

World Environment Day



2025 Theme:

Putting an End to Plastic Pollution



imjpic@outlook.com

Congregation of Jesus Mary Joseph

Introduction

World Environment Day 2025, observed on 5 June, centers on the urgent global challenge of plastic pollution under the theme **“Putting an End to Plastic Pollution”**. Plastic pollution poses a severe threat to ecosystems, public health, and economies. Annually, approximately 11 million tons of plastic waste enter aquatic environments, and microplastics have been detected in soil, water, and even human bodies. World Environment Day 2025 emphasizes the need to refuse, reduce, reuse, recycle, and rethink plastic usage.

World Environment Day is celebrated to raise global awareness and encourage action for the protection of the environment.

It highlights urgent environmental issues such as pollution, climate change, deforestation, and biodiversity loss, urging governments, organizations, communities, and individuals to take meaningful steps toward sustainability.

The day is marked by various activities including tree planting, recycling drives, clean-up campaigns, educational programs, and advocacy against single-use plastics. It especially encourages young people and students to become active environmental stewards by adopting eco-friendly habits and spreading awareness in their communities. This day reminds us that we are a part of nature, and it's our duty to take care of the planet. The environment gives us air to breathe, water to drink, and food to eat. We need to spread awareness about the importance of keeping our environment clean, green, and safe for all living beings. It serves as a reminder for everyone to take meaningful steps toward protecting nature, reducing pollution, and preserving natural resources.



In Biblical Perspective:

From a **biblical perspective**, the environment is a gift from God, entrusted to humanity for stewardship—not exploitation. The Bible consistently emphasizes creation care, responsibility, and reverence for God's world.

1. Creation as God's Work

- **Genesis 1–2:** God creates the heavens and the earth, calling creation “good” (Gen 1:31).
- Humans are made *in God's image* and are given the task to “till and keep” the Garden of Eden (Gen 2:15), which implies caretaking, not domination.

“The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.” — *Genesis 2:15*

2. Stewardship, Not Exploitation

- The Bible teaches that the Earth belongs to God, not to humans:

“The Earth is the Lord's, and everything in it.” — *Psalms 24:1*

- Humans are seen as **stewards** (managers), not owners. This stewardship carries a moral responsibility to care for creation in a way that reflects God's love and justice.

3. Respect for All Creatures

- Animals and all living beings are included in God's covenant (Genesis 9:9–10).
- Proverbs 12:10 says, “*The righteous care for the needs of their animals.*”
- God's care extends even to the smallest creatures (Matthew 10:29).

We, therefore, are called not only to love God and neighbour, but also to honour God's creation as a form of faithful discipleship.

In Founder's Perspective:

Fr. Wolff's teachings offer a profound perspective on this issue.

He reminds us:

“In our daily work and dealings with others, we should try not to lose sight of God. Practicing God's presence will help us walk with Him always and find Him everywhere. Remembering that ‘God sees me’ will strengthen us against every temptation so we don't give in. It will encourage us to do all our work carefully, give us courage to act for His glory, and help us be patient in all difficulties we face. We should always say: ‘All for the greater honor and glory of God.’” (Wolff, *Grondregels*, 86)

If we truly believe God sees our actions, we would not pollute our lives—or our environment. Fr. Wolff urges us to act with care and devotion, knowing that every movement is witnessed by the Divine. This awareness should make us more conscious—motivating us to do what is good for ourselves, others, and the Earth.

Can we truly honor the Creator by polluting the very world He entrusted to us? Plastic pollution is not just an environmental crisis—it is a moral failure. When we recklessly discard plastic, we disregard God's gift of creation. But if we act with reverence—reducing waste, recycling diligently, and advocating for change—we turn environmental care into an act of worship. The fight against plastic pollution is more than a practical challenge; it is a spiritual duty. Through shared responsibility and collective effort, we can restore the Earth—giving glory to God by protecting His creation.

Our Responsibility Towards the Environment

It involves recognizing our role as caretakers of the Earth and acting in ways that promote sustainability, justice, and respect for all forms of life. This responsibility applies on moral, ethical, and spiritual levels.

1. Stewardship, Not Ownership

We do not own the planet—we are entrusted with it. Whether from a religious, ethical, or humanist viewpoint, this means we must:

- Use resources wisely.
- Avoid overconsumption.
- Protect ecosystems for future generations.

"The Earth does not belong to us; we belong to the Earth." — Chief Seattle

2. Reduce Harm and Pollution

Our daily actions—consumption, waste, travel—impact the environment. It is our responsibility to:

- Reduce plastic and electronic waste.
- Recycle and reuse materials.
- Limit fossil fuel use and support clean energy.

3. Preserve Biodiversity

We share the planet with millions of species. Destroying their habitats and polluting their environments is not only harmful but unjust. Our duties include:

- Supporting conservation efforts.
- Avoiding products that drive deforestation or animal cruelty.
- Respecting the balance of ecosystems.

4. Promote Sustainable Development

Progress should not come at the cost of the Earth. We must:

- Support policies that prioritize sustainability.
- Encourage businesses to adopt eco-friendly practices.
- Balance economic growth with environmental care.

5. Educate and Advocate

Environmental care is a shared mission. We must:

- Educate others, especially children, about eco-responsibility.
- Advocate for climate justice and policy change.
- Join or support environmental movements and clean-up initiatives.

6. Spiritual and Ethical Responsibility

For people of faith, caring for creation is an act of worship and gratitude. Even outside of religion, it's a moral duty to:

- Live simply so others (and the planet) may simply live.
- Consider the long-term effects of our choices.
- Cultivate awe and respect for nature.

Our responsibility toward the environment is not optional—it is essential. Whether through small personal habits or larger community efforts, each action matters. A healthy planet means a healthy future for all.

World Environment Day 2025 Pledge

I pledge today,
as a responsible member of Earth's family,
to respect and protect the natural world.

I will care for the land, preserve the forests,
protect the water, and reduce pollution.

I will plant trees, save energy,
and minimize waste.

I will stand for environmental justice
and speak up for the Earth and all its creatures.

I will restore what has been damaged,
nurture what is still living,
and build a sustainable future
for generations to come.

This is my Earth. My home. My responsibility.

I pledge to act—today and every day.

Prayer for World Environment Day 2025

Creator God,
We praise You for the beauty of the Earth—
for the sun that warms, the rain that nourishes,
the trees that give breath, and the soil that sustains life.

On this World Environment Day,
we thank You for the gift of creation,
and we ask forgiveness for the times we have polluted,
neglected, or taken Your creation for granted.

Awaken in us a deep love for the Earth,
and a firm resolve to restore what is broken.
Help us to be protectors, not exploiters,
to choose simplicity over greed,
and to stand with the poor and the voiceless,
whose lives are most affected by environmental destruction.

Bless all efforts around the world that seek to heal the land,
to reforest, to cleanse the waters, and to cool the warming
skies.

May we be united as one human family—
restoring ecosystems, reviving hope,
and building a future rooted in justice, peace, and respect
for all life.

We ask this through Christ our Lord,
who lived in harmony with creation.

Amen.