



What does "Peace with Creation" Look like to You?

By Miranda Zafranco

"Peace with creation" acknowledges God's powerful and genuine creation by trying to make the most out of life. God created the Earth so carefully that we, his children, would be provided with everything needed to live like him. Humans have survived and thrived for thousands of years because of the natural resources provided by the Earth. The most obvious is food, water, and air, but creation offers a state of mind of solidarity, reflection, and inspiration. As a student in a Benedictine school, I know the Rule of Benedict emerged from the seclusion of the outside chaos as he meditated in a cave. The laws of motion and gravity derived from an apple falling on Isaac Newton. And some of the most famous paintings - *The Starry Night* by Vincent van Gogh, *The Great Wave off Kanagawa* by Katsushika Hokusai, or *Water Lilies* by Claude Monet use the beauty of the natural world as a



muse. Psalm 96:11-12 says "Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad; let the sea resound, and all that is in it. Let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them; let all the trees of the forest sing for joy." meaning that nature co-exists with our spiritual and physical existence; the feeling of the sublime is so overwhelming that it provides us with peace and stability. Like the '*Fear of God*', it's not the fear of God's creation that would make us powerless against it, but our awareness of the overwhelming power and beauty our world holds.

However, over time, we've tried to take advantage of the Earth. We don't respect our waterways, our land and animals – even people different from us. We think producing more things is progress. Noise, pollution, trash, waste; Is that really the growth God wanted us to make? In a turmoil to seek refuge and peace, we are standing in its ashes as 'refuge' turns into 'resource'. People have forgotten how much God loves and cares for us that he gave us a home to live freely. We wanted to control what we had instead of appreciating what God has given us.

We don't move with nature anymore; we have separated ourselves and moved against it. Genesis 1:31 says "God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day." We are shown in the first book of the Bible that God's creation wasn't instant but took time to be powerful and good. The more we grow with nature instead of against it is when we learn more about what God wants and what the world needs.

"Peace with creation" is moving with the nature around us, to thank God when we are greeted by the sun and wake up, to see our wrinkles as skin we're thankful to have, to treat everyone with equality, and to swim and run, and get dirty. We must put our desires on things above and value love, peace, and tranquillity that is here on Earth.



I'm in peace with creation when I see God in the beach walking beside me, in the seasons that change to remind me that I'm also changing too, when I see God in others and see kindness overflow from people's souls. Some of the best memories I have: school camps with my friends, time with my family or even alone, I gave all my pains to God and found beauty in what he has given me in this world. The things that ground me aren't temporary desires but the nature that make me connected to God's goodness and peace.



So, no matter who we are from all walks of life, we are made to protect the peace we find on Earth, so that the peace is returned in heaven. As Christians, we are taught to reconcile with God by seeing him in others and in the natural world around us. Everything made is a product of God's goodness, and we are the goodness to cultivate and grow more.