In This Issue:

The Paris Conference on Climate Change - Neil Thorns (CAFOD)

God’s Deliverance of Animals - Prof. David Clough

The Great Addiction - Dr Richard D. Ryder

Penance vs Plenty - Jane Easton (VIVA)

As It Was In The Beginning - Revd Prof. Martin Henig

The Spirit of Catholic Renewal - Dr Deborah Jones

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CCA now has new publication dates for The Ark which are:
1 March, 1 July and 1 November.

The Editor invites members to send material for possible inclusion in The Ark (preferably by email), but she reserves the right to select. **Next Deadline:** 1st May (for July issue). Publication in The Ark does not imply that the material necessarily reflects the policies and views of the committee and membership of Catholic Concern for Animals.

**CAN YOU RECEIVE THE ARK BY EMAIL?**

Receiving The Ark by email has many advantages, not least to enable you to pass it on to your friends and church members. Also, you can keep it filed on your computer. For CCA it would save us a great deal on postage, so we would of course appreciate it.

If you decide to receive your Ark by email, please contact the membership secretary,

Frances Chalk at franceschalk@hotmail.co.uk
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**Cover photo:** Cecil the Lion

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The Ark is printed by *The Graphic Station* in Romford, Essex, using recycled and recyclable paper which is FSC and PEFC accredited. The ink is derived from organic sources.
Looking back over the last year, it has been a year of surprises. Much has happened that was unexpected and top of the list must be the publication of the encyclical by Pope Francis, *Laudate Si*. Last year we were keenly awaiting this publication and were full of anxiety and worry about its possible contents. Such was our concern that Chris and Debbie met up in Rome to find a way to get our submission to Pope Francis. Fast forward to just a few months ago when we were delighted with *Laudato Si’* and all it contained. You will have seen from our previous special publication of *The ARK* that it will be the basis of the work which we will be doing over the next year, and for years to come. It has provided us with strength and encouragement.

**Year of Mercy**

This year Pope Francis has declared a *Year of Mercy*, in this fast moving world it is refreshing and beautiful that we are asked to return to such tender values in our lives. Mercy is about forgiveness and recognising the need for the understanding of mercy in our own lives. It is always easy to see 'acts of mercy' in relation to other people, but fail to see, for example, how we should be the 'merciful species' towards all other living creatures. The *Year of Mercy* is a time for people to examine how merciful they are to all God's creatures, and to see themselves as representing the human race whenever they interact with animals. Do we want the animals to see us, the human species, as perpetrators of cruelty, or as the image of the merciful God? That also goes for allowing other people to do the dirty work, for example, such as on factory farms, in slaughter houses and experimental laboratories. The people dealing with animals there do so on behalf of the ones who make use of their work - so we all need to ask if we are causing others to behave unmercifully towards animals.

**Annual Retreat**

We are holding our annual retreat at *Charney Manor*, a Quaker house in Oxfordshire. This medieval manor house (all rooms ensuite) is set in beautiful gardens in a small Oxfordshire village. I would encourage everyone to join us from 22nd – 26th August. There will be interesting speakers, time to pray as well as a time to listen and to catch up with friends. Visits to local attractions will be arranged for the half day free time, including *Island Farm Donkey Sanctuary* and the 2,000 year old *White Horse Hill*, or simply take coffee in the local historic town of Wantage on market day. Please book early – see the advert on the back cover of this issue of *The Ark*. 
Animal Blessing Services & Diocese Magazines
Now is the time to be working with local clergy and congregation in planning animal blessing services in your area. If you need sample orders of service they are available together with a small booklet of Hymns for Animals. So, if you would like any more information do get in touch with Wanda Oberman 01235 868516 or labcott@gmail.com.

I would ask everyone to approach your local Bishop with a view to CCA being given some space in their Diocesan magazines. I am grateful to Bishop Philip Egan, Bishop of Portsmouth, and the editorial board of Portsmouth People, for their agreement to an article in the Christmas issue of their Diocesan Magazine. Surely, this can be replicated through all Dioceses.

CCA Going Forward
Barbara Gardner (Editor of The Ark) has now taken over the website and it has been completely redesigned. Visit www.catholic-animals.com to see the wide range of topics and Chris’ blog which has attracted 5000 hits so far.

CCA can now look forward to the coming year – we will be working to improve the lives of our fellow creatures by education and example. Chris will be concentrating on schools and colleges to engage with our young people. We will be meeting the increasing demand for speakers at conferences, both here abroad, as we become a truly international Catholic organisation, which not only cares about animals, but spends every moment trying to improve their lives by changing attitudes towards them.

Judy Gibbons

WAYS YOU CAN SUPPORT CCA TO HELP ANIMALS

- **Gift subscription** - give a friend, or your parish priest, the gift of a year’s membership of CCA, with three issues of The Ark, for £20.

- **Distribute copies of The Ark** - available from the General Secretary, Chris Fegan at chrisfegancca@gmail.com, 07817 730472.

- **Copies in your church** - with permission, display several copies of each issue of The Ark at the back of your church for sale or to give away.

- **Bidding Prayers** - ask for the occasional Bidding Prayer for animals, for an end to cruelty, and a blessing on all people who help them.

- **Insert our website** address in your parish bulletin/newsletter: www.catholic-animals.com, with a brief description of our work.
NEWS FROM THE GENERAL SECRETARY

BY CHRIS FEGAN

Laudato Si’
The Encyclical Letter on the Environment has dominated the activities of CCA in the last few months and the effect of Pope Francis’s wonderful document has been like a breath of fresh air to us in our work for all of God’s Creation. We have seen a huge increase in interest about what we do from both the clergy and the lay congregation within the Church and also from organisations and individuals not directly linked to the Catholic faith. I was particularly delighted that the special edition of The Ark, which we published, has been universally applauded and has quickly become a collector’s item! Laudato Si’ has already taken its place as the key text for CCA and we will be using it for many years, even decades, as the central plank of our education work.

COP 21
We have been working in preparation for the COP21 Climate Change Conference for well over a year and, indeed, Laudato Si’ was partly aimed at influencing decision makers in Paris last December. I had a meeting with the Director of CAFOD ahead of the summit to discuss our priorities for COP21 and also how we can work together in the spirit of Laudato Si’ going forward to implement the vision of the climate change work that we share. I am delighted that we have an article from CAFOD in this edition of The Ark on their perspective on the Conference (page 7). The Conference was held in the aftermath of the awful Paris attacks and the security in the French capital was very strong and included the cancellation of some public activities planned for the

Pope Francis says:
‘Because all creatures are connected, each must be cherished with love and respect, for all of us living creatures are dependent on one another’.

Laudato Si’ - 42
Conference. Whilst I was in Paris I took the opportunity to lay a wreath on behalf of CCA at the statue in Place La Republique to those who lost their lives or were injured in the horrendous bombings and shootings.

Website and Social Media Renewal
I hope that you have had the chance to look at the new website recently which has undergone a major revamp in recent months and is now generating traffic from all over the globe. We are trying to cater better for our overseas members and supporters by launching a new International Section from 1st March. Social media is increasingly the way forward for organisations like CCA to communicate with the outside world and, alongside our Facebook page (which is also being revamped) and our Twitter feed, this is the way forward for CCA. However, The Ark will remain our centerpiece member magazine and individual member communication and connection. Please feel free to write to the letters page and submit articles for publication for The Ark and, indeed, for the website.

Conference Attendances
I was delighted to attend the Tablet’s 175th Anniversary Academic Conference in Durham and also the Green Christian Conference in Bristol. Both were excellent and we are hoping to carry out some new work this year following discussions with other participants from both the UK and abroad.

CHARITY CHOICE
An exciting new way to donate online to Catholic Concern for Animals.

If you would like to make an online donation to Catholic Concern for Animals by debit or credit card, with the option of adding gift aid, please go to:

www.charitychoice.co.uk/catholic-concern-for-animals-1068

Or go to the link on CCA’s website at www.catholic-animals.com

Thank you for your kind support!
EDITORIAL

Following the special edition of *The Ark*, celebrating Pope Francis’ wonderful encyclical letter, *Laudato Si’*, which said so many positive things about animals and the Creation, I wondered how the next *Ark* could possibly match it. However, in this edition, we now celebrate the *Paris Conference on Climate Change, COP21*, and the animal movement has a great deal to contribute to this critical issue.

Livestock farming is one of the major contributors to climate change, yet world leaders and decision makers simply haven’t grasped this. The issue just wasn’t on the table at the *Climate Change Conference*. Factory farming makes a significant contribution to the world’s greenhouse gases*, but most of the attention has been on reducing carbon dioxide emissions from industry and transport. Also, whilst carbon dioxide has been focused on as the guilty greenhouse gas, methane and nitrous oxide, both emitted through livestock farming methods, are also major greenhouse gases, with methane being 25 times more potent than carbon dioxide and nitrous oxide being 300 times more potent than carbon dioxide*. Livestock farming is also the main cause of mass deforestation, destroying the very organisms - trees - that absorb carbon dioxide, in order to make land for growing cereals to feed to factory–farmed animals. All this is highlighted in Lisa Kemmerer’s new book *Eating Earth*, which is reviewed in this edition and which I strongly urge you to read. We need to wake the politicians and the public up to the urgent issue of the effects of livestock farming on climate change.

As well as the climate change issues surrounding livestock farming, we also look at some of the other issues surrounding meat-eating. Just before the *World Health Organisation (WHO)* officially labelled red meat as carcinogenic, CCA’s scientific advisor, Dr Richard Ryder, gave a ground-breaking speech at this year’s CCA AGM on 17th October 2015, suggesting that meat could be addictive and that research should be carried out into this. The highlights of his speech are reproduced in this edition. We also welcome Jane Easton of *Viva* as a new contributor who has written about the benefits of a vegan diet.

I am now editing the new CCA website at www.catholic-animals.com, which integrates with *The Ark* and CCA’s Facebook and Twitter pages. Chris has a new blog on the website, so please look out for this and follow him. It’s been wonderful to receive so many readers’ letters recently. Thank you and please keep them coming in.

Please note that CCA now has new publication dates for *The Ark* which are 1 March, 1 July and 1 November.

* from *Eating Earth* by Lisa Kemmerer

Barbara Gardner
THE PARIS CONFERENCE ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Neil Thorns is the Director of Advocacy and Communications at CAFOD (The Catholic Agency For Overseas Development) and Chair of The Climate Coalition. Here he reports on the recent Paris 2015 Climate Change Conference (COP21) held in November last year, where he worked with CCA, along with other coalition organisations, on climate change issues.

BY NEIL THORNS

When you’re in the midst of a whirlwind it’s difficult to view anything which is happening around you objectively, which leads one to either think everything is awful and we’re tail-spinning to destruction or isn’t it exciting and this energy must lead to something new. That’s what it felt like in Paris during the climate talks. When Laurent Fabius banged his gavel heralding the Paris Agreement (PA) it was difficult to judge how much progress, if any, the PA had made. With distance and time it is clear that, whilst not perfect, it set a clearer destination but, as with all things, the devil is in the detail and this is just the start of the journey.

This was the culmination of many years’ hard work and, in particular, a very intense two weeks starting on Monday 30 November when world leaders gathered in Paris to agree a new climate change deal to tackle carbon emissions and reduce dangerous warming. This meeting was the twenty-first gathering of the Conference of Parties – the 195 countries that meet annually to discuss climate issues.

Climate Change Goals

Current global climate agreements run out in 2020, so these talks were crucial to agree a new set of guidelines that include all countries and set us on a long-term path of decarbonisation. The organisation of these talks is under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). According to the UNFCCC the objective of the 2015 conference was to achieve, for the first time in over 20 years of UN negotiations, a binding and universal agreement on climate, from all the nations of the world. If this was achieved then the talks would put governments on a more sustainable pathway for economic growth, protecting the planet and people from climate change.

The heads of state set the bar high with their ambitious statements on the first day and the fact that there were 150 leaders gathered, the highest ever under one roof for one topic, was a hopeful sign. President Obama talked of ‘submerged countries;
abandoned cities; fields that no longer grow’ and said that, ‘This future is one that we have the power to change – right here, right now’. Similarly, David Cameron spoke of speaking to ‘our grandchildren if we failed’, that they would reply, ‘What was it that was so difficult when the earth was in peril, when the sea levels were rising in 2015, when crops were failing, when deserts were expanding? What was it that was so difficult?’

Before the talks CAFOD was urging leaders to agree a fair and binding global agreement to cut carbon emissions that has the needs of the world’s poorest and most vulnerable at its heart. We wanted to see progress on important areas such as supporting poorer countries to adapt to the impacts of climate change, a long-term goal to keep global temperature increases below 1.5°C and ensure there is a clear way forward after Paris.

**Real Effects of Climate Change on Lives**

We know from our partners in some of poorest communities around the world that climate change is affecting them now and having a big impact in their lives. In Kenya, for example, there have always been droughts, but when you hear from people like Sinteyo and her neighbours talk of these droughts happening more often and with greater severity it is clear that climate change is one of the greatest challenges to tackling poverty.

‘When I was a girl, the climate was very predictable,’ Sinteyo says. ‘The environment looked lush, and I never heard my parents complaining about it. We used to know when it would rain. In December and April rain was almost guaranteed. But now things have changed. The rains are very unpredictable. We have more droughts, less rain, and life is more difficult for my generation.’

We know from Sinteyo and millions of others living in poverty that climate change is already having devastating consequences and that this is urgent. When judged from the perspective of people like Sinteyo, living on the front-line of climate change, the PA offers hope for a brighter future, but not yet the security that it’ll get there quick enough for them. It is the start of what Pope Francis calls *a global common plan*. 
Agreed Targets

One of the key positives within the PA is the recognition of a need to keep global temperature rise to 1.5°C rather than the previous 2°C. The most vulnerable countries and small island states have been calling for this for many years, recognising that to them the difference is a question of survival. Although, again, the PA doesn’t give a clear pathway on how to get there, there are mechanisms which bring countries back to the table and, with this new ambition, we must all ensure that there is progress towards reaching this goal.

Every country was invited, as part of the process leading up to the talks in Paris, to submit an Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) on what actions they’d take to tackle climate change post 2020. This was one of the ways in which the PA was built; these national plans were aggregated bottom up rather than as an international treaty imposing down to countries what they had to do. These INDCs need to be reviewed alongside all domestic policies to see if they are compatible and meet this new target.

We believe the PA marks the start of a new era of action on climate change. While the deal does not set a mid-century deadline for full phase out of fossil fuels which we called for, it does make clear the world must make the transition to a low carbon future. Developed countries have reaffirmed their commitment in the deal to support poorer countries financially to cope with the impacts of climate change and have recognised their historical responsibility, having contributed more to the problem of climate change, to support vulnerable countries who are impacted. With these building blocks in place we look forward to ensuring that the detail matches the ambition so that we are passing on our beautiful world safely to the next generation.

Pope Francis says:

‘Because of us, thousands of species will no longer give glory to God by their very existence, nor convey their message to us. We have no such right’.

*Laudato Si’* - 33
David Clough is Professor of Theological Ethics at Chester University, President of the Society for the Study of Christian Ethics, Co-chair of the Animals and Religion Group of the American Academy of Religion, author of ‘On Animals’ and a Methodist preacher. Here he discusses John Wesley’s sermons on the animals’ place in Creation and how we are now affronting God with our present treatment of them.

BY PROF. DAVID CLOUGH

In this essay, I will introduce a sermon preached in 1781 by John Wesley taking Romans 8 as his text, to explore how Wesley interpreted the coming of the reign of God in relation to the world beyond the human, and what this meant for Christian practice in the present. I will then ask how Wesley’s vision might impact on our practice in relation to non-human animals. I will argue that this material prompts us to a broader vision of God's purpose for creaturely life, and to corresponding changes in how Christians see their responsibilities towards other animals.

Wesley on the future of animals

In 1781 John Wesley preached a sermon on Romans 8:19–22 entitled The General Deliverance. He quotes from the King James version that the ‘earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God’, that ‘the creature was subjected to vanity’ and that ‘the creature itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God’. Wesley’s sermon is structured around a theological problem. He begins with the statement that ‘Nothing is more sure’ than that God is merciful towards ‘all that have sense, all that are capable of pleasure or pain, of happiness or misery’. In support of this position Wesley quotes psalms 104, 145 and 147 that God’s mercy is over all his works, providing all things with plenteousness, preparing food for cattle as well as human beings, feeding the young ravens when they cry to God and sending springs into rivers to give drink to beasts of the field and even wild asses. The problem Wesley identifies is how to reconcile the providential care of God for all creatures proclaimed in these psalms with what we see around us every day: ‘If the Creator and Father of every living thing, is rich in mercy towards all; if he does not overlook or despise any of the works of his own hands: if he wills even the meanest of them to be happy, according to their degree: how comes it to pass, that such a complication of evils oppresses, yea, overwhelms them?’
To answer this animal particularisation of the problem of evil, Wesley sets out a sermon in three parts: what the original state of non-human animals was, what their state is at present and what their state will be when Paul’s prophecy in Romans 8 comes to pass. Originally, in Paradise, Wesley argues that non-human animals were blessed with self-motion, a degree of understanding and a power of choice guided by this understanding, but as a result of the Fall, the current state of other animals is far from their original one. They have lost vigour, strength and swiftness, but even more have substantially lost their understanding and power of will so that they are now ‘utterly enslaved to irrational appetites’. This is the reason, Wesley contends, that non-human animals are now savage and cruel to their fellow creatures, that many of them have become horrid in appearance and why so many of them suffer, not least at the hands of humans.

