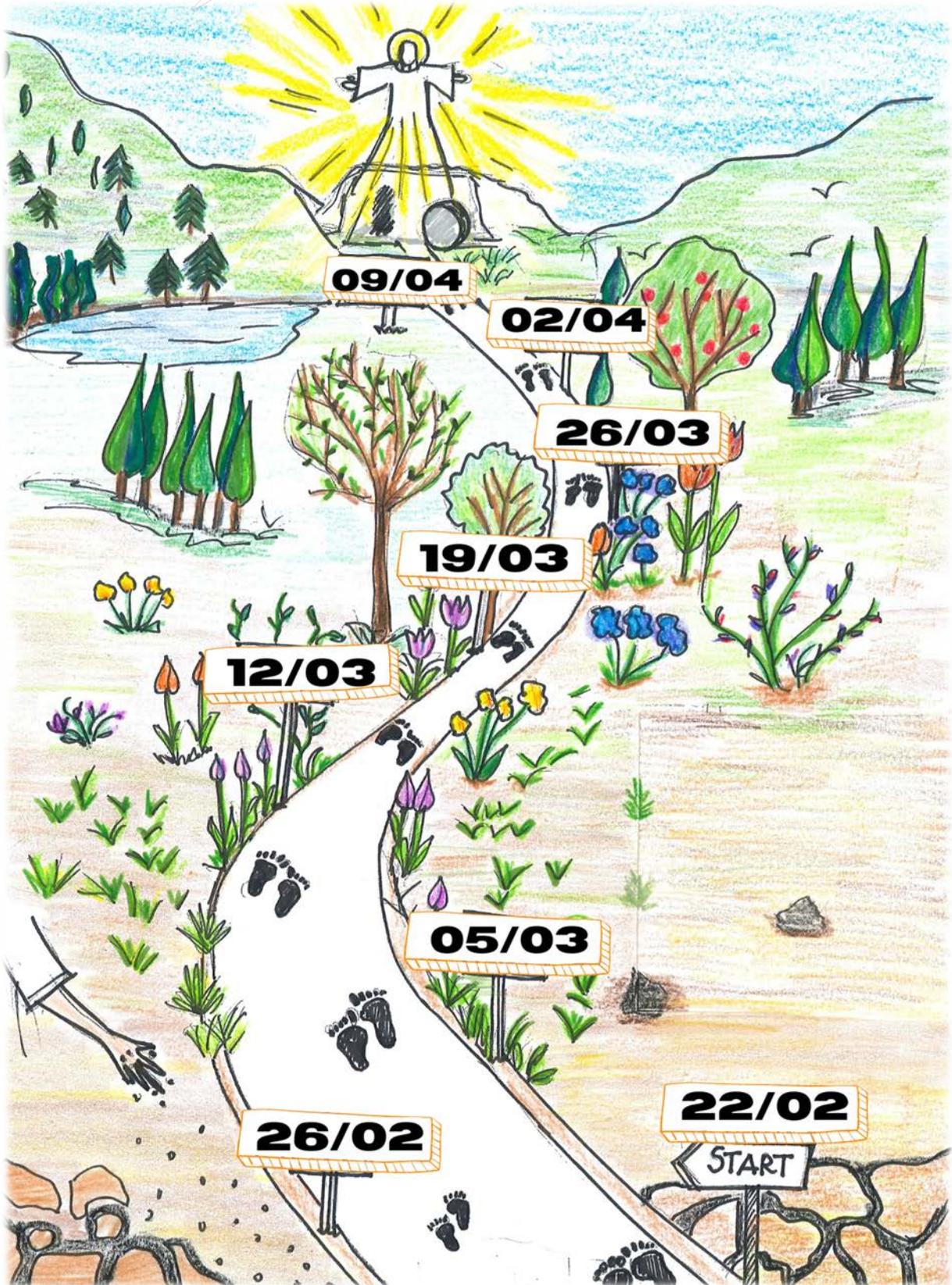


ECO-SPIRITUAL LENT 2023 - THE JOURNEY TOWARD EASTER



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In this Lenten journey, we will try to reduce our **ecological footprint** in the light of the Gospel passages that will accompany us every day. We will take advantage of the 40 days of conversion that will lead us to Easter in reconciliation with ourselves, with all creation, and with God.

