



Earth Day 2019: Trees for the Amazon

Earth Day falls on April 22, just after Easter. We invite you to host an event on Mercy Sunday, April 28, to celebrate the gift of hope for all creation.

Earth Day

This year, the official theme for Earth Day is “Protect Our Species.” To celebrate the gift of new life and hope, and to symbolize our commitment to protecting all creation, we’re taking action together. On April 28, which is Mercy Sunday and the first Sunday after Earth Day, we invite you to join Catholics around the world.

- 1) **Hold a tree-planting ceremony** as a community, rejoicing in your common commitment to protect creation and the web of life.
- 2) **Sign a letter to political leaders** urging them to protect forests and the communities that call them home.

By uniting our action and our advocacy, we can heal our local environment and create global change.

Start planning your Earth Day event:

- **Reach out to the leaders** in your religious community or parish to talk about how the community can take this action together
- **Scout locations for a tree.** This could be on the property of your retreat house, monastery, school, or parish, or maybe you can connect with a local park organization or an organization that is beautifying under-served communities. Think creatively!
- **Contact a nursery or local ecological group** to determine the best types of trees to plant for your region
- **Educate others about the importance of the Amazon** and why it is important for all of us to protect this critical region. Work with your local green team, Laudato Si’ Circle, or chapter.
- **Talk to the school or the religious education team.** This is a perfect project for kids.
- **Invite others.** Share this campaign with other Catholic institutions, with your diocese, and with interfaith organizations as well. Let’s plant 1,000 trees for creation!

Lent

Lent is the backdrop to Earth Day and Mercy Sunday. During Lent, we’re choosing plant-based meals to grow in simplicity and live more sustainably in our common home. Many of us enjoy meat, and we’re grateful for the farming families who make our meals



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possible. Focusing our diets on plant-based meals and enjoying meat as an occasional treat is a sustainable way of living in our common home.

The Amazon and its people benefit from the choice of plant-based meals. It's a surprising fact that cattle ranching is the leading cause of deforestation in the Amazon—in Brazil, cattle ranching is responsible for approximately 80% of all deforestation—and that livestock ranching is a major source of greenhouse gas emissions.

The Church cares for all creation, and this year we're holding a special focus on the Amazon. In October, bishops from all around the world will gather in Rome for a synod, a month-long conversation on protecting the Amazon and its people.

We invite you to [celebrate Lent as a community](#), and to prepare for your Earth Day event now.