Wesley reaches the climax of his sermon in the question: ‘But will the creature, will even the brute creation always remain in this deplorable condition?’ His answer is forthright:

God forbid that we should affirm this, yea, or even entertain such a thought! ‘While the whole creation groaneth together’, (whether men attend or not), their groans are not dispersed in idle air, but enter into the ears of him that made them. While his creatures travail together in pain, he knoweth all their pain, and is bringing them nearer and nearer to the birth, which shall be accomplished in its season. He seeth the earnest expectation wherewith the whole animated creation waiteth for that final manifestation of the sons of God: in which they themselves also shall be delivered, (not by annihilation: annihilation is not deliverance), from the present ‘bondage of corruption into (a measure of) the glorious liberty of the children of God’.

Nothing can be more express. Away with vulgar prejudices, and let the plain word of God take place. They ‘shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into glorious liberty’: even a measure, according as they are capable, of the liberty of the children of God.

Wesley cites the final chapter of Revelation in support of his conclusion: God’s declaration that ‘I am making all things new’ and the assurance that ‘he will wipe every tear from their eyes’ and that death, mourning and crying will be no more (21:4–5), noting that the text does not limit these promises to humans alone. Animals will exceed
their former state, even in Paradise, ‘As a recompense for what they once suffered, while under the bondage of corruption, when God has renewed the face of the earth, and their corruptible body has put on incorruption, they shall enjoy happiness, suited to their state, without alloy, without interruption, and without end’. Wesley sees in this latter point an important response to ‘a plausible objection against the justice of God, in suffering numberless creatures, that had never sinned, to be so severely punished’, since such creatures ‘receive ample amends for all their present sufferings’. He also hopes that recalling God’s mercies to all creatures may ‘enlarge our hearts towards these creatures’ so that we may ‘habituate ourselves to look forward, beyond this present scene of bondage, to the happy time, when they will be delivered therefrom, into the liberty of the children of God’.

In this sermon, Wesley sees no alternative to an interpretation of Romans 8 that includes all animals in its grand redemptive vision, but he also sees in Paul’s image of a creation set free from its bondage both an answer to a systematic theological concern about the unjust suffering of sinless creatures and the inspiration for a change in Christian practice to avoid cruelty to other animals. While my judgement is that an adequate theological account of animals requires some development of Wesley’s position, what is notable and important about Wesley’s sermon is that he is clear that the Romans 8 text requires a more-than-human view of redemption and that he recognizes that this view of the scope of redemption will have practical consequences for Christian treatment of other animals.

Wesley’s belief in the place of non-human animals in God’s redemptive purposes was not a fleeting whim: he engaged with concerns for animals regularly over his long period of ministry. We might ask at this point why it was the case that Wesley took up the cause of non-human animals with such energy. It is important to note that such humanitarian concern for particular cruelties practised on other animals was not unique to Methodism, and objections to animal cruelty were raised by other Christians, primarily among non-conformist denominations. It is also important, however, to note the context for such sentiments within Christianity, particularly in relation to the Patristic sources that were influential on Wesley. The affirmation of the gathering up (anakephalaiosis) of all things in Christ in Ephesians 1:10 led Irenaeus in the second century to develop a doctrine of recapitulation in which Christ redeems the whole creation and restores the world to its primeval state, with creatures returning to obedience to human beings and to their first food provided by God. The statement in Peter’s Pentecost sermon that Jesus would remain in heaven ‘until the time of universal restoration [apokatastasis]’ (Acts 3:21) inspired Origen to develop the related tradition in which all things are restored to their state in paradise. The tradition of apokatastasis is taken up in the fourth century by
Gregory of Nyssa, who also looks forward to the final harmony of all things. It may be precisely Wesley’s knowledge of Patristic eschatological visions, therefore, that convinces him that a human-only vision of the reign of God is a theological mistake.

**What do we make of Wesley’s vision?**

If we are to take Wesley’s inclusive vision of the reign of God seriously as a peaceable kingdom in which all creatures participate, we need to recognize, like Wesley, that this has implications for how we live now. We cannot confess and worship God as the creator, reconciler, and redeemer of all creatures, without attending to what this means for how we live alongside our fellow creatures here and now.

Two years ago I found myself standing on sawdust in a large windowless shed, holding a scraggly 16 day old hen. In the barn were 26,000 other hens the same age; on the site there were 12 similar sheds, all full of hens, on a nearby site another 12 sheds. 600,000 hens on that site. The hen I held was halfway through its 35 day life. It had been born in a commercial hatchery, debeaked, brought to this broiler shed as a day old chick with 600,000 others, would spend 35 days in this shed without access to daylight, then would be picked up by its legs, wings flapping in panic, crammed into a crate with 30 odd others, put onto a lorry for two hours down the M6, then hung by its legs, stunned into unconsciousness in an electrified water bath if it was lucky, before its throat was cut and it is plucked and dismembered. According to DEFRA statistics 922 million hens were slaughtered in the UK in 2012. Assuming 24 hour x 365 day operation of poultry slaughterhouses, we're killing 100,000 hens every hour. It's staggering just in terms of logistics. That's about 200 hens killed in the UK between me beginning this sentence and ending it. There's no time to do it well. We are clearly causing harm to these birds: we have bred them to gain weight so quickly that their legs can barely support their unwieldy bodies in order to allow their slaughter at five weeks of age and make their meat cheaper than it has ever been. They have been placed in an artificial environment with no regard for their particular mode of life or social
structures. Every aspect of their brief lives has been ordered to human convenience and economic advantage. They are treated much more like a crop than a fellow animal creature. If you eat chicken that you don't know the source of, you are, almost certainly, eating chickens whose life has been as brief and brutish as that poor hen I held.

What about other farmed animals? Globally, 70-80 per cent of the 5 billion laying hens are housed in small battery cages. New EU regulations to prohibit battery cages became effective in 2012, and require more space per bird, but hens are still in stacked cages housed in large windowless sheds, still don't have height to fly to higher perches, don't have access to dust to clean their feathers, and they get to scratch at just a doormat-sized piece of artificial grass. Virtually all the 9 million pigs in the UK are also kept in sheds without access to the outdoors from birth to slaughter at around 6-12 months. To address problems of biting in the intensive conditions, tails are frequently docked. I'm still haunted by a visit to an abattoir near Chester, and can still hear the squeals of the pig I watched desperately running round a pen to avoid the stunning tongs after it had watched seven of its fellows stunned and hauled up by their back leg to have their throats cut and bled to the floor.

Sheep and cattle usually do better than poultry and pigs in terms of access to the outdoors, though increasing numbers of intensive dairy facilities are now entirely indoor, with no access to grass for the cows, and many beef cattle are kept indoors during the winter. The average milk yield of dairy cattle has risen by a third even since 1995: many cows are now in production systems where their calves are removed at birth, they are milked three times per day, and on average only live for around 4 lactations before their yield drops and they are culled for beef. Around one third of beef consumed in the UK comes from culled dairy cattle.

The animals of the late eighteenth century were subject to a different range of cruelties, but the cruelty we visit on the animals we eat is far greater in extent and scale: 2013 figures from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
indicate that 77 billion terrestrial farmed animals were killed for human food in that year, and it is a reasonable estimate that up to 7 trillion fish are killed each year. We need to realize that the lives of the animals killed for meat or kept for milk and eggs, or the scale in which fish are now caught from the oceans, have changed radically even in the past 60 years, and are no longer compatible, for the most part, with any respect for what constitutes their creaturely well-being.

If we believed that the kingdom or reign of God included only one species of creature, ourselves, that would provide some kind of rationale for thinking that we can use other animals for our convenience without regard for them. This is not a biblical vision of God’s ways with creation, however, and so we should be deeply uncomfortable, as Wesley was, about the mismatch between our Christian vision of the reign of God and the way we treat our fellow creatures. Treating animals as crops without regard for their flourishing as creatures of God, as we are doing in our current agricultural systems, seems to me a kind of practical denial of our Creator: acting as if there was no God who was the creator redeemer of both us and other animal creatures. We do not need to consume fellow creatures in this way, and it seems to me that Christians should quickly come to see that their faith requires them to stop consuming the animal products of intensive farming.

Once we have glimpsed the full breadth of the peaceable reign of God, where the wolf will lie down with the lamb, and the baby play in front of the asp's nest, we should realize that we can already let go much of the unpeaceful, unjust and unkind relations we have with our fellow creatures. So why wouldn't we? Why shouldn't Christians start by choosing to consume the vast array of foods that don’t depend on unjust treatment of God's creatures, starting now? It seems to me that this would replace the practical denial of the Creator of our current practice, with a small practical act of faith in the in-breaking reign of God who is creator, reconciler, and redeemer of all.

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2 This figure is taken from 2013 data downloaded from Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations Statistics Division, ‘Faostat3’, (2013), using the ‘Production’ domain and ‘Livestock Primary’ category.

3. The FAO estimate that in 2012 global capture of fish was 79.9 million tonnes and aquaculture production of fish was 66.6 million tonnes (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, *The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture* 2014 (Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2014), 10, 18), giving a total of 146.5 million tonnes. Using average tonnage of wild caught fish from 1999–2007 of 77 million tonnes, A. Mood and P. Brooke estimated that this represented between 1 and 2.7 trillion fish A. Mood, and P. Brooke, ‘Estimating the Number of Fish Caught in Global Fishing Each Year’, (2010), 9. I have obtained my rough estimate of total number of fish killed for purposes related to providing food for humans in 2012 from increasing Mood and Brooke’s estimate range by the 90% that the total 2012 tonnage exceeds their average wild caught figure, to 1.9–5.1 trillion, and by the additional third representing fish wasted, unreported, or used for bait, to 2.5–6.8 trillion.
THE GREAT ADDICTION

Dr Richard D. Ryder is CCA’s Scientific Adviser and is a psychologist and ethicist who has written extensively about animal concerns and speciesism for over 40 years. He was the guest speaker at CCA’s AGM on 17th October 2015 where he talked about campaigning tactics, speciesism and the possibility that meat is addictive, suggesting that more research is needed into this issue. He made this suggestion just before the World Health Organisation (WHO) officially labelled red meat as carcinogenic. Highlights of his speech are presented here.

BY DR RICHARD D. RYDER

Ladies and Gentlemen,
I feel honoured to be asked to address your AGM of 2015. What a year it is! It is the year of revolution: the year of extraordinary change.

Previously we had Bishop Desmond Tutu in South Africa telling us: ‘We should not overlook the issue of justice to animals...Churches should lead the way by making clear that all cruelty — to other animals as well as human beings — is an affront to civilised living and a sin before God’.

The Dalai Llama has said: ‘In Buddhism the highest spiritual ideal is to cultivate compassion for all sentient beings and to work for their welfare to the greatest possible extent’.

Then, most wonderfully for everyone here today, this year we have Pope Francis’ brilliant encyclical letter Laudato Si’. This letter tells Catholics everywhere to change their attitude towards animals. The Pope wants no more tyrannical anthropocentrism. No more putting of human interests way above those of the other animals. As Pope Francis says: ‘The Bible has no place for a tyrannical anthropocentrism unconcerned for other creatures’.

The Gentle Revolution
So these three great men have all spoken out this year: Desmond Tutu, the Dalai Llama and Pope Francis. They have all spoken out in support of nonhumans. Such statements 20 years ago — or even 10 years ago — would have been unthinkable. They amount to a gentle revolution — a worldwide but gentle turning of the tide.

On the other hand, of course, the situation remains dire. Millions of animals are still suffering in painful experiments — perhaps 100 million around the world each year. Millions of animals are still suffering in factory farms and in being transported alive across oceans and continents. Millions are being abused in slaughter houses. Millions
of wild animals, too, are being trapped for their fur — often dying with broken legs in steel-toothed traps after days of agony. Millions are dying in other ways, poisoned or shot with bows and arrows for sport, like Cecil the lion.

It is not enough to just wring our hands about all this cruelty that goes on in the world today — we need to try to stop it, and to do so ethically and, of course, non-violently. Inspired by Pope Francis’ wonderful encyclical Laudato Si’ we must try to stop all forms of tyrannical anthropocentrism, whether it is cruelty in animal experiments, in slaughter houses, in unnatural farms, in the constant overproduction of pets in this country, in foxhunting or in the shooting and slow killing of half-tame lions by American dentists. [Dr Ryder then spoke about campaigning tactics].

Speciesism and Anthropocentrism
I believe there is ample evidence that animals can suffer pain and distress. They have the same sort of nervous systems as we do and the same sorts of brain chemicals associated with the experiences of pain and distress. There is now ample scientific evidence to support this. We are just one species of animal among hundreds of species who can suffer pain and distress.

Yet the absurd discrimination against nonhumans continues. I have called it speciesism. Speciesism is like racism and sexism. It is cruel and irrational. It is pre-Darwinian and out of date. Speciesism is selfish and unintelligent. Yet it continues all around us! If speciesism is not morally wrong then neither are sexism or racism!

We now have the Pope’s wonderful encyclical, Laudato Si’. In this, Pope Francis repeatedly attacks the world’s ‘anthropocentrism’ — the way in which people put the human species on a pedestal at the centre of the universe — as if all other of God’s creatures were of little importance. Such anthropocentrism, says Pope Francis, is distorted, excessive, misguided and tyrannical. Yes, he uses these actual words. He is attacking speciesism although he calls it anthropocentrism — an older and probably better word for it.

For the last 700 years this excessive and misguided anthropocentrism has been on the up and up in European and other cultures. Now, when the commercial and scientific abuse of nonhumans is at its maximum, people of intelligence and understanding are calling it into question. Perhaps the turning point was 200 years ago with writers such as Alexander Pope, Voltaire, Dr Samuel Johnson, John Wesley and Jeremy Bentham in this country. More recently, in the 1970s, we had the modern philosophers of the Oxford Group spreading the attack on speciesism. In the 19th century there were Cardinal Newman and Cardinal Manning, William Wilberforce, Lord Shaftesbury, Henry Salt and Frances Cobbe, all attacking cruelty to animals.
The Example of the Early Christian Saints

In the old days, many saints were also opposed to such anthropocentrism. Before the year 1300 it was common for the saints to be animal protectors. They were often very fond of animals, making friends with them and rescuing them from hunters. Take, for example, St Jerome who took a thorn out of the paw of a lion, St Columba who cared for a crane, St Walaric who caressed the woodland birds, St Neot, St Godric, St Aventine, St Carileff, St Monacella, St Isidore and St Anselm who are all recorded as rescuing animals from hunters. St Cuthbert, too, made friends with birds. Being kind to animals was part of the usual trademark of sainthood. As early as the fourth century St John of Chrysostom had urged kindness to animals because ‘they are of the same origin as ourselves’ and St Basil of Caesaria had urged a ‘sense of fellowship with all living things’.

Yet after the time of St Francis, who died in 1226, things got a lot worse for the animals. Much of the earlier kindness was suppressed. It was the same with slavery wasn’t it? Self-interest blinded us to this injustice for hundreds of years. Animal cruelty is today’s slavery. We all need to wake up! Women, too, were oppressed for centuries — out of the self-interest of men.

As Desmond Tutu has recently said — ‘religious traditions do not, by and large, have a good record on animals’. For some 700 years after St Francis, sadly, that has been true. Now, with Pope Francis, we have an opportunity to make some more progress. Armed with his words we can approach the politicians who can change things, lobbying Catholics in particular all over the world and persuading the United Nations to recognise the rights of all animals. We seek a world without blood-sports, where all slaughterhouses have CCTV cameras, where animals are not transported over huge distances, where the most severe forms of painful experiments are totally banned and where meat-eating is a rarity.
Meat Addiction

Why have the Churches made so little progress over recent centuries? Why have they ignored the whole issue of cruelty to our brothers and sisters of other species?

The main answer is probably MEAT. The human species has seemingly become addicted to meat. Billions of human beings appear addicted to meat and they can’t give it up. Either it is an innate drive to eat meat — a drive like thirst or sex or sleep, or it is an unnecessarily acquired addiction — a chemical dependence on meat like an addiction to cocaine, heroin, alcohol or tobacco. We simply don’t know which it is. Science has strangely ignored the issue. Why has nobody researched this properly?

More and more people in the UK are becoming vegetarians or vegans but most of them appear never to have been addicted to meat. For thousands of the others — the carnivores — the majority in the Western world — it is like asking millions of drug addicts to give up their drugs! It is easier said than done! This is probably why the liberation of our fellow animals has never been achieved. This glaring moral issue has been blocked time and time again by the meat addicts. This is typical of addiction. If you try to come between an addict and his ‘fix’ — addicts can become very difficult.

