

**Everything is Connected**  
“interdependence obliges us to think of one  
world with a common plan.”

(Laudato Si', 164)



## The Earth – Our Mother

Mother Nature, you are so wonderful,  
Your splendor glorious, you are our Friend.  
You give new life to us, refresh our every self  
You are just all around, your grandeur has no end.  
Confessing our many faults, our lack of care and share  
Repenting our sinful pride, Help us shun our ignorance.  
We are in need of you, just as we need a Friend,  
We shall take care of you, until the end.

### Thoughts from different Faiths

**Baha'i:** “Nature is God's Will and is its expression in and through the contingent world.” (Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh)

**Buddhism:** “Our ancestors viewed the earth as rich and bountiful, which it is. Many people in the past also saw nature as inexhaustibly sustainable, which we now know is the case only if we care for it.” (Dalai Lama, 1990)

**Christianity:** “We must treat nature with the same awe and wonder that we reserve for human beings. And we do not need this insight in order to believe in God or to prove his existence. We need it to breathe; we need it for us simply to be.” (Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, 2010)

**Hinduism:** Krishna says, “I am the origin of all creation. Everything proceeds from me. The wise who know this perfectly worship me with great faith and devotion.” (Gita 10.8)

**Islam:** “Devote thyself single-mindedly to the Faith, and thus follow the nature designed by Allah, the nature according to which He has fashioned mankind. There is no altering the creation of Allah.” (Qur'an 30:30)

**Jainism:** "Do not injure, abuse, oppress, enslave, insult, torment, torture or kill any creature or living being. Ahimsa Paramo Dharamah! Non violence is the greatest virtue." (**Mahavira**)

**Judaism:** "And God said: 'Behold, I have given you every herb yielding seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed—to you it shall be for food.'" (**Gen 1:29**)

**Sikhism:** "You, yourself created the Universe, and You are pleased... You, Yourself the bumblebee, flower, fruit and the tree." (**Guru Granth Sahib**)

**Reflections:** Pope Francis has invited the whole world to join in the celebration of the '**Laudato Si'** (LS) week (16 - 24 May 2020) commemorating the 5th anniversary of the promulgation. It is a special letter (Encyclical) devoted to the Environment and addressed to the whole world. We are indebted to Mother Nature (LS 50). We need to move into newer paradigms to save the planet. (LS 16, 203). Together we need to take charge to build our common home (LS 244).

**Let us pause for a few moments of silent prayer and reflection, acknowledging our great indebtedness to Mother Earth.**

1. The first world countries, the developed nations, the Northern Hemisphere as Pope Francis would call it, are ecologically indebted to the south. We have gone far ahead to define progress in our own terms. Are we ready for change? We pray for an ecological change of heart.

Response: **God, help us protect our Mother Earth and all who dwell in it.**

2. Laudato Si' preaches the message of equality which itself is counter cultural. It is a great challenge to those who want to take control and those who want to plunder the resources of the earth. We all are responsible in our own way. Are we willing to undergo a metanoia? We pray for an ecological conversion.

Response: **God, help us protect our Mother Earth and all who dwell in it.**



3. All faiths teach us how to care and share. They place Mother Nature as an integral part of our lives. Do we pay heed to this realization as we go about living and practicing our faith from this perspective? We entreat for a greater conscious effort to integrate this dimension in our lives.

Response: **God, help us protect our Mother Earth and all who dwell in it.**

4. We implore for world leaders to make decisions for economic and environment sustainability and stability to go hand in hand, co-dependent on each other.

Response: **God, help us protect our Mother Earth and all who dwell in it.**

5. The coronavirus has swept Planet Earth, leaving death and mayhem in its wake. Many theories are being expounded to explain the ferocity. Is it not Mother Nature's response to human transgression? We implore God to intervene and save the world.

Response: **God, help us protect our Mother Earth and all who dwell in it.**

Concluding Prayer: (Together) All-powerful God, you are present in the universe and in the smallest of your creation. You embrace with your tenderness all that exists. Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty. Fill us with peace that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one. 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. 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. (Adapted from Laudato Si')

**Ryan Rodrigues, SJ**

