

## **An Easter Hope: An Eco-Theological Reflection for the Easter Season**

Easter seems to present us with the idea of life and death and of renewal and rebirth. These thoughts are woven into and integrated in our daily lives, and we look forward every year to the arrival of spring and the transformation in our landscape from bleak and barren to vibrant and filled with an abundance of new plants, the return of color to our landscapes, and the anticipation of fresh vegetables and fruits on our tables. But is what we have come to know and understand as good in our world in danger, because of us, humanity?

It seems that around every corner we are now faced with questions concerning our actions that are in violation of our physical world. Every day, news from around the world confronts us with findings of species extinction, toxic pollutants that are threatening the water we drink and the very air we breathe. In Leviticus 25: 3-5, God speaks of a Sabbath for the land and that the land needs to rest. This certainly is not a modern-day practice. We continue to operate and believe that our world has an unlimited supply of resources and that technology (our own brilliance) will always come to our rescue. Will it?

I have hope that if we start to see the world with our eyes wide open, we will begin to recognize our destructive ways to ourselves and our planet. In my few short years of life, I have witnessed monumental changes in our world. I have watched wars being waged over control of resources, people being killed for their personal and political beliefs, and government policies being made only for the purpose of monetary gain and political power with no thought to human and planetary suffering. This is sin in the world, and we must stand up to it when we see it. Living with my eyes wide open means recognizing my failings and the sin in me, and asking God to create a right spirit within me (Psalm 51:10). By dying to my sinful self daily, I am being born anew in Christ. This is the promise of Easter and the promise and hope for us all.

— Dan Bagwell