

A PRAYER for EARTH DAY

*God looked at everything He had made, and He found it very good.
Genesis 1: 31*

*We do not exist outside of nature
or above nature
or independent of nature —
we are simply its most vulnerable part.*

— Joan Chittister

Presence of God

We pause and remember that the God Who created us and Who sustains us is never far from us. In God we live and move and have our being.

Prayer

O God, Holy Spirit, Whose breath gives life to the world
and Whose voice is heard in the soft breeze,
we need Your strength and wisdom.
Come to us and among us;
Come as the wind and cleanse us.
We join with Your Creation and with each other.

Psalm 65

*It is good to give thanks,
for the boundless mercy
which renews us and makes us whole.
Happy are those who know this
and open themselves to the Light
and sing—*

*You make the sunrise and the sunset shout for joy.
You are the earth's fertility.
Your law governs her cycles of snow, run-off, flood, and rain.
You crown the year with abundance
The wild lands are watered with dew.
The hills deck themselves with green.
The meadows adorn themselves with flocks,
The valleys gown themselves with grain.
They dance together.
They join in song.*

*Glory to You, Creator and Sustainer.
Glory to You for the awesome gift of life.*

A Prayer

*Earth teach me freedom
as the eagle which soars in the sky.
Earth teach me regeneration
as the seed which rises in the spring.
Earth teach me to forget myself
as melted snow forgets its life.
Earth teach me to remember kindness
as dry fields weep with rain. — from Ute prayer*



Prayer Before Reading Sacred Scripture

*O Lord, open our minds and hearts
so that we may hear Your Holy Word,
understand it and do Your Will
as we sojourn on this earth.*

Wisdom of Solomon 11:24-12:1

For You [God] love all things that exist, and detest none of the things that You have made, for You would not have made anything if You had hated it. How would anything have endured if You had not willed it? Or how would anything not called forth by You have been preserved? You spare all things, for they are Yours, O Lord, You Who love the living. For Your immortal Spirit is in all things.

Matthew 6:26

Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them.

Luke 12:6

Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? And not one of them is forgotten in God's sight.

Revelation 4:9-11

And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to the One Who is seated on the throne . . . they cast their crowns before the throne, singing, 'You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for You created all things, and by Your will they existed and were created.'

Reflection

Ponder these words and, through this pondering, see and touch God in the world of splendor that is surrounding us at that very moment. What is God saying to us? How should we respond? All thought, all creation, speaks of God's glory and providence.

As we are called to see ourselves and each other as earthen vessels that hold God's presence and bring God's gifts to the world, so too, this very world and all that is above, around and within it are Earthen Vessels - just as easily shattered, just as much in need of our loving attentiveness and support. May our hands align with God's in respecting and shaping these.

Together we proclaim:

We, and all creation are God's earthen vessels.

*Help us, O Lord to live and act in harmony
and interdependence with all creation.*

Hymn: We Still Can Save Our Planet, Earth

*We still can save our planet, Earth,
if we resolve to share
the energy and food we waste
with creatures everywhere.*

*Creation struggles for its life,
while our false needs increase.
Redeeming God, convert our will
to act for justice, peace.*

*In Jesus we see nothing less
than Your own love expressed,
and we are called to show such love
to all the world's oppressed.*

*Free us to open wide our hearts;
our apathy decrease.*

*Redeeming God, convert our will
to act for justice, peace.*

A Prayer of Healing

*Reader: We join with the earth and with each other.
To bring new life to the land
To restore the waters
To refresh the air*

All: We join with the earth and with each other.

*Reader: To renew the forests
To care for the plants
To protect the creatures*

All: We join with the earth and with each other.

*Reader: To celebrate the seas
To rejoice the sunlight
To sing the song of the stars*

All: We join with the earth and with each other.

*Reader: To recall our destiny
To renew our spirits
To reinvigorate our bodies*

All: We join with the earth and with each other.

*Reader: To create the human community
To promote justice and peace
To remember our children*

*All: We are full of the grace of creation
We are graceful
We are grateful
We rejoice in all life.*



Blessing

Leader: Certainly God is raising up people even today to bring us through this dark time.

People: Life-giving God, we offer ourselves in service to You, supported by a great cloud of witnesses who urge us on.

Leader: We are connected to other people of faith and conscience around the world who are working for a peaceful, just, and sustainable world.

People: This global community supports us; we support each other.

Leader: We are related to the earth and all its creatures in a web that cannot be broken without injury to all.

People: The earth and our fellow creatures support us; we are their advocates.

Leader: Therefore, let us lay aside every weight and sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the Pioneer and Perfecter of our faith, resisting all powers that destroy, bringing healing and hope to the world.

People: O God, Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, we offer our lives in service to You.

Hymn: For the Beauty of the Earth

*For the beauty of the earth
For the glory of the skies,
For the love which from our birth
Over and around us lies. (Refrain)*

*Refrain: Lord of all, to Thee we raise,
This our hymn of grateful praise.*

*For the beauty of each hour,
Of the day and of the night,
Hill and vale, and tree and flower,
Sun and moon, and stars of light. (Refrain)*

*For the joy of ear and eye,
For the heart and mind's delight,
For the mystic harmony
Linking sense to sound and sight. (Refrain)*

*For each perfect gift of Thine,
To our race so freely given,
Graces human and divine,
Flowers of earth and buds of Heaven.*

Refrain

Concluding Prayer

Let us pray for: trees, plants, crops, and forests.

Let us pray for: water, oceans, rivers, streams and ponds.

Let us pray for: air, wind, climate and weather.

Let us pray for: sun, clean energy and prevention of global warming.

Let us pray for: animals, especially endangered species.

Let us pray for: humankind.

Let us pray for: recycling and moderate personal consumption.

Let us pray for: proper use of chemicals and disposal of toxic waste.

Let us pray for: Earth and unity.

"God has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God?" Micah 6: 8

Creator God, we thank you for all of creation. We ask Your forgiveness where we have failed to be just stewards. And we now ask for Your guidance in restoring the face of the earth. May we learn to live in harmony, safety and just sharing of resources among all so that we achieve the kingdom of God.

Amen.

Live Jesus in our hearts. Forever!

