

Experiencing the earth

By Margo Morris, RSCJ

Save the earth! The rallying cry is familiar. But we've got it backwards; a planetary logic seems to have escaped us. We pray to God for health, life, prosperity, and grace but tend to overlook what supports us, feeds us, and, in a very real sense, "grows" us: Planet Earth.

Earth, sometimes gracious and magnanimous, sometimes volatile and stinting, always provides us with what we need for survival. Yet most of us show no comprehensive understanding of the planet, even after millennia of walking it, working it, and eating it!

We have instead spent hundreds of years creating little worlds, temperature and light controlled, that insulate us from Earth. We live longer, as a result, and with less hardship, to be certain. But we appear to have lost our relationship with our host and our home. This propensity for disconnection – from Earth, from one another, and even from ourselves – is a characteristic that we alone as a species appear to possess. And ironically, we spend our lives trying to become whole.

Why is it so difficult to connect with all that would give us life? Perhaps we need to look to the planet itself for an answer. It seems to be a natural function of earth to literally create chaos in order to arrive at a new level of function and consciousness.

Most likely, Earth can survive us if it has to. But I believe we are now being given a chance to consciously evolve – and to discover that we are neither top nor center, but are one among many life forms, inextricably linked to one another for survival, growth, and development.



What do we need to “get it”? What can we do to consciously connect?

If we remove just a little of that insulation, we can experience Earth itself relieving us of our burdensome need for dominance. Earth can restore our balance if we are willing to notice, listen, and adjust the way we think about things like food, and trees, and animals.

We do not need to move to the country and eschew electricity to experience Earth; the shift required is an interior one. But a few practical, enjoyable activities can enhance the experience.

For example, we might grow herbs in a kitchen window planter and use them with gratitude when we cook. We can go to a farmer’s market, talk to the people who grow the food – and maybe even go visit them. Or we can simply tune in to the sounds of the earth – the wind in the trees, the rain on the roof, the morning and evening birds.

Entering into this kind of conscious relationship not only restores balance but gives us genuine pleasure. Experiencing the Earth in this way reminds us that we do belong in the universe and are profoundly connected to all of creation.

Save the earth? Let us allow earth to save us and deliver us whole to the God whose love infuses ALL. ❖

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