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UD Professor Offers Earth Day Thoughts of Concern and Hope

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NEWS TIPS

UD PROFESSOR OFFERS EARTH DAY THOUGHTS OF CONCERN AND HOPE

HUMILITY NEEDED TO PRESERVE PLANET — When contemplating one's role in global conservation, "I can't be bothered" is *not* an answer," says Brother Don Geiger, S.M., professor of biology at the University of Dayton.

Geiger, who remembers the "teach-ins" that were part of UD's celebrations of the first and following Earth Days beginning 30 years ago, said his attitude about environmental awareness and the future of Mother Earth has become hopeful — even as he remains concerned. "The celebration of Earth Day (April 22) each year offers the chance to remind people that we are not as clever or powerful as we think, and that a little humility is needed to realize we are all very dependent on the natural processes that are essential for life," Geiger said. "We get so engrossed in our own agendas that we ignore them or overwhelm them."

Addressing one of his primary concerns, the process of waste disposal, Geiger noted that environmental toxins that make their way to someone's backyard eventually — through nature's own recycling processes — travel around the globe. "People have to be more critical of their lifestyles, and understand that what they do affects others far beyond their own neighborhoods, and will effect their children and grandchildren as well."

Citing the research of several environmental educators and writers, Geiger noted that more of the world's resources have been used during this generation of humankind than during all the generations before. At the same time, he said, individuals and industry are starting to "get it." "The students in my biology classes are giving me feedback to indicate that the younger generation is more environmentally aware," he said. "Businesses are finally starting to understand that they need to build wisely and are revamping their current structures and methods of manufacturing to be more environmentally friendly. Car makers are bringing out hybrid autos, which will lead us to hydrogen cars fueled by water instead of gasoline. So I am hopeful because awareness is beginning to seep in and changes are coming, but we need to continue to live sensitively."

For media interviews, call Brother Don Geiger at (937) 229-2509.

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