



Jeffrey Mark Gollither


In every age, God raises up people of vision and courage and sound theological integrity, to speak to the most urgent demands of the time. Today when the world faces the greatest environmental crisis in human history, that person in the Anglican Communion and the Diocese of New York is Jeffrey Gollither. Priest, Franciscan and Cultural Anthropologist, Jeff currently serves as the Vicar of Saint John's Memorial Church in Ellenville. He is also the Environmental Representative for the Anglican Communion to the United Nations.

In that capacity, as one of the principal human resources of the communion regarding the environment, Jeff conceived of, advocated for, and helped facilitate the gathering of bishops in Cape Town, South Africa in 2015, to which this bishop was a participant, where the global consequences of climate change were compared and discussed, studied and debated, and from which came the report *The World is Our Host*. That report formed the foundation for the work of our own task force that led to the groundbreaking resolutions to this convention two years ago regarding environmentally sustainable investing and environmentally responsible use of our building assets. We know that Jeffrey's heart is in his small Catskills parish, but it is from there that he continues to guide our environmental work, and from which he advises and counsels his own bishop, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the global leadership of our communion.

Fundamentally, Jeff's theology of creation is rooted in his own experience of the spiritual pulse of the world about him. He writes: "Trees are sacred, and I'll tell you why. Think of the trees we see. They breathe. They take in carbon dioxide, while giving us the oxygen we need. They make our lives possible. Without them, we wouldn't exist. They hold vast amounts of water above ground. Although we don't see it, it's there: in their trunks, branches, and leaves. Not only that - people have traditionally regarded the mythological "cosmic tree" as the center of the spiritual universe. Some believe that the souls of children perch on its branches, like birds, before they're born, while the souls of shamans and holy ones return there to shine as guiding lights for humanity. The cosmic tree still exists. Every one of us can find it within ourselves."

Therefore, in recognition and gratitude for his witness to the theology of creation, to hope, and to the responsibility of stewards, offered to the glory of God, we, on this 11th day of November 2017, in the sixth year of our consecration, do award him

The Bishop's Cross


The Right Reverend Andrew ML Dietsche
XVI Bishop of New York