



..... "the voice of the infinite in the small"

YOU ARE PRESENT
in the whole universe and
in the smallest of your creatures.



• As we begin this time of prayer,
let us prepare for some forms of life we might find
challenging to love-

--the small crawling and flying creatures.

name some

Science tells us that insects were here long before humans (more than 290 million years before) and that they have a very good chance of being here long after humans. Science and religion together tell us that all of creation is interwoven, interdependent and that we would do well to respect all life forms whether or not they obviously contribute to our pleasure. Indeed, the Earth Charter calls us to respect these life forms

(if not necessarily to love):

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Even creatures we consider pests have their special place. The praying mantis was chosen by Stone Age African hunters as the highest representation of value and meaning or "the voice of the infinite in the small."



•• Let us light the larger candle to represent the Divine Infinite present in the primordial flaring forth 13 billion years ago.

••• Now let us light the smaller candle to represent the voice of the Infinite, the Holy Triune God in these small creatures, insects, that appeared 395 million years ago.

•••• A balance of nature depends on allowing all creatures to play their parts. Flies and mosquitoes pollinate wild flowers and are themselves a food source for frogs, bats, and fish. Beetles (ladybugs) eat aphids. Ants help peonies to bloom.

••••• We are generally more favorably inclined toward bees, especially honeybees, than toward other insects. In early Christian symbolism, bees symbolized resurrection and immortality. They disappear into the darkness of the hive in the winter and reappear in the spring. Honey has been considered a powerful and mystical substance, representing both wisdom and sweetness. The little bee, in cooperation with many other little bees, makes this great treat of honey possible.



tell a story of your experience with the infinite and the small ones who live here with us on Earth



..... A POEM BY RUMI

YOU ARE PRESENT
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in the smallest of your creatures.

You should try to hear the name the Holy One has for things.
We name everything according to the number of legs it has;
The Other one names things according to what they have inside.



YOU ARE PRESENT
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from Hildegard of Bingen

Every creature is a glittering, glistening mirror of divinity.

from Meister Eckhart

If I spent enough time with the tiniest creature--even a caterpillar---
I would never have to prepare a sermon. So full of God is every creature.



from Elizabeth Johnson

In their beauty, their variety, their interacting, their coming to be and passing away, they witness to the over flowing goodness of their Creator.

from Pope Francis

From panoramic vistas to the tiniest living form, nature is a constant source of wonder and awe. It is also a continuing revelation of the divine.

Canadian Bishops, "You Love All That Exists" as quoted in Laudato Si!

from Thia Delio, O.F.M.

Deep within we long for unity because, at the most fundamental level, we are already one. We belong to one another because we have the same source of love; the love that flows through the trees is the same love that flows through my being . . . We are deeply connected in this flow of love, beginning on the level of nature where we are the closest of kin because the earth is our mother.

from Richard Rohr

The mystery of cosmic incarnation, when taken to its theological conclusion, leads us to enjoy a very real participation in the same single state of Being, to varying degrees and with different qualities. This eliminates any radical distinction between things, peoples, and creatures because Christ existed in all matter from the first moment of the Big Bang. Remember, "There is only Christ! Who is everything and Who is in everything" (Colossians 3:11).

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For sharing:

Which of these quotes captures your mind and heart? Why?

What small creature would you like to honor? How will you do that?

What is happening to you as you ponder the words in this prayer?

Let us pray about those who are considered small and unworthy and ask to become aware that God's love extends as much to them as to any. Let us be mindful of the smallest efforts and the tiniest creatures as we go about our tasks great and small.

YOUR PETITIONS

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CLOSING PRAYER

Be praised, God of great and small. Be the Infinite within our small, finite selves. Be the Infinite within our great possibilities. Let us see your work even in creatures that do not please us. Let us seek your wisdom in the enormous diversity that surrounds us. Let us hear your voice in every act of kindness. Let us feel our relationship with all of
THE COMMUNITY OF LIFE ON EARTH. AMEN.

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