

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

(Laudato Si', 164)



## The Earth and the Poor

### Begin with a Hymn: (2 Min)

Listen; let your heart keep seeking... OR

Whatsoever you do to the least of my people... OR

Any suitable hymn.

### Opening Prayer: (For all to say together) (1 min)

“God our creator and sustainer, we thank and praise you for creating the Mother Earth to nourish and sustain us. We thank you for bestowing your goodness through her on each one of us without any bias. We experience your love and care for us through her. In return to her abundant and unconditional love for us, driven by our unquenchable thirst for power and authority over her; we have caused harm to her, exploited and polluted her and also looked down on our fellow human beings. As we reflect on the mother earth and her poor children as fellow humans, help us to undergo an attitudinal conversion so that we may care more intensely for the earth and take care of our poor brothers and sisters as our own”.

### An Extract from the Encyclical “Laudato Si” (1 Min)

The rich and the poor have equal dignity, for “the Lord is the maker of them all” (Prov22.2). “He himself made both small and great” (Wis 6:7), and “he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good” (Mt 5:45). This has practical consequences, such as those pointed by the bishops of Paraguay: Every *campesino* has a natural right to possess a reasonable allotment of land where he can establish his home, work for subsistence of his family and a secure life. This right must be guaranteed so that its

exercise is not illusory but real. This means that apart from the ownership of property, rural people must have access to means of technical education, credit, insurance, and markets". (L.S. 94).

**Let us allow the words of the text to move our hearts: (observe silence for 2 Minutes)**

**Reflection: (4 Minutes)**

In his encyclical on "The care of our Common Home, the Mother Earth," Pope Francis teaches us that the cry of the mother Earth is also the cry of the poor. They are not separated from one another. Reading today's signs of times especially in the context of covid-19 it is urgent and essential for us to reflect over our Common home. We are not inheritors of the earth rather we are co-creators, care-takers and fellow creatures. We humans want to rule over each other also. On account of this there is a discrimination made against one another on the basis of gender, class, creed and caste. The rich are becoming richer and the poor are becoming poorer. In our country, the poor farmers on whose sweat we enjoy our bread are being neglected driving them to suicide rendering them landless and homeless.

Badly affected by Covid-19 and the prolonged nationwide lock-down thousands of migrant workers are struggling to get back home. The government seems to worry more about the rich and is doing a little for the poor and migrants. Desperate to go home, the migrants are taking any transport available to them. Some of them are breathing their last on the way. So many trucks carrying the migrants are meeting with accidents. The plight of the poor seems to be endless. In any natural or artificial adversity it is the poor who are at the suffering end. Each human life is precious and has its dignity and worth. Now it's high time to wake up. The fifth anniversary of Pope Francis encyclical 'Laudato Si' is giving us a clarion call that the care of the mother earth is not separated from the care of the poor. We have to learn treat our fellow human beings with equal dignity and allow our conscious to be penetrated by the hard realities of the lives of the poor and the migrants so that we may respond to their plight with compassion and love and give them a ray of hope for better tomorrow. Let us reflect:

What I have done for the mother earth and the poor?

What am I doing for the mother earth and the poor?

What I ought to do for the mother earth and the poor?

### **Pause for 1 minute Silence**

**Prayers of intercession: (4 minutes)** *(Based on profound religious experiences of Asian Mystics)*

**Your response:** *God, grant us the grace of attitudinal conversion.*

**1]** The first precious words that came from the mouth of Guru Nanak Dev after his God-experience while bathing in a stream at Sultanpur were: "There is no Hindu, there is no Mussulman". Let us pray that during this Carona Pandemic we may not discriminate against the poor and needy on the basis of their religious affiliations but reach out to them in love and mercy. We pray that many generous souls may come forward to help them.

*For this let us pray....*

**2]** In his first sermon at the Deer Park at Sarnath, Bihar, the awakened one, the Buddha, taught his first five disciples the theory of 'Dependent Origination,' that everything is interlinked and inter-connected. We are not isolated from the other creatures on the Earth. We pray that all of us may learn to de-compartmentalize ourselves and embrace the whole creation as our own.

*For this let us pray....*

**3]** One of the Panch Mahavratas of Jainism is Ahimsā, 'non-violence. It teaches us that every sentient and non-sentient being has a soul and therefore we need to practice 'Ahimsā'. We pray that all our thoughts, words and actions may be for the good of the entire humankind and for the planet and all its creatures.

*For this let us pray...*

**4]** Through his Gathas Zoroaster teaches us that the two primeval spirits, the Holy Spirit and the Evil Spirits are continuously at war with each other. We pray that all of us, who adhere to different beliefs, may always listen to the inner voice of our conscience and thus, promote what is good for humankind and for the creation and always resist all that which goes against it.

*For this let us pray....*



5] The Holy Quran endorses regular charity along with prayers, "Be steadfast in prayer, practice regular charity, and bow down your heads with those who bow down (in worship)" (2:43). We pray that all those who are gifted with plentiful may learn to share with the less privileged ones and help them to live a dignified life as human beings.

*For this let us pray...*

**Concluding prayer (For all to say together):** (1 min)

May the Self of the universe be pleased with this sacrifice of words and bestow His grace on me.

May the sinners no longer commit evil deeds, may their desire to do good increase, and may all beings live in harmony with one another.

May the darkness of sin disappear, may the world see the rising of the sun of righteousness, and may the desires of all creatures be satisfied.

May everyone keep the company of saints devoted to God, who will shower their blessings on them.

Saints are walking gardens filled with wish-fulfilling trees, and they are living villages of wish fulfilling gems.

Their words are like oceans of nectar. They are moons without blemish and suns without heat. May these saints be the friends of all people.

May all beings in all the worlds be filled with joy, and may they worship God forever.

*(An English translation of Marathi Poem 'the Pasaydaan' (A prayer for the Universe) composed by a great Bhakti mystic poet saint Shri Dnyaneshwara of Maharashtra).*

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