It is not enough to say the carnivores eat meat because they ‘like’ it. It may be more insidious than this. It is not sufficient for a drug addict to say he only takes his drug because he ‘likes’ it. Liking something can be just part of an addiction.

We at least know something about meat nowadays. Science tells us we can live very well without it. Indeed, we now know that meat, like cocaine, is often bad for us — increasing the risks of cancer, blood pressure and heart disease. The economics are crazy too. We are destroying forests in order to produce meat, at far greater cost than we could produce more than enough vegetable protein. Why does the majority cling to its meat diet? Why is the majority so afraid of a world where animals of all species — nonhuman as well as human — can enjoy equal rights?

So, is the Churches’ failure to grasp the issue of animal cruelty just because of the self-interest of meat addiction? As a psychologist I have had some experience of dealing with addictions, with young people unable to stop taking heroin or cocaine. The addicts produce all sorts of excuses just as meat-eaters do. There are some striking psychological similarities between addiction and meat-eating.

Addiction today is usually called substance use disorder. Often such substances are psychoactive — they stimulate and satisfy the reward mechanisms in the brain such as the nucleus accumbens. There is a craving, often strong and overpowering, to take the substance on a periodic or continuous basis, even when that substance is harmful to physical health — as cocaine, meat, tobacco, alcohol and heroin all are. Withdrawal may produce physical and psychological symptoms such as irritability, explosive demands for the substance, angry resistance against any attempt to prevent access to the substance, or to speak against it, as well as feelings of anxiety, depression and agitation. Is meat addiction one of the unrecognised causes of anxiety and depression in our society?
In addictions, physical and psychological symptoms of dependence and withdrawal can occur — tremors, sweating, nausea, exhaustion, feeling generally unwell. Those who are already psychologically disturbed with anxiety, depression or incipient psychosis can be especially vulnerable to addiction. The consumption of alcohol or nicotine or, possibly, MEAT becomes a way of reducing these uncomfortable feelings. But in the long run, of course, it doesn’t work. Often, it only makes things worse.

As far as I know, few people have really researched the possibility that meat contains chemicals that are addictive in the strictly medical sense. Maybe there are a score of such possible chemicals in meat which need to be analysed. One question is this: are any of them opioids, cannabinoids or stimulants, or other substances already known to be addictive? We already know there is Hypoxanthine, which is a stimulant. Such substances can interact with the chemicals already in the body, such as brain transmitters — for example serotonin and dopamine.

I am only making the suggestion that meat may be an addictive substance, at least for some people. Research needs to be done and it will, of course, be opposed by the mighty meat industry. We have to explain why, when all the evidence is that many other species ought to be in the same moral community as ourselves, that nonhuman animals are still excluded — against all the overwhelming rational and scientific evidence. Why? Charles Darwin told us long ago that we are all animals. These are our relatives whom we are killing and eating. We are related through kinship. Modern science tells us that all animals suffer pain and distress. We are all in the same moral ark!

So why exclude them? It has to be a reason that is both irrational and overwhelming — and these happen to be two of the hallmarks of addiction: irrationality and overwhelming compunction. The signs and symptoms of addiction include, not only craving and unstoppable, but spending more than is prudent on the addictive substance, excessive consumption of the substance, and, above all, denial of the problem. I have known quite a few meat-eaters like this! Maybe they have become dependent on meat in order to cope with their lives. Yet the more they eat, the more they want. When they don’t eat meat they become irritable and moody. (Even if we argue that it is natural to eat meat, this is no justification. Under certain situations it may be natural for some people to kill or rape. This does not morally justify rape or murder! Certainly we know that meat eating is not necessary for our health and can be harmful. Maybe non-sentient, synthetic ‘meat’ could be the answer).

Isn’t it strange that parents around the world force their children to eat meat? Why do they do it? They don’t force their children to eat opium or amphetamines! Yet this almost universal practice of forcing children to become meat-eaters seems to be associated with one or two wrong ideas: the first is that meat is good for their children, when it isn’t! The second is that meat is the only source of protein, which it isn’t! Thirdly that meat is a manly thing, and finally that meat is a sign of opulence and success. These ideas are all irrational or outdated or primitive or simply wrong.
Like a lot of children I was fed meat daily by my parents and, by the age of eight, hardly surprisingly, I was behaving as if I was addicted to it. I craved meat intensely. At school, this addiction process continued with meat and two veg, meat and two veg, meat and two veg — day after day, and year after year. Society was surely making a determined effort to ensure that I would forever be a meat addict, which is what I suppose I am today. Drinking or not, once an alcoholic, always an alcoholic. Once a carnivore, always a carnivore. At least for those of us who are chemically vulnerable.

If 90 per cent of Western populations are addicted to meat, and progressively more of the rest of the world, too, what hope is there for our relations — the other animals? I suspect that for thousands of years some men have become addicted to meat and have for this reason, fiercely and irrationally defended their right to kill and eat animals. All the arguments of mercy and rationality have been in vain. Full of tell-tale guilt, anger and contempt, the addicted carnivores have fought off all challenges. They have produced rationalisations, wrong facts and irrational arguments to do so, just as addicts always do. Many of the religious orders of Christian and other religions have taught vegetarianism but, in the end, they have forgotten them. Armed with the fanaticism and the extremism of addiction, the meat-eaters have prevailed.

I suspect that only something as powerful as full psychological addiction can explain all this. All I am saying is that we need to find out if meat eating is really an addiction for some people, like an addiction to cocaine or tobacco. If so, society may begin to change its attitude towards animals and their moral status. I dare say I will not be heard, but I call upon my fellow scientists to research this issue. Why is it that so many people crave this medically dangerous substance called meat? Let’s also research, in greater detail, the real medical dangers of meat.

I suspect that, going back thousands of years to the Stone Age, there were probably actual battles between meat eaters and vegetarians — between the addicts and the ethicists. I also suspect that this, ultimately, is why the true moral position of the other animals has never been fully accepted. It threatens a worldwide addiction.
Penance vs Plenty: Christianity’s Approach to Vegetarianism and Animals

Jane Easton is the Food and Cookery Coordinator for Viva! and Viva!Health, a job which entails cooking, researching new products, teaching cookery via demonstrations, writing recipes and creating recipes for Viva guides e.g. Everyones’s Going Dairy-Free. Here she discusses why veggie diets are better than meat diets.

By Jane Easton

Abstaining from meat in the Christian traditions has long been associated with ‘giving up’ or penitence, the most obvious example being Lent. More recently, the nineteenth century Christian temperance movement was strongly linked to the vegetarian movement. Perhaps this may go some way to explain why so many Christians resist a change of diet. Vegan and veggie diets may seem ‘worthy’ – rather than being as opulent as they truly are.

On the upside, there is increasingly a creative and lively debate within Christianity about our relationship to the animals we eat and use. Science has increased our knowledge about animal sentience (including sea animals like fish), animal suffering and the impact that the meat, fish and dairy industries have on us as humans and our environment. Last year, Pope Francis himself made a very strong statement about our duty to animals and the planet.

‘Be the change you want to see in the world’ seems like an appropriate starting point for anyone with a desire to lead a kinder, more ethical life. The most important step is to take a step. But that doesn’t mean cake can’t be involved. Indeed, vegan and vegetarian food is a taste revelation and it is far more varied than the diets many omnivores eat.

Hindrances

A recent study from Lancaster University looked at how people justify meat-eating. (This also goes for eggs and dairy, whose cruelty is less obvious). They categorised the phenomenon like this:

The four Ns:

- Natural - ‘Humans are natural carnivores’
- Necessary - ‘Meat provides essential nutrients’
- Normal - ‘I was raised eating meat’
- Nice - ‘It’s delicious’.

The first three are easy to overturn.
Natural? We’re not ‘natural’ carnivores. Scientific studies show our teeth, jaws and digestive organs to be far closer to plant-eating animals than to carnivores, or even true omnivores. Ancient people are better described as gatherer-hunters rather than hunter-gatherers because the vast majority of their food was foraged plant foods. Indeed, most of our species had never eaten meat in the quantities that so many of us do today.

Healthy? Real carnivores and omnivores don’t succumb to the diseases of affluence that we humans do when we eat animal foods, e.g. heart disease, type-two diabetes, obesity and many cancers, such as prostate and breast cancer.

But where do you get your protein and...? The World Health Organisation, British Medical Association, American Dietetic Association, British Nutritional Foundation and other such reputable organisations confirm that a well-balanced wholefood, plant-based diet provides more than adequate nutrition, with vegans in particular having much lower levels of those diseases of affluence.

But I’ve always eaten this way. Custom and culture don’t necessarily mean that an action is kind or right. Ethics are an ongoing process of fine-tuning, soul-searching and spiritual practice. Practises that were once accepted as ‘necessary’, ‘normal’ or ‘good’ – e.g. slavery or the oppression of women – are now regarded as quite the opposite. So knowing what we do now about animal sentience, intelligence, altruism and suffering, surely a revisiting of our behaviour to our fellow Earthlings is way overdue?

The world has changed. The human population was relatively small when the Bible was written. We now face a world of growing food shortages. Wealthier countries eat a lot of meat and the animals bred for it are fed with a vast percentage of the world’s plant foods. Children in poor countries starve beside fields where grain is being grown to feed meat animals. In short, meat is the most inefficient and wasteful way of obtaining protein.

Feeding the five thousand? There are no welfare regulations for fish slaughter so these sociable, sentient sea animals die in slow agony. Also, industrial fishing is destroying the oceans, not only by decimating fish stocks but attacking biodiversity – huge nets catch more than fish. And on top of this, much of the fish caught is fed back to other animals: pigs, chickens, farmed fish such as salmon. Captain Paul Watson of anti-whaling group Sea Shepherd explains this succinctly, ‘When you eat chicken you may be eating fish. When you eat bacon you may be eating fish. When you drink milk or eat eggs you maybe consuming marine wildlife’.

In a nutshell, we cannot feed the world’s population on the kind of diet that many of us currently eat. But we could feed the world – and more – on a plant-based diet or something closer to it.
**Green your life.** The environmental impact of meat and dairy is enormous. The *United Nations* report in 2006, *‘Livestock’s Long Shadow’* documented this clearly. Digestive gases from farmed animals and their manure create more carbon emissions than all transport put together. Then there is water pollution; fresh water wastage, deforestation, land degradation and desertification and more. None of this would have been a factor in the days of Moses or Jesus.

**Not so natural or nice.** The dairy and egg industries would be unrecognisable to our ancestors, even those a couple of centuries ago – the cruel slaughter of day-old male dairy calves and the milking of desperately overworked, hormone-laden pregnant cows are only two examples of relatively recent changes to farming practices.

Certification schemes are no guarantee of animal welfare. Time and time again, *Viva!*’s undercover investigations of UK farms have exposed gross abuse and neglect. Many shocking practices are legal and done without anaesthetic, e.g. debeaking of chickens, removal of piglet teeth and tails and bullock or goat castration. These ‘approved’ farms supply our main retailers, e.g. the Co-op, Tesco, Waitrose, M&S, Sainsbury’s and many others. Between 80-95 per cent of our meat and dairy come from intensive farming but even organic/free-range enterprises are no guarantee of good welfare standards.

Another investigation obtained undercover footage of 11 randomly selected slaughterhouses across the UK, several of which were *Soil Association* (organic) approved. All except one were in breach of the law. Proper supervision on kill floors was all too often ignored, with the animals paying the price – bullied, taunted and beaten by the workers. The footage is the stuff of heartbreak and nightmare.

**What would Jesus do?** This isn’t simply a case of ‘bad apples’ – undercover operations are randomly chosen, as investigators just get into places wherever they can. Rather, this is something that is endemic in the industry itself. Does anyone really want to be associated with this – merely to eat foods that we don’t need, foods whose production is destroying the planet, let alone creating all that suffering? Certainly, I doubt that we would find Jesus on a factory farm or in an abattoir.
**Psychological damage** Imagine having to control and kill terrified, screaming animals, day after day. Time is money and ‘good’ industry practice, although inadequate in itself, is often ignored or subverted. Callousness, brutality and even downright sadism are common. Reputable research reveals the impact on the workers, their family lives and wider communities. It makes for harrowing reading.

**Bootiful?** The last ‘N’ – the taste of meat – might seem the most problematic. Many believe they would miss it. I personally used to enjoy eating meat – I often joke that I ‘grew up on lard’ – and come from a working class family. Nowadays I have too many disturbing images in my head and the smell of cooking flesh, once so enticing and ‘normal’ now smells repellent. Most veggies and vegans feel the same – and most grew up as meat-eaters.

**Celebrating life** Replacing meat with other foods doesn’t mean we have to give up the ritual of enjoying and sharing good food. There are so many tasty alternatives to eat now that it’s hardly a sacrifice! In other words, everyone’s perceptions, taste buds and the like can and do change.

**The real comfort zone** Humans are past masters at a kind of spiritual ‘fingers in the ears la-la-la’ mentality. Psychology describes this as ‘cognitive dissonance’ – having inconsistent thoughts, beliefs, or attitudes to our behaviour. In turn, this state ‘produces a feeling of discomfort leading to an alteration in one of the attitudes, beliefs or behaviours to reduce the discomfort and restore balance etc.’ Is this really the way we want to live our lives?

The real discomfort that this dissonance causes is one of the reasons I went vegetarian and eventually vegan – one of the best decisions I’ve ever made. The knowledge I gained was a burden, whereas changing my diet was a liberation, not a penance. That’s why millions of people around the world are doing the same. There is so much inspiration, help, advice out there. Why not give it a go? 🧘‍♂️

**References and resources**
For help with changing your diet, recipes, nutrition, queries about any of the information in this article go to
www.viva.org.uk
www.veganrecipeclub.org.uk
http://www.viva.org.uk/30dayvegan
‘AS IT WAS IN THE BEGINNING’
WHAT WE SHOULD HAVE KNOWN WITHOUT THE NEW SCIENCE

Rev. Prof. Martin Henig MS, DPhil, DLitt is Vice-President of the Anglican Society for the Welfare of Animals, a director of the Animal Interfaith Alliance, a founder member of the Voice for Ethical Research and a Fellow of the Oxford Centre for Animal Ethics. He is also Honorary Visiting Professor at the Institute of Archaeology at UCL, London. Here he shares with us his talk, given at the 2015 Ecumenical Animal Welfare Retreat in Noddfa.

BY REV. PROF. MARTIN HENIG

The Judeo-Christian tradition recognises that all living creatures, including humans, were created by God, and some texts, amongst them Psalm 104 and Genesis 1, actually place mankind and the rest of creation on a level. Although written relatively late in human history, they retain something of the awe early humans evidently felt for wild nature (as seen, for example, much earlier in Palaeolithic cave paintings). The Neolithic Revolution saw certain species (cattle, sheep etc.) domesticated, and urbanisation separated our species from other animals, which came to be seen as merely instrumental and created for human needs. For the Greeks (and the Romans): Man is the measure of all things. Aristotelean (Greek) philosophy reinforced this, in the Synagogue and Church. Such an attitude led to a disregard of our likeness to other creatures, our disregard of their emotional lives, language etc. and allowed for cruelty on a vast scale. Nevertheless, there were counter voices, especially amongst those who often separated themselves from wider society (desert fathers, insular saints and later individuals, amongst them St Francis) who saw, empathised, and even conversed with other animals as 'creatures of the same God'. I believe that there is a primary need for the Church/Synagogue, not only to accept the new science and also what other faith traditions, such as Jainism, tells us, but to shed their speciesism and to return to a focus on God as creator of all living beings, as expressed in the more enlightened of the early traditions.

Animals in Scripture
Science, that is the observation of verifiable phenomena which can be repeated experimentally, is presenting us with ‘discoveries’ of one kind or another every day. Some of these are concerned with animal behaviour, including observations which tell us about the intelligence and emotions of animals, communication skills and language. These are, of course, valuable and interesting, just as are similar observations concerned
with our own species and, for much the same reason, they add to the flourishing of groups and individuals. Here I am not speaking of anything which causes discomfort, pain and death, like so much that takes place in animal laboratories which I regard as always morally illegitimate. But I am interested in how blue tits, badgers, monkeys and my human contemporaries spend their time. With regard to the last, I could not be a professional archaeologist or priest; with regard to the first, I could not claim to be an (admittedly amateur) Natural Historian.

As a priest, of course, I am required to have some familiarity with Scripture, which we understand as writings written at different times but, nevertheless, inspired by God. When I read Scripture I do not leave behind my other professions. As a Natural Historian, I observe that all the works were written by (and most are obsessed with) a single species, which happens to be my own! A few passages of scripture attempt to look at creation imaginatively, from the perspective of the creator God who is implicit in the Judeo-Christian narrative. The first chapter of Genesis is concerned with the creation of the elements and plants, then of animals, sea creatures and birds on the fifth day, and land animals on the sixth day, together with humans who are awarded stewardship (which is what that word ‘dominion’ actually means) over the other creatures. Perhaps anterior to this in date (second millennium BC), is the extraordinary Psalm 104, a hymn of praise to the creator in which human beings and animals are treated almost equally, and do what they were created to do. Ultimately, every creature is created to praise God and this is the theme of Psalms 147 and 148 and also of the Song of the Three Jews, familiar to us as the Benedicite.

