

**Earth Day
22 April 2010**

International Earth Day is a global day of action, encouraging people across the globe to walk the talk.

This year marks the campaign's 40th anniversary, and by doing something that respects or protects the Earth we can help to contribute to the *Billion Acts of Green* theme.

Respect for creation is of immense consequence, not least because 'creation is the beginning and the foundation of all God's works', and its preservation has now become essential for the pacific coexistence of mankind.

(Pope Benedict XVI, World Day of Peace Message 2010, Par 1)

About Earth Day Network

Earth Day Network was founded on the premise that all people, regardless of race, gender, income, or geography, have a moral right to a healthy, sustainable environment. Their mission is to broaden and diversify the environmental movement worldwide, and to mobilise it as the most effective vehicle for promoting a healthy, sustainable environment. Their activities include education, public policy, and activism campaigns. Earth Day Network has a global reach with more than 20,000 partners and organizations in 190 countries. More than 1 billion people participate in Earth Day activities, making it the largest secular civic event in the world.

Ecology

The ecological crisis which threatens the health of the planet itself cannot be viewed in isolation from the other crises facing humanity, whether social, economic or related to basic needs such as food and water.

Prudence would thus dictate a profound, long-term review of our model of development, one which would take into consideration the meaning of the economy and its goals with an eye to correcting its malfunctions and misapplications.

(Pope Benedict XVI, World Day of Peace Message 2010, Par 5)

There needs to be a deeper understanding of humans' relationship with God, the earth and one another.

Issues to consider:

Recycling and Waste Reduction

The garbage dumps and junkyards of the world are filling quickly with goods that might have been reused, recycled or composted. The world's old computers rot in scrap yards overseas, leeching toxic chemicals into the ground. Action must be taken to reduce the amount of waste we produce.

Energy

The time to build a clean energy network is now. Action must be taken to develop renewable energy and we must begin a responsible transition from coal and oil.

Sustainable Development

As the world's human population grows, so does our footprint. We must find ways of living and growing in harmony with nature and with the earth's finite resources. Action is needed to promote green building, organic agriculture and responsible environmental practices.

For Reflection

The Book of Genesis, in its very first pages, points to the wise design of the cosmos: it comes forth from God's mind and finds its culmination in man and woman, made in the image and likeness of the Creator to 'fill the earth' and to 'have dominion over' it as 'stewards' of God himself (cf. Gen 1:28).

(Pope Benedict XVI, World Day of Peace Message 2010, Par 1)

The relationship between God, human beings and the whole of creation is indivisible. How have you experienced the connection between cultivating peace and protecting creation?

Sources: ACSJC Discussion Guide: World Day of Peace Message 2010

<http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/>

www.earthday.org

www.earthday.net

Sarah Menassa

Promoter of Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation

Franciscan Provincial Office 47 Victoria Street, WAVERLEY NSW 2024

Telephone: (02) 9369 9309 Fax: (02) 9369 9322