

# Evening Prayer for Earth Day, 2020

*Leader:* The God of peace grant us a quiet night and a perfect end. Amen.

*All:*       **Our help is in the name of the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth.**

*Leader:* The angels of God guard us through the night,  
and quiet the powers of darkness.

*All:*       **The Spirit of God be our guide, to lead us to peace and to glory.**

*Reader:* For we have grown into union with Christ through a death like His, we shall also be united with Him in the resurrection....If, then, we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall live with Him....Consequently, you too must think of yourselves as being dead to sin and living for God in Christ Jesus: (Romans 6: 5, 7, 11)

This Earth Day, Evening Prayer layered concern for the earth with Stations of the Resurrection. Seven stories of how the Risen Christ appeared to disciples illuminate seven choices people have to treat the Earth in either death-dealing or life-giving ways. Let us meditate upon the resurrection of Christ and pray for grace to be agents of resurrection in our daily life.

## **First Station - Jesus Rises from the Dead**

**All:** We adore You, O Christ and we praise You! Because by the Wood of the Cross and the Light of the Resurrection, You have redeemed the world!

**Reading:** "The angel of the Lord said to the women: 'Do not be afraid! I know that you are seeking Jesus the crucified. He is not here, for He has been raised just as He said.'" (Matthew 28: 5b-6a).

## **Reflection:**

The women went to the tomb to anoint Jesus' body for burial. Today disciples can go to various sites where the fragile ecosystems given for our use and care seem dead. We read dismal statistics about damaging effects of pollution, or global warming, or overfishing, and it's easy to despair in the face of death. "Do

not be afraid,” says the angel—the same love that raised Christ from the dead can magnify the smallest actions of care for the planet, restoring parts of creation in miraculous ways. May the power of the resurrection encourage us to overcome fear and trust God’s redeeming love.

*Silence*

**Prayer:**        **Barbara Deming, in *Earth Prayers*, pp. 76-77**

Spirit of love that flows against our flesh, sets it trembling,  
moves across it as across grass  
Erasing every boundary that we accept  
And swings the doors of our lives wide—  
This is a prayer I sing: Save our perishing earth!  
. . . Spirit that hears each one of us,  
Hears all that is—  
Listens, listens, hears us out—  
Inspire us now! Amen.

### **Second Station - The Disciples Discover the Empty Tomb**

**All:** We adore You, O Christ and we praise You! Because by the Wood of the Cross and the Light of the Resurrection, You have redeemed the world!

**Reading:** "Then the other disciple also went in, the one who had arrived at the tomb first, and he saw and believed" (John 20: 8).

**Reflection:** All too often, we see scarcity: not enough water, fuel, food, imagination, power. Seeing the empty tomb, the disciples were motivated to seek the Risen Lord at work in their midst. They saw and believed in the continuing presence of the Lord of love. We too need to believe that God has given the planet an abundance of resources to sustain creation, if only we can learn to trust and share and discern our needs truly.

*Silence*

**Prayer: Walt Whitman, from *Earth Prayers* p. 99**

I swear the earth shall surely be complete to him or her who shall be complete, the earth remains jagged and broken only to those who remain jagged and broken. [Source of all life, remind us that] there is no greatness or power that emulates those of the earth, there can be no theory of any account unless it corroborate the theory of the earth, No politics, song, religion, behavior or what not, is of account unless it compare with the amplitude of earth, unless it face the exactness, vitality, impartiality, rectitude of the earth.

May the Risen Lord breathe on our minds and open our eyes that we may follow Him in His risen life. Grant this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Third Station - The Risen Lord Appears to Mary Magdalen, Apostle to the Apostles**

**All:** We adore You, O Christ and we praise You! Because by the Wood of the Cross and the Light of the Resurrection, You have redeemed the world!

**Reading:** "She turned around and saw Jesus there, but did not know it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?' She thought He was the gardener and said to Him, 'Sir, if you carried Him away, tell me where you laid Him, and I will take Him.' Jesus said to her, 'Mary!' She turned and said to Him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni, " which means Teacher. Jesus said to her, 'Stop holding on to Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to My brothers and tell them, 'I am going to My Father and your Father, to My God and your God.' Mary of Magdalen went and announced to the disciples, 'I have seen the Lord,' and what He told her" (John 20: 14b-18).

**Reflection:** Mary, weeping at the futility of her actions, can't recognize Jesus until she hears the Lord she followed and loved call her by name. Can you hear the voice of Jesus, or feel the invitation of the Holy Spirit to lift your head out of everyday routine and delight in the air, or sky, or plants, or the interconnectedness of life? In the fourth gospel, Mary Magdalen is given the mission to carry the good news of the Resurrection. We too can respond to the creation by inviting others to share our joy, to really see the world we inhabit, to notice the diversity, detail, and patterns all around us.. Mary is known over the

centuries as "the apostle to the Apostles"—may we too become known as bearer of the good news found in nature and in each other.