The Hebrew mind was able to comprehend the possibility that non-human creatures might be more attuned to the will of God than humans, as is evident from the folk-story of Baalam’s donkey in the book of Numbers, where the donkey upbraids Baalam for his cruelty, before it is revealed that the donkey has seen the angel of the Lord which Baalam has not seen (Numbers 22:21-33). In a later book, Jonah, it is the animals, first a whale, then the animals of Nineveh and finally the worm which devours the gourd which shelters Jonah as he sulks after Nineveh is not destroyed, who obey God, rather than the disobedient and petulant prophet. But it is in Job, especially in the late chapters, 38-41, that we find the fullest exposition of the mystery of animal behaviour as an expression of the unknowability of God. Some may be wise creatures, like the wild ass which ‘scorns the tumult of the city’ and some stupid, for instance the ostrich which ‘leaves its eggs to the earth and lets them be warmed on the ground, forgetting that a foot may crush them’. The natural history may be flawed but the principle remains true.

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**The key texts concerning Creation in the Hebrew Bible make it clear that the division lies, not between humans and other animals, but between the Creator and all creation.**

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Animals in the Classical World

Other traditions too, even the Greeks for whom ‘Man was the measure of all things’ - and the proper noun here is deliberate; women were seen as inferior and less intellectual - had an ambiguous attitude to animals and the natural world in which, as is well known, the gods had animal familiars and often adopted the persona of particular animals. Zeus, as an eagle, carried off the shepherd boy Ganymede to Olympus, but also, as a bull, abducted Europa. Amongst other examples, Athena had her little owl, Apollo his raven, Artemis her hind. One tradition in Greek thought, however, saw animals as lacking *logos* and hence were different in kind from humans. That was particularly the view of Aristotle from whom it was unfortunately inherited by Western Christian culture.

But there were opposing views seen, for instance, through Pythagoras and Porphyry, where there is an acknowledgement of kinship between mankind and other animals, and examples of observation in Greek and Roman literature of animal thought and intelligence which bear the marks of actual observation, for example by Lucretius on the emotional response of cows whose calves had been sacrificed (*On the Nature of things* 2,342-80), by Pliny on the wisdom of elephants (*Natural History* 8,1-3) by Herodotus on Arion’s rescue by a dolphin (Herodotus I.23-24) and, of course, we all know the famous folktale of Androcles and the lion (Aulus Gellius, *Attic Nights* V. xiv ; Aelian VII. xlviii ). There are also other empathetic writings about animals, notably by the Cynic Sextus Empiricus, noting that a dog in its actions, greeting those with whom it is familiar, possesses *logos* and he cites the case of Odysseus being recognised by his faithful hound Argos (*Outlines of Pyrrhonism* 1.62-78), while throughout Apuleius’ *Metamorphoses*, otherwise known as ‘the Golden Ass’, the world is viewed through the eyes of the supposed author, transmuted into a donkey. Apuleius was a convert to the gentle cult of Isis and that surely influenced his attitude. Moreover it is clear that individuals then, as now, developed close relationships with the animals which served
them, such as horses (think of Alexander the Great’s Bucephalos) and dogs (we have already noted Odysseus’s faithful dog Argos). Horses (often racehorses) and hunting dogs bear names and were clearly valued by their owners who often wore signet-rings on which they were shown and named.¹

**Animals in Other Cultures**

Relationship to other creatures and an appreciation that they too think, that they too have developed patterns of behaviour, are found in the records and folk tales of many cultures, from those of the Australian aborigines to those of the so-called ‘Celtic fringe’ of the British Isles. They are evident in the lively Palaeolithic wall paintings at Lascaux in France and Altamira in Spain, where the humans clearly felt they had an ambiguous relationship with the other animals they hunted. What these have in common is that they are, or were, by their very nature, non-urban cultures, and very much in touch with the natural environment around them. If you find yourself living an extremely ascetic life close to nature, like Cuthbert on the Farne islands, you are literally close to the seals, otters and other creatures in your environment. You share their creatureliness every day. That must be true even if one properly displays a certain caution with regard to early and Medieval hagiographies which tended to follow set formularies.² St Francis, in the 13th century, may have been something of an exception in his stress on the common condition of all Creation as a gift of God, hence other animals are our brothers and sisters.

**Personal Observations**

More powerful for us than folk stories, or even the words of venerable books, are our own observations, or at least those fairly recently recorded. These are not, strictly speaking, ‘scientific’ because they are not subject to objective scientific method, though they overwhelmingly disprove the Cartesian hypothesis (itself not scientific, and descended, like that of Thomas Aquinas, from Aristotle) that animals are merely machines which cannot feel real pain or experience real pleasure.

All of us are acquainted with companion animals, with those with whom we share a house, or those who live with others. If they were pre-programmed machines their behaviour would be predictable, but they clearly have their own personalities, just like people. If we do not know the animals well, as personal friends, our responses are often similar to those we might adopt to small children, not I hope from any lack of respect to either, but because we do not share the same language to converse.

We break through into their world and theirs into ours when it is apparent that a cat, a dog or a child wants us to play a game, normally throwing a ball or other object for them to retrieve. The exact analogy between child and, in this case, a primate infant came to me when on holiday in India and observing a local colony of macaques. A young monkey was attempting to display dexterity in acrobatics in the trees, a facility
no doubt vital to him in later life. He looked at me. Indeed, it was obvious that he wanted to attract my attention. I started to laugh and at that he really began to show-off, jumping higher and sometimes losing his balance, and clearly in a state of happy enjoyment. I at once recalled very young human friends, just beginning to talk and to use their bodies athletically, and the frequent demand from them to: ‘Look at me!’

If that is one kind of empathy, there are others. Dogs in particular seem attuned to respond to emotions, those of other dogs, and of other species, including our own. I remember the real companionship and sympathy accorded to me by a retriever at a time of deep grief. At St Margaret’s, Binsey, the little country church where I often officiate, Shay, the local farmer and churchwarden would arrive followed by his faithful old collie, Millie. He would ring the two bells to announce the service, but the tone of one of them upset Millie and so one of us would have to comfort her. There was a real and palpable bond of love between Millie and Shay, and when Millie died, Shay died shortly after. When we came to publish a book on Binsey and its church it seemed natural to dedicate it to them both.³

Something happens when one gathers such observations together. It is comparable in many ways to the technological revolution of our own day which has developed the computer out of all recognition. I was brought up on such books as Konrad Lorenz’s King Solomon’s Ring (1949), on his observation of jackdaws and geese in an Austrian village and on his Man meets Dog (1950), but it is the vast range of observations and advancing knowledge about animal (including human) behaviour,
communication and thought, brought together in Jonathan Balcombe’s book *Second Nature*, that has convinced me that we need to radically revise our world-view, our theology. After reading it, and the many observations it contains, I declared that it was surely the most important contribution to theology that year, despite the fact that I don’t suppose the author thought he was writing a theological work.

I should qualify that to say I do not think this new understanding in any way undermines a true understanding of God or, for that matter, of the Incarnation. The key texts concerning Creation in the Hebrew Bible make it clear that the division lies, not between humans and other animals, but between the Creator and *all* creation. The Incarnation is surely a matter of God entering his creation which had, by its very nature, to be specific, so he was incarnate, not as an Amerindian, but as a Jew, as a man and not a woman, in the Holy Land and not in Wales, and in 4BC, or whenever it was, and not at any other date. But ultimately these specifics are irrelevant as he is present for us all and the ‘us’ includes all he has made.

Sharing God’s love with the other animals does not lessen God’s love for any one of us as individuals. Without any of the resources of modern science Mother Julian of Norwich saw ‘everything that is’ in a small object, the size of a hazel-nut, that Our Lord placed in her hand, and that tiny object can only be sustained through love. It is insights such as these which send me out to fight for the environment, for the Amazonian Rain Forest, for our countryside, for elephants, badgers and foxes, for our fellow creatures living miserable lives in factory farms and tortured in laboratories in contempt of that loving hand and the tears falling from the Saviour’s eyes. ☣

1 A. Harden, *Animals in the Classical World. Ethical Perspectives from Greek and Roman Texts* (2013) is particularly useful.

2 D. Alexander, *Saints and Animals in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge 2008)


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**ECCLESIASTES 3:18-21 (NIV)**

I also said to myself, ‘As for humans, God tests them so that they may see that they are like the animals. Surely the fate of human beings is like that of the animals; the same fate awaits them both: As one dies, so dies the other. All have the same breath; humans have no advantage over animals. Everything is meaningless. All go to the same place; all come from dust, and to dust all return. Who knows if the human spirit rises upward and if the spirit of the animal goes down into the earth?’
You know how we all grow from being a needy, egocentric infant and, through various processes of socialisation, become, we hope, a proper adult, a mature being who respects the other person, whoever they are. From self to other. Biblical history follows a similar trajectory. From an early tribal understanding of 'our god is better than your god', the people of the Book came to understand that God is God of the whole people of Israel, even, eventually, to the realisation that God is Father-Creator of and for all people, even the hated Ninevites and Samaritans.

The metaphorical tents of our people need to be widened each time it dawns on us that another category of humanity is included in God's love and purpose - in recent years, women, slaves and (we're almost there) homosexuals. As Isaiah has it, 'Enlarge the place of your tent, stretch your tent curtains wide, do not hold back. Lengthen your cords, strengthen your stakes'.

We make God too small, in our own image of human-centredness. God constantly tells us to grow, to be more expansive, more inclusive, more other-respecting. The Church has, in the past, reflected this movement, if painfully slowly. It has moved from opposing to supporting human rights and the principles of social justice. Now, with the Encyclical, Laudato Si’, we are to embrace the integrity of creation, the whole order of nature. The earth with all created beings, is the last, previously neglected, category.

This is what Pope Francis teaches, following the poor man of Assisi, in the Encyclical. He tells us that our relationship with mother earth has been an abusive one: 'We have come to see ourselves as her lords and masters, entitled to plunder her at will'. He doesn't pull his punches! Nature is a precious gift, not just a resource. It is, he says, 'a magnificent book - through the greatness and beauty of creatures one comes to know by analogy their maker' (LS:12).

Climate change, ecology and global food security issues are now on the agenda. The natural world is no longer to be simply the backdrop to human economic development and human spiritual concerns. The earth is now to matter - wait, this is the radical thing - and not just for the sake of human beings.
We have privileged one species of primates, however endowed with reason and responsibility, over all others. Yet God is the Father-Creator of all creatures, all species, all that has been created - slugs, polar bears, mountains, trees, badgers and humans. God loves all creatures into being. Why? This immense universe is not designed just for one little species within it. The whole and all its parts, from the micro to the magna, is from God and for God. We have only to look around the natural world to see that, for God, nothing is ever enough. Prodigality is God's modus vivendi; unreciprocated, unmerited love his very essence. The list of species of creatures is endless - we know only a part of the whole - yet, Francis has, I quote, 'the conviction that everything in the world is connected' - we are caught in the mesh of an immense network of being, and he calls for us to respect 'the value proper to each creature'. As St Francis has it, we are all kin, all are brother or sister to us.

It was Aquinas who taught that all things exist for the glory of God, not for us, and the Catechism declares that 'Animals are God's creatures ...by their mere existence they bless him and give him glory' (2416). Straight out of both St Francis of Assisi and Aquinas - and they are not often bracketed together!

**From Anthropocentrism to Theocentrism**

Since Galileo we have given superficial acknowledgement that the earth moves around the sun, and that man is not the centre of the universe. Yet we have behaved as if we still believed we were at the centre. The way we have treated all other creatures is just as if we still believed in that hubristic and arrogant notion.

What if we now put God at the centre, displacing the culture of anthropocentrism, human-centredness? After all, that is itself more a result of the secular rationalism of the enlightenment than of Christian faith. A true theocentrism would have repercussions in the way we treat God's other creatures.

In *Laudato Si’*, after assessing a set of scriptural texts, Pope Francis concludes with: ‘Clearly, the Bible has no place for a tyrannical anthropocentrism, unconcerned for other creatures’ (LS:68). He says, simply yet radically, ‘We are not God’ and goes on to admit that the ‘earth was here before us’. He denies it to be legitimate to interpret the

**Pope Francis says:**

‘Clearly the Bible has no place for a tyrannical anthropocentrism unconcerned for other creatures’.

*Laudato Si’* - 68
granting of ‘dominion’ as meaning we can treat the earth and all other living beings in a ‘domineering and destructive’ manner. He even admits that while ‘we Christians have at times incorrectly interpreted the Scriptures, nowadays we must forcefully reject the notion that our being created in God’s image and given dominion over the earth justifies absolute dominion over other creatures’ (LS:67).

Theologians and Animal Rights
Does this lead to an acceptance therefore of animal rights? Well, according to Cardinal John Carmel Heenan back in 1970, yes indeed - he stated that they have 'very positive rights because they are God's creatures...God has the right to have all his creatures treated with proper respect'. This is later developed by Andrew Linzey as Theos-rights, joining the theory of each creature having its own proper telos, or end, purpose, beyond that of instrumentality for people, with the Creator's rights over his creation. Cardinal Manning suggested we have 'a seven-fold obligation to the Creator (I won’t enumerate them all here) to those animals'. Our obligation and moral duty, he went on, 'is to him who made them'. - and he was forefront in the burgeoning anti-vivisection movement.

Going back to Cardinal Heenan, he concedes that the 'rights of God, in this respect, can be transgressed through ignorance as well as malice'. But there is such a thing as culpable ignorance! How can we say we do not know how animals are slaughtered before their time, or kept in ghastly conditions? If factory farms, laboratories and abattoirs had glass walls, there would be no excuse.

Moving on from Medieval Views
The Church and society in general was ignorant for centuries about the nature and workings of non-human animals. Today’s ethological and biological studies have advanced understanding of animal behaviour and physiology far beyond the comprehension of those medieval theological opinion-formers who pronounced on the relation between human and non-human, and non-human and God. In other respects we have moved on beyond medieval views of, for example, the processes of human

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‘We must forcefully reject the notion that our being created in God’s image and given dominion over the earth justifies absolute domination over other creatures’.

Laudato Si’ - 67
reproduction (for example that the heat from a woman's orgasm was needed for fertilisation, so that a woman who had been raped and conceived was presumed to have given happy consent, also that sperm contained homunculi, little people in miniature). And yet we maintain outdated notions of the cognitive abilities and emotional attributes of other sentient creatures. This has allowed Christians to collude with practices which oppress and exploit others of God’s creatures in a way which a God-centred approach would resist.

So how should we relate with other earth inhabitants? We Catholics have paid lip-service to the notion of ‘stewardship’ without taking it seriously. A steward cannot appropriate for his or her own use that which belongs to the master - if so, the CEOs of all the stately homes in England would be put out of work. They have to conserve, protect, and make the owner's property flourish. Were we to do so with nature, God's property, *Laudato Si*’ would not have needed to have been written.

**Interconnectedness**

I want to return to the theme of interconnectedness, that quotation from *Laudato Si*, 'that everything in the world is connected'. This is what underlies Pope Francis’ world view, the connectedness of everything, the network of relationships between all the elements of creation, and of those with their Creator. Not only are we people the brothers and sisters of each other, including the poor and vulnerable, but all other created beings are kin to us, all are gift, all ‘imbued with [Christ’s] radiant presence’ (LS:100). Each creature of every species ‘has its own purpose’ and all reveal a different aspect of the love and power of God. The very fact of the multiplicity and variety of species of animals, birds, fish, insects and plants calls us to wonder and worship. Pope Francis quotes the bishops of Brazil who noted that ‘nature as a whole not only manifests God but is also a locus [place] of his presence. The Spirit of life dwells in every living creatures and calls us to enter into relationship with [God]’ (LS:88).

Thus, any loss of biodiversity brought about through human action is to be lamented and where possible, prevented. Uncontrolled fishing, cultivated wetlands, coral reef depletion – all are part of our human destructive tendency which must be resisted if we are to be true stewards. The loss of great swathes of tropical rainforests, gone forever through unsustainable agriculture, causes particular pain to this Argentinian Pope. He trounces those who control the economic power which puts profit before the common good, while commending people and organisations who exhibit ‘positive examples of environmental improvement’, such as cleaning up rivers, restoring native woodlands, improving public transport and erecting buildings that are beautiful, such as those using non-polluting energy. (He'd approve of the Welsh Assembly building, the Senedd, built with sustainability and energy efficiency in all aspects).

But what could be the implications of the encyclical for us as individuals? There is a pair of cartoons I liked so much that I put them on my Facebook page - one
frame asks a congregation, ‘Who wants change?’ and all hands go up. The second asks, ‘Who wants to change?’ and all eyes look down and hands stay low!

