

Participation-June 2018



Use cloth bags, not plastic.

who often mistake plastics for food. This year let us commit ourselves to lessening our use of plastics wherever and whenever we can. Simple measures such as using cloth bags instead of plastic ones, eliminating the use of straws and plastic cups, recycling plastics when possible, and encouraging product manufacturers to package their products in non-plastic containers will significantly reduce plastic pollution.

Creator God, we thank you for the wonders of creation. Nature's beauty feeds our souls and calls us to treasure all that you have made. Help us to appreciate the environment and to care for Earth, our common home. Inspire us in our efforts to restore the health and balance within nature by being good stewards of the gifts with which you have blessed us.



June 8—World Oceans Day

Oceans cover about two thirds of the earth's surface. Oceans are a critical part of earth's biosphere and an essential element for food, security and life survival on the earth. The 2018 theme is "Take Action Against Plastic Pollution".

World Oceans Day allows us to:

- **Change perspective** – encourage individuals to think about what the ocean means to them and what it has to offer all of us with hopes of conserving it for present and future generations.
- **Learn** – discover the wealth of diverse and beautiful ocean creatures and habitats, how our daily actions affect them, and how we are all interconnected.
- **Change our ways** – we are all linked to, and through, the ocean! By taking care of your backyard and helping in your community, you are acting as a caretaker of our ocean. Making small modifications to your everyday habits will make a difference, and involving your family, friends, and community will benefit our blue planet even more!
- **Celebrate** – whether you live inland or on the coast, we are all connected to the ocean. Take the time to think about how the ocean affects you, and how you affect the ocean, and then organize or participate in activities that celebrate our ocean.

Creator of life, we thank you for the oceans that team with life, regulate earth's climate, inspire us with beauty and power, and sustain all living creatures. Open our hearts with a growing appreciation of how oceans affect all of us. Help us to care for the oceans by making sustainable living choices each day so that life can continue to flourish for generations to come.

June 12—World Day Against Child Labor



World Day Against Child Labor aims to accelerate action to achieve Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target 8.8 of safe and secure working environments for all workers by 2030 and SDG target 8.7 of ending all forms of child labor by 2025. Achieving these goals for the benefit of the next generation requires a concerted and integrated approach to eliminating child labor and promoting a culture that ensures that occupational health and safety standards are met.

All workers have the right to a safe and healthy work environment. Young workers (15-24 years old) suffer up to a 40 per cent higher rate of non-fatal occupational injuries

than adult workers above the age of 25. In addition to injuries, the workplace hazards they face often put their health and very lives at risk. Children have the right to be protected from all forms of child labor, including hazardous work, which affects 73 million children worldwide. Child labor robs children of education, safety, health and their right to protection against exploitation. It robs them of their childhood itself!

Holy One, we ask you to protect all children from labor exploitation of all kinds. Help us to treat one another with respect and to honor the dignity of every human being, especially the children who depend on us for food, shelter, love and safety. Help us as we work tirelessly to promote the educational, physical and emotional wellbeing of children so that every child can develop fully into productive and caring citizens of the world.



S Reynelda examines the corn crop stunted by drought in Malawi.

June 17—World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought

This day calls our attention to the rapidly expanding areas of drought across our planet. This year's theme is: "Land has true value—invest in it!" Poor farming methods in many parts of the globe have robbed the soil of nutrients, turning once rich farmland into arid wastelands. Climate change is currently prolonging dry seasons and delaying the onset of rainy seasons in many agricultural countries, resulting in very short growing seasons, often insufficient for adequate food production. Deforestation of large woodland biomes has changed rainfall patterns, and has left the soil unprotected from soil erosion by wind and rain. Ozone layer destruction has contributed to desertification by over-exposing the land to relentless drying from the sun. World Day to Combat Desertification (WDCD) will be celebrated worldwide on the 17th of June with the focus on sustainable land management as

a way to regenerate economies, create jobs and revitalize communities. Under the slogan "Land has true value – Invest in it," WDCD 2018 will call all involved – producers, consumers and policy makers – to make a difference by investing in the future of land. These efforts, together with global efforts to address climate change, bring hope for the future of our planet.

Mother/Father God, we thank you for Mother Earth who sustains our lives. Help each of us to do our part to protect Earth by making the necessary life-style changes to reduce climate change, to conserve water and to live in a sustainable way that respects our planet.

June 20—World Refugee Day



Refugees from Venezuela are often found living on the streets or in parks in Santarem, Para-Brazil.

Our world is facing a global refugee crisis on a scale not seen since World War II. War, violence, religious persecution, desperate economic conditions and climate change have driven millions of people from their homelands. Longing to find food, shelter and safety, many of these refugees are greeted with suspicion, hostility and rejection instead. World Refugee Day is a day to raise awareness of the plight of refugees. It is a day to respond in love to the needs of our brothers and sisters around the world who have been forced to flee their homes in order to survive. It is a day to reach out to the refugees among us who are in need and to offer them hope, compassion, welcome and love.

God, we ask that you protect the millions of refugees around the world who have suffered so much that they have had to flee their homelands in order to survive. Open our hearts and our hands as we reach out to the refugees in our midst. Let us not turn away, but rather, inspire us to look each other in the eyes and respond in love. Help us all to learn from one another.

June 26—International Day In Support Of Victims Of Torture



This day is dedicated to all who have endured unspeakable and unimaginable torture. It is a day that calls all citizens of the world to find their voices and to raise a united cry of “No More Torture!” Torture denies the inherent dignity of the human person and is illegal under international law. Despite this, torture is a widespread practice around the world. With one voice, the people of the world need to condemn torture, and declare once and for all that torture **cannot ever be justified**. Furthermore, those who have suffered torture have a right to have their cases brought forward so that those engaged in torture can be held accountable and so that victims can receive effective and prompt redress, compensation and appropriate social, psychological, medical and other forms of rehabilitation.

Holy One, you have made every person with an inherent dignity and sacredness. Teach us to treat each other with empathy, respect and compassion. Whenever we know of torture, disrespectful or inhumane treatment of others, may we raise our voices in protest and take action to stop it. Let us never condone torture by our silence. Give us the courage we need to stand up against torture and to demand an end to its use.