



# Prayer Service: *Listening to Earth*

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*“It is not so much a question of whether the lion  
will one day lie down with the lamb, but  
whether human beings will ever be able to lie  
down with any creature or being at all.”*

*Alice Walker*

**Prayer Environment/Space:** Table in center for a container with soil from your bioregion, a pitcher with enough water from your bioregion for each sister and a small plant or seed packet for each sister. Have each sister bring a cup to this Prayer.

Possible opening hymn: “All Creatures Of Our God and King...”



## OPENING PRAYER

*Right side, or Voice 1: Loving Spirit, Creator God,  
Who birthed our grace-filled world in light  
You who bathed us in sweet water,  
Forming, contouring rich Earth;*

*Left side, or Voice 2: We are Your seeds, You are the Gardener,  
Bringing us mercy, forgiveness and love;  
Water us with a thirst for knowledge,  
Grow in us yearning, wisdom and heart;*

*Right side, or Voice 3: That we may care for all Your creation,  
That we may understand why and how,  
That we may crave deep oneness with nature,  
Sharing with all Your spirit and song.*



*Left side, or Voice 4: This we ask, Our Breath of Life,  
Humbly we pray, in our small voices,  
Humbly we trust, in our weak faith,  
Humbly we hope, in our need for Your light.*

*All: Amen.*

## ***THE STORY OF CREATION***

*“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was a formless void, there was darkness over the deep, and God’s spirit hovered over the water. And **God said**: ‘Let there be light.’*

*Pause*

***God said***: ‘Let the waters under heaven come together into a single mass and let dry land appear. God called the dry land ‘earth’ and the mass of waters ‘seas’.

*Pause*



**God said:** 'Let the earth produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants, and fruit trees bearing fruit with their seed inside, on the earth.'



*Pause:*

**God said:** Let the waters teem with living creatures and let birds fly above the earth within the vault of heaven....God said, Let the earth produce every kind of living creature: cattle, reptiles and every kind of wild beast.'



*Pause:*

**And God said:** 'Let us make man and woman in our own image. God created humans in the image of Himself, male and female He created them.'

*Pause:*

God saw all He had made, and indeed it was very good!

The Word of the Lord.



## PSALM 96

*Sing to Our God a new song!*

*Sing to Our God, all the Earth!*

*Sing to God, bless God's name.*

*Proclaim His salvation day after day.*

*Declare His glory among the nations,*

*God's marvels to every people.*

*Let the heavens be glad, let Earth rejoice.*

*Let the sea roar and all that it holds.*

*Let the fields exult and all that is in them*

*Let all the trees of the forest sing for joy*

*At the presence of Our God, for God is coming,*

*He is coming to rule Earth-*

*To rule the world with justice*

*And its peoples with truth.*



*Glory to the Father. ....*

*Generous God, You provide so many ways for us to nourish ourselves and our families. Yet we know that some of the choices we make deplete Earth's bounties: monocultures sap nutrients from the soil; animal-raising practices contribute to pollution, require huge amounts of precious fossil fuels, and use antibiotics and hormones that can harm us; oils require despoiling vast natural spaces.*

*Grace us with resolve to make choices compatible with life on Earth. Remind us that we are called to honor every living being and that we are called to nourish others with the ways of Your love and wisdom.*

*Feed us with a hunger for justice and peace. Amen.*

### **A READING FROM :**

*Pope John Paul II and Patriarch Bartholomew I of Constantinople:*

*"Respect for creation stems from respect for human life and dignity. It is on the basis of our recognition that the world is created by God that we can discern an objective moral order within which to articulate a code of environmental ethics. In this*

*perspective, Christians and all other believers have a specific role to play in proclaiming moral values and in educating people in ecological awareness, which is none other than responsibility towards self, towards others, towards creation.”*

*Response: Earth and all that is in it belong to God.*

*Earth and all that is in it belong to God.*

*His marvelous works are beyond compare*

*Earth and all that.....*

*Glory to the Father..... Earth and all that is in it belong to God.*

## **WATER AS PRAYER**

*Each sister brings a cup to the pitcher on the table and pours water into it.*

*With this water, I soothe my parched mouth and nourish my thirst, preserving in my body the fluid of life.*

*Take a drink of water.*



*N. Robinson*

*With this water, I cleanse my skin, nourishing and washing away its dead cells.*

*Take water on your fingers and dab your skin.*

*With this water, I make the sign of the cross,*

*Blessing myself with the Ancient rite of*

*Baptism.....refreshing my spirit with*

*God's healing mercy.*

*Amen*

## **PAUSE FOR SILENT REFLECTION, 2-3 minutes.**

*Name the blessings you witness in creation.*

*Name the creatures in your bioregion.*

*What are the obstacles you have to living in solidarity with the Earth?*

*What will it take to remove those obstacles?*

*Get some soil under your fingernails by planting a tree outdoors or a green plant indoors.*

## CONCLUDING PRAYERS

*Prayers of Compassion – Response: BREAK OPEN OUR HEARTS, O LORD.*

*When we become hardened to inconvenient truths,.....*

*The gifts of the Earth are distributed unevenly and we long to lift up those in need. When our comfort is more important than the greater good.....*

*When we forget our place in creation...*

*You preached to the crowds, inviting them to sit on grassy hillsides. Open our eyes to the beauty of our world and make us understand the need to protect our environment....*

*When we think we can do anything without You....*

*For what else shall we pray?.....*

*Creator God, open our eyes to see what needs to be healed, our ears to the cry of those who are disenfranchised, and our minds to the knowledge that we can make a difference in our World. Amen.*

**SENDING FORTH:** *Each sister will choose a plant or seed packet and give it to the sister to her right.*

*Possible closing hymn: "All Creatures Of Our God and King.."*