**Responsible Stewardship**

Could it be that we are to re-evaluate the way we use animals? Consider in each case the 'who benefits', *cui bono* question of Cicero! For whose wellbeing is racing horses and dogs, angling and hunting, wearing pelts and fur? Do we develop our land with wildlife's rights to safe habitats in mind? Do we shop and eat with animals' wellbeing in mind? Just on that issue, there are four good reasons to reduce or, better, abstain from eating animals - for their sake, for the hungry world's sake, for the planet's sake and for the sake of our health.

First, the industrial production of meat for the unprecedented demand of meat addicts is highly and obviously harmful to the well-being of billions of food animals;

Second, that disproportionately large areas (43 per cent) of the world’s total harvest of human-edible crops goes to the feeding of meat-animals, thus contributing to world hunger;

Third, the enormous quantities of carbon fuel, water use and pollution, plus methane emissions, and the vast deforestation and desertification where trees are felled for the ever-increasing need for more pasture, all contribute to the degradation of the natural world;

And finally, as for human health, we have only to refer to the ubiquitous medical advice to reduce saturated fats, dairy and red meat intake.

'The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof’ - inscribed above many a civic corn exchange, such as at Bury St Edmunds. Now is the time to renew our Church's appreciation of this gift of God. Let's be a fully mature church by putting God in the centre and treating his creation as he would truly want. Through all your creatures, Praise be you O Lord, *Laudato Si’*. ☺️

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**Pope Francis says:**

‘Our “dominion” over the universe should be understood more properly in the sense of responsible stewardship’.

*Laudato Si’* - 116
Brothers and sisters, we are like leaves on the tree of life. The tree that bares birth, pain, death and resurrection; The tree that, like a tent, gives shelter and protection; The tree that gives fruit and new life. There is an invisible force of the wind Which bends us, takes us low and high. We dance to the music of life And turn to the sun for energy. (Photosynthesis enables us to share and to be green). We can absorb impurities and return them to the earth as pure air. Some of us are fully green leaves and still flexible, Some have wilted edges but are still fully part of the tree of life. Eventually we will all leave our safe places on the tree of life, We will fall to the ground, We will enrich the soil, We will continue to feed the tree of life which has given so much. Each leaf reveals the mystery of God, Absorbs God’s energy, Leading to the revelation of the harmony of the Cosmos. Each leaf is continuously challenged To be a living part Of the harmonious relationship of life. Remember that a tree is like a tent with a large canopy, Under which many can be born, rest, live, grow, play, shelter and die. The tree’s canopy is continuously growing wider and is always open to new visitors. Do we, the leaves, know the inhabitants and visitors under our tree?
Dr Michael W. Fox is a graduate of the Royal Veterinary College, London, and holds doctoral degrees in Medicine and Ethology/Animal Behavior from the University of London. Here he discusses how we can catch a glimpse of the empathosphere.

BY DR MICHAEL W. FOX

I was sorting through all my animal and environment-related files recently and I came across a cluster of saved correspondence from readers of my Animal Doctor newspaper column, syndicated across North America, who say they felt and otherwise experienced the physical presence of a deceased animal companion. I was surprised and impressed by the number of readers, (whose input about their animals I have appreciated for some 40 years and more!) who affirmed that there are other dimensions to the various and separate realities we create with our culturally-shaped and conditioned states of mind.

One of the most vivid accounts (included in my book Cat Body, Cat Mind) was from a couple who both saw their deceased cat enter their living room in a halo of light after previously filling the artists’ studio with an indescribably sublime fragrance. I have had personal accounts of people dying and giving off that kind of fragrance; and even a major newspaper reporter seeing the ephemeral shape of his beloved dog arise from his canine companion during the chemical-injection initiated euthanasia process.

The Empathosphere

How are these kinds of visionary experiences properly interpreted? Are they hallucinations, self-comforting imaginative creations, conditioned associative memories awakened by grief and remorse, or glimpses of the quantum field of love (which I term the empathosphere) and life after life? I envision this as part of the boundless connectivity of a creative life-force from which we express the code of life, genetically and ethically manifested in our consciousness, as the light of compassionate action, loving kindness (maitri) and obedience to the Golden Rule.

Sometimes a camera will catch the images of such experiences which our rational minds would deny: like the rainbow that appeared when a Tibetan monk was blessing some deer in a park in Japan. My rendition of a vision that I experienced in an ancient chapel close to the abbey on the Isle of Iona on the west coast of Scotland invokes a sense of the numinous for some, an affirmation that this world is but one reality of
which there are many dimensions, including the manifestations of our loved ones, human and non-human, after their mortal existence has come to its end. Soon so will ours.

These kinds of phenomena, and the visionary experiences described over the ages by people of various religious traditions and beliefs, as well as secular non-believers, who have had transcendental, metaphysical and spiritual experiences in times of grief and other emotional crises, during prayer and meditation, or ecstatic communion, often in Nature beside a waterfall, ancient tree or upon seeing a wild creature - integral and culturally accepted elements of the Vision Quest of Native Americans - cannot be denied: except perhaps by the instrumental rationalism of the dominant culture of materialism and mammonism that is destroying the Soul of the Earth and all our sacred connections to the life and beauty within us and around us.

I would appreciate responses from readers after viewing the two images posted on this page (email me at IPAN@erols.com). I feel that these metaphysical and mystical dimensions are significant in these difficult times of escalating religious and political conflict, ecological desecration and suffering, not as an escape but as an affirmation that we are part of one stupendous whole and that there is a deeper, spiritual dimension to all our lives which we must not abandon and let become extinct by losing our humanity, or succumbing to chauvinism and materialism, but instead evolve spiritually and ethically as a more empathic and enlightened species.

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26 July 1985, Nara Park, Japan, Ven. K.C. Ayang Rinpoche blessing the deer.
GENERAL SECRETARY’S REPORT TO THE CCA AGM
SATURDAY 17 OCTOBER 2015

The 2015 CCA AGM was held at the Brompton Oratory at 2.00pm on Saturday 17th October, at which CCA’s Scientific Advisor, Dr Richard D. Ryder, gave the keynote speech ‘The Great Addiction’. This was followed by AGM business, during which the General Secretary’s report, below, was presented.

BY CHRIS FEGAN

The last twelve months have been an historic time for CCA, with the year dominated by the publication of the His Holiness, Pope Francis’ encyclical on the environment, Laudato Si’. I am delighted that CCA played some role in the production of the Encyclical by submitting a detailed paper to the Vatican in the summer of 2014, followed up by the lobbying of key officials during the following months and a visit to Rome in December 2014. This was followed by further lobbying in 2015.

Laudato Si’
The Encyclical has exceeded our wildest expectations and has put animals at the centre of Church teaching on the environment and will form the basis for CCA activity for several years to come. We have already seen a substantial change in thinking within the clergy and I was particularly delighted that we received a contribution from Bishop John Arnold, Bishop of Salford and also Environment Spokesperson for the Bishops’ Conference and Chair of CAFOD, in our special Laudato Si’ edition of The Ark. We are also seeing a better response from clergy at all levels to our requests for animal blessing services and publicity of our work. We have had The Ark published on Diocese websites and we are trying to roll this out across the country and also abroad.

We now have the major task, as an organization, of spreading the word of Laudato Si’ throughout the world and we have already began to do so by virtue of the excellent special edition of The Ark which is now published in both hard copy and PDF versions. The reaction to this edition has been very encouraging and we have received many phone calls and letters from members and supporters saying how delighted they are with it.

New Website
We have relaunched our website, allied with our new Twitter and Facebook accounts, to make maximum use of the internet and we are now reaching more people across the globe than before. We have appointed Barbara Gardner as Web Editor, along with her role as Ark Editor, to enable better communication across our publications. The website has been viewed on every continent since relaunch.

Talks and Presentations
I have been giving talks on CCA and Laudato Si’, both in person and via technology, to
audiences in the UK and overseas, which will continue. We are planning a series of talks within Catholic secondary schools to educate our young people about the Encyclical.

Membership, Administration and Partner Organisations
We have continued to modernize our administration and have made substantial changes to overseas work and membership, that has resulted in both financial and membership issues, to be dealt with in more detail by the Treasurer and Membership Secretary later.

We have continued our work with partner organisations, including our work with The League Against Cruel Sports (LACS) on the Malta bird shooting issue, and also our work with The Anglican Society for the Welfare of Animals (ASWA) on the NOMS Prison Project. I was also delighted that we attended and spoke at the ASWA-organised Animal Remembrance Service last November in London. I am very hopeful that such co-operation will continue for the forthcoming year.

The Hunting Act and Other Educational Campaigns
The big animal welfare issue of the year was the possible amendments to The Hunting Act 2004, which would have meant that the Act was unenforceable and that hunting with hounds would return to England and Wales. I am very pleased with the actions of CCA in working with Catholic MP’s and others to stop this occurring and special thanks must go to our Patron, Sir David Amess, who was particularly vocal in his opposition to any change and watering down of the existing legislation.

We are now members of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Animal Welfare (APGAW), which will increase our influence in UK animal welfare matters, and I have had recent discussions with senior politicians from all parties on the key issues facing the UK Parliament in the coming months.

We have also supported other big campaigns in the UK, including the opposition to the ongoing badger culls. We played a part in stopping the horrendous pig wrestling event in Wisconsin, by our intervention directly to the Catholic parish concerned in the USA. We fully expect to play a continued role in educating people against animal cruelty wherever they live.

Ecumenical Animal Welfare Retreat
We had another fantastic retreat in North Wales and thanks, once again, to Irene Casey for organising this. We have done many other things during the past year and this report could have continued for another two to three pages, but I just wanted to highlight the main events of the last year.

To conclude, I believe that we have had a very good year and we are in good shape to move forward. Our challenge over the next year or two is to take forward the opportunities given to us by the publication of Laudato Si’ whilst continuing to grow our membership base and develop our online presence.
Since I last reported on the Animal Interfaith Alliance (AIA), of which CCA is a founder member, AIA has warmly welcomed three new member organisations - Dharma Voices for Animals (Buddhist), Islamic Concern and The Jewish Vegetarian Society. It has also published its third Animal Spirit magazine (see right) which can be downloaded from the AIA website at www.animal-interfaith-alliance.com.

Following the Paris Conference on Climate Change, COP21, AIA has launched its Cooler Eating Campaign to highlight the effects of livestock farming on climate change. Further details of this will be available in the next issue of Animal Spirit. On 30th January AIA joined with The Gandhi Foundation to hold a multifaith celebration of Gandhi’s work, entitled ‘Gandhi: the Sanctity of Life and the Ethics of Diet’ which included speakers from many faiths. This was well attended and there was a lively discussion after the talks. My sincere thanks to Thom Bonneville for organising this splendid event.

AIA has embarked on a major letter writing campaign, writing letters to key people around the world to ask them to intervene to stop various animal cruelties, and I am enormously grateful to Marian Hussenbux, AIA’s multi-lingual correspondence secretary, for the huge amount of work and dedication she has put into this. Marian has written on a large range of animal cruelty issues which are described in Animal Spirit and on the AIA website.

Several of us have given talks about the work of AIA and I have addressed the Guildford & Godalming Interfaith Forum, the Cheltenham Interfaith, and the One Jain Conference. Dr Andre Menach spoke to the Young Jains, Thom Bonneville spoke at the London Animals Charities Fair and the Westminster Cathedral Interfaith Group. Thom, Chris Fegan and Harshad Sanghrajka attended the Animals In War Memorial service in London last November, where Thom laid a wreath of purple poppies from AIA.

AIA has continued to lobby MPs with its political manifesto and to work with other organisations to defend The Hunting Act. It is now a member of the All Party Group for Animal Welfare (APGAW), where we put pressure on MPs of all parties to work for the welfare of animals.

We continue to raise funds for the Dr Schweitzer Universal Kinship Fund for non animal research into cancer and diabetes with £24,500 being raised to date.

For further details visit the AIA website at www.animal-interfaith-alliance.com and please follow us on Facebook and Twitter.
Letter from the Membership Secretary

Dear Friends,

Following the *Laudato Si*’ issue, I have received many letters of praise, and many more wanting to purchase further copies. It was such a lovely issue, and sits on our coffee table for regular dipping in, so I can understand why it was so well received. Not that members aren’t always enthusiastic about *The Ark*, but this issue was rather special.

A friend called in to see me – not an animal lover / Christian / vegetarian – and asked to borrow my copy. I quickly sold her one for £3 and, since reading it, she wants to join, which suggests that *The Ark* communicates to the un-converted. However, I think my friend may well decide to become one of the above in the future, as she agrees with so much in the magazine. Watch this space.

I had my first Christmas card on 18th November (a bit late this year) and Waitrose sold mince pies which must be eaten before 20th December. Now, I know these two dates are not on the Christian calendar but soon it will all be over by the 20th. Still, that’s not such a bad thing as I’m told that much of Christmas is Victoriana, and has little to do with Jesus’ lowly birth. Happily, we still re-enact the nativity and as we celebrate our saviour’s birth with prayer and music, we remember that He wasn’t alone in the manger, but was with his family and animals, who loved Him - which is what Christmas is really all about.

Seeing those poor whales washed up and dead on the beach was the saddest thing I’d seen in a while, especially as no-one appears to know why they were there, since at this time of the year they head, in packs, for warm water breeding grounds. It is said that the changes in sea temperatures and sea rises have confused the whales. Or they could be trying to escape the whale hunters – still legal. We must be so much more aware of a possible increase in these disasters and be prepared to help them and organisations, such as *Defenders*, who do their best to defend these wonderful mammals.

Happy New Year
Frances Chalk

Catholic Concern for Animals Warmly Welcomes:

*New Annual Members:*

- Virginia Bell of Beanhill, Milton Keynes
- Carmel Boyd of Orpington, Kent
- Jackie Dewhurst of Walnut Tree, Milton Keynes
- Josephia Liem of Indonesia
- Mrs M. Lomax of Worcester, Worcestershire
- Annette Lyons of Gillingham, Dorset
- Kevin Newns of Warrington, Cheshire
- John O’Neill of Netherfield, Milton Keynes
- The Hon Bridget Mary Smith of Craven Arms, Shropshire

*New Life Member:*
Michael Finigan of Upminster, Essex
Dear Friends,

I am so happy to write again. *Catholic Concern for Animals* is becoming more and more known in Poland. However, it is not easy to convince people that the issue of animal rights is essential for our actions among the other problems of the contemporary world. I often hear the opinion that there are many essential problems today, such as hunger, poverty, persecution of Christians etc., so animals rights should be peripheral. Fortunately, I meet a growing number of people who, as Christians, believe in the need to defend the rights of the weak and defenceless, the unprotected beings. I have recently participated in two conferences, during which I presented the idea and activity of *Catholic Concern for Animals*. The first was held at the *Academy Ignatianum*, the University where I study, and the second was organised by the *Scientific Club of Animal Studies*, called LAS at the *Faculty of Philology, University of Silesia*. I talked about Christian theology and ethics, teaching about treatment of animals, the struggle of members of the Catholic Church to limit the suffering of animals in the world, because deep in their hearts they discovered the meaning of the words of the Christian vocation to love and have mercy for all creation. These words generated huge interest among the participants of the conferences. It was a unique experience - to talk about something that is obvious to me and surprising to others, to observe their emotions and desire to get to know more. Even more surprising was the information about the existence of *Catholic Concern for Animals*!

Last month the opportunity for cooperation with the *Animal Rights Science Club* at the *Law Institute of Silesian University* arose, so we are planning to organise meetings, in different Christian denominations, to present the problems of meat, dairy, egg, fur farming and every aspect of animal suffering. We need more and more people to become involved. I believe that the number of people interested in *CCA* will increase in Poland soon.

I wish all of you a wonderful New Year, full of happiness, peace and comfort for every human and animal heart, beating together to praise the Lord.

*Grażyna Stanek-Czerny - CCA-Poland*
NEWS FROM AUSTRALIA

Dear Friends,

Our well-publicised annual *Blessing of the Animals* on 31st October, at *St. Brigid’s Church* at Fitzroy North (an inner suburb of Melbourne) was poorly attended, owing to an adverse weather forecast earlier in the afternoon. In fact, the sun was pleasantly shining throughout the actual service, which was conducted by Emeritus Bishop Hilton Deakin, our chaplain.

We were all very pleased with the new encyclical *Laudato Si’*, and we have to thank our parent CCA in England for their influence on its composition. However, it is going to take some effort to draw the attention of clergy and laity here in Australia to the actual animal welfare aspects of the encyclical. Some of us attended a public meeting consisting of a panel discussion on the encyclical, the panel consisting of three experts, two of them leading Catholic intellectuals: yet the word ‘animal’ was not heard even once in their speeches. On questioning, one of them indicated, however, that he was well aware of the animal content of the encyclical.

