



BISHOP MICHAEL PFEIFER, O.M.I.
Bishop Emeritus of the Diocese of San Angelo

World Earth Day 2025 Focuses on Our Power, Our Planet

Tuesday, April 22, 2025, is the 55th anniversary of Earth Day. Everyone is invited to support, to study and reflect on Earth Day's 2025 theme – Our Power, Our Planet. There are many ways to make a difference for our planet on Earth Day and every day. Join millions worldwide in Earth Day 2025 activities. Attend a local event or plan and register your own. Earthday.org mentions several resources such as quizzes, fact sheets, articles and more to help us celebrate Earth Day this year in our homes and communities, at work and at school. We are invited to act now to make smart powerful energy choices at a family level and community level and demand rapid renewable energy deployment from your governments, industries, schools and businesses.

Our duty is to protect the environment

Earth Day serves as a powerful reminder of our shared responsibility to protect the environment. With every passing year, the urgency grows – whether its climate change, pollution, or deforestation, the planets' ecosystems are facing increasing challenges. Scientist are unified on the causes of climate change and warn that without quick and comprehensive action, we are heading

towards an existential threat to the Earth and all of its inhabitants, especially the most vulnerable among us. As we pause to reflect on our environmental impact, we must also remember that our power is directly tied to the health of our planet. In accord with the theme of Earth Day, we are invited to explore how our collective actions shape the future of the world around us, and how we can tap into the power of mindful, sustainable living. [Diversdirect.com](https://www.diversdirect.com) points out the theme of this Earth Day is simple yet profound: Our Planet, Our Power. We often think of power in terms of external forces – energy, machines, and technology. But power, in its truest sense, is about choices. It's about the choices we make every day that affect the environment which surrounds us. Whether it's the energy we use, the waste we produce, or the products we buy, our individual actions ripple out, creating broader effects. As a collective body of people, we wield enormous power over the health of our planet. The planet's resources are finite. Freshwater, fertile soil, clean air – they aren't guaranteed to last forever if we don't manage them carefully. In accord with the theme of Earth Day, all are invited to choose to be part of the solution and how we can tap into our power to live more sustainably. Our daily choices hold immense power.

Pope Francis urges climate justice

As regards the theme of Earth Day, Pope Francis has been a prophetic voice for climate justice, urging action to protect the earth

and the vulnerable. His teachings challenge us to resist greed, embrace sustainability, and advocate for systemic change. Pope Francis has fearlessly and directly addressed the links between “the cry of the earth” and “the cry of the poor” and the vulnerable. Pope Francis spoke about the various international and national movements that have sprung up to appeal to our consciences about caring for our common home. He noted how young people have taken to the streets to teach us we have no future if we destroy the environment that sustains us. Some fall into despair at the magnitude of the problem, but the Pope assures us everyone has a role to play -- every little bit helps. We must work to influence our elected officials at all levels to uphold their duty to care for the Earth and its inhabitants, especially the poor and vulnerable. We must be vocal in calling for policies that protect creation. This includes advocating for clean and renewable energy, pushing back against harmful deregulation of rules and laws that protect life and speaking up in defense for those who suffer most from environment degradation. We must work to influence our elected officials at all levels to uphold their duty to care for the Earth and its inhabitants, especially the poor and vulnerable.

The History of Earth Day and gratitude to God

As we look back on the history of the importance of the first Earth Day in 1970, we recall it mobilized millions of Americans from all

walks of life to give birth to the modern environmental movement. Earth Day is celebrated on April 22nd because it marks the beginning of spring in the Northern Hemisphere and the end of autumn in the Southern Hemisphere. Earth Day is celebrated in more than 193 countries with over a billion people participating annually. On this International Mother Earth Day, we reflect on humanity's important relationship, not only among human beings but the whole natural world. The UN Secretary General reminded us that from the air we breathe, the water we drink and the soil that grows our food – humanity's health depends on the health of Mother Earth.

The annual celebration on Earth Day indeed calls us to pick up the pace of not only caring for our fellow human beings, but we must also care for the entire earth and all creation. Our Creator gave us stewardship over the Earth, not to dominate it but to care, protect and enrich it. As Pope Francis has stated many times the Earth is our Common Home, the only home we have, the only one we will pass onto the next generation. Today all humanity should lift up prayers of thanksgiving to our loving God for the wonderful gift of Mother Earth, which provides us with the means we need to stay alive. And then, humbly pray that we will be better stewards to better care for this magnificent gift. This is a day to stay alive; to be grateful for all the good things God gives us from Mother Earth, and to pledge that

we will use the means we have to help Mother Earth to be filled with the power of life for now and in the future.

