

## *PLANET vs. PLASTICS*

*Washington, D.C. (July 31, 2023)- EARTHDAY.ORG, the global organizer of Earth Day, has announced the global theme for Earth Day 2024: Planet vs. Plastics.*



*Listen  
with  
Earth*

*As you prepare for this prayer, find something from nature that speaks to you of the Creator's great love and blessing evident in Earth and bring it to our prayer.*

**Leader:** *Planet vs. Plastics* unites students, parents, businesses, governments, churches, unions, individuals, and NGOs in an unwavering commitment to call for the end of plastics for the sake of human and planetary health, demanding a 60% reduction in the production of plastics by 2040 and an ultimate goal of building a plastic-free future for generations to come.

Plastics are not biodegradable. They break down into smaller and smaller pieces, which are ingested by turtles, fish and birds. Eighty-four percent of plastics contain toxins, which pass into animals and our food chain. The oceans are sick, our planet is suffering and life is endangered.

**Together:** *OPENING PRAYER:*

Gracious God,  
We praise you for the marvels of your creation,  
For plants growing in earth and water,  
The life inhabiting lakes and seas,  
For all that creeps through the soils and land,

For all creatures in the wetlands and waterways,  
For life flying above earth and sea,  
For the diversity and beauty of your creation  
We stand in awe and wonder.

(Uniting Church, Australia, from Earth Gospel pg. 61)

**HYMN:** View the Youtube song “Mother Earth” by Karliene

<https://youtu.be/cal01UGSDgw?si=TjxWwhWziDs1xGMb>

**or** Sing: *I SING THE MIGHTY POWER OF GOD* by Isaac Watts, 1715  
(tune: *O Queen of the Holy Rosary* ~ language adapted)

I sing the goodness of the Lord that filled the earth with food;  
God formed the creatures with a word and then pronounced them good.  
Lord, how [Your] wonders are displayed where’re I turn my eyes;  
If I survey the ground I tread or gaze upon the skies.

There’s not a plant or flower below but makes [our] glories known  
And clouds arrive, and tempests blow by order from [Your] throne.  
While all that borrows life from [You] is ever in thy care,  
And everywhere that we can be, [You], God [are] present there.

**READINGS ON CREATION** (Chief Dan George 1899-1981, from Earth Gospel)

Side 1: The beauty of the trees, the softness of the air  
The fragrance of the grass, speaks to me.  
The summit of the mountain, the thunder of the sky,  
The rhythm of the sea, speaks to me.

Side 2: The faintness of the stars, the freshness of the morning  
The dew drop on the flower, speaks to me.  
The strength of fire, the taste of salmon,  
The trail of the sun, and the life that never goes away,  
They speak to me.

**Reader 1:** READING FROM AL-MIZAN, “A Covenant for the Earth”

“Our Earth with its evanescent community of life, of which we are a part, is exquisite beyond all telling, and more precious than mortal human beings can comprehend, for it too reflects the grace and mercy of the Lord of all. God has unfolded all things in balance with one another, in need of one another, and all support and benefit one another. But the world we live in is now degraded, corrupted, and dangerously unstable. We have changed the face of the Earth and we struggle to restore its equilibrium.”

*(Reflections on Islamic teachings, 2024, item 1.1) <sup>1</sup>*

**Leader:** *PSALM 121*

I lift up my eyes toward the mountains; whence shall help come to me?  
My help is from the Lord who made heaven and earth” (vs. 1-2)

**Reader 2:** *FROM LAUDATO SI'*

“God has written a precious book, whose letters are the multitude of created things. From panoramic vistas to the tiniest living form, nature is a constant source of wonder and awe. It is also a continuing revelation of the divine. Alongside revelation in sacred



Scripture, there is a divine manifestation in the blaze of the sun and the fall of night. This contemplation of creation allows us to discover in each thing a teaching which God wishes to hand on to us, since “for the believer, to contemplate creation is to hear a message, to listen to a paradoxical and silent voice.” (LS, 85)

**Leader:** *SHARING* Take time now to share with a person beside you why you chose this particular gift of nature, what it means to you and how you would feel if it no longer existed on our Earth

## **INTERCESSIONS**

**Leader:** O God, you have blessed us and call us to be caregivers of earth.

**Side 1** We pray for our world, your gift of creation  
that we may share and conserve its resources,  
live in reverence for its beauty and in harmony with one another.  
Lord of creation ~ **Response:** In your mercy, hear us.

**Side 2** You have created a rich land of streams and springs,  
of wheat and barley, vines and oil and honey.  
In our greed and indifference, we have made a world of suffering and  
sorrow. We pray for those who bear the weight of affliction,  
that they may come to share the life of wholeness and plenty.  
Lord of creation ~ **Response:** In your mercy, hear us.

**All** Social injustice and fashion are directly intertwined with exploitative  
working conditions, low wages and widespread child labour. We pray that  
our government leaders will move to create regulations to protect all  
those harmed by this industry.  
Lord of creation ~ **Response:** In your mercy, hear us

## **CLOSING PRAYER**

In Christ you call us to a new way of life,  
loving our neighbours before ourselves.  
Help us to treat with care and respect the world as it is  
as we live in hope and anticipation of the world as it will be  
when your Kin'dom comes and your will is done.  
Thank you for those, living and departed,  
who have shown a true respect for your creation.  
Help us to follow in their footsteps,  
until, with them, we see you face to face,  
where all is made new in Christ our Lord.

(Catholic Health Association of the United States, 2014)

**Closing Song:** *O Beautiful Gaia* <https://youtu.be/MLZW78u-Cfk> or one of your choice

## Did You Know?



People seldom think of water when they think of plastics. But making a plastic water bottle requires [six times as much water](#) as the bottle itself contains.

More than [500 billion plastic bags](#)—one million bags per minute—were produced worldwide last year. Many plastic bags have a working life of a few minutes, followed by an afterlife of centuries. Even after plastics disintegrate, they remain as microplastics, minute particles permeating every niche of life on the planet.

To learn more about *Planet vs. Plastics* and join the movement for a plastic-free future, please visit: <https://www.earthday.org/ear>

Also EARTHDAY.ORG's [Earth Hub](#) for all fact sheets, toolkits, press releases, and articles.

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1. Twelve leading Islamic scholars at a U.N. Environment Assembly in Nairobi, Kenya wrote *Al Mizan* (meaning balance) applying Islamic teachings, values and principles to today's environment challenges. It calls on all Muslims to embrace sustainability in their daily lives and work together to protect our common home.

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