**Prayer:**

Meet us, O God, in polluted rivers, in smog, in endangered species, in denuded forests and fractured mountains. Help us heal the wounds we have inflicted on each other and on the planet that sustains us. Free us to share glimpses of your healing power with others, that we may align our actions with your winds, and sun, and rain.

O heavenly Father, *who hast* filled the world with beauty: Open our eyes to behold *thy* gracious hand in all *thy* works; that, rejoicing in *thy* whole creation, we may learn to serve *thee* with gladness; for the sake of him through whom all things were made, *thy* Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.* (BCP, p. 814)

**Fourth Station -The Risen Lord Appears on the Road to Emmaus**

**All:** We adore You, O Christ and we praise You! Because by the Wood of the Cross and the Light of the Resurrection, You have redeemed the world!

**Reading:** "...It happened that while they were conversing and debating, Jesus Himself drew near and walked with them, but their eyes were prevented from recognizing Him.... And He said to them, 'Oh, how foolish you are! How slow of heart to believe all that the prophets spoke! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and enter into His glory?' Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, He interpreted to them what referred to Him in all the scriptures" (Luke 24: 15, 25-27).

**Reflection:** The Emmaus road is the story of the Christian life. These disciples were walking away from Jerusalem, grieving, disappointed, and once again unable to recognize the Risen Christ. The Risen Lord Jesus accompanies us along the road, even when we are moving in the wrong direction. The Risen Christ, known in worship and life, can "break open" the Word to understand the stories of our lives and read them in harmony with the pattern of the Scriptures.

## *Silence*

### **Prayer: Jewish Prayer, from *Earth Prayers*, p. 57**

How wonderful, O Lord, are the works of your hands; the heavens declare your glory, the arch of sky displays Your handiwork. In Your love You have given us the power to behold the beauty of Your world, robed in all its splendor. The sun and the stars, the valleys and hills, the rivers and lakes all disclose Your presence. The roaring breakers of the sea tell of Your awesome might, the beast of the field and the birds of the air bespeak Your wondrous will. In Your goodness You have made us able to hear the music of the world. The voices of loved ones reveal to us that You are in our midst. A divine voice sings through all creation.

### **Fifth Station - The Risen Lord is Recognized in the Breaking of the Bread**

**All:** We adore You, O Christ and we praise You! Because by the Wood of the Cross and the Light of the Resurrection, You have redeemed the world!

**Reading:** " ...They urged Him, 'Stay with us, for it is nearly evening and the day is almost over.' So He went in to stay with them. And it happened that while He was with them at table, He took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them. With that, their eyes were opened and they recognized Him, but He vanished from their sight. Then they said to each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while He spoke to us on the way and opened the scriptures to us'" (Luke 24: 29-32).

**Reflection:** The encounter on the road leads to the table, the breaking of the bread and the total gift of self. Humans, individually and collectively, exploit resources when we focus primarily on our own needs and wants. We miss our connection to each other; we miss our connection to all of creation, we miss our connection to the source of life only known in sharing what we fear we can't afford to share. At Eucharist, in the receiving, breaking, blessing, and sharing of Christ's body and of the earth, God's body, our eyes are opened to the unity and interdependence of all. Small everyday actions—reusing plastic bags and

bottles, picking up litter, conserving water and fuel—open our eyes and free our hearts to care more deeply for all life. Humbly, we set out on the various roads of our lives to respond to all the hungers of the human family.

*Silence*

**Prayer:** Annie Besant, from *Earth Prayers*, p. 195.

O Hidden Life vibrant in every atom;  
O Hidden Light! Shining in every creature;  
O Hidden Love! Embracing all in Oneness;  
May each who feels himself as one with Thee,  
Know he is also one with every other.  
Mae each who feels herself as one with Thee,  
Know she is also one with every other. Amen.

### **Ninth Station - The Risen Lord Eats with the Disciples on the Shore of Tiberias**

**All:** We adore You, O Christ and we praise You! Because by the Wood of the Cross and the Light of the Resurrection, You have redeemed the world!

**Reading:** "Jesus said to them, 'Bring some of the fish you just caught.' So Simon Peter went over and dragged the net ashore full of one hundred fifty-three large fish. Even though there were so many, the net was not torn. Jesus said to them, 'Come, have breakfast.' And none of His disciples dared to ask Him, 'Who are You?' because they realized it was the Lord" (John 21: 10-12).

