Tree-planting guidance and prayer service

Your community’s tree-planting will leave a living reminder of your commitment to protecting forests and those who depend on them, both in the Amazon and around the world.

**Planting and caring for your tree**

* Ask a local nursery, university, or tree advocacy organization for guidance on selecting and siting the tree that is best suited to your location.
* Determine how many trees you will plant. The more trees you plant, the better you will provide food and habitat for the web of life in your area.
* If possible, choose a native species. This will best support insects and other animals, contributing to the health of the entire ecosystem on your grounds.
* Work with the facilities manager, grounds committee, and your own team to care for the tree after it is planted.

**Tree-planting prayer service**

*Opening prayer*

Praise be to the Holy Trinity! God is sound and life, Creator of the Universe, Source of all life, whom the angels sing; wondrous Light of all mysteries known or unknown to humankind, and life that lives in all. (Hildegard of Bingen)

*Opening sentences*

*One* We gather in the image of the Creator

***Many* who is a community of love.**

*One* We gather in the name of the Redeemer

***Many* who reconciles all of creation.**

*One* We gather in the presence of the Life Giver

***Many* who inspires new life and renews it.**

*Psalm 36:5-9*

*One* Your steadfast love, O Lord, extends to the heavens,

 your faithfulness to the clouds.

***Many* For with you is the fountain of life**

*One* Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains,

 your judgments are like the great deep;

 you save humans and animals alike, O Lord.

***Many* For with you is the fountain of life**

*One* How precious is your steadfast love, O God!

 All people may take refuge in the shadow of your wings.

***Many* For with you is the fountain of life**

*One* They feast on the abundance of your house,

 and you give them drink from the river of your delights.

***Many* For with you is the fountain of life**

*One* For with you is the fountain of life;

***Many* In your light we see light.**

*Reading of scripture, followed by preaching or participatory reflections*

At least there is hope for a tree: If it is cut down, it will sprout again, and its new shoots will not fail.

*Job 14:7*

*Planting of tree*

Powerful and ever-loving God, we are gathered today in Your name. We confess that our lifestyles and our systems of political power have not honored You. We give thanks for the gift of mercy and for the new life that is abundant in You. We plant this tree as a sign of our shared commitment to protect all You have created. We commit to taking further action by (*name your commitments, such as establishing a community green team, holding a community energy audit, incorporating creation care into prayers of the faithful, engaging in local advocacy, etc.)*

*Ribbon-tying*

We will now write our prayers for creation on these ribbons and tie them on the tree.

*Offering and offertory prayer*

*You may want to have an offering, perhaps to collect money for a tree-planting initiative such as* [*Trees for the Future*](https://trees.org) *(English) or* [*Saving the Amazon*](https://www.savingtheamazon.org) *(Spanish).*

*Prayers*

One O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of

this earth, so precious in your eyes. Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it, that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction. Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain at the expense of the poor and the earth. Creative Spirit,

**Many enlighten our hearts and remain with Your world.**

One Teach us to discover the worth of each thing, to be filled with awe and

contemplation, to recognize that we are profoundly united with every creature as we journey towards your infinite light. Creative Spirit,

**Many enlighten our hearts and remain with Your world.**

One We thank you for being with us each day. Encourage us, we pray, in our

struggle for justice, love and peace.” Creative Spirit,

**Many enlighten our hearts and remain with Your world. Amen.**

 *(adapted from A prayer for the Earth, Pope Francis, Laudato Si’)*

*Lord’s Prayer*

Say the Lord’s Prayer together

*Closing Song*

Sing a hymn that praises God as Creator.