

12 FEBRUARY

- 1 Charles Darwin - who would become famous for his theories of evolution - was born on 12th February in 1809.
- 2 Aged 22, Darwin joined the British explorer ship, HMS Beagle, on their 5-year voyage around the coasts of South America and to other countries. He was a keen observer of how plant and animal life differed in various parts of the world. He realised that plants and animals can change over many generations, adapting and evolving because of their surroundings.
- 3 In his "*Theory of Evolution by Natural Selection*", Charles Darwin says that the young born to any living thing compete for survival against everything around them. He realised (for example) that, at a time of famine, the only leaves not eaten on trees would be high up. Small giraffes would die, but those that were tall enough to reach the leaves would live and would then reproduce, and their young would also be tall. Darwin said that only by adapting to surroundings will species survive.
- 4 In reading the creation stories at the beginning of the Bible, some people have thought of them as a kind of "diary", but many people read them as inspired "parables" that have deep meanings: emphasising that mankind is blessed and is at the centre of God's attention - so much so that God later chose to become one of us.

5 *Let us pray:*

**God our Father, open our eyes
that we may sense the wonder and awe
in the splendour of all your creation -
from the stars
that are large and far away,**

**to people and the tiniest creatures
near us each day.**


**Help us to become more aware
of how every living thing is special
and to be treated well.**


**Lead us to respect and value every person
as unique and important,
made in your image and likeness.**

**We ask this prayer through Jesus,
who became a human being
because you love our world so much.**

Amen.



 *There are two DIFFERENT creation stories in
Genesis: 1¹-2⁴ and 2⁴-2⁵.*

 *See also Psalm 103/104 and Psalm 8 [a version
of which is printed for 12 April].*

This is an excerpt from the page of this date in
'Praying Each Day of the Year',
a 3-volume book
by Nicholas Hutchinson, FSC.

For details:

<http://www.matthew-james.co.uk/>

Could make use of a search engine
to research this topic further.

This material is part of
the prayer and education website
of the De La Salle Brothers
in Great Britain:
www.prayingeachday.org