every day  
You Select!



in the HCUC

**No. 12**

**For 1 August 2010**

**Dear Friends**

Many people talk to the pot plants in their house. Maybe you do. What about talking to trees? Perhaps you are a silent tree hugger. I have a friend who is an unselfconscious tree hugger who listens to trees. His habit grew out of reading the story of the Findhorne Garden on the bleak coast of Scotland. He told me that one day he was standing with his back to a giant tree in his local botanical gardens. He had his eyes closed and was in a deep meditative time of silence. His 7 year old daughter came along and asked what he was doing. He said something about talking with the tree. As she was curious he encouraged her to join him and 'listen' to the tree. After a while she opened her eyes and looked at him. "Did the tree speak to you?" he asked. "Yes" was her reply. "What did it say?" "It said 'Don't look up. There's a bird above you and it might poop!'"

All this about hugging trees, and talking to your plants is a little window onto how people think of nature, and interact with this whole realm. It features on a bigger scale as we make our attitudes known over the issue of mining in some of our National Parks and reserves.

In the last 2-3 centuries our materialistic and mechanistic approach has emphasised that what we call nature is a purely material and physical dimension that is lifeless. It is usually treated as dead and mechanical.

Rupert Sheldrake, a biologist from Cambridge University, says simply: "Nature is alive. From the time of our remotest ancestors until the 17th century it was taken for granted that the world of nature is alive." (From *'The Rebirth of Nature'*) It is a relatively recent belief that nature has no life, purpose or value except the values placed by market forces or powerful planners.

Barbara McClintock, also a research biologist, writes in her autobiography *"A Feeling for the Organism"* that working with the corn plants and their chromosomes it was crucial for her 'to have time to look, and the patience to hear, what the material has to say to you—openness to let it come to you.'

These are only two of the many well known scientists who have seen the aliveness of nature.

**Sincerely - Lester**

	<b>Psalm</b>	<b>Epistle/OT</b>	<b>Gospel</b>
Monday 2 August:	119:89-96	Jer 28	Matt 14:13-21
Tuesday 3 August:	102:16-21	Jer 30:1-2,12-15, 18-22	Matt 14:22-36
Wednesday 4 August:	121	Jer 31:1-7	Matt 15:21-28
Thursday 5 August:	51:11-18	Jer 31:31-34	Matt 16:13-23
Friday 6 August:	137:1-6	Deut 32:35,36,39,41	Matt 16:24-28
Saturday 7 August:	9:7-11	Habk 1:12-2:4	Matt 17:14-20
<b>Sunday 8 August <u>Pentecost 11</u></b>			
Ps 50:1-8,22-23; Isa 1:1,10-20; Heb 11:1-3,8-16; Luke 12:32-40			

	<b>Psalm</b>	<b>Epistle/OT</b>	<b>Gospel</b>
Monday 9 August:	148:1-4, 12-13a	Ezek 1:2-5,24-end	Matt 17:22-end
Tuesday 10 August:	119:65-72	Ezek 2:8-3:4	Matt 18:1-5, 10, 12-14
Wednesday 11 August:	113	Ezek 9:1-7,10,18-22	Matt 18:15-20
Thursday 12 August:	78:58-64	Ezek 12:1-12	Matt 18:21-19:1
Friday 13 August:	118:14-18	Ezek 16:1-15,60-end	Matt 19:3-12
Saturday 14 August:	51:1-3,15-17	Ezek 18:1-10,13,30,	Matt 19:13-15 32
<b>Sunday 15 August <u>Pentecost 12</u></b>			
Ps 80:1-2,8-19; Isa 5:1-7; Heb 11:29-12:2; Luke 12:49-56			