Our power is to enrich our planet

In accord with the theme of this wonderful day, we reflect together on the power we have with Earth itself to improve and enrich our planet. Everyone, as already mentioned, is invited to support Earth Day theme: Our Power Our Planet. We ask the question; how can we empower ourselves to make a positive difference? To begin, we remember that Earth Day is important because it raises awareness and promotes action towards protecting our planet and its natural resources. It provides an opportunity for individuals, organizations, and governments around the world to come together and discuss the urgent need to address the global environmental crisis we are facing, such as climate change, air and water pollution, deforestation, and loss of biodiversity. Every good action matters – and we all have a role to play. Nature.org gives us four ways to get started.

- Volunteer With Us

Want to get your hands dirty for nature? Help a preserve by removing invasive species or collect data. Or virtually volunteer your professional skills

- Explore Our Externships

We partnered with The National Geographic Society to create unique opportunities for people 18-25 to gain conservation training and experience.

- Share Lessons from Nature Lab

Explore virtual field trips and nature teaching guides great for classrooms or home from Nature Lab, our youth curriculum platform.

- Plant a Tree (or Three)

When we restore critical forests, we fight climate change and support biodiversity. Help us reach our goal of a planting a billion trees!

How we bring together the two words – Our Power, Our Planet

As mentioned, Earth Day is the occasion for empowering ourselves to make a difference. While it can feel overwhelming to think about global challenges, we must remember that change often begins with small, intentional steps. Whether it's reducing our carbon footprint, embracing renewable energy, or simply being more conscious of our consumption, our daily choices hold immense power. This helps us to see how we bring together in a living manner the two words of the theme of Earth Day, "Our Power. Our Planet". Diversdirect.com invites us to consider how shifting to energy-efficient appliances, reducing plastic waste, and supporting eco-conscious business can reduce the burden on natural resources. It

doesn't take a large-scale revolution – it begins with each of us taking responsibility and being mindful of how our decisions impact the planet. Small changes make a big difference:

- **Reduce. Reuse. Recycle:** These three Rs are fundamental in minimizing waste. Recycle products when possible and always try to reduce consumption and reuse items to avoid unnecessary waste.
- **Opt for renewable energy sources:** Solar, wind and other renewable energies are increasingly accessible. Consider making the switch to lower your carbon emissions.
- **Support sustainable brands:** Choose companies that prioritize sustainability in their supply chains and manufacturing processes. By supporting them, we vote with our dollars for a greener future.
- **Eat more plant-based foods:** The food choices we make also have a huge impact on the environment. Plant-based diets are generally more sustainable, requiring fewer resources and producing less pollution.

Diversdirect.com reminds us that though individual action is crucial, we must recognize the power of collective action. The environment isn't a challenge that can be solved by any one person or country. It requires all of the world working together.

Governments, businesses, individuals, must collaborate for future

generations. This means supporting policies that combat climate change, funding initiatives, protect diversities, and demanding great accountability from corporations that harm the environment.

The Earth is our common home

Mother Earth provides us with all we need to live. In return we need to give power back to Mother Earth to continue the mission given to her by our loving Creator. We do this individually and as a family by caring for and protecting the piece of our common home entrusted to each family and community. Earth Day helps us realize how we must use the power given to us to enrich our part of the planet.

As Pope Francis has stated, the beautiful God given gift of planet Earth is our common home for all people worldwide. Like in our homes, all members of the family are to care, clean and protect the home in which we live. In a similar way each and every human being is to care for, cultivate, protect, and preserve for Mother Earth which provides all we need to stay alive. Our responsibility for God's Earth is to respect natural laws with the delicate equilibria, the biodiversity existing between all creatures of this world. In this way, we come to see that nature has intrinsic value and that each creature possesses its own particular goodness. This Earth Day all people everywhere on the globe should raise their voices – in our homes, schools, churches, workplaces, cities, civic and faith communities,

government offices and demand leaders to make peace with nature. World Earth Day is indeed an important time to focus our attention and appreciation on the wonderful God given gift of Mother Earth with all its power and life and how we can be better stewards for our planet and the surrounding universe.