

## Words of inspiration

A selection of verses from Scripture, quotes from the saints, prayers and poems, to aid reflection on our relationship with God's creation. Part of the *Call of Creation* toolkit.

I look up at your heavens, shaped by your fingers,  
at the moon and the stars you set firm –  
what are human beings that you spare a thought for them,  
or the child of Adam that you care for him?

*Psalm 8:3*

I shall make a treaty for them with the wild animals,  
with the birds of heaven and the creeping things of the earth;  
I shall break the bow and the sword  
and warfare, and banish them from the country,  
and I will let them sleep secure.  
I shall betroth you to myself for ever,  
I shall betroth you in uprightness and justice,  
and faithful love and tenderness....

*Hosea 2:18-22*

Thus says Yahweh, your redeemer,  
he who formed you in the womb:  
I, Yahweh, have made all things,  
I alone spread out the heavens.  
When I hammered the earth into shape, who was with me?

*Isaiah 44:24*

By the word of Yahweh the heavens were made,  
by the breath of his mouth all their array.  
He collects the waters of the sea like a dam,  
he stores away the abyss in his treasure-house.

Let the whole earth fear Yahweh,  
let all who dwell in the world revere him;  
for, the moment he spoke it was so,  
no sooner had he commanded, than there it stood!

*Psalm 33: 6-9*

In the beginning was the Word:  
the Word was with God  
and the Word was God.  
He was with God in the beginning.  
Through him all things came into being,  
not one thing came into being except through him.

*John 1:1-3*

See, I am God: see, I am in all things: see, I do all things: see, I ever lift my hands off my works, nor ever shall, without end: see, I lead all things to the end that I ordain it to, from without-beginning, by the same might, wisdom and love that I made it with. How should anything be amiss?

*Julian of Norwich*

Earth at its beginning was for all in common, it was meant for rich and poor alike; what right have you to monopolise the soil? Nature knows nothing of the rich; all are poor when she brings them forth. Clothing and gold and silver, food and drink and covering – we are born without them all; naked we were when earth brought us into life; naked she receives back her sons in the tomb...she bears us all equal, and entombs us all equal in her bosom. Who can tell class from class among the dead?

*St Ambrose of Milan (c340-397)*

Remember, man, you are dust  
And to dust you shall return.

*Ash Wednesday liturgy*

Praised be my Lord God for all his creatures,  
and especially our brother the sun,  
who brings us the day and brings us the light;  
fair is he and shines with a great splendour;  
O Lord, he signifies us to thee.

Praised be my Lord for our sister the moon,  
and for the stars, which he has set clear  
and lovely in the heaven.

Praised be my Lord for our brother the wind,  
and for air and cloud, calms and all the weather,  
by which thou upholdest life in all the creatures.

Praised be my Lord for our sister water,  
who is very serviceable unto us  
and humble and precious and clean.

Praised be my Lord for our brother fire,  
through him thou givest light in the darkness;  
and his is bright and pleasant and very mighty and strong.

Praised be my Lord for our mother the earth,  
who doth sustain and keep us,  
and bringest forth divers fruits  
and flowers of many colours, and grass.

Praise ye and bless ye the Lord,  
and give thanks unto him,  
and serve him with great humility.

*St Francis of Assisi: Canticle of the Sun*

Earth teach me stillness as the grasses are stilled with light.  
Earth teach me suffering as old stones suffer with memory.  
Earth teach me humility as blossoms are humbled with beginning.  
Earth teach me caring as the mother who secures her young.  
Earth teach me courage as the tree which stands all alone.  
Earth teach me limitations as the ant which crawls on the ground.  
Earth teach me freedom as the eagle which soars in the sky.  
Earth teach me resignation as the leaves which die in the fall.  
Earth teach me regeneration as the seed which rises in the spring.  
Earth teach me to forget myself as snow forgets its life.  
Earth teach me to remember kindness as dry fields weep with rain.

*Traditional Ute Prayer (native North American)*

Look to this day for it is life,  
the very breath of life...  
for yesterday is already a dream and tomorrow is only a vision.  
But today, well lived, makes yesterday a dream of happiness  
and every tomorrow a dream of hope.  
Look well, therefore, to this day.

*Ancient Sanskrit poem*

Let each one examine himself, to see what he has done up to now, and what he ought to do. It is not enough to recall principles, state intentions, point to crying injustices and utter prophetic denunciations; these words will lack real weight unless they are accompanied for each individual by a livelier awareness of personal responsibility and by effective action.

*Octagesima Adveniens (A call to action), Pope Paul VI, para. 48*