| Date              | Gospel                                                                                        | Commitment                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
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| 22/02/2023        | Be careful to practice your righteousness in order to be admired by men (Mt 6:1)              | The path of this Lent will be one of reconciliation with our brothers and sisters and with the earth, our mother. We want to reduce our footprint in order to have less impact on the earth and on others. We begin by reading the Word of God every day.                                                                                                                                                      |
| 23/02/2023        | What advantage does a man have who gains the world, but ruins himself? (Lk 9:25)              | Conquering the world to plunder it does not make us happy. Make a list of thoughts and actions that will help you to be in harmony with all creatures, and to be their "keepers" and not their "owners".                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 24/02/2023        | The days will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them, then they will fast (Mt 9:15) | We never have time; we have no more time. Choose one person, the last person to whom you said 'I have no time', and listen to him/her, share his/her joy or tears. Free yourself from your hurry.                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 25/02/2023        | He left everything and got up and followed him. (Lk 5:28)                                     | Following Jesus is a path to Beauty and Goodness. Say a prayer today with your family/community to leave behind feelings of war and follow the beauty of peace. Please try it!                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>26/02/2023</b> | <b>Man does not live by bread alone. (Mt 4:4)</b>                                             | <b>TEMPTATION SUNDAY. The Spirit leads Jesus into the desert to be tempted. His footsteps now follow our footsteps, leaving a heavy footprint on this earth in the desert of temptation. Jesus says "No" to the lust that ignites our cravings and shows us the only way to reduce our footprint. THIS WEEK, MAY THE SPIRIT HELP US TO RECOGNISE THE TEMPTATIONS THAT WEIGH DOWN OUR ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT.</b> |
| 27/02/2023        | Whatever you did not do to one of the least of these, you did not do to me. (Mt 25:45)        | Let us not be seduced by indifference, but on the contrary, let us be conquered by love for all Creatures, especially the most fragile sisters and brothers, without forgetting our sister and mother Earth.                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 28/02/2023        | On earth as it is in heaven. (Mt 6:10)                                                        | In Jesus heaven and earth are united: let us not give in to the temptation to see them as two separate realities. Let us commit ourselves to build heaven on earth! Let us begin by recognizing God's creatures in all living beings.                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 01/03/2023        | This generation is an evil generation. (Lk 11:29)                                             | Evil is always and everywhere: the Gospel should help us to recognize it and not to give in to its temptations, which only cause harm to all Creatures.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 02/03/2023        | Whatever you want men to do to you, you also do to them. (Mt 7:12)                            | Let us commit ourselves to do good without expecting anything in return, to recognize Jesus in others, and to go out to meet Him. Doesn't creation do the same for us?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 03/03/2023        | Go first and be reconciled with your brother. (Mt 5:24)                                       | Let us strive to offer and ask forgiveness from our brothers and sisters, but also from our common home, which suffers so much from the inconsiderate behaviour of so many human beings.                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |

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| 04/03/2023 | Love your enemies.<br>(Mt 5:44)                                                | Today we remember the Ecological Martyrs: among them is Breiner David Cucuñame, a 14-year-old boy, from the Nasa people (Colombia) who had decided to protect the territory of his ancestors from the aggression of paramilitary groups and drug traffickers. He was the first martyr of the Earth killed in 2022 on the Latin American continent, where many other environmentalists have been victims of brutal murders.                                                                                |
| 05/03/2023 | <b>This is my Beloved Son. Listen to him. (Mt 17:5)</b>                        | <b>THE SUNDAY OF TRANSFIGURATION: Jesus leads his three apostles to the mountain to pray. The silence of the prayer transforms his face, which for a moment reveals the mystery. Overwhelmed by this divine light, the apostles have only one desire: to stay. For it is the light of God that illuminates the heart and enlightens the steps of the journey. MAY THE PRAYER THIS WEEK ENLIGHTEN US AND LIGHTEN THE STEPS OF OUR INNER JOURNEY.</b>                                                       |
| 06/03/2023 | Be merciful. Do not judge. (Lk 6:36-37)                                        | Let us lighten our steps by removing from our souls the burden of prejudice, of hasty and merciless judgement. Let us be guided by a contemplative gaze that illuminates and appreciates everything.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 07/03/2023 | You are all brothers.<br>(Mt 23:8)                                             | Let us lighten our steps by laying aside the burden of presumption and arrogance. Let us recognise ourselves as brothers of all living beings, all connected in a common path.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 08/03/2023 | Among you it will not be so. (Mt 20:26)                                        | Let us remove from our hearts the burden of competition, of ambition, of striving for superiority, which leads us to plunder and overpower other creatures. And let us be servants to one another.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 09/03/2023 | A poor man named Lazarus stood at the door. (Lk 16:20)                         | Let us lighten our purses, closets, and pantries, and share what we have with those who have less than we do. The accumulation of wealth springs from the exploitation of creation and leads to poverty.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 10/03/2023 | Come, let us kill him and we shall have the inheritance. (Mt 21:38)            | The burden of endless desires torments us; it kills us inwardly. Let us free ourselves from the greed of excessive consumption that poisons us and drives us to harbour feelings of envy and hoarding.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 11/03/2023 | Then he came to his senses.<br>(Lk 15:17)                                      | We return to the Father. His house is also the symbol of a Creation where there is bread in abundance for all. We realize that we, too, keep wasting the goods that He Himself has given us through sins that eventually oppress us.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 12/03/2023 | <b>True worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth. (Jn 4:23)</b> | <b>THE SUNDAY OF THE SAMARITAN: Jesus sets out for Jerusalem, crossing Samaria and conversing with those who were considered enemies. What aggravates the conflicts and divisions is the search for water that makes people thirsty again. Jesus, with the Spirit and the Truth, points to a living water that quenches thirst and puts an end to division. THIS WEEK WE LISTEN TO THE VOICE OF THE SPIRIT TO QUENCH THE THIRST THAT CAUSES DIVISION AND OPPRESSION TOWARDS OTHERS AND ALL CREATURES.</b> |

