

ST. PHILIP'S MILFORD PRAYER CIRCLE



Prayers for Our Lord's Earth

Thursday, April 27, 2023

On Earth Day, let's pray for peace on this earth. For an end to that which tears at the planet: a warming climate, polluted waters and profit over planet and people, and yes, war. 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. God declared his creation good and entrusted us to care for it, along with caring for each other, those we know, but especially those we do not know. Sometimes in our everyday lives, we forget our responsibility to care for nature, to care for others. Today, as we reflect on the marvels and wonders of creation, let us renew our commitment as good stewards of the earth and all God's people.

NEW READER: As we gather, we are thankful for our Lord's creation:

for light and darkness;
for air, wind, and sky;
for earth and sea;
for seeds, harvests, and plant life;
for sunlight, moonlight, and starlight;
for every living creature, swarming, flying, creeping, and grazing;
for our lives.

In our actions, meditations, and prayers,
may we honour and celebrate your very good creation,
as we seek wisdom on how to share our gratitude and love in good and healing ways.
Amen.

NEW READER: So let us start at the beginning, with a reading from the Book of Genesis:

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.

NEW READER: And God said, "Let there be a vault between the waters to separate water from water." So God made the vault and separated the water under the vault from the water above it. And it was so. God called the vault "sky." And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day.

And God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear." And it was so. God called the dry ground "land," and the gathered waters he called "seas." And God saw that it was good.

NEW READER: Then God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds." And it was so. The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the third day.

And God said, "Let there be lights in the vault of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark sacred times, and days and years, and let them be lights in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth." And it was so. God made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. God set them in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth, to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the fourth day.

NEW READER: And God said, "Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the vault of the sky." So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living thing with which the water teems and that moves about in it, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. God blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth." And there was evening, and there was morning—the fifth day.

And God said, "Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: the livestock, the creatures that move along the ground, and the wild animals, each according to its kind." And it was so. God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.

NEW READER: Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

NEW READER: Then God said, “I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food.” And it was so.

This is the word of the Lord

ALL: Thanks be to God.

NEW READER: We uphold to you Lord, a prayer for Earth Day from Pope Francis:

All powerful God, you are present in the whole universe
and in the smallest of your creatures.

You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.

Pour out upon us the power of your love,
that we may protect life and beauty.

NEW READER: Fill us with peace, that we may live
as brothers and sisters, harming no one.

O God of the poor,

help us to rescue the abandoned and
forgotten of this earth,

so precious in your eyes.

Bring healing to our lives,

that we may protect the world and not prey on it,

that we may sow beauty, not pollution and
destruction.

NEW READER: Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain
at the expense of the poor and the earth.

Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,

to be filled with awe and contemplation,

to recognize that we are profoundly united
with every creature

as we journey towards your infinite light.

NEW READER: We thank you for being with us each day.

Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle

for justice, love and peace.

ALL: AMEN

NEW READER: The Psalm today is 37:1-18. This can be read responsively:

¹Do not fret because of those who are evil

or be envious of those who do wrong;

²for like the grass they will soon wither,

like green plants they will soon die away.

³Trust in the LORD and do good;

dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture.

- ⁴ Take delight in the LORD,
and he will give you the desires of your heart.
- ⁵ Commit your way to the LORD;
trust in him and he will do this:
- ⁶ He will make your righteous reward shine like the dawn,
your vindication like the noonday sun.
- ⁷ Be still before the LORD
and wait patiently for him;
do not fret when people succeed in their ways,
when they carry out their wicked schemes.
- ⁸ Refrain from anger and turn from wrath;
do not fret—it leads only to evil.
- ⁹ For those who are evil will be destroyed,
but those who hope in the LORD will inherit the land.
- ¹⁰ A little while, and the wicked will be no more;
though you look for them, they will not be found.
- ¹¹ But the meek will inherit the land
and enjoy peace and prosperity.
- ¹² The wicked plot against the righteous
and gnash their teeth at them;
- ¹³ but the Lord laughs at the wicked,
for he knows their day is coming.
- ¹⁴ The wicked draw the sword
and bend the bow
to bring down the poor and needy,
to slay those whose ways are upright.
- ¹⁵ But their swords will pierce their own hearts,
and their bows will be broken.
- ¹⁶ Better the little that the righteous have
than the wealth of many wicked;
- ¹⁷ for the power of the wicked will be broken,
but the LORD upholds the righteous.
- ¹⁸ The blameless spend their days under the LORD's care,
and their inheritance will endure forever.

