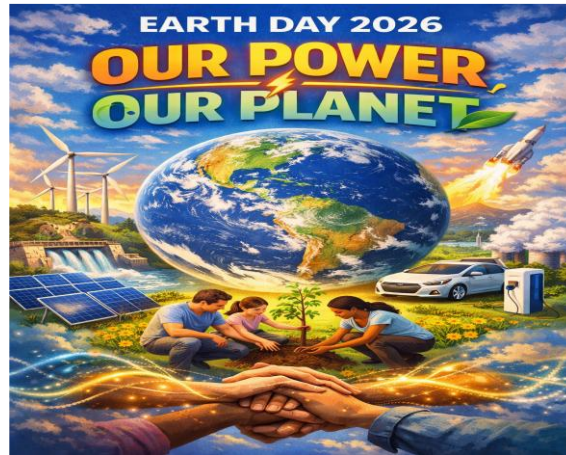


EARTH DAY
THEME: *OUR POWER, OUR PLANET*
APRIL 22, 2026



“Each morning, we hold out the chalice of our being to receive, to carry, and give back.”
- Dag Hammarskjöld

Opening Song: In this joyful song we are being called to wake up—both physically and spiritually—and step into the light of a new day to embrace the power deep in our hearts, a power of God that encourages listeners to participate in the creation of a new world.

Rise and Shine: <https://youtu.be/PjXZ7oV3sNw?si=RIHJFCQcVTYMH1S6>

When we hear the theme of Earth Day - *Our Power, Our Planet* - we may wonder if such a call belongs more to the younger generation than to us, older people. We might feel that it is the next generation who is best equipped to face the urgent challenges of a world that seems to be unravelling into uncertainty and fear.

Yet, if we pause, and listen more deeply another truth begins to emerge. Besides the voices that speak of crises and collapse, there are also other gentle but persistent voices speaking of an unveiling, a quiet but profound rebirth. What may appear as unraveling can also be understood as a threshold, an opening into a new way of being, a new story for our planet and for all of humanity.

From this perspective, we begin to recognize that we are not without power. In fact, shaped by years of deep grounding in God through prayer, contemplation, and faithful living, we as religious carry a profound and transformative power—the power of influence. It is a quiet power, yet deeply generative. It is a power that does not dominate but awakens, a power that can move hearts, shift consciousness, and call forth hope.

This is the power that can draw us beyond fear and awaken within us a prophetic voice - a voice that dares to name a different future. A voice that helps guide the human family away from ways of living that harm the Earth and one another toward a vision that honours, sustains, and cherishes the equality of all life.

This movement has been named by Joanne Macy as *The Great Turning*, and it also resonates deeply with what Pope Francis calls in his encyclical *Laudato Si'* an “*ecological conversion*”. It is, at its heart, a conversion of the whole person, a spiritual, cultural, and moral transformation, a turning of the heart toward right relationship: with God, with one another, and with all creation.

For us, as religious, this is the most important work of our time. We are now being called to be witnesses to this new way of seeing and living, by walking with others along this sacred, evolving path to inspire and gently persuade. And above all, we are being called to remain attentive to the movement of the Holy Spirit who continues to guide, direct, renew, and call forth life in every age.

This awakening is not at a distance, rather it is deeply personal and urgently needed. It calls us to allow our hearts, and that of others, to be reshaped, to be redirected away from patterns that no longer serve life in today’s world. It invites us into a deeper alignment with truth, with love, and with the profound interconnection of all that is

In this great turning, we begin to listen not only with our ears, but with our hearts. We become more aware of God’s call echoing all around us, woven through creation, in Scripture, and in the cries of our world. And as we respond, something within us is transformed: fear gives way to love, division to unity, dishonesty to truth, and injustice to peace. This is the power entrusted to us. This is our shared calling - to restore the sacredness of our planet Earth. And in this awakening of hope and trust, we catch a glimpse of God’s Kingdom coming ‘on earth as it is in heaven’.

Hymn: Canticle of the Turning by Rory Cooney.

This closing hymn is based on the **Magnificat (Luke 1:46–55)**

https://youtu.be/trhxP6VAOuc?si=l3Qq55tG3Ag_G7Of