**Reflection:** After the crucifixion, the apostles returned to their former way of life. Out on the familiar Sea of Galilee, these expert fishers find themselves ineffective and baffled because not even a single fish was caught. From the shore, the Risen Lord guides them and directs their nets until they are filled to overflowing. As He prepares breakfast for them, He nourishes their hearts.

When do we find ourselves working anxiously, ineffectively, stubbornly resisting help? When do we refuse to rest, to let ourselves be led or be fed by you? Often it is when we assume that our survival depends solely on our own efforts, and we refuse help. You meet us in anxious work and offer blessing, abundance, food, and rest—thank you.

*Silence*

**Prayer: BCP, p. 824**

Almighty God, we thank you for making the earth fruitful, so that it might produce what is needed for life: Bless those who work in the fields; give us seasonable weather; and grant that we may all share the fruits of the earth, rejoicing in your goodness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

### **Tenth Station - The Risen Lord Forgives Peter and Entrusts Him to Feed His Sheep**

**All:** We adore You, O Christ and we praise You! Because by the Wood of the Cross and the Light of the Resurrection, You have redeemed the world!

**Reading:** "When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?'... Peter was distressed that Jesus had said to him a third time, 'Do you love Me?' and he said to Him, 'Lord, You know everything, You know that I love You.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed my sheep.... Follow Me' " (John 21: 15, 17b, 19b).

**Reflection:** The earth can produce more than enough food to feed everyone on the planet in ways that nurture rather than overtax the land and waters. Humans often betray the fruitfulness and health that God builds into the fabric of creation. We hoard food. We make people in some parts of the world produce food for others to their own detriment. People with ample economic resources expect stores full of food from around the world in all seasons and ignore the costs of shipping and the seasonal patterns that keep renewing the earth. God knows this, forgives us, and reminds us that our task is to feed and sustain the world we have been given. The questions posed by Jesus help Peter to find

reconciliation and to embrace his new mission to tend and feed the sheep. We will be fed in the work of feeding each other and respecting the rhythms and character of the planet.

*Silence*

**Prayer:**        **BCP, p. 825.**

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.*

### **Eleventh Station - The Risen Lord Sends the Disciples into the World**

**All:** We adore You, O Christ and we praise You! Because by the Wood of the Cross and the Light of the Resurrection, You have redeemed the world!

**Reading:** "Go therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age" (Matthew 28: 19-20).

#### **Reflection:**

Each time the disciples experienced the Risen Christ, their guilt and fear and grief became forgiveness and courage and joy. Their lives were transformed, and they were not just willing but eager beyond all measure and at great risk to share the good news. We too can experience the transforming, healing, and renewing power of God as we marvel at God's creation, recognize it as gift, align ourselves with the underlying rhythm of life, and make choices to respect, sustain, and share the resources God continually gives. We must allow the Risen Lord to reinvigorate our whole way of living, helping us to re-evaluate every aspect of our lives with the values of the Kingdom of God.



**Prayer:** BCP. p. 824

Almighty God, whose Son Jesus Christ in his earthly life shared our toil and hallowed our labor: Be present with your people where they work; make those who carry on the industries and commerce of this land responsive to your will; and give to us all a pride in what we do, and a just return for our labor; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

### **Closing Prayers**

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy Name,  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those  
who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
for ever and ever. Amen.**

### **The Suffrages**

V. Show us your mercy, O Lord;  
R. And grant us your salvation.  
V. Clothe your ministers with righteousness;  
R. Let your people sing with joy.  
V. Give peace, O Lord, in all the world;  
R. For only in you can we live in safety.  
V. Lord, keep this nation under your care;

R. And guide us in the way of justice and truth.  
V. Let your way be known upon earth;  
R. Your saving health among all nations.  
V. Let not the needy, O Lord, be forgotten;  
R. Nor the hope of the poor be taken away.  
V. Create in us clean hearts, O God;  
R. And sustain us by your Holy Spirit.

## **The General Thanksgiving**

**All: Almighty God, Father of all mercies,  
we your unworthy servants give you humble thanks  
for all your goodness and loving-kindness  
to us and to all whom you have made.  
We bless you for our creation, preservation,  
and all the blessings of this life;  
but above all for your immeasurable love  
in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ;  
for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.  
And, we pray, give us such an awareness of your mercies,  
that with truly thankful hearts we may show forth your praise,  
not only with our lips, but in our lives,  
by giving up our selves to your service,  
and by walking before you  
in holiness and righteousness all our days;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,  
be honor and glory throughout all ages. Amen.**

Glory to God whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine: Glory to him from generation to generation in the Church, and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever. Amen. Ephesians 3:20,21