

Well, I guess God told Job! You're familiar with the story of Job. He's suffering with the loss of everything. Thinking they're helping his friends tell him to confess his sins – even his wife tells him to confess and die. (I think she just wants the suffering to end and she thinks he's the cause!)

Earlier, we find Job pleading, demanding to see God's face and explain to him the reason for all that has happened to him. He issues one last plea, almost like a child threatening to hold his breath.

A smile always comes to my face when I read, *“Who is this that obscures divine plans with words of ignorance?” Gird up your loins now, like a man, and you tell me the answers!”*

It's like the sitcom with the Huxley family, where Bill Cosby tells one of his children “I brought you into this world and I can take you out!”

And God goes on with the “Where were you?” questions. “Where were you” ...regarding the formation of all of the created order.

Perhaps because of the tenuousness of our world today, the focus on the created order stood out for me.

How often do we consider the awesomeness of God's creation?

Recently a pair of finches built a nest in a wreath on our front door. This alone wasn't surprising because that has happened before. Normally when they realize the door is opened/closed, they abandon it. However, this time they didn't and to our amazement one day there was an egg, then within days there were four eggs. Sunday night when we returned from a trip, two of the eggs had hatched. Now there's three. We find ourselves mesmerized. We both stand staring at this nest!

God's created order is sacred. Humans, yes, but all of creation – animals, birds, trees, oceans, etc.

According to Rabi Heschel “the awareness of the Divine begins with wonder,” with amazement. He says that “we should stand in awe at beauty and grandeur of the universe.”

Episcopal priest, Matthew Fox claims that “we suffer from nature deficit disorder.”

Fox points out that in 1960 the first image sent to us by astronauts was of our solar system, with the earth in the center. It became a memorable icon.

Years later, in 2014, a spacecraft sent back to us another image from far out in space. All you could see were many “dots.” NASA had to place an arrow showing which “dot” was earth. It showed us that we are just a grain of sand in God's created order. We now have a new icon.

Fox shares a dream he had a few years ago. He says that he heard only one sentence – “There's only one thing wrong with the human species –you have forgotten the sense of the sacred.”

Environmentalism isn't something new in our age.

Hildegard de Bingen is a Doctor of the Church from the early 11th century. St. Hildegard said “We, too, have a natural longing for other creatures and we feel aglow of love for them.”

She preached of “the web of life that all of creation shares, but she also warned that “the earth must not be injured, the earth must not be destroyed, - and that if humans misuse creation, “God will permit creation to punish humanity.” Wow!

In the 13th century St. Thomas Aquinas, taught that “By dwelling on the creatures, the mind is inflated to love divine goodness. We love God and know God in the mirror of God's creatures.”

Aquinas states that “it is false to say that humanity is the most excellent being in the world. The universe is the most excellent

thing! God wills that human beings exist in order to join God in bringing the universe to maturity and perfection.

Do we see the world with amazement? When you look at another person, no matter their race, gender, orientation or even their politics, do you see beauty and grandeur?

When you walk outdoors to view this world –God’s Kingdom – can you view it in such a way that you recognize your connection to the Divine?

As we physically come back as church, we have the challenge to look for ways that we can envision how we can work together to protect God’s created order, to see the world with new eyes.

However, we cannot afford doing nothing. Our world – God’s kingdom’ needs us now!

Perhaps we haven’t considered including in that view the generations yet to come. Do you keep in your heart and mind the grandchildren, great-grandchildren and so on of all peoples?

A rapper wrote this poem:

It’s three in the morning and I’m awake because my great-great grandchildren won’t let me sleep.

My great-great grandchildren ask me in dreams “What did you do when the planet was plundered?

What did you do when the earth was unraveling?

Surely you did something when the seasons started failing. As the mammals, reptiles, birds were all dying.

What did you do once you knew?...

What did you do once you knew?...

Amen.