NEW READER: We uphold to you Lord, a Litany for Earth Day:

God, on this day we celebrate the gift of this planet, Earth,
ALL: Which you created for us as a home:

A home for humanity

ALL: A home for creatures

A home for plants

ALL: A good gift of creation.

We are truly sorry for the ways we have corrupted it.

ALL: Forgive us.

We are truly sorry for the ways we have disregarded its well-being.

ALL: Forgive us.

We are truly sorry for the ways we've been complicit in systems that degrade it.

ALL: Forgive us.

Help us, Oh God,

ALL: To be good stewards of your gifts to us.

Help us, Oh God,

ALL: To realize our connectedness to creation.

Help us, Oh God,

ALL: To understand our reliance upon the Earth.

Help us, Oh God,

ALL: To bring healing to the planet.

Help us, Oh God,

ALL: To make changes that benefit all creatures.

As all creation praises and glorifies you,

ALL: So we praise you.

As all creation reflects your character and beauty,

ALL: So we seek to reflect your beauty.

As all creation supports and sustains us,

ALL: So we seek to support one another.

For the gracious gift and vast beauty of creation,

ALL: We give thanks.

AMEN

NEW READER: We uphold to you Lord, a Prayer for our Union with Creation:

Father, we praise you with all your creatures.

They came forth from your all-powerful hand; they are yours,
filled with your presence and your tender love.

All: Praise be to you!

NEW READER: Son of God, Jesus, through you all things were made.

You were formed in the womb of Mary our Mother,

you became part of this earth, and you gazed upon this world with human eyes.

Today you are alive in every creature in your risen glory.

All: Praise be to you!

NEW READER: Holy Spirit, by your light you guide this world toward the Father's love
and accompany creation as it groans in travail.

You also dwell in our hearts and you inspire us to do what is good.

All: Praise be to you!

NEW READER: Triune Lord, wondrous community of infinite love,
teach us to contemplate you in the beauty of the universe,
for all things speak of you.
Awaken our praise and thankfulness for every being that you have made.

All: Give us the grace to feel profoundly joined to everything that is.

NEW READER: God of love, show us our place in this world as channels of your love for all the creatures
of this earth, for not one of them is forgotten in your sight.
Enlighten those who possess power and money that they may avoid the sin of indifference,
that they may love the common good, advance the weak, and care for this world in which we live.

All: The poor of the earth are crying out.

NEW READER: O Lord, seize us with your power and light, help us to protect all life,
to prepare for a better future, for the coming of your Kingdom of justice,
peace, love and beauty.

All: Praise be to you!

AMEN

NEW READER: Lord, we uphold to you, our Prayers for your Earth:

All powerful God, you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of your creatures.
You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.
Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty.

ALL:

**Fill us with peace, that we may live
as brothers and sisters, harming no one.**

NEW READER: O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of
this earth, so precious in your eyes.
Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it,
that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.

ALL:

**Touch the hearts of those who look only
for gain at the expense of the poor and the earth.**

NEW READER: Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,
to be filled with awe and contemplation,
to recognize that we are profoundly united with every creature as we journey towards your infinite
light.

ALL:

**We thank you for being with us each day.
Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle
for justice, love and peace.**

AMEN

NEW READER: Lord, we uphold to you in Prayer, your Church:

Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your apostles, "Peace I give to you; my own peace I leave with you." Regard not our sins, but the faith of your Church, and give to us the peace and unity of that heavenly city, where with the Father and the Holy Spirit you live and reign, now and forever.

Therefore, with confidence and trust, let us pray for our one holy, catholic and apostolic Church.

We pray for Linda, Primate of Canada, Anne, our Metropolitan. We pray for our Diocesan Bishop, Michael, and Richard, our regional dean. We pray for our priest, Nancy. We pray for Paula, our lay reader, Sally, Rosemary and Elizabeth, our organists, for our wardens Sally and deb. We pray for the people of St. Andrew's and St. Philip's as we continue our mission and ministry with our incumbent Canon Nancy.

NEW READER: Lord, we uphold to you in Prayer, our upcoming Electoral Synod:

Gracious God, through this slow season of waiting, keep us mindful of Your promises. In the busyness of our many preparations remind us to savour the joy of Your abiding presence.

As we move towards making good and godly decisions, may our hearts and minds be attentive to the guidance of Your Spirit.

In our questions and conversations, may we listen carefully, and speak the truth in love. Then may Your Spirit lead us to choose a shepherd for our Diocese, one who will lead, love, and serve among us.

