

Published on *National Catholic Reporter* (<https://www.ncronline.org>)

March 22, 2011 at 10:46am

How I came to make Earth my life's work

by Carol Meyer

Eco Catholic

To give you a better understanding of what has shaped my views expressed here, I would like to tell you more about myself and my passion for the Earth.

My childhood was lived on a farm close to nature and to the Catholic church. At age 20, I joined the Adorers of the Blood of Christ in Wichita, finished my education degree and began elementary teaching. After four years, I became a DRE and eventually a Pastoral Associate. I completed an MA in Theology from St. John's University in Collegeville, Minnesota.

Feeling called to other ministry, I left the community after 15 years, got married, adopted 3 children all at once (ages 3,4 and 6), worked for National Catholic Reporter Publishing Co., started a women's center for personal and spiritual growth, was Director of Christian Formation for an Episcopal church, and was self-employed for the past 13 years doing education, spiritual direction, and massage.

Now I am the executive director of the Sustainable Sanctuary Coalition in the Kansas City, Mo. metro area. This is an interfaith nonprofit that provides educational programs, resources and support to congregations regarding Earth care ministry. If you want to learn more, the web address is: www.sustainablesanctuary.org.

In 1991, I did a personal mission statement that read, "My mission is to be a wise woman and spiritual leader, teaching, inspiring, counseling, and facilitating the spiritual development of people and society." That still has accuracy and deep meaning for me some 20 years later. I've always wanted to make a difference for the world based on Christian values and spirituality. Contemplation, mysticism and social justice have figured prominently in this desire, which gradually led me to focus primarily on deep ecology.

When my good friend Catherine Browning introduced me to Creation Spirituality 20 years ago, I was

hooked. I went to several national conferences, read books on the new science, and watched/discussed Brian Swimme's 12-hour video series, *Canticle to the Cosmos*, with a sense of awe and excitement. My spiritual life, now more linked to the cosmos, was more vibrant and powerful. I could feel in my gut the truth of what Matt Fox, Swimme, Thomas Berry, and others were saying about the human connection to the universe.

I knew the answers to our environmental crisis had to come from new cosmological and theological understandings, and since I was modestly prepared to share those, I said to God, "Send me, Lord." The urgency of making this my life work came from reading Thomas Berry's *The Great Work* and other books that outline the seriousness of the harm we are doing to our planet. To me, nothing else is as basic and important since everything, including the spiritual, is dependent on a healthy planet.

So here I am, a One on the Enneagram, ENTJ on Myers-Briggs, doing whatever I can to save the planet that I love dearly as a piece of God. I write these blogs with prayer and attentiveness to the urgings of the Holy Spirit, as boldly and honestly as I can. I feel humbled and grateful to be able to do so, and I am deeply grateful that you also care for the Earth and want to do more for it. We are all learning and growing together, and I welcome your comments and insights about the blogs. God bless you!

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