	<b>Psalm</b>	<b>Epistle/OT</b>	<b>Gospel</b>
Monday 16 August:	78:1-8	Ezek 24:15-24	Matt 19:16-22
Tuesday 17 August:	107:1-3,40, 43	Ezek 28:1-10	Matt 19:23-30
Wednesday 18 August:	23	Ezek 34:1-11	Matt 20:1-16
Thursday 19 August:	51:7-12	Ezek 36:23-28	Matt 22:1-14
Friday 20 August:	107:1-8	Ezek 37:1-14	Matt 22:34-40
Saturday 21 August:	85:7-end	Ezek 43:1-7	Matt 23:1-12
<b>Sunday 22 August <u>Pentecost 13</u></b>			
Ps 71:1-6; Jer 1:4-10; Heb 12:18-29; Luke 13:10-17			

## ALL PART OF THE ONE LIFE—NO SEPARATION

Joseph Campbell tells of a talk given by the famous Japanese Zen philosopher, Dr D T Suzuki. He began with a striking comment about the relationship between God, man and nature as he saw it in our Western world. It went like this:-

“Man is against God, Nature is against God, and Man and Nature are against each other. God’s own likeness (ie Man), God’s own creation (ie Nature) and God himself—all three are at war.” He was silent for a moment and then said “Strange religion”. Suzuki’s comment has a clear link to the story in Genesis Ch 3. In brief it refers to the story of the Garden of Eden which is usually called the Fall. The common idea of a fall is a downward fall to a lower level. It seems to be more helpful to see it as a falling apart, or a falling out, like friends falling out and their relationship breaking. It’s also like Humpty Dumpty going to pieces when he falls off the wall. Then the real issue becomes how to put the pieces together—not an easy task as all the King’s powers (horses and men) found out.

There is a rather beautiful and mysterious passage in Romans Ch. 8:18-25. It seems to be confident of a new era of harmony and love. Not just gluing the bits (God-nature-humankind) together, but becoming aware that they have always been together in oneness. It is we who have seen only separation and have behaved with either ego driven fear of what seems against us, or with ego driven desire to use and abuse, and to grasp and possess.

J B Phillips in that Romans passage translates verse 19 in this way:

“The whole creation is on tiptoe to see the wonderful sight of the sons of God coming into their own...” This seems to point to a new awareness in humans of our existence springing out of nature (and existing in nature) just as nature springs from the unmanifest Being into the variety of manifest creation. It is all oneness beneath the forms – always has been and always will be. The hope is that we will awaken to this. Is it something like this that Phillips means by ‘coming into their own’? It’s about people like us becoming who we have always been; able to see the oneness, to hear the trees talk, to feel at home in the infinite, to appreciate the beauty of the world, to know the air, the wind, the fire, the earth, as our brothers and sisters.

When we don’t it is because we are asleep—not awake, not conscious. Jesus lived among us, not to see and hear for us, but to shake us awake.

## COMING INTO OUR OWN

- \* When we perceive nature, let there be spaces of no thought, no mind. When you approach nature in this way it will respond to you and participate in the evolution of human and planetary consciousness.
- \* When we perceive nature only through the mind, through thinking, we see the form only and are unaware of the life within the form – the sacred mystery.

*There was an old Hasid master who said:-*

*“When you walk across the fields with your mind pure and holy, then from all the stones, and all growing things, and all animals, the sparks of their soul come out and cling to you, and then they are purified and become a holy fire in you.”*

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Thought reduces nature to a commodity ... so the ancient forest becomes timber, the bird a research project, the mountain something to be mined or conquered.

*No wonder creation is on tiptoe to see and encounter such aware people coming into their own! Until then creation will continue to groan in all its parts.*

(Eckhart Tolle)

*(See Romans 8:19 § 22)*

We must, as best we can, unlearn the dualistic teaching of our European languages that sets “man” apart from “nature” — an inside (the human) separated from the outside (the “environment”).

In Maori the word for Earth and for placenta are one and the same: whenua. After birth, as before, it is whenua that cradles and nourishes each living being.

**There is no separation: We are nature.  
Everything flows into everything else.**

- John Bloomfield “Other Ways of Knowing”