We pray especially for those who have put their names forward to stand in the election to become our next Bishop: Brad Smith and William Cliff. And we pray for Canon Nancy, and Alfie and Gord, who will represent St. Philip's at the upcoming election as they listen to the guidance of God through the Holy Spirit.

In communion with all those who have walked in the way of holiness, we uphold His church in prayer to the Father.

ALL: AMEN

NEW READER: We uphold to you Lord, those who have asked for our Prayers:

Almighty and everlasting God, the comfort of the sad and the strength of those who suffer, hear the prayers of your people who are ill, suffer, or are in any trouble. Grant to everyone in distress mercy, relief, and refreshment.

We pray for the sick, and all who suffer. We uphold to you O God, either silently or aloud, for others we know of who are in need of prayer...

Dear Lord, we pray for our friends and family, and those we love. We pray for those known only to you in their suffering. We ask for wisdom and courage as they face this difficult time in their lives – may we all cast their cares on you. Through your Spirit, guide them in every choice they make.

Lord of compassion,

ALL: hear us, as we pray for your grace and mercy.

NEW READER: We pray for our broken earth. We pray for sustainability. That all Canadians, and all people on this earth see climate change as a clear and present danger, to our personal well-being. We pray for resolve to do everything possible to avert this danger and leave this world a better place, not only for ourselves but also for future generations. We pray for all victims of natural and man-made disasters. We pray for those suffering with their mental health. We pray for people dealing with substance abuse issues. We pray for those experiencing physical, emotional or verbal abuse, for all who are sick, lonely or forgotten. We pray that a spirit of respect and reconciliation may grow among nations, people within nations, and all people around the world.

Lord of compassion,

ALL: hear us, as we pray for your grace and mercy.

NEW READER: We pray for those who live and work behind concrete walls, chain link fences and barbed wire. Keep them in good health and spirit. Help both the prisoner and the jailer to do the tasks before them with grace and compassion. Help both the prisoner and the jailer to see one another as human beings created in your own image. And protect both the prisoner and the jailer from those who would do them harm.

We pray for grace to amend our lives and to further the reign of God, let us pray to the Father. Lord of compassion,

ALL: hear us, as we pray for your grace and mercy.

NEW READER: And now, either silently or aloud, we pray for places we know, events we know, people we know, that are in need of our prayer...

We pray for all who are afraid in these anxious times. For those whom we have injured or offended,

Lord of compassion,

ALL: hear us, as we pray for your grace and mercy.

NEW READER: We uphold to you Lord, the Dearly Departed and those who Mourn:

Let us pray for those who have died in the peace of Christ, and for those whose faith is known to God alone.

And now, either silently or aloud, we pray for those who we have loved and lost and see no longer...

Grant them your peace, let light perpetual shine upon them, and in your loving wisdom and almighty power, work in them the good purpose of your perfect will. We pray this through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever.

ALL: AMEN

NEW READER: We Pray in Grace & Thanksgiving for our Lord's Gifts to us, His People:

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

ALL: We thank you Lord for your gift of water

NEW READER: Soil

Sometimes we forget that the earth we walk on is, like water, is another source of life. From the land, plants, trees, and all living creatures are nourished. We harvest its minerals and rocks to build our homes and cities. We use its nutrients to grow our food. Let us remember to care for our earth and harvest its resources in moderation.

ALL: We thank you Lord for your gift of soil

NEW READER: Seeds

If cared for lovingly and properly, seeds 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. Seeds remind us not only our potential, but that we need to love and care for others as well.

ALL: We thank you Lord for your gift of seeds

NEW READER Plants & Animals

In Scripture, we hear how God appointed us to take care of the earth and rule over 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. Let us remember to make wise decisions and treat all living creatures with care and kindness.

ALL: We thank you Lord for your gift of plants and animals

NEW READER The Cross

The cross reminds 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.

ALL: We thank you Lord for your gift of your son, and our saviour AMEN

NEW READER And now, in Closing, We Pray:

Lord God, 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.

ALL: AMEN

Holy God,
earth and air and water are your creation,
and every living thing belongs to you:
have mercy on us
as climate change confronts us.
Give us the will and the courage
to simplify the way we live,
to reduce the energy we use,
to share the resources you provide,
and to bear the cost of change.

Forgive our past mistakes
and send us your Spirit,
with wisdom in present controversies
and vision for the future to which you call us.
We pray this in Jesus Christ our Lord.

AMEN

And as Jesus taught us, we pray:

TOGETHER: Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory,
for ever and ever,

AMEN and AMEN