We have made a few changes in our membership requirements, mainly an increase in the annual fee to $35. But anyone who is also a member of the parent (English) CCA (and who would receive *The Ark* magazine as part of that membership) would pay us a reduced CCA-Aus membership subscription of $20.

*John Drennan - CCA-Australia*

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BEQUESTS AND DONATIONS TO CCA

Bequests and donations provide most of our income, so please remember our two charities when drawing up your Will:

- **Catholic Concern for Animals**, which publishes and distributes *The Ark*, directs all our activities and employs a part time General Secretary.

- **The Phyllis Mary Trust**, administered by Catholic Concern for Animals, which provides grants to small, struggling rescue centres and sanctuaries.

*For donations, please make out all cheques to CCA, but mention the Phyllis Mary Trust on a note if that is where you would like the money to go.*
Dear Editor,

What a joy to read through the last issue of *The Ark* (*Laudato Si’ special edition, number 231*), not just the excerpts from the Pope’s Encyclical, but also the articles written in response.

Prof. David Clough’s article said so much so well, but I disagree with his interpretation of the ‘sparrows’ quote from the New Testament (Matthew 10: 29-31). I believe his interpretation is that human needs take priority and the interests of humans come first (page 39 *The Ark*). It is very natural for a human to feel that their needs come first. That is in the animal nature of humans to feel. I can see no objective reason to support this feeling. Christ has taught us that if we want to be first, we should put ourselves last. In other words, our superiority lies in self-sacrifice. That is the spiritual nature of humans.

I loved the Pope’s comment on the ‘sparrow’ quote. The Pope says ‘We read in the Gospel that Jesus says of the birds of the air that “not one of them is forgotten before God”.’ His comment? ‘How then can we possibly mistreat them or cause them harm?’

The verse from the Bible goes on to say ‘You are worth more than many sparrows’. Worth in this spiritual sense means privilege. Those who are able to know, love and serve God are worth more than those who are not able to, whatever the species. Those who are able to know, love and serve God are privileged, and with privilege comes responsibility. The privileged show their worth by serving others or by

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Dear Editor,

Thank you for a wonderful edition of *The Ark*. I like the glossy paper. I was pleased to see a lovely picture of you also. It makes it all the more personal, especially as I now live in the west of the Republic of Ireland. The best of luck with your great work!

Dr Denise Farrell (by email)

acts of sacrifice, not by putting their interests before those of the less privileged. Christ was making a point here (don’t be over anxious about the cares of life), so that’s what we should be concentrating on.

I would also like to comment on the references, in Carmody Grey’s article on a Catholic’s concern for animals (page 41), to the uniqueness of humanity. It’s not that I disagree with the article, but I’d like to say that every species is unique, in some way. Carmody says that ‘human beings alone have the capacity to suffer moral guilt’- well we are guilty. It’s we who are deliberately destroying the planet for greed, not other creatures.

When I contemplate humanity, en-masse or individually, I see no difference from any other species regarding a sense of responsibility towards other life forms, apart from in a minority of people. When pleading the cause of other animals, the most frequent response is ‘we are superior / we come first’, as if being superior should rule out compassion instead of obligating it. I feel that the stressing of human uniqueness tends to confirm ‘anthropocentrism’. The responsibility to protect the planet is not one which can be laid on any other creature anyway, as it’s we who are destroying it, not other creatures. ‘Our unique vocation in God’s plan to save this travailing world’ that Carmody refers to is completely ignored by bishops and priests, at least in my experience and in this country, anyway. Almost never are other creatures mentioned at Mass – in the bidding prayers, sermons or noticeably in the liturgy.

We can see that other creatures are capable of empathy. They’re capable of love - for their mate, for their young. It is possible that some individuals in some species have a sense of morality. Moral concern could certainly evolve in other species – it did in ours, it wasn’t always there.

I obviously agree with our responsibility towards the planet and our fellow creatures, but I think that humans need no reminding of their uniqueness – that is something they feel completely assured of. What humans need above all is a sense of humility. That’s what should be fostered in the human race.

**Virginia Bell - CCA member (by email)**

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Dear Editor,

Thank you for *The Ark* with Pope Francis’ message. I hope all people, the world over, will heed his words and act upon them. We are killing everything, poisoning the earth with poisonous sprays and weed killers. We kill the creatures who share the world with us. Perhaps we should all obey the commandment: ‘Thou shalt not kill’. Thank you again and I will pass *The Ark* to my friends.’

**Joan Lerson** (Alcester)
Dear Editor,

Although committed last July, the killing of Zimbabwe lion ‘Cecil’ will probably be recalled easily by most Ark readers. According to reports at that time, he was wounded with an arrow, tracked for about 40 hours, and then killed with a gun, beheaded, and skinned. Protesters will have included relativists who, in other contexts, demand freedom of conscience and rights to choose (cf. 1 Peter 2:16 and Catechism of the Catholic Church paragraph 2039).

The directly-relevant questions raised by Cecil’s case include those of why people hunt and whether a stated reason justifies their doing so. Judgment of the latter brings in a ‘wider view’.

On 29th July 2015, BBC Radio 4’s The World at One discussed, with an allegedly-professional hunter, the killing of Cecil. He had no objection in principle to hunting. According to him, it can involve the development and exercise of collaboration which people enjoy (illustrated also in other ways, as in the popularity today of team games such as football). His main point in answer to ‘What is the appeal of hunting?’ seemed to be that people do it for ‘excitement’ (which is simply a particular level of ‘pleasure’; cf. Oxford Dictionary of English).
Although appearing to have doubts about whether the killing of Cecil could be excused, he mentioned that Cecil was a very old lion and might easily have been killed by other animals, and (whereas the interviewer cited an estimate that the number of lions in Africa has fallen considerably) that lions reproduce themselves quite profusely.

The killing of Cecil was symptomatic of a broader subject: the extent of people’s moral dominion over life. It is, indeed, a very broad subject when expressed in those words. Life presupposes pre-existing life. Non-existent life cannot produce life, so the existence of a life proves that a life existed before it. That pre-existing life is God, who must always have existed (a mystery, but inevitably a fact). I take, hesitatingly, the risk of assuming that all Christians acknowledge that God is the source of all life, and that Jesus Christ is God and is ‘the life’ (John 11: 25).

*The Catechism of the Catholic Church* (a sure and authentic reference text for Catholic doctrine: *Fidei Depositum* section 3) does not deal with hunting as such. Hunting is, however, a human act which therefore must be categorised as good or as evil. The rules governing the distinction are stated by *The Catechism* between paragraphs 1749 and 1756. ‘Man’s dominion over [animals] is not absolute’ (CCC, para. 2415). ‘Animals are God’s creatures. … Thus men owe them kindness’ (CCC, para. 2416). He entrusted them to our stewardship (CCC, para. 2417), not to our tyranny, and we must not ‘cause [them] to suffer or die needlessly’ (CCC, para. 2418). From those criteria, the following conclusions seem logically to result:

Pleasure (whether calm or heightened) does not justify an intrinsically-immoral act. In particular, the organising of collaboration and the deriving of excitement do not justify killing or causing suffering or fear to an innocent victim incapable of self-defence.

Killing or causing suffering or fear are not justified by such victim’s old age or previous avoidance of other fatal or traumatic events.

Killing or causing suffering or fear are not justified by the fact that such victim is likely soon to be replaced, or by belief that replacement is undesirable

Those conclusions seem applicable, without distinction or derogation, to animal and to human life.

**Anthony Hoffler** - CCA member (by email)

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Dear Editor,

Why is *Isaiah 66: 3* never/rarely quoted as clear damnation of ox-eaters, cruelty to dogs etc.? Many past reformation groups’ founders began with a vegetarian ideal - 7th Day Adventists, Ellen White, Jehovah’s Witnesses. I hope to get Albert Kaplan’s letter out to all my non-veggie contacts.

**Dawn P. Gordon** - Croydon, Surrey.

*Isaiah 66: 3* ‘He that kills an ox is as if he slew a man; he that sacrifices a lamb, as if he cut off a dog’s neck.’
Dear Editor,

Thank you for printing Mr Kaplan's *I Lay Down my Life for the Sheep*, in *The Ark's* Spring 2015 issue, number 229. This is the best article you have ever printed.

I am reminded of the children's classic, *The Emperor's New Clothes*. Here we have one clear, starkly honest voice amid the clamour of thousands who continue trying to justify the horror of animal slaughter with every shallow excuse available. They know the truth. But they do nothing.

We live in an era of almost unimaginable hypocrisy. If evil truly exists, we are living in the middle of it. Thousands have turned away from the Church, the Temple, the Mosque in disgust. More and more, science exposes the reality of animal suffering, the graphic details of factory farms, slaughterhouses, blood sports, laboratories that experiment, etc. etc. The Churches know this, yet they do nothing. Where is their outrage? How dare they preach to us?

Mr Kaplan's magnificent exposure of this hypocrisy is thorough. And it is heart-rending to those of us who are still trying desperately to hold on, to have faith that truth and honesty, mercy and compassion will prevail. As a first step, let us finally admit the truth, to each other, to our children. Plain and simple: Jesus did not cause an ‘episode’ in the temple because of the ‘money-changers’. He was horrified at the blood-bath. No, he did not say, ‘I lay down my life for my sheep’. He laid it down for the sheep, all the tortured creatures subjected to man's cruelty. It hurt him terribly, just as it must have hurt all those deeply sensitive prophets, saints and mystics, and just simply good people down through the ages.

We are so fortunate to have Mr Kaplan speak for them and for us. God bless you, Mr Kaplan, and thank you also CCA, and *The Ark*.

**B. Anderson** - CCA Lifetime member (by email)
Dear Editor,

In the spring 2015 edition of The Ark, number 229, you printed an article entitled *I Lay Down My Life For The Sheep* by Albert Kaplan. It was written in response to an earlier essay (*The Ark*, summer 2013) by Mark Bredin, entitled *Was Jesus a Vegetarian?* This is my response to Albert Kaplan's article.

Evidently Mr Kaplan feels very strongly about the matter, but that is no excuse for distorting the facts to suit his argument. Starting with his first point, despite his attempt to shock us into the opposite view, I now accept that Jesus may well have slaughtered a lamb in the course of his Jewish upbringing. He came to share in the life of humanity, not to condemn it. Necessarily, he would have partaken in Jewish culture, of which such ritual slaughter was a part. That He was obedient to cultural demands does Him credit. More so perhaps, than if He had chosen to object on the grounds of conscience.

As regards the Temple being the slaughterhouse, I may be naive but I believe that the purpose of the Temple was to house the Presence of God (Exodus 25: 8). Sacrifice was indeed a secondary purpose and in Jesus' day, yes, there was considerable ritual slaughter taking place there, but it was still negligible compared with what was needed to feed the population of Jerusalem! Not even at the Passover Festival would the Temple have been involved in supplying the kosher meat to the populace as Mr Kaplan implies. The inhabitants of the city would have sourced their slaughtered animals more locally, as they did throughout the rest of the year. The strict rules governing sacrifice (Exodus 20: 24) would have ensured that this was so. Sacrificial offerings were to be completely burnt. A portion of the animal was allowed to the priests for their consumption (Exodus 29: 26-27), but there was never any question of feeding the population from the altar of sacrifice! It is therefore a gross misrepresentation of the truth to describe the Temple as an abattoir.

To state that Jesus was opposed to the sacrificial system, is so far from Church teaching, that one can only conclude that Mr Kaplan is unfamiliar with it, which he tacitly confirms by telling us that ‘it has long been my view that Christianity is one thing, Jesus another, and morally there is no relationship between the two’. Any practising Catholic would know that the need for sacrifice is fundamentally incorporated into Christian beliefs. Therefore he completely misunderstands the reason why Christ drove out the oxen, sheep and their vendors from the Temple. It was not out of His opposition to the sacrifices taking place there, but simply because it angered him to see ‘His Father's house being turned into a house of commerce’ (John 2: 14-22).

But Jesus' death, would abolish the sacrificial use of animals, wherever the Christian faith was taught and received. Sadly, for those of us who are unhappy about the slaughter of animals for food, it would not stop the eating of meat. That was not His mission.

Robert Wehrmeyer - CCA member (by email)
HAVE YOUR SAY

DOM AMBROSE AGIUS

Dear Editor,

I had a lovely moment this morning on taking Communion to a lady just moved into our parish when I spotted the spring 2015 copy of The Ark on her table. Apparently it is her favourite read and I was able to tell her all about the life and times of the first editor in 1937 - my great-uncle Dom Ambrose Agius OSB. It is recorded that he was editor of 123 issues of The Ark. You can read about his WW1 story on our family website: www.agiusww1.com

Peter Agius - (by email)

Editor’s comment:
Thank you very much for that fascinating information, Peter. We are tremendous admirers of your great uncle and all the wonderful work he did for The Ark. Please also see
www.catholic-animals.com/about/history

HAVE YOUR SAY - THE FARM ANIMAL RESCUE SANCTUARY

Dear Editor,

Following the sad death of its excellent administrator, Janice Pinkston, The Farm Animal Rescue Sanctuary in Woolly Park Farm, Wolverton, Stratford-Upon-Avon, Warwickshire, CV37 0HQ, is now administered by Mike Berry and managed by its founder, Carole Webb. It is a not-for-profit organisation, run by volunteers, where every penny goes to the upkeep of the animals. However, ongoing costs are high. Many hundred animals have been nurtured. As Carole says, ‘All lives are precious’. [See www.farmanimalrescue.org.uk. Not to be confused with Woolley Park Farm in Wiltshire, which is NOT a sanctuary].

Sanctuary Handspun - ‘helping rescued sheep earn their keep’ in the latest sanctuary newsletter, explains that ‘the raw fleece is purchased at a fair price from farm animal sanctuaries and rare breed farms with non-slaughter policies’. This valuable source is available to crafters or is fashioned into unique headgear.

Iris Pyves (Kent)
How heartening to read the last issue of *The Ark* which explored the Pope’s Encyclical *Laudato Si’*. This Encyclical is very much welcomed by all Catholics who care about the environment and about our fellow creatures.

Here in Milton Keynes a few of us have responded to the Encyclical by starting a local parish group, to educate about and promote concern for our fellow creatures, and to be a witness to the Church’s concern for animals. We call ourselves *Supporters of Catholic Concern for Animals* and meet once a month, advertising the meeting in the newsletters of Milton Keynes Catholic churches. We have an online petition, supported by *Catholic Concern for Animals*, asking the Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales to establish a Committee on Animals (they already have a Committee on the Environment). We have the same petition in written form, which we have taken to one parish, and intend to take to other parishes when we have more members. We have started a written petition for priests to sign, asking the Pope to condemn the bullfight.

On *World Day of Prayer for Animals*, St. Francis’ feast day, 4th October, we left our leaflets about the Pope’s Encyclical at the back of Catholic churches in Milton Keynes, and advertised the event in the churches’ newsletters. In several of these churches we were able to hand out the leaflets to parishioners as they left the church after Mass.

We have publicised our group via the national Catholic press, Catholic news agencies and Christian organisations around the world, in the hope that others will start up their own group in their own local church. I think there is a great need for such groups. They would be a legitimate, caring response to the Pope’s inspiring call for dialogue and action concerning the care of ‘Our Common Home’. I think that, just by their presence, such groups would be a reminder to fellow Catholics that our treatment of other animals is a matter of Christian morality.

Some of the things we intend to do include requesting various bidding prayers for animals, holding stalls at parish events, contacting the bishops with our points of view, distributing leaflets, trying to persuade priests to include mention of animals in their sermons and promoting the setting up of similar groups in other parishes.

If any readers feel called to undertake similar activities, all that is needed is two or three like-minded people to get together. *Catholic Concern for Animals* is uncontroversial. It is accepted and respected by priests and bishops. Groups could promote *The Ark* and make leaflets from articles in *The Ark*. Groups could also inform people about the Pope’s Encyclical – who’ll argue about that? People could take on whatever tasks they feel comfortable with, giving as much or as little time to their group as they want. Any reader who would like to establish a group in their own parish may, if they wish, contact us for information/advice: - vrbell18@yahoo.co.uk
ARK CROSSWORD - NUMBER 38

Across
7 Sociable people do and cricketers may do (3,2,3)
9 A less important highway on the continent (6)
10 Spent in SA (4)
11 Nine ill mum’s upset for a long time (10)
12 Excuses given by Basil I (6)
14 Dispatch small garden for the dock. (8)
15 Handsome young man is after a university lecturer (6)
20 Initially did it only play pre-stereo records? (8)
22 Topless master smoked fish! (6)
23 A cuppa 'lees not right served with a roast (5,5)
24 Cleans deer (4)
25 Badger lashes out (6)
26 Members in direct confrontation in the ring (3-2-3)

Down
1 Reclaims strange phenomena (8)
2 Discover ones received a verbal penalty (4)
3 Hollow dance combos (6)
4 Rook or partridge maybe (4,4)
5 Nan's dry bap exchanged for a ginger biscuit (10)
6 Fast running animal, using petrol or diesel? (6)
8 Sociable and friendly people from Suffolk sympathise. (6)
13 This sort of pit goes on forever (10)
16 Taken into custody for faulty re-treads (8)
18 You may find one in a laboratory, or a cupboard! (8)
19 How much for a horse? (6)
21 No harp played for this child (6)
22 He, or it, may look after a magnet (6)
24 In the garden with snow or a little rain (4)

Solution to Last Crossword No. 37


Down: 1 Backfiring, 2 Double, 3 Oslo, 4 Barn door, 5 Taxi, 6 Aloud, 8 Milksop, 12 Sofas, 14 Reprobates, 16 Abandon, 17 Greatest, 21 Pedlar, 22 Table, 24 Arid, 25 Gash.
THE JANE ANN BOULDEN ESSAY AWARD
FOR YOUNG WRITERS
ON POPE FRANCIS’ ENCYCLICAL
LAUDATO SI’: ON CARE FOR OUR COMMON HOME

Entry is open to anyone aged 16 to 25 and we are looking for writers to display an in-depth knowledge and understanding of Pope Francis’ new encyclical *Laudato Si’: On Care for Our Common Home*, in particular in relation to what he has to say about our inter-relationship with the other animals who share our home planet with us. Essays must be a maximum of 2,000 words.

