



..earthday..

April 22, 2014

“As part of the unfolding universe story, we celebrate our kinship not only with other humans but also with all life forms. We begin to find our niche. We realize we are not only part of humankind but of Earthkind; we are not simply human beings but universe beings. As such we are distinguished not merely by reflective consciousness but by wondering intelligence as well. ...Along with gratitude, and reverence, wonder may be a key to release the flourishing potential of our species and our planet.”

-Mary Evelyn Tucker *Worldly Wonder: Religions Enter Their Ecological Phase*, pages 11–12;

Psalm 65:8–13

Those who dwell at the ends of
the Earth stand in awe of
your marvels;
you make the sunrise and sunset shout for joy!

You nourish and water the land
— Greatly you have
enriched it.
The streams of God are full of water.
You provide us with grain as you ordained.

Thus have you prepared the
land drenching its furrows,
breaking up its clods, softening it with
showers, blessing its yield.

You have crowned the year with your
bounty and your paths overflow with
a rich harvest;
the untilled meadows overflow with
abundance, and rejoicing clothes the
hills.

Quietly reflect and imagine some element or image from nature for which you are especially grateful.



Readings

From the Earth Charter Preamble

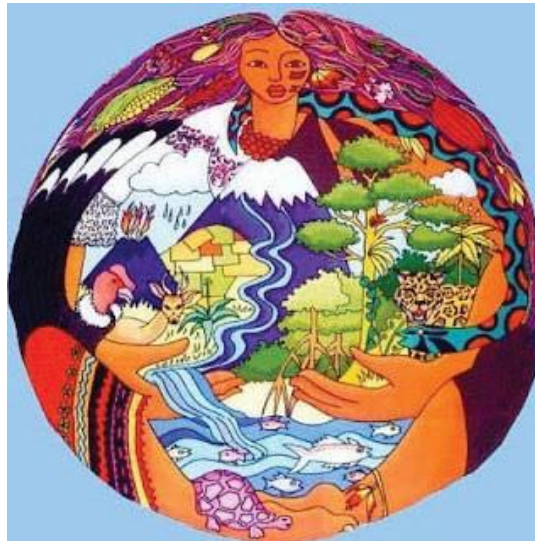
We stand at a critical moment in Earth's history, a time when humanity must choose its future. As the world becomes increasingly interdependent and fragile, the future at once holds great peril and great promise. To move forward we must recognize that in the midst of a magnificent diversity of cultures and life forms we are one human family and one Earth community with a common destiny.... The protection of Earth's vitality, diversity, and beauty is a sacred trust.

From Brazilian theologian Leonardo Boff

The "good life" points to an ethic of "enough" for the whole community, and not only for the individual. A "good life" implies an integrating, holistic vision of the human being, immersed in the great Earthly community that includes besides humans, the air, water, soil, mountains, trees and animals; it is to be in profound community with Pachamama, Our Mother Earth, with the energies of the Universe; and with God.... A "good life" is being in constant harmony with all, celebrating the sacred rites that continuously renew the connections with the cosmos, and with God.

— *Living Better or Living a "Good Life"? World Latin American Agenda, 2012, page 66*

Spend time reflecting on the image of Pachamama (Mother Earth) below, either quietly or with soft instrumental music.



Reflection questions

- What does "living well together" with the whole Earth community mean to you?
- What changes in our relationships with other beings does "living well together" ask of us individually and as a species?

Sharing, if desired

Traditional Indigenous Prayers of Intercession

Side 1 Oh, Great Spirit, whose voice we hear in the wind, whose breath gives life to all the world, hear us, we need your strength and wisdom.

Side 2 Let us walk in beauty,
and make our eyes ever behold the red and purple sunset.
Make our hands respect the things you have made and make our ears sharp to hear your voice.

Side 1 Make us wise so that we might understand the things you have taught our people.
Help us to remain calm and strong in the face of all that comes toward us.

Side 2 Let us learn the lessons you have hidden in every leaf and rock.
Help us seek wholesome thoughts and act with the intention of helping others.

-Adapted from "Great Spirit Guide Me"

Pray the closing prayer together:

O Sun behind all suns
O Soul within all souls
grant me the grace of the dawn's glory
grant me the strength of the suns' rays
that I may be well in my own soul
and part of the world's healing this day
that I may be well in my own soul
and part of the world's healing this day.

Show to me this day
amidst life's dark streaks of wrong and suffering
the light that endures in every person.
Dispel the confusions that cling close to my soul
that I may see with eyes washed by your grace
that I may see myself and all people
with eyes cleansed by the freshness of the new day's light. Amen.

Special thank you to the Sisters of the Holy Cross for their contributions to this prayer.