

EARTH DAY



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IS APRIL 22

A Liturgy for Earth Day



An Earth Day Prayer Service

These prayers can be said at the beginning of the service , to be led by young people or Sunday School

Opening Prayer

We gather today, to rejoice in the creation of the world. God in his infinite compassion has lovingly formed our planet and all that live within it. He declared His creation good and entrusted us to care for it along with each other. Sometimes in our everyday lives, we forget our responsibility to care for nature. Today, as we reflect on the marvels and wonders of creation, let us renew our commitment as good stewards of the earth

Scripture Reading (Adapted from Genesis 1:1-30);

A reading from the book of Genesis

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. God said, "Let there be light!" And there was light. And God saw that it was good. God separated the light from the darkness and called the light "Day" and the dark "Night".

On the second day, God created a dome in the middle of the waters. God said, "Let the dome be separated from the waters." And it was so. And God saw that it was good. He called the dome "Sky".

On the third day, God said, "Let the waters under the sky be gathered into one place and let the dry land appear." And it was so. And God saw that it was good. He called the dry land "Earth" and the waters "Seas and Oceans."

On the fourth day, God said, "Let there be lights in the sky in the day and in the night." And it was so. And God saw that it was good. He called the light in the day "Sun" and the lights in the night "Stars."

On the fifth day, God said, "Let there be living things and living creatures in the waters and in the skies." And it was so. And God saw that it was good. He called the living things and creatures in the waters "Fish", "Seaweed" and "Underwater Plants" and the creatures in the skies "Birds."

On the sixth day, God said, "Let there be living things and living creatures on the surface of the earth." And it was so. And God saw that it was good. He called the creatures "Cattle", "Lions," "Elephants," "Mice" and all the other animals of the earth, and called the other living things "Flowers" and "Trees".

Then God said, "Let there be human beings made in my image. Let these humans rule over all the other animals and living creatures on earth. Let them use plants and seedlings for food and to make shelter and tools. Let them make the land and seas of earth as their home."

And it was so. And God saw that it was good. He breathed life into the humans and blessed them, making male and female. He called the humans "Man" and "Woman." Then God looked at all he had made. The day and the night, the sky, the land and the seas, the sun and stars, the living creatures in the oceans, the skies and the earth, and the humans in God's own image. And God saw that it was very good.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Reflection/Offering of gifts. (These items are brought and placed in front of the altar)

1. **Water:** Water is the source of all life. It is pure and refreshing. It flows, cleans, and nourishes. Water is a vital element we must take care of. Through the water cycle we are intimately connected to all of creation. As we offer this jug of water, let us remember how essential it is to all life on our planet. Let us strive to always care for it, use it wisely, and help keep it clean of pollution.

2. **Soil:** We offer up this pot of soil to remind us of all the minerals and unseen resources it holds. Sometimes we forget that the earth we walk on is, like water, another source of life. From it, plants, trees, and all living creatures are nourished. We harvest its minerals and rocks to build our homes and cities. Let us remember to care for our earth and harvest its resources in moderation.

3. **Seeds:** As we offer up these seeds, we are reminded of the potential they possess. Seeds, if cared for lovingly and properly, grow, mature, and bear fruit. Like the seed, we too need to be loved, cared for and nurtured by all those around us in order to grow to our full potential as disciples of Christ. When we look at these seeds let us remember not only our potential, but that we need to love and care for others as well.

4. **Plants and Animals** (stuffed toy and plant) In the scripture reading, we heard how God appointed us to take care of the earth and the plants and animals. We realize that we are integrally connected to all living things through the food chain and the elements of the earth. As we offer up this plant and this animal, let us remember to make wise decisions and treat all living creatures with kindness.

5. **Cross:** We offer this cross to remind us of the profound love of God. Through His compassion, He gave us life and made our beautiful world. Let us remember to give thanks to Him always and praise Him for His wondrous creation. We give thanks that God so loved the whole world that he sent his son Jesus.

Litany: Living in Harmony

May we use the world's resources we need with love, humility, and thoughtfulness, without guilt, without fear, without waste.

All: May we live in harmony with the earth

May we live together with animals with which we share this planet, being careful not to harm them or their habitats.

All: May we live in harmony with the earth

May we respect the life in our lakes, rivers and oceans, using them with care and being mindful in our efforts not to pollute them.

All: May we live in harmony with the earth

May we learn to live within our means, by reducing our waste and continuing to reuse and recycle all that we can.

All: May we live in harmony with the earth

May we plan to leave the world in a state that all future generations will be able to enjoy, ensuring that it is filled with resources, life, and kept healthy and clean.

All: May we live in harmony with the earth

Lord, Creator of all living things, Help guide our daily actions and thoughts to become better stewards of the earth. Guide us to act responsibly, care for the earth you gave us, and make wise choices in our everyday living. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

(Adapted from Words for the Journey for Teens by Lisa Freemantle, Les Miller & Melinda Rapallo-Ferrara)
Toronto Catholic Schools Board

<https://www.tcdsb.org/Board/NurturingOurCatholicCommunity/Liturgies/Documents/Earth%20Day%20Liturgy.pdf>