

"Every Leaf in Springtime"

April 22, 2021

An Earth Day Message

Dear Sisters and Brothers of Saint Luke's,

Thursday is Earth Day.

We are connected to the earth. Every morning we wake up with air to breathe, water to drink, and the sun to warm us. These are gifts from God. When you ponder the experience of simply being alive to meet every morning anew, it is an extraordinary thing. Scientists tell us how rare it is that all the conditions were met so that life could be sustained on planet earth, our home. Our very bodies are made up of atoms from the air, water and earth. Every tool, machine, appliance and device we use is constructed from materials in our environment. Everything we eat comes from the environment. It is not possible for us to live, separated from the atmosphere and earth.

Consider the miracle of all living things to always be born, to grow, to reproduce, to age and to die. Even if you haven't studied biology, you can be awed by the interconnectedness of living things. When you see a new branch emerge from a dead stump, you behold the power of life. As Martin Luther writes, "Our Lord has written the promise of resurrection, not in books alone, but in every leaf in springtime."

For most of human history, we have assumed the earth and the atmosphere are endless resources for meeting our needs. The earth, however, is not limitless. The fish in the sea we catch, the trees we cut for wood and for grazing, the balance of atmospheric gases that moderate our temperature, are not limitless. Our industrialized society is using natural resources at a rate faster than the earth can replenish them. Respecting the earth and all living things is an act of praise to God who has given us this home and given us the responsibility to care for it.

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