

The background is a complex, abstract composition of various organic shapes and colors. It includes shades of olive green, burnt orange, dark charcoal, and deep red. There are stylized floral motifs, such as a large flower with a yellow center and pinkish petals, and other abstract forms that suggest leaves and stems. The overall style is modern and artistic.

Season of Creation

Pilgrimage

Why I Wake Early

By Mary Oliver

Hello, Sun in my face.
Hello, you who make the morning
and spread it over the fields
and into the faces of the tulips
and the nodding morning glories,
and into the windows of, even, the
miserable and crotchety-
best preacher there ever was,
dear star, that just happens
to be where you are in the universe
to keep us from ever-darkness,
to ease us with warm touching,
to hold us in the great hands of light--
good morning, good morning, good morning..
Watch, now, how I start the day
in happiness, in kindness.

lament

Creation and the Cross

Elizabeth Johnson

Calvary graphically shows that the God of suffering love abides in solidarity with all creatures, bearing the cost of new life through endless millennia of evolution, from the extinction of whole species to, yes, every sparrow that falls to the ground. The Creator of all flesh is silently present with creatures in their pain and dying. The cross signals that God is present in the midst of anguish, bearing every creature and all creation forward with an unimaginable promise.

"I did not intend my creatures to
make themselves servants and
slaves to the world's pleasures..."
-Catherine of Siena

"When we violate, abuse, exploit, or even simply ignore non-human creatures, we are rejecting a core dimension of our humanity and God's calling for us."
-Br. Keith Nelson, SSJE

"Is it realistic to hope that those who are obsessed with maximizing profits will stop to reflect on the environmental damage which they will leave behind for future generations? Where profits alone count, there can be no thinking about the rhythms of nature, its phases of decay and regeneration, or the complexity of ecosystems which may be gravely upset by human interventions."

- Pope Francis

Adapted from "Prayer of Lament" written by the four Religious
Orders in the Anglican Church of Melanesia, as published in
"Listen to the Voice of Creation"

O god of the whole creation, you have created
land and trees, animals and all living creatures
on the earth. We are destroying the forests
through poisons and logging; the voices of the
birds, insects and forest dwellers are silenced.
You created the wonders of the ocean, the fish,
shells, reefs, whales, waves, corals. The oceans
are warming, and as they drown in plastic, their
voices are being stilled.

We turn to you in sorrow and repentance.
Please help us to care for the oceans, the land
and the forest, and open our eyes to their
blessing.

All Creation is speaking to us, but their voices
have been silenced by the roar of our greed.
Lord in your mercy, Hear our prayer.

Action *and* Contemplation

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The Canticle of Brother Sun and Sister Moon

St. Francis of Assisi

Most High, all-powerful, all-good Lord, all praise is Yours, all glory, all honor and all blessings. To you alone, Most High, do they belong, and no mortal lips are worthy to pronounce Your Name.

Praised be You my Lord with all Your creatures, especially Sir Brother Sun, who is the day through whom You give us light. And he is beautiful and radiant with great splendor, of You Most High, he bears the likeness.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars, in the heavens you have made them bright, precious and fair.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Brothers Wind and Air, and fair and stormy, all weather's moods, by which You cherish all that You have made.

Praised be You my Lord through Sister Water, so useful, humble, precious and pure.

Praised be You my Lord through Brother Fire, through whom You light the night and he is beautiful and playful and robust and strong.

Praised be You my Lord through our Sister, Mother Earth who sustains and governs us, producing varied fruits with colored flowers and herbs.

Praise be You my Lord through those who grant pardon for love of You and bear sickness and trial.

Blessed are those who endure in peace, by You Most High, they will be crowned.

Praised be You, my Lord through Sister Death, from whom no one living can escape. Blessed are they She finds doing Your Will. No second death can do them harm. Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks, and serve Him with great humility.

Apprehend God in all things,

for God is in all things. Every single creature is full of God, and is a book about God. Every creature is a word of God. If I spend enough time with the tiniest creature--even a caterpillar--I would never have to prepare a sermon, so full of God is every creature. -Meister Eckhart

All animals who lift their voices at dawn sing to God. The volcanoes and the clouds and the trees cry to us about God. The whole creation cries to us penetratingly with a great joy about the existence and the beauty and the love of God. The music roars it into our ears, the landscape calls it into our eyes. In all of nature we find God's initials, and all God's creatures are God's love letters to us.

All of nature burns with love created through love to light love in us. Nature is like a shadow of God, a reflection of God's beauty. The still, blue lake is a reflection of God. In every atom lives an image of the trinity, a figure of the trinitarian God. And also my own body is created to love God. Each of my cells is a hymn about the Creator and an ongoing declaration of love.

A reading from: "To Live is To Love"

by: Ernesto Cardenal

"ONLY WHEN OUR CLEVER BRAIN AND
HUMAN HEART WORK TOGETHER IN
HARMONY CAN WE ACHIEVE OUR
TRUE POTENTIAL" –JANE GOODALL

"Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find the reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts. There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature--the assurance that dawn comes after night, and spring after winter." -Rachel Carson

"What is good for the world will be good for us. That requires that we make the effort to know the world and to learn what is good for it. We must learn to cooperate in its processes, and to yield to its limits. But even more important, we must learn to acknowledge that the creation is full of mystery; we will never entirely understand it. We must abandon arrogance and stand in awe. We must recover the sense of the majesty of creation, and the ability to be worshipful in its presence. For I do not doubt that it is only on the condition of humility and reverence before the world that our species will be able to remain in it."

"The Art of the Commonplace" by: Wendell Berry