Voices of Sisters
Environment
EarthBeat



Residents run across a bridge over the flooding Beas River following incessant rains in Kullu, in northern Indian state of Himachal Pradesh, Aug. 26, 2025. (AP/Aqil Khan)



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When I know God in the core and fibre of my being, my inner calling compels me to emulate the Creator — his values, characteristics, teachings and more. Knowing God makes me want to transform the systems that allow suffering to persist. Climate change and the resulting chaos are the new normal that seem here to stay.

When I hear about 1,900 villages across 23 districts of Punjab submerged under water in September 2025, 105 major landslides and at least 45 cloudbursts in Himachal Pradesh this year, and extreme weather events tied to a heating planet, I wonder: Will these realities just fade into thin air? With the cries of Mother Earth and her children — especially those on the peripheries — growing louder every day, can I be silent, apathetic, or look away unperturbed? This feels like a moral and spiritual crisis, almost a sinning against God's great gift of creation.

I was meant to till the land, keep it and be its steward. Yet I feel I have betrayed this divine trust. I see clearly that the impact of climate change is most severe on the poor. Farmers lose their fields to floods, storms and tsunamis. Daily wage workers suffer from unbearable weather. Slum dwellers face rehabilitation that often results in migration or becoming refugees.

This is the face of Christ I see all around me today. How can I ignore Christ himself being born this Christmas as a tiny helpless babe when I turn a deaf ear to his whimper in the cry of the poor and the Earth's weakening plight?

What is my response to this scenario this Christmas? What does ecological conversion mean for me? What is my responsibility to be a witness of sustainable faith and living during this festive season?

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How can I be a protector and help the poor and myself, knowing I am connected in the web of life? Harm done to one part affects the whole, as I am part of the same whole.

I want to begin creating sacred spaces for myself — nativities where the Divine meets me in my wholeness, where light shines in these spaces revealing the

unfinished business of justice, inclusion and liberation. I want to prepare the way for new life to erupt, where God's peace and justice reach out in love and prayer.

Mindfulness is only possible in the present moment. Jiddu Krishnamurti calls it "choiceless awareness." My mind and body are in process. By mastering my mind, I can hold it in the present through heightened awareness.

Vipassana, a meditation technique used by Lord Buddha to attain Nirvana, helps increase one's awareness by observing body sensations. Beginning with anapana — sharpening awareness with the breath — I slowly experience a free flow of body sensations from head to feet and back.

With mindful living, I can slowly forge forward toward collective well-being, as life is a great tapestry — especially when I think effectively, behave congruently, and relate empathetically with all God's creatures — leading to a more just and flourishing future.

God does not ask of me the perfection of tomorrow, not even of tonight, but only of the present moment.

Life is growth. It happens both inwardly and outwardly — outside perspectives and inner reflections.



A woman prays during Christmas Eve Mass at Holy Family Catholic Church in Srinagar, India, Dec. 24, 2025. (OSV News/Reuters/Sharafat Ali)

As I experience the *you*niverse and dive deeper, I become more aware and conscious of Pope Benedict XVI's teaching on the environment. I better comprehend Pope Francis' *Laudato Si'* and *Laudate Deum*, and I fall in line with Pope Leo XIV's stress on synodality, dialogue, community and peace.

Eventually, I hope to reflect a "spirituality of encounter" and a commitment to listening, especially to those on the margins. The Spirit is always speaking deep in my heart — if only I listen.

This Christmas, I want to be proactive through the authenticity of my life rather than words alone — as the saying goes, "the very best sermon."

To please others, I will not go beyond my strength or attempt more than I am able.

May I fix my eyes on the babe in the manger in every difficult moment, confident that his gaze will renew my courage; for the babe wishes to establish between me

and himself an intimate and perfect union.

He does even more — he associates me with his divine mission.

God took on human form to set the downtrodden free. I want to be a co-creator with him, helping to build his kingdom here on earth.

May my traditional ecological knowledge, scientific inquiry, and sociocultural practices grow deep roots this Christmas as I walk fearlessly in the light and glow of the babe in the crib, taking the first step and trusting that the rest will follow.

Happy proactive Christmas 2025!