Please submit your essay to Chris Fegan, the General Secretary, Catholic Concern for Animals at chrisfegancca@gmail.com by 30 June 2016. Essays will be judged by a panel, to include Dr Deborah Jones, CCA’s Theological Adviser, Dr Richard Ryder, CCA’s Scientific Advisor and Chris Fegan, CCA’s General Secretary. The winner will be announced in the Winter 2016 edition of *The Ark* where the winning essay will be published.

First Prize
£500
Plus an additional £200 for your school, college or other supporting institution.

Second Prize
Life membership of CCA.

Third Prize
A 3 year annual membership of CCA for 2016/17 to 2018/19.

www.catholic-animals.com
SERVICE FOR ANIMALS
FROM THE 2015 ECUMENICAL ANIMAL WELFARE RETREAT

In the last edition of The Ark John and Wendy Brayshaw contributed an article about the 2015 Ecumenical Animal Welfare Retreat at Noddfa. At that retreat they led a delightful morning prayer session for animals which is reproduced here.

BY JOHN AND WENDY BRAYSHAW

Hymn
Come Let Us Join Our Cheerful Songs
Tune: Nativity. Words: Wanda Oberman

1 Come let us join our cheerful songs
   With creatures round your throne.
Ten thousand, thousand are their forms
   But all their joys are one.

2 Happy the creatures of this earth
   Who live in peace and joy.
Help human kind to know their worth
   To value, not destroy.

3 Let us remember Lord that you
   Have given us love to share
With creatures of this planet Earth
   The common and the rare.

4 Every sparrow, every being
   Make this a special world.
We must continue, always seeing
   This universe as pearled.

5 Lets us not mock the daily toil
   Of creatures great and small.
We have no right this Earth to spoil
   But love and cherish all.
Leader: Opening Prayer

How wonderful are the works of your hands
The Heavens declare your glory, O Lord
The arch of the sky displays your handiwork
We give thanks O Lord our God
For all your wonderful creation.

All: We praise you, we thank you, we glorify you Lord God, creator and sustainer of all.

Leader: Prayer

Father creator God
Help us to follow the example of St Francis of Assisi
Who showed his love for all his fellow creatures
And taught us to call them our brothers and sisters.

All: We praise you O Lord and Father of all living creatures. May we never forget our kinship with all you have created.

Reading: Numbers 22: 20-34 Balaam and the Donkey

And God came to Balaam at night and said to him, ‘If the men have come to call you, rise, go with them; but only do what I tell you’. So Balaam rose in the morning and saddled his donkey and went with the princes of Moab. But God's anger was kindled because he went, and the angel of the Lord took his stand in the way was his adversary. Now he was riding on the donkey and his two servants were with him. And the donkey saw the angel of the Lord standing in the road, with a drawn sword in his hand. And the donkey turned aside out of the road and went into the field. And Balaam struck the donkey to turn her into the road. Then the angel of the Lord stood in a narrow path between the vineyards, with a wall on either side. And Balaam struck the donkey to turn her into the road. Then the angel of the Lord stood in a narrow path between the vineyards, with a wall on either side. And when the donkey saw the angel of the Lord, she pushed against the wall and pressed Balaam's foot against the wall. So he struck her again. Then the angel of the Lord went ahead and stood in a narrow place, where there was no way to turn
either to the right or to the left. When the donkey saw the angel of the Lord, she lay down under Balaam. And Balaam's anger was kindled, and he struck the donkey with his staff. Then the Lord opened the mouth of the donkey, and she said to Balaam, ‘What have I done to you, that you have struck me these three times?’ And Balaam said to the donkey, ‘Because you have made a fool of me. I wish I had a sword in my hand, for then I would kill you’. And the donkey said to Balaam, ‘Am I not your donkey, on which you have ridden all your life long to this day? Is it my habit to treat you this way?’ And he said, ‘No’. Then the Lord opened the eyes of Balaam and he saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way, with his drawn sword in his hand. And he bowed down and fell on his face. And the angel of the Lord said to him, ‘Why have you struck your donkey these three times? Behold, I have come out to oppose you because your way is perverse before me. The donkey saw me and turned aside before me these three times. If she had not turned aside from me, surely just now I would have killed you and let her live’. Then Balaam said to the angel of the Lord, ‘I have sinned, for I did not know that you stood in the road against me. Now, therefore, if it is evil in your sight, I will turn back’.

Litany:

God our Father, have mercy on us and all your creation - *Hear our prayer*

From indifference to the suffering of animals throughout the world - *Lord save us*

From the heartless use and abuse of animals for our own pleasure - *Lord save us*

From the use of angry words and rough and cruel treatment - *Lord save us*

From acts of thoughtless cruelty - *Lord save us*

From lack of courage in speaking out against cruelty and wrongdoings - *Lord save us*

From turning a blind eye to the hidden cruelties of factory farming, animal experiments and long distance transport - *Lord save us*

Grant that sports and entertainment involving the torture and death of animals will stop - *Lord hear our prayer*

Grant that the use of cruel traps and the abuse and exploitation of wild animals may end - *Lord hear our prayer*

May all farm animals be treated with care and understanding throughout their short lives - *Lord hear our prayer*

Let all working animals be treated kindly according to their needs - *Lord hear our prayer*

All: May we respect all your creation
**Bidding Prayers:** Individuals are invited to add their own prayers, remembering suffering animals throughout the world. *Lord in your mercy - Hear our prayer*

**Leader:** As we mark this year the end of two World Wars, the terrible slaughter in Gallipoli during the First World War, the release of the prisoners from concentration camps in Auschwitz and Belsen and the victory celebrations marking the end of the Second World War, let us also remember, not only those millions of men and women who suffered and lost their lives, but also all those millions of innocent animals who suffered and died during these times.

**Final Hymn:**

*Oh God Our Help in Ages Past*

*Revised words for remembering Animals in War by Wanda Oberman*

1 Oh God our help in ages past,  
   Our hope for years to come,  
   Our shelter from the stormy blast  
   And our eternal home.

2 The pain, the slaughter and the din  
   Are not within God’s plan.  
   We must atone for all this sin  
   And mend the role of man.

3 The peaceful dove, the faithful horse,  
   The overburdened mule,  
   Are innocents in man’s cruel course  
   And treated as a tool.

4 In Flanders field the poppies grow,  
   A silent sign of peace.  
   The red and purple row by row,  
   May wars and conflict cease.

5 God’s creatures always suffer when  
   Man’s discord turns to war.  
   We pray that fear and pain may end  
   And conflict is no more.

6 O God our help in ages past,  
   Our hope for years to come,  
   Remember wars may never last,  
   For sins we must atone.
I was delighted to once again represent CCA at the annual Animal Remembrance Service arranged by our sister organization, ASWA, at the Animal War Memorial on Park Lane. The event took place this year on 8th November and I was, once again, as last year, joined by CCA trustees, Pat and Frances Chalk, and this year we had a very special CCA attendee and representative in their little dog, Rosie, which was wonderful. We all played a formal role with Pat reading about Brian, a paratrooper dog, who received the Dickin Award for his work in the D-Day landings and I read from scripture, whilst Frances laid the formal wreath from CCA to represent our members and supporters.

The turnout was, once again, very good and, indeed, higher than in previous years. We were joined by representatives from NOWZAD Dogs and also from the RAF Military Police with their dogs. I am already looking forward to the 2016 event and am in discussions with our ASWA colleagues about the planning of the event to support them as may be required.
The animal blessing service this year attracted one of its most diverse gatherings for some years, with visitors from across London, the Home Counties and a couple all the way from Paris.

As in previous years, dogs were in the majority but cats were also well represented, including a feisty kitten who was entirely at ease in the presence of the dogs and people. The exotics were not to be outdone, with a baby bearded dragon proudly presented for the blessing by its young owner. The companion animals of those unable to attend the service were also remembered and prayers were said for animals in different parts of the UK and Europe, including Spain, Russia and Cyprus.

In the past, I have given a talk during the service about one of the animal welfare projects I am involved with but this year I took the opportunity to pay a personal tribute to Brian Sewell, the art critic of the *London Evening Standard*, who died two weeks before the service on the 19th September. Brian was life-long animal lover, who supported a variety of animal charities and welfare causes and who endeavoured throughout his life to encourage people to show greater respect and compassion for the other living creatures who share this planet with us. He was a true original in every sense of the word and will most assuredly be sorely missed.

St Martin's has links with an Orthodox convent in Russia, where the animal-loving nuns rescue and care for unwanted and abused animals, and a retiring collection was held to assist them with their welfare work, raising £230.
As three o’clock approached on the afternoon of Sunday 4th October, the church of St John Vianney in Wantage, Oxfordshire began to welcome a very special congregation for the annual service of thanksgiving and blessing for animals.

One of the first people to arrive at the church was Jill Smith from Stanford in the Vale with her husband Dan and help dog, Lexus. Jill has been coming to the service since the very first occasion 25 years ago. Following Jill was an assortment of dogs and cats and two lop-eared rabbits, led by Tracy the rescued donkey from Island Farm Donkey Sanctuary at Brightwell-cum-Sotwell.

The weather was thankfully dry and surprisingly warm for October and, after special prayers and hymns, Canon Peter Turbitt, the Parish Priest, invited each individual animal up to the altar for a blessing. To mark Pope Francis’ special Encyclical *Laudato Si’* on the environment and the care of our common home, Canon Peter had invited Judy Gibbons, Chair of Catholic Concern for Animals to give the short address where she emphasised our duty of care and responsibility for the way we live and treat all creation. Canon Peter said, ‘People are always amazed at how well behaved all the animals are – they seem to sense it is a very special occasion and, of course, this year our service fell on the 4th October, the Feast Day of St Francis’.

Wanda Oberman, who arranged the service, said, ‘We owe so much to the creatures who share our planet. In previous years we have had an amazing collection of animals, both great and small, from the donkey and the usual selection of cats and dogs, to a Shetland pony, a horse, hamsters, guinea pigs, rats, ferrets, chickens, snakes and even a stick insect. We have much to be grateful to Susan Marshall, CCA member from Oxford, for this service. It was Susan who first started the Ecumenical Animal Blessing Services at the church of St Michaels in the Northgate, in Oxford over thirty years ago, from which our service has taken the lead’.

A retiring collection of £150 was donated to the local Oxfordshire Animal Sanctuary.
WORMWOOD SCRUBS PONY CENTRE RECEIVES THE QUEEN’S AWARD FOR VOLUNTARY SERVICE

On 2nd June 2015, the 63rd anniversary of HM the Queen’s coronation, it was publicly announced that The Wormwood Scrubs Pony Centre would receive The Queen’s Award for Voluntary Service, which is the equivalent of an MBE for a group. The official presentation took place on 26th September 2015 by the Lord Lieutenant and was followed by the presentation of over 70 awards to individual volunteers. Anneka Rice also attended the award ceremony, celebrating the 21st anniversary of her visit to the centre in 1994 when she built a large indoor riding arena as part of the BBC TV programme ‘Challenge Anneka’.

The Wormwood Scrubs Pony Centre is a registered charity which provides riding and equine therapy for children with special needs and physical disabilities. It was founded by Sr Mary Joy Langdon in 1989, who now manages the centre. Further details can be found at www.wormwoodscrubsponycentre.org

GARDEN SONNET - THE HONEY BEE
BY MIKE RAFFERTY

The honey bee spends all his hours
Popping in and out of flowers,
Or illustrating geography
By means of choreography.
He dances to convey the sector
Where he found a fund of nectar:
Bearing, distance, colour, number,
Foxtrot, quickstep, waltz and rumba.
But what a thankless life he lives:
Unstintingly his time he gives,
And gets ignored by queen and drones,
But yet he never ever moans.
To crown it all (it can't be funny)
Along comes man and steals his honey.
In his book *On Animals - Volume 1, Systematic Theology*, David Clough, who is Professor of Theological Ethics at the University of Chester, proposes ‘that “It’s all about us” theologies are at least insufficient, if not plain heretical, and we need to reject these in favour of an account that sees the end of creation as its participation in the triune life of God’.

In this very academic work, David puts forward the case for animals being an important part of God’s creation in their own right, in an extremely persuasive way, that is supported by significant theological references. This is not a book for anyone who wants a light read, but it is just what is needed for anyone wishing to debate with theologians on the subject of the rights of animals.

The book is divided into three parts, Creation, Reconciliation and Redemption, and it undertakes the task of examining the appropriate doctrinal place of animals under each of these headings. David argues that there are important theological reasons for judging it to be a ‘theological mistake’ to consider human beings to be God’s aim in creation. He discusses the problems evident in the ways human beings have distinguished themselves from other animals and the limitations of the classifactory schemes we have used to set our relationships between animals. He argues that the whole of creation, rather than just human beings, stand in need of atonement and that all creatures can share in the redemption and live together in the biblical vision of a peaceable kingdom - that lions will literally lie down with lambs.

David critically examines why Christian Churches are so negative about animals, when there is little in theology to support this. He examines the influences on the Church by the ancient Greek philosophers, such as Philo of Alexandria (15BC - 50AD) and how their philosophies have been developed by later Christian theologians, such as Origen, Augustine and Aquinas. Picking their fallacious arguments apart, he concludes that ‘the weight of theological opinion that human beings are God’s aim in creation, therefore, is not matched by a similar weight of theological argument’. He also highlights the positive theologies on animals by others, such as St Basil of Caesarea.

This is a very persuasive book and I would recommend it to all theologians and to all those who want to debate with those who are still clinging to an anthropocentric view of creation.

*Barbara Gardner*
At the end of her book, *Eating Earth*, Lisa Kemmerer highlights her five main reasons for choosing a vegan diet, which she remembers with the acronym AMORE (Italian for ‘Love’). These are Animals, Medical, Oppressed people, Religion and Environment. However, in this book, it is the Environment that she focuses on. This is because, as she describes in her introduction, it was the environmental issues surrounding a carnivorous diet that persuaded a friend (with whom she had unsuccessfully debated for years on the subject of the moral arguments of compassion for animals) that finally caused him to have a ‘Eureka’ moment. They had, she said, been magnetically attracted to each other - like the negative poles of two magnets! But on the subject of the environmental impact of eating meat, they finally saw eye to eye. So, assuming that the many environmentalists, who were blindly causing enormous environmental damage through their carnivorous habits, would feel the same way, she wrote this book.

*Eating Earth* is divided into three parts - *Farming Facts, A Fishy Business* and *Hunting Hype*, in which Lisa examines the environmental impact of factory farming, fishing and hunting on the Earth’s atmosphere, oceans and land. The book is concise and packed with the latest statistics, providing anyone who wishes to debate the issues surrounding the environmental impact of meat eating with a most valuable resource. As such, I highly recommend this book.

The great impact of Lisa’s work is that it highlights that all the efforts to contain CO2 emissions from transport and switching to energy saving devices is pointless and useless if we continue to eat meat at the current quantities. And never mind the CO2, it’s the methane that we should be worried about as the most potent greenhouse gas! Nor should we focus our concerns on small tokens to save water either. Factory farming uses far more water than these small gestures could ever save. And then there’s the vast quantities of grain used as animal feed of which the world’s starving people are being deprived, the toxic wastes discharged over the land, in rivers and into the sea and, finally, the loss of CO2 absorbing forests and the many species who inhabit them. Although many of these things have been highlighted in various reports before, Lisa provides the latest data here. Also, Lisa highlights what is largely overlooked in former reports which focus on the land and air, that is the terrible effects on the oceans.

Please recommend this book to your environmentally-concerned, carnivorous friends in the hope that, like Lisa’s friend described in the introduction, they too will have a Eureka moment.

**Barbara Gardner**
Peter Singer has been described as ‘the world’s most influential living philosopher’ and *Time* magazine has named him as one of the 100 most influential people in the world. He is still best known for his first book *Animal Liberation* (1975) in which he picked up on my concept of speciesism (in reaction to seeing my leaflet entitled *Speciesism* which I published in 1970) and turned it into the powerful philosophical tool it is today.

