

# The Lord's Prayer: a green meditation

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In these days when all humankind is becoming more and more aware of the damage to the environment done by thoughtless 'development' in the interest of short term economic advantage, it is imperative that we should reflect more deeply on the barriers between us.

'Religion is one of the most divisive things we are likely to encounter', said a friend. This is true if we understand 'religion' in a restricted sense, as one of the ways of keeping out those who cannot agree with us. But religion can, we believe, be a power to bring human beings together; it does not necessarily conflict with the impetus to unity originating in the green issues. In fact, the Lord's Prayer—the 'Our Father'—arguably is one of the most ecologically sensitive of all prayers ...

Our Father,

Abba—intimate and loving origin of all, beyond gender yet embracing Fatherhood and Motherhood in the absolute inclusiveness of your Being—you are closer to us than we are to ourselves.

who art in heaven,

In eternity is your dwelling-place: time and space are subsumed in your presence.

hallowed be thy name.

You are beyond our understanding, yet we bow down in reverence and thanksgiving before the manifestation of both your cosmic glory and the tenderness revealed in the smallest details of your creation.

Thy kingdom come.

We perceive dimly a glimmer of that destiny to which we each are called—to cooperate and to fulfil that end for which we are made, love.

Thy will be done on earth,

Our hope and our faith lie in the confidence that our weakness and our creaturely failings—selfishness, pride, rebelliousness—cannot triumph...

as it is in heaven.

... in the end—which is perpetually beginning in your act of creation.

Give us this day  
our daily bread

We trust that your providence will continue to sustain our lives on this our planet...

and forgive us our trespasses,

... notwithstanding all the ignorance, greed, suspicion and fear by which we do violence not only to others in the ecological community but to ourselves.

as we forgive those  
who trespass against us

For we need forgiveness as much as those who harm us.

and lead us not into temptation

Let us not fall into thinking that any of us are guiltless.

but deliver us from evil.

Protect us from our tendency to presume that we can totally determine our lives, and preserve us from the fruits of our pride and complacency.

For thine is the kingdom,  
the power and the glory

For by acknowledging you and our dependence on you, we acknowledge our interdependence on others who share with us in the cosmic dance...

for ever and ever. Amen.

... until the end of time.  
Be it so.