

## Earth Day Prayer, 2017

*Earth Day 2017 has as its theme, “Environmental and Climate Literacy,” which calls us to a thoughtful study of environmental issues so that we may act with discernment to defend God’s Creation. This is very much in keeping with Pope Francis’ call in Laudato Si’ and his recent declarations, calling us to a deeper understanding of the environment, both in terms of theological and scientific concerns. The following prayer includes quotations from Pope Francis.*



We listen to the words of our Pope as we pray to respect God’s Creation  
And to reflect deeply on the environmental issues we must face,  
So we can play our role in the healing of the Earth,  
So we can comprehend in our deepest being that “everything is connected.”

We are called to recognize the earth “is a garden to be cultivated,”  
As we are all gardeners needing to touch the soil, the “source of life,”  
And to experience the mystery of growing things, God’s sacred gifts.  
In this way, we celebrate our connections with all living things.

We are called to respect and understand biodiversity,  
“which gives glory to God” by its existence,  
and to reject any tendency “to be indifferent or resigned” to its loss,  
And not to turn away from the “destruction of ecosystems” that gird Creation.

We are called to renounce “infinite, unlimited growth,”  
Realizing that the earth’s resources are limited  
And that we must share our “common home” with all other members  
Of the human family, and with the generations to come after us.

We are called to experience, with mind and heart and soul,  
That “all is communion” through an “ecological conversion,”  
That we are all necessary to play a passionately informed role  
As we embrace “our responsibility to ourselves,  
our neighbors, Creation, and the Creator.” Amen.

— Jane Deren, Ph.D.