

SPIRITUALITY

For many religions around the world, and in particular the many religions that make up 'Paganism', the main spiritual path is Nature. Of course, other people have a good deal of interest in nature too. Many people love being outdoors in the countryside or at the coast. Many, like the members of Durham County Badger Group, work hard to protect their environment.

If you are a true lover of nature, then seeing someone throwing down their litter will make your blood boil! (And the chewing gum on the pavements too!!!)



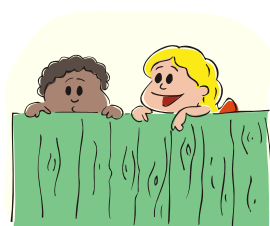
All religions of the world have their spiritual places, such as Jerusalem or the River Ganges in India. But to many people, the whole of the Earth is sacred.

So, are you a spiritual person? I found a great quote in a book, (*Exploring the Pagan Path* by a number of authors), which I think is great!

*"If you can ride under Goddess Moon;
Upon Mother Earth;
While God Sun rises in your face;
While Brother Hawk and Crow fly overhead;
While Sister Fox and Rabbit run beside you;
And not realise that you are spiritual,
Then you are dead and do not realise it yet."*

Thank you to Chris from New Mexico for that.

Most Pagans believe that we all have a lot of control over our lives, as long as we live in harmony with nature. This is different to many religions that say that people are under the control of a god or goddess and that they will determine our lives. But this does mean that we must take a lot more responsibility for what we do!



Not all religions agree with what we have said, but that's fine. Many of us realise that we can't and shouldn't force our ideas onto people, or condemn them because they don't believe as we do, (as some religions do). But followers of Nature know that they must not hold hostility and bad feelings for people who are different, either in religion or race or colour.

*The Pagan Rede says: "An Ye Harm None, Do What Ye Will" It means, 'As long as you harm no one, do as you see fit.' That doesn't mean that we can all just do whatever we want. It means, **Do no harm. Do what you know is right!***

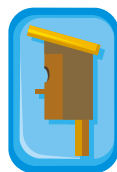


And then we must consider Mother Earth. We must show her respect. We can show it in spiritual ways, but also in practical ways too. 'Reduce, reuse, recycle' is one phrase that you must have heard. It is important that we all do this, for the sake of the Earth. You can feed the birds, especially during the winter weather, when birds struggle to survive. Turn off the lights in your classroom or bedroom to save our precious energy resources, protect wild places and wildlife. I'm sure there are many more examples that you can think of!

So: Be honest in all you do. Care for yourself and others. Respect other people and religions. Take care of the Earth. Enjoy your life.

Time to think and discuss:

- 1. Apart from the Badger Group, can you think of other organisations that care for the environment?*
- 2. How do you feel when you see people throwing down litter or otherwise hurting the Earth? Could you do anything about it? What might you do in school?*
- 3. What did you think of the quote from Chris from New Mexico? Do you think he is right? Why/why not?*
- 4. What do the followers of Nature think about other people who are not the same as us? What do you think of that?*
- 5. What does the Pagan Rede say? What does it mean?*
- 6. What can you do to help protect Mother Earth? What could you do at home? What could you do at school?*



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