

Lament for the Anthropocene

Most gracious God, Thread of Love that pulses through the earth binding creation to its maker, Light and Life that is our Source and our Breath, we come to you in humility and in need.

We confess that we are terrified. Day by day bad news comes across the airwaves to us. Extreme heat in the Western US and Canada; tinder forests lit by lightning flaming uncontrollably; flood-devastated villages; the melting of Antarctic ice shelves and Arctic tundra; the loss of over 2/3's of the earth's living non-human creatures over the last seventy years and the threat of extinction to more; oceans filled with microplastics; polluted rivers and cities; the ongoing trauma of the centuries' old pandemic of racism; crushing poverty for many alongside sickening enrichment of the few; the chaos and unpredictability of these times.

Why ever did you create a world that we were capable of destroying? Did you anticipate the cost of our precious freedom? Do you weep as you look at the straining, struggling earth you so tenderly crafted and entrusted to us to tend and to till? Are we staring into the abyss of the end of our species' time here? Did you create us just to watch us destroy ourselves? Is your cruelty as great as your love, and how can that be? We toss and turn; we fill our heads with other things to distract us. We do not know where to go or what to do. Is it too late?

You have been our compass and our mainstay for generations. We tell the stories of our ancestors with pride and recall your saving grace in our own lives. Day by day, week by week, we call on you and will continue to do so. But will you answer?

Mighty and merciful God, save us from ourselves. There is no other way. Turn us from our thoughtless consumption, our stuffing our heads and bellies with nonsense that does not nourish, our self-centred prisons and narrow horizons. Raise up the leaders we need and help us to heed them. Convert the whole world to the power of self-giving love. Place our feet on the path of right relationship with all the earth and her creatures, and enable us to walk it.

And we will praise you. We will be like those who journeyed from slavery to freedom, crossing the Red Sea safely, like those who returned home after exile to prepare to rebuild the city. Our mouths will be filled with laughter and our songs will be songs of joy.

Amen.

Adapted from Carla A. Grosch-Miller, *Trauma and Pastoral Care* (London: Canterbury Press, 2021), pp. 181-2.

Please adapt to fit with the state of the world/your context as appropriate, and attribute authorship. Thanks.