



RNDM Earth Community

“We are One, We are Love”

December, 2010

“Let ours be a time remembered for awakening a new respect for our earth and all her inhabitants, for one another, for ourselves and for our common destiny.” (RNDM Congregational Chapter, 2008)

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12 SPIRITUAL PRACTICES TO HONOR THE EARTH

Attention. Ernesto Cardenal in *Abide in Love* observes: “Everything in nature has a trademark--God’s trademark: the stripes on a shell and the stripes on a zebra; the grain of the wood and the veins of the dry leaf; the markings on the dragonfly’s wings and the pattern of stars on a photographic plate; the panther’s coat and the epidermal cells of the lily petal; the structure of atoms and galaxies. All bear God’s fingerprints.” Go for a walk and look for God’s trademarks – and, perhaps, use a camera to document evidence of God’s fingerprints in nature.

Be Present. Annie Dillard has written: “My God, what a world! There is no accounting for one second of it”. Get personal with one small piece of the Earth - sit in the dirt; play in the sand; roll in the grass; stand under a waterfall. Sense the Earth as an animal senses it. Be present with your planetary host.

Connections. Share a story or write in your journal about a time when you were humbled, soothed, awed by something in the natural world. How did you feel connected to nature?

Devotion. Adopt a tree, beach, waterway, or a piece of wild land and look out for its welfare. Clean up in and around it. Include it in your daily prayers – petition to alleviate its suffering (dying plants, polluted waters, toxic lands...)

Hospitality. Invite a bug into your home for an evening! View with friends the documentary *Microcosmos* by French biologists C. Nuridsany and M. Perennou, which highlights a French countryside meadow where butterflies, ants, spiders and many other insects cavort in their small, exquisite worlds.

Joy. Listen to Three Dog Night’s classic rock song: *Three Dog Night: Joy to the World* with the lyric “Joy to the fishes in the deep blue sea”. Imagine all the other gifts of God in the plant and animal kingdom that give you pleasure and fill your heart with joy.

Justice. Hold a Council of All Beings - with each person speaking for another life-form and expressing the being’s concerns. When finished, connect our responsibilities to these species.

Openness. Embrace your environment. Walk around the perimeter of your home. Explore it as if being there for the first time. What do you see, feel, hear, smell? Continue to move further out into your community and make a list of the things you have never seen before.

Teachers. Find a teacher in nature and let her give you a lesson today. (for example, learn from a piece of grass what it means to be rooted and yet willing to lean.)

Unity. Google “Susan Seddon Boulet Gallery” and find examples of the intertwining figures of humans and animals from her images on line.

Wonder. Set up a wonder table and make it a place where people can display wonders of the nature world they have found...or photographs of wonders.

You. Rededicate yourself to live lightly on the planet. Perhaps make this pledge: (Please turn to Page 2)

We join with the Earth and with each other to renew the forests, to care for the plants and to protect the creatures.

We join with the Earth and with each other to celebrate the seas, to rejoice with the sunlight and to sing the song of the stars.

We join with the Earth and with each other to recreate the human community, to promote justice and peace and to remember our children.

We join with the Earth and with each other. We join together as many and diverse expressions of one loving mystery: for the healing of the Earth and the renewal of all life.

DID YOU KNOW?

The energy we save when we recycle one glass bottle can energize a light bulb for 4 hours.

More than 1/3 of all energy is used by people at home.

It takes 90% less energy to recycle aluminium cans than it takes to make new ones.



TIPS FOR GREEN LIVING

Compost All Winter...

Even though your compost might freeze solid and decomposition comes to a complete stop, there is no need to stop composting. In fact the freeze-thaw cycles will help to break down the materials that you are adding and they will decompose more quickly when the spring arrives. Here are a few things people ask about winter composting:

Will the food materials attract animals? It isn't necessary to cover the food scraps with leaves in winter because they will freeze very

quickly and create little if any odour to attract animals. Keep the lid firmly on smaller store-bought bins and once the warmer weather arrives, cover the food waste with some leaves or other brown materials. If you have a larger compost pile in your yard, save a few bags of leaves from your fall raking to cover food periodically throughout the winter or in the spring when things start to thaw.

How can I make it easier to get to the compost pile in winter? You can place a small, covered store-bought bin in a convenient place close to the house. Or, you can keep a 5-gallon pail or other container in your garage or similar cold space and make your trips to the compost only when it's full.

What if my main compost bin fills up? If you have emptied your bin in the fall or if you have a larger compost pile, it's not likely that you will have this problem. With the colder temperatures everything that you add will freeze so there is no reason to add extra leaves or browns, which can fill your bin quickly. If it does fill up, you can always store compostable items in a separate container (pail or garbage can) and place the contents in the bin once things start to thaw in the spring.

Composting in winter is not really different than composting in the summer; it is just slower. Keep composting all year round to maximize your free soil amendment and at the same time minimize your impact on the environment.

(Adapted from an article at

www.greenactioncentre.ca)

If any of these articles have stirred a response in you, please share your insight at GreenSistersTalk@yahoo.com