In his latest book Singer argues: ‘to give less consideration to the interests of nonhuman animals, merely because they are not members of our species, is speciesism and is wrong in much the same way that the crudest forms of racism and sexism are wrong’. Singer has said: ‘if speciesism is not wrong, then neither are racism or sexism!’

In a telling phrase Singer asserts: ‘Speciesism is a form of discrimination against the interests of those who are not “us”’. He argues that species (like gender and race) is morally irrelevant, adding: ‘my impression is that the moral irrelevance of species, in itself, has come to be accepted by most philosophers who reflect on the question’. In the words of Colin McGinn, ‘it is a won argument’.

This is one of Singer’s greatest achievements: to have put speciesism (and the moral status of nonhuman animals generally) onto the agenda for philosophers around the planet when, prior to 1970 it was hardly ever mentioned. Indeed, philosophical ethics (thanks largely to the utterances of logical positivists such as A.J. Ayer) had, before 1970, become almost a dead subject as far as the secular world was concerned. By espousing and helping to champion the animal issue, Singer (along with the other philosophical members of the second Oxford Group) managed to revive the whole subject of Ethics itself. After the animal liberation explosion of the 1970s (caused chiefly by Oxford-connected thinkers Singer, Regan, Clarke, Linzey, Brophy, Midgely, Godlovitch, Harris, McGinn and myself) the whole of Ethics became a hot topic and, thankfully, remains one to this day. The ‘animal issue’ led the way for the exploration of the other moral issues (e.g. environmental ethics, abortion, euthanasia, human rights, just war, political ethics, media ethics etc.) which followed. The universities of the world geared themselves up accordingly. Prior to 1970 moral issues had been left almost entirely to the churches and to non academic political activists. Indeed, many professional philosophers (such as C.D. Broad, who, coincidentally, died in 1971) influentially argued against involvement by philosophers in the promotion or application of ethical points of view.

So the huge revival of interest in the treatment of individuals of other species
which occurred from 1970 till 2000 (and still continues) was different from the political movements against Racism, Sexism and the Vietnam War which had occurred in the 1960s, not least in that professional philosophers themselves played a leadership role in the anti-speciesism movement. Rarely has a reform movement been intellectually so well armed as this one! Professor Charles Magel pointed out in 1989 that, in the 2,400 years since Socrates and up to 1970, only 94 published works dealt with the animal issue, whereas in the next 19 years there were 240 such publications.

Peter Singer, with this book, is taking the next step. Now that we can agree, more or less, on what is good (reducing the suffering of others) we need to set about practical ways in which we can do the most good. Singer, as a professor in both America and Australia, advises his followers to become more ‘morally effective’ by:-

1) donating to effective charities
2) establishing which charities are most effective
3) choosing careers that earn most so that they can give most to charity
4) spreading the idea of effective altruism
5) donating body parts (blood, marrow, or a kidney) to others.

Strangely, Peter leaves out politics as a way to do good. (That is the route I chose myself in the early 1970s and in which I became so engrossed that I felt I could not accept his kind invitation to be co-author of Animal Liberation. I was too busy!) Yet in Britain and Europe generally we did manage to put animals into politics successfully and can now look back on the passage of some 23 major pieces of legislation which reduce the sufferings of many millions of animals. As I approach the end of the road that thought comforts me.

In this country the backlash from the pro-hunters has been vicious and, in consequence, the British media have turned against the pro-animal movement causing even the politicians to forget its importance, and for animal campaigners to be traduced, suppressed and persecuted, as we now are. The foxhunters are few but powerful. They stretch to the very top of British society and represent very clearly the forces of cruelty and evil. Being cruel to an animal for fun is certainly a sin. Indeed, cruelty, surely, is the greatest sin. Peter Singer, thank goodness, manages to remain above all this. But I wish I could be as sanguine as he is about the effectiveness of charities. I have spent 45 years campaigning within charities and seeing how desperately ineffective they can be. If I now feel exhausted, this is not due to having to fight my moral enemies but because I have had to fight the short-sightedness, laziness, incompetence (and sometimes the subversiveness, too) of my supposed charitable allies. Charities too often fail to get to the root of a problem.

All in all, I trust politicians more than charity workers to get the right results! But I wish Peter Singer all the best with his great crusade for effective altruism, which I warmly support. He has written a book that Jesus might have written if he had not died so young.

Dr Richard D. Ryder
OBITUARIES

Brian Sewell

Brian Sewell, the famous art critic and animal lover, died on 19 September 2015, aged 84, after a battle with cancer. Brian, who was a member of Catholic Concern for Animals, put his passion for animals into practise by speaking out for them and adopting homeless dogs.

Brian was famous for his posh voice and for his acerbic view of conceptual art and the Turner Prize. He wrote for the London Evening Standard and later went on to become a critic of politicians which won him the Orwell Prize for political writing. On television he appeared on ‘Have I Got News For You’ and had a six-part TV series on Channel 5, ‘The Naked Pilgrim: The Road to Santiago’ in 2003 and then ‘Brian Sewell’s Grand Tour of Italy’ in 2005.

He was also patron of the Captive Animals Protection Society (CAPS) and said: ‘I have a rescued parrot. She perfectly encapsulates the misery of a wild animal in the wrong environment, in the wrong climate and with access to the wrong natural resources. I cannot do for her what I have done for captive songbirds in Mediterranean countries - bought them and released them. She is for me the lonely circus elephant in Germany, the caged tiger in Spain, the dancing bear in Turkey, the baited bear in Pakistan’.

In 2010 he teamed up with PETA and wrote an article in Hello magazine about why people should always adopt dogs from animal shelters rather than buying them from breeders. In 2014 he published a children’s book, The White Umbrella, about a man who rescues a neglected and overworked donkey. A few months before his death he wrote to Air France, urging them to stop transporting primates to be tortured and killed in laboratories, saying: ‘Since my cancer diagnosis, I’ve spent months being poked and prodded, and I wouldn’t wish such an experience on my worst enemy, let alone innocent animals’.

Dr Norman W. Moore

Conservationist, scientist, and author, Dr Norman W. Moore, has died aged 92. He led scientific research into the devastating effects of pesticides on wildlife. When naturalists reported the deaths of hundreds of birds (including peregrines, eagles, red kites and sparrow hawks) and other wildlife, he began researching for the cause at his home. His work, which he began two years before Rachel Carson wrote ‘Silent Spring’, led to a ban on DDT pesticide in UK.
Dr Jerilyn Felton, the four-footed minister’s pastoral care program coordinator at Maryville Nursing Home in Beaverton, Oregon, USA, wrote of her work with her dog, Alya, in the summer 2014 edition of The Ark. Sadly Alya passed away last year and, in this tribute to Alya, Dr Felton describes her work now without her.

**BY DR JERILYN FELTON**

Sometimes the end of a relationship can set a course for the beginning of a new endeavour. This is the feeling I had after my beloved four-footed minister, Alya, passed away in November 2014. Alya had been my spiritual/pastoral care research buddy for my doctoral project to formulate a program approach to the integration of dogs as ministerial partners in healthcare settings. She became, in effect, a four-footed minister. After her passing, I moved into a new retirement community and found there an audience open to exploring dog-ministry prayer-group sessions without the canine being present. Here, the attendees heard animal stories based on an extension of scriptural passages; however, would this experience of ‘dog ministry without a dog present’ be profitable to each individual’s prayer life?

As a therapy dog/four-footed minister, Alya had learned her role very well and performed it until the day she died. Her responsibility in our weekly dog-ministry prayer-group gatherings in an assisted-living facility was to welcome the attendees and create the sacred space. She greeted everyone with a lick on the hand and then looked to her mom (me) to give her a treat for a job well done. I had often told my attendees that her gift was her beauty and not her ministerial skills because she ‘worked for food’. I could tell, however, that she seemed to bring an air of the sacred to our gathering. After all had settled and we began our prayer time, she usually parked herself in the centre of our circle and promptly fell asleep. It was the final ‘Amen’ that woke her from her slumber and, together, we initiated our closing ritual, a gift of hand sanitizer given to our attendees to prevent the transmission of infection.

Though I knew at some level that she would not be with me forever, I had not considered how I would continue to spread the concept of dog ministry after she had passed away, other than to obtain another dog and continue as I had in the past. After moving into my new community, I had the chance to discern what other avenues might be open for dog ministry promotion. Thus, to keep my ministerial skills sharp, I
volunteered to conduct a series of biblical reflections on the New Testament readings for the Lenten season that utilized my dog-ministry theological-reflection format. I pulled stories from for the Lenten season that utilized my dog-ministry theological-reflection format. I pulled stories from my repertoire of dog and cat midrashim that seemed to dovetail with those readings, determined to note similarities and differences between groups with and without a dog present, to see if ‘dog ministry without a dog’ was even possible. Reflecting on these gatherings, it became apparent that, perhaps, dog ministry is possible without a dog, but the experience will be different.

Differences in Both Scenarios - The Dog

Alya’s role in our dog-ministry prayer-group gatherings was to act as a social lubricator, an activity that has been empirically demonstrated as beneficial to humans (Giaquinto and Valentini, 2009). She was the facilitator who gathered individuals into community. Her animal presence created a sacred space in the most mundane places within the assisted-living facility. Because dogs have often been described as reflecting the Divine in more than name only, feelings of unconditional acceptance and love seemed to flow out of her to the attendees who had been crippled by age or infirmity. Though she was not the focus of our prayerful reflections and, with her no longer by my side, my Lenten bible study-group was not as vibrant as in the past, where Alya’s presence often functioned as a manifestation of the Divine. I feel that her presence in our group would have made the whole experience more reflective of the Garden of Eden, satisfying the deep human need for connection to nature and through that, to the Divine.

Because Alya was a beautiful dog, people naturally moved to touch her. As it has been pointed out in many areas, meaningful touch is often missing from ministerial interactions because of the fear of being misinterpreted or technology has gotten in the way. Touching a therapy dog and petting him or her offers a level of safe interaction that will usually not open up old wounds of maltreatment or abuse because the dog offers unconditional acceptance. Unless the individual has had a bad experience with dogs, is allergic to them, or fears them, petting a dog has empirically measurable calming and bonding effects on both the person initiating the touching interaction and the dog receiving it. This level of bonding was totally absent from our Lenten dog-ministry prayer-group because there was no live dog present.

The Minister

Throughout my four years of working with dog-ministry prayer-group gatherings, I had developed a good working relationship with my four-footed minister. With Alya present, my role was to be there as the facilitator and storyteller, not concerning myself too much with engaging all attendees in the process of theological reflection. Some of our attendees in assisted-living had challenges keeping present with the group, but had something else ‘holy’ upon which to focus - Alya, as a creature of God. Though it was often an effort to draw individuals into a space where they felt comfortable in sharing
their story, it did not matter in the long run because it was evident that each person drew from the gathering what spiritual nourishment that person needed, whether from our group reflections on scripture and midrashim or from Alya’s sleeping presence. Throughout my Lenten series, I found I had to work harder to draw people in, though they were independent-living residents who appeared to be much more able to engage the outside world than those in assisted living. I attribute this to the fact that my four-footed minister was not there as either a presence or a focus. I did discover that the stories were a drawing force that encouraged individuals to return. As the stories were ones I had used in theological reflection with Alya, I discovered that, despite the fact the stories lacked that imperceptible, tangible presence of the Divine, they did provide something meaningful to support an individual’s prayer life.

**Similarities in Both Scenarios**
In reflecting back over our Lenten gatherings, I see that there are commonalities that do make it possible to do ‘dog ministry without a dog present’, though it is not the same experience. The most obvious similarity between experiences with and without a dog is the encouragement that can be created by the facilitator to have a person tell their life story of faith after considering a particular question. As theological reflection, by its structure, opens a way for attendees to offer examples from their own lives that illustrate a question posed at the beginning of the session, I discovered that elders are willing to share their pet or human stories with others because they realize others are listening to them. Telling their pet/human story in conjunction with the sacred story enables them to feel connected to the group and connected especially to God. In working with elders, I have discovered that individuals often do not perceive their stories about their pets as important enough to be connected to the Sacred. They are surprised when others find their reflections enlightening as well as entertaining.

**Conclusion**
In the long run, from my limited experience without a four-footed minister present, either a live dog or a stuffed one, I can see that it is possible to conduct a dog-ministry prayer-group without a dog. However, one must realize this experience could be dissatisfying because of its incompleteness on a deep spiritual level. I believe that it is the story, integral to the structure of the gathering, that will be beneficial to the attendees. In creating the midrashic story, the minister should work as if the dog were present, because in proclaiming the Word of God and illuminating it through a pet midrash, a dog or cat comes alive again, if only for a moment. It is the power of story in this instance, bringing presentness to the past that helps the pet to live again, if only in the time it takes to tell the story (Felton, 2008). Thus, in the final analysis, I hope that others will take up the challenge to attempt ‘dog ministry without a dog present’. Here is an area where more experiences will contribute insights into the growing field of dog ministry.
DIARY DATES

Regular Events

Every Wednesday: Prayer link-up at 9.30pm. Wherever you are. Irene Casey has a prayer suggestion sheet: Tel. 01925 657890.

Every first Saturday of the month: Prayers for Animals at 12.15pm. Gloucester Cathedral, Check with Rev. Helen Hall on 07919 538077.

Westminster Cathedral Interfaith Group is studying Pope Francis’ new encyclical Laudato Si’ in the Hinsley Room, Morpeth Terrace, London, from 4.00pm - 5.00pm on the following Wednesdays: - 16th March, 20th April, 18th May, 15th June, 19th October, 16th November, 21st December. All welcome!

May

Noddfa Retreat - 3rd May teatime to 6th May lunchtime - ‘In the footsteps of Celtic holy women - a celebration with meditation, music and pilgrimage to sacred sites’ run by Rev. Julie Hopkins. Further details at www.noddfa.org.uk

August

Ecumenical Animal Welfare Retreat 2016 - Charney Manor, Oxfordshire, Monday 22nd August to Thursday 25th August - see back cover for further details.

September

Pope Francis’ World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation - 1st September

October

World Animal Day - 4th October

Animal Blessing Service - Sunday 9th October, 3.00pm at St John Vianney Church, Charlton Road, Wantage, Oxfordshire, OX12 8ER. Animals and their human friends are invited to remember St Francis of Assisi in their own special service of blessing and thanksgiving. Led by Canon Peter Turbett. All Welcome!

Interfaith Celebration for Animals - Saturday 22nd October at 3.00pm at Golders Green Unitarians, 31 Hoop Lane, Golders Green, London, NW11 8BS. Led by Rev. Feargus O’Connor with guest speaker Rev. Prof. Martin Henig MA. DPhil, DLitt., plus readings from all of the main faiths. All Welcome, including dogs!

November

ASWA Remembrance Sunday Service - Sunday 13th November at 3.00pm at the Animals in War Memorial, Park Lane, London.

Events are kept up to date on our website at www.catholic-animals.com/events
CCA MEMBERSHIP FORM
Registered Charity No 231022

Life membership £200; Annual membership £20
Overseas Life Membership £300; Annual Membership £30

Please send the completed page to the Membership Secretary (not your bank):
Frances Chalk, CCA, 26 The Fairway, Upminster, Essex, RM14 1BS.

Please circle the appropriate area below
I wish to:
- join
- renew
- become a life member
- donate

Please EITHER send a cheque (made out to ‘CCA’) 
OR complete the following Bankers Order Form.

Please tick this box for the Gift Aid scheme if you pay UK Income Tax or Capital Gains tax. ☐

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To (name of your Bank/Building Society)………………………………………………..
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My account number is................................................Sort Code ...........................

I would like to give the sum of £………….. on the 1st day of each month / year
starting on ............../.......... (MONTH / YEAR) until further notice in writing,
to account number 00006345 of Catholic Concern for Animals, at Cafcash
(40-52-40), Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4TA.

NAME & ADDRESS (in block capitals please ) (Rev / Mr / Mrs / Ms / ……..)
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Email address:.................................................................................................
ECUMENICAL ANIMAL WELFARE RETREAT 2016

CHARNEY MANOR
13th Century Conference & Retreat Centre
Monday 22nd August - Thursday 25th August 2016

This three night break offers a relaxing environment for you to enjoy stimulating speakers, the company of like-minded people and thoughtful liturgies and prayer-times in this peaceful 13th Century Retreat Centre, set in the beautiful Oxfordshire Countryside. Roman Catholic mass and Anglican services will be available. Rooms are en-suite and include towels, toiletries and tea/coffee making facilities.

Costs are £315.00 per person and there is a £15.00 deduction per person for room sharing. £50.00 deposit required by 25th July 2016.

Book now to be sure of a place by contacting Irene Casey
Email: irene.casey@talktalk.net or Tel: 01925 657890

For further details about Charney Manor visit their website at
www.charneymanor.com
www.catholic-animals.com