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| 13/03/2023 | No prophet is welcome in his own country. (Lk 4:24)   | Although it is not easy to change habits and be understood by those closest to us, let us strive to adopt a critical and conscious attitude towards the foods and beverages we buy. Let us inform ourselves about their ethical and health safety, and remember how many people in the world are still dying of thirst, not least because of the climate crisis.                                                             |
| 14/03/2023 | Were you not also to pity your fellow man? (Mt 18:33) | Let us remember that we owe an ecological debt to many countries that are exploited and plundered to produce the food that comes to our table. Let us defend and protect them by eating less meat, fruit grown at home and food produced and sold at Km0.                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 15/03/2023 | I have come to give full fulfilment. (Mt 5:17)        | The Word of God, when 'eaten' daily, teaches us how best to live, how to be authentically happy.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 16/03/2023 | Your children will be your judges. (Lk 11:19)         | What will we leave to future generations? Let us do an examination of conscience, starting with our daily behaviour. They, the younger generations, will judge us by our deeds                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 17/03/2023 | The first commandment is: Listen! (Mk 12:29)          | We are invited to listen. To listen to the cry of Creation that is robbed and exploited. And to listen to the cry of the poor who pay the highest price for an economy based on the exploitation of resources and not on respect for natural cycles, and for our lifestyle that is no longer ecologically sustainable.                                                                                                       |
| 18/03/2023 | O God, have mercy on me a sinner. (Lk 18:13)          | The destruction of an ecosystem, the extinction of a species, the theft of land and water from other living beings: all this is 'ecocide', which for us means the destruction of the work of God's hands: his creation. It is a sin that requires deep repentance.                                                                                                                                                           |
| 19/03/2023 | Do you believe in the Son of Man? (Jn 9:35)           | <b>THE SUNDAY OF THE MAN BORN BLIND. The works of Jesus manifest a new light. No one is condemned, for no one is born to sin, but that the works of God may come to light. He is the Light of the World so that the footsteps of mankind do not wander in darkness but walk again in the paths of goodness. IN THIS WEEK WE INTENSIFY WITH OUR WORKS THE LIGHT THAT ILLUMINATES EVEN THOSE WHO PRETEND NOT TO UNDERSTAND</b> |
| 20/03/2023 | Joseph, fear not! (Mt 1:20)                           | Like Joseph, let us find the courage to swim against the tide, to be courageous witnesses of God with our lives again and again. Today, let us find the courage to buy food that respects the environment by reading the origin and the type of ingredients on the labels.                                                                                                                                                   |
| 21/03/2023 | Do you want to heal? (Jn 5:6)                         | Lord, heal our bodies and souls from the desires of possession and consumption that sicken the world and living beings.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 22/03/2023 | The Son by Himself can do nothing. (Jn 5:19)          | Not even we alone can do anything to save the planet: we are all in the same boat and no one is saved alone, as Pope Francis affirms. May the Lord guide us and keep us united in our action to safeguard creation.                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

