(Barbara Fraser)



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Fourth week of Advent theme—Community

Day 23: Monday, Dec. 21

REFLECT

> "The abundance to which Jesus pointed was explicitly not the abundance of possessions. It was the abundance of the restored relationship , the God-relationship. It was the freedom to enjoy the community– the giving-and-receiving relationship with one another for which we were created."
>
> -William Gibson, *Simpler Living, Compassionate Life: A Christian Perspective*

> "Our lack of intimacy with each other is in direct proportion to our lack of intimacy with the land. We have taken our love inside and abandoned the world."
>
> -Terry Tempest Williams, *An Unspoken Hunger*
>
> "Climate change, since ultimately it imperils us all, gives us perhaps the best shot at what the pope in his most recent encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* called 'the rebirth of a universal aspiration to fraternity [kinship].' "
>
> -Bill McKibben, "The Rich Shall Destroy the Earth"in Soujourners

The relational nature of the Holy Trinity reminds us that, at our core, we are meant to be in relationship with one another. None of us brought ourselves into the world, nor can any of us sustain ourselves without other humans or gifts from the web of life (e.g., other people grow some or all of the food we eat, while the sun, rain, pollinators and complex ecosystems help those crops to mature).

Pope Francis' encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* calls us to unite as a human family to care for each other and to value people over things and economic profit. In a historic moment when climate change is causing unprecedented occurences in the natural world, the need to support and to build strong connections is more important than ever.

As we journey toward Jesus' birth into the world, what can we learn from his way of relating to others? And what would it look like for us to extend this care and relationship into the natural world?

ACT

Say a prayer of gratitude for the relationships that sustain you. Reach out to someone you have been meaning to connect with this Advent.

View the Advent Simplicity Calendar for another opportunity to explore the connections between community and simplicity.

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reflect | act

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