

International Mother Earth Day 22 April

On 22 April 2009 the General Assembly of the United Nations declared International Mother Earth Day to be held on 22 April each year. By declaring the International Day, Member States of the UN recognized their responsibility, as called for in the Rio Declaration, adopted at the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), also known as the “Earth Summit”, to promote harmony with nature and the planet to achieve a just balance among economic, social and environmental needs of the present and future generations of humanity.



By the text, the Assembly acknowledged that “the Earth and its ecosystems are our home”, and expressed its conviction that, in order to achieve a just balance among the economic, social and environmental needs of present and future generations, “it is necessary to promote harmony with nature and the Earth”.

The resolution, spearheaded by the Bolivian Government and supported by over 50 Member States, noted that Earth Day is observed each year on 22 April in many countries. The Assembly invites all Member States, the entire United Nations system, regional and subregional bodies and non-governmental organizations “to observe and raise awareness of International Mother Earth day, as appropriate”.

Mother Earth is a common expression for the planet earth in a number of countries and regions, which reflects the interdependence that exists among human beings, other living species and the planet. For instance, Bolivians call Mother Earth Pachamama and *Nicaraguans* refer to her as *Tonantzin*.

The proclamation of 22 April as International Mother Earth Day is an acknowledgement that the Earth and its ecosystems provide its inhabitants with life and sustenance. It also recognizes a collective responsibility, as called for in the 1992 Rio Declaration, to promote harmony with nature and the Earth to achieve a just balance among the economic, social and environmental needs of present and future generations of humanity.

International Mother Earth Day provides an opportunity to raise public awareness around the world to the challenges regarding the well-being of the planet and all the life it supports.

A Call to Prayer

Hildegard of Bingen



The earth is at the same time mother,
She is mother of all that is natural, mother of all that is human.
She is the mother of all, for contained in her are the seeds of all.
The earth of humankind contains all moistness, all verdancy, all germinating power.

It is in so many ways fruitful.

All creation comes from it. Yet it forms not only the basic raw material for humankind, but also the substance of the incarnation of God's son.

This prayer was used for Earth Day, 1990

From: Interfaith Declarations and Worship Observance Resources; The North American Conference on Religion and Ecology; 5 Thomas Circle, NW, Washington, DC 20005

Hymn of the Universe

Teilhard de Chardin

I live at the heart of a single, unique Element, the Center of the universe, and present in each part of it: personal Love and cosmic Power.

To attain to him and become merged into his life I have before me the entire universe with its noble struggles, its impassioned quests, its myriad of souls to be healed and made perfect. I can and I must throw myself into the thick of human endeavor, and with no stopping for breath. For the more I bring my efforts to bear on the whole surface of reality, the more also will I attain to Christ and cling close to him. God who is eternal Being-in-itself, is, one might say, ever in process of formation for us.



And God is also the heart of everything; so much so that the vast setting of the universe might be engulfed or wither away or be creation's dust, which is vitalized by a halo of energy and glory, to be swept away, the substantial Reality wherein every perfection is incorruptibly contained and possessed would remain intact; the rays would be drawn back onto their Source and there I should still hold them all in close embrace.

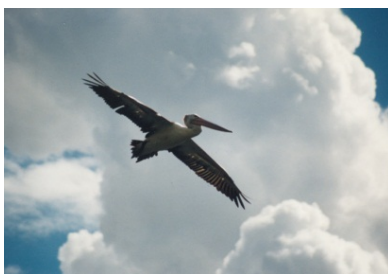
Prayers of the People

(From St. Thomas Episcopal Church, Medina, Washington.)

We give you thanks and praise, O God of creation, for the grandeur of all that you have made, saying
We thank you, God.

For the healing waters of creation, which bring pleasure and health, purity and life,
We thank you, God.

For the richness of the good Earth that brings forth fruits and flowers, a pleasure to taste and a joy to behold,
We thank you, God.



For the soaring birds of the air, the crawling creatures on the Earth, the gliding fishes in the seas, for all creatures great and small with whom we share this precious web of life,
We thank you, God.

For the invigorating sunlight of day, the deepening mystery of night, the wonder of the stars, and the call of the unknown in the universe,
We thank you, God.

From heedless misuse and dishonoring of the wonders of your hand,
Good Lord deliver us.

From squandering resources, abusing our companion species, and polluting the habitat we all share,
Good Lord deliver us.

From the folly of imagining ourselves free from the fate of your whole creation,
Good Lord deliver us.

For the courage and wisdom to confess how little we have cared for your gifts,
Strengthen us, O Spirit.

For the conviction that you have called us to love and restore the Earth,
Strengthen us, O Spirit.

For repentance and the determination to begin our stewardship anew,
Strengthen us, O Spirit.

O merciful Creator, your hand is open wide to satisfy the needs of every living creature: Make us always thankful for your loving providence; and grant that we, remembering the account that we must one day give, may be faithful stewards of your good gifts; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever, Amen.