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| 23/03/2023 | I know you: you do not have the love of God in you. (Jn 5:42)                                    | Let us be bearers of God's love, lamps in the dark, salt that flavours food, voices in the desert that bring glad tidings and hope.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 24/03/2023 | I did not come to myself. (Jn 7:28)                                                              | Each one of us has a mission: God sends each one of us with tasks that - if we open ourselves to listening - we will discover. Let us be guided by the steps of the Lord.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 25/03/2023 | Fear not, Mary. (Lk 1:30)                                                                        | Let us also say our Yes to Good, to Beauty, to Peace that is to be rediscovered and brought back to all creation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 26/03/2023 | <b>I am the resurrection and the life. (Jn 11:25)</b>                                            | <b>THE SUNDAY OF LAZARUS' RESURRECTION. Jesus makes his way to the house of his friend Lazarus. He proclaims that he is life, but he mourns death as his steps come to a halt before the tomb. Death is terrible, but it is even more terrible to see how in many cases it is the consequence of pathetic human actions. The footprints of our steps end up trampling on life. THIS WEEK WE REPUDIATE EVERY ATTITUDE AND LIFESTYLE THAT BRINGS DEATH AND SUFFERING TO LIVING BEINGS.</b> |
| 27/03/2023 | Neither do I condemn you. (Jn 8:11)                                                              | What prevails in our hearts toward living beings? The judgement of condemnation or benevolence, the spirit of vengeance or the desire for good? Let us open our lungs to the fresh air of love and fill ourselves with goodwill.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 28/03/2023 | When you have lifted up the Son of Man you will know that I Am. (Jn 8:28)                        | Let us commit ourselves to recognise the Lord in the cry of the poor and the cry of the earth and come to him to relieve the suffering of the world.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 29/03/2023 | If you abide in my word, you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free. (Jn 8:31-32) | Often the deceptions of the world tend to lead us astray from the sure way of the Word of Jesus. True freedom consists in walking joyfully according to the Word, which leads us to the truth that shines in creation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 30/03/2023 | Before Abraham was, I Am. (Jn 8:58)                                                              | The story of Abraham leads us to rediscover the importance of the ancient covenant of families and children accepted as a gift from God. Only by recognising God in all people and all creatures can our society regain hope.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 31/03/2023 | The Father is in me and I in the Father. (Jn 10:38)                                              | Let us remember that we are called to be co-creators, helping nature and history to bring forth the creativity of the universe.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 01/04/2023 | It is fitting that one man should die for the people. (Jn 11:51)                                 | Sometimes it seems to us that we are left alone to fight against injustice, to swim against the tide. The Pope himself sometimes finds himself in this position. Let us be close to those who work for just causes and let us support the peacemakers.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

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| 02/04/2023 | Behold, to you comes your king, meek. (Mt 21:5)        | <p><b>THE PASSION WEEK.</b> The steps of Jesus' journey finally reach Jerusalem. In the holy city He will proclaim in word and deed, by His life and death, the Father's will for mankind. A will of universal love that involves every man, every nation, every living being. A will that excludes all forms of violence and oppression. Which restores the original plan of a God who loves all that he continually calls to life.</p> <p><b>THIS WEEK WE FOLLOW THE STEPS OF JESUS LEADING TO THE CROSS, WHERE HE TAKES UPON HIMSELF THE BURDEN OF OUR SINS.</b></p> |
| 03/04/2023 | Let it be. (Jn 12:7)                                   | With what oil shall we anoint the head and feet of Jesus? What actions and thoughts of peace and reconciliation will be balm for the sin of the world today?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 04/04/2023 | One of you will betray me. (Jn 13:21)                  | The covenant between man and creation has been betrayed, mankind has broken the agreement and is paying the consequences without realizing it. To restore this betrayed covenant is our task. Let us help each other in this!                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 05/04/2023 | You have said it. (Mt 26:25)                           | "Rabbi, is it I?" Let us ask ourselves: what responsibility does each of us bear for the socio-environmental crisis in which we are immersed? What can we do starting today?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 06/04/2023 | Do you understand what I have done for you? (Jn 13:12) | Let us participate in the service of the washing of the feet and try to understand again what Jesus has done for us. Has our footprint become lighter on this journey? Back home, let us do what Jesus did. Let us wash each other's feet as a sign and promise of an ever-lighter footprint.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 07/04/2023 | Behold the man. (Jn 19:5)                              | Is He the salvation we seek? From the suffering of the world comes redemption, from the wounds comes peace: only through Jesus can we understand this and give meaning to pain.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 08/04/2023 | He is risen. (Mt 28:6)                                 | We have almost reached the end of our journey: do we feel less heavy? Have we lightened our footprint? Let us prepare ourselves, all creation will rise with Christ, if we really want it!                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 09/04/2023 | And he saw and believed. (Jn 20:8)                     | <p><b>THE EASTER OF RESURRECTION.</b> The light of Easter morning is the certain hope and horizon of all our expectations. We are invited to proclaim the Gospel to every creature. To all creation. He who is the Beginning of creation, with his glorious suffering, is the perfect fulfilment of all things. The horizon toward which the groaning of creation is directed. <b>WE PROCLAIM TO ALL LIVING BEINGS THE JOY OF EASTER THAT MAKES OUR WANDERING FREE FROM ANXIETY AND OUR STEPS GLAD AND LIGHT.</b></p>                                                   |