

- 1 In the 1800s, as European settlers moved further west in the United States of America, attempts were made to restrict the Native Americans to 'Indian Reservations'. Chief Seattle of the Suquamish Tribe (in what is now the State of Washington) spoke about his people's love of and respect for the land. We'll hear part of "Chief Seattle's Testimony":
 

*He treats his mother, the earth,  
and his brother, the sky,  
as things to be bought, plundered,  
sold like sheep or bright beads.  
His appetite will devour the earth  
and leave behind only a desert.*
- 2 "The Great Chief in Washington sends word that he wishes to buy our land.  
*We will consider your offer,  
for we know that if we do not sell,  
the white man may come with guns  
and take our land.*
- 3 "How can you buy or sell the sky,  
*the warmth of the land?  
The idea is strange to us.  
If we do not own the freshness of the air  
and the sparkle of the water,  
how can you buy them?*
- 4 "Every part of this earth  
*is sacred to my people.  
Every shining pine needle,  
every sandy shore,  
every mist in the dark woods,  
every humming insect is holy  
in the memory and experience  
of my people.*
- 5 "The perfumed flowers are our sisters.  
*The deer, the horse, the great eagle  
- these are our brothers.*
- 6 "So, when the Great Chief in Washington  
*sends word that he wishes to buy our land,  
he asks much of us,  
for this land is sacred to us.*
- 7 "The earth is not the white man's brother  
*but his enemy,  
and when he has conquered it  
he moves on.  
He kidnaps the earth from his children  
and does not care.*
- 8 "This earth is precious to God,  
*and to harm the earth  
is to heap contempt on its Creator.  
Preserve the land for your children  
with all your strength,  
with all your mind,  
and with all your heart,  
and love it - as God loves us all."*
- 9 We'll use as our prayer some words written by a Native American:
- 10 **Great Spirit,  
whose voice I hear in the winds,  
and whose breath  
gives life to all the world,  
hear me!  
I am small and weak;  
I need your strength and wisdom.**
- 11 **Let me walk in beauty,  
and may my eyes always see  
the red and purple sunset.  
May my hands  
respect the things that you have made,  
and my ears be sharp to hear your voice.**
- 12 **Make me wise  
so that I may understand  
the things that you have taught  
my people.  
Let me learn the lessons  
that you have hidden in every leaf  
and rock.**
- 13 **Make me always ready to be with you  
with clean hands and straight eyes.  
So, when life fades as the fading sunset,  
my spirit may come to you  
without shame.**

This is an excerpt from the page of this date in  
*'Praying Each Day of the Year'*,  
a 3-volume book  
by Nicholas Hutchinson, FSC.

For details:

<http://www.matthew-james.co.uk/>

Could make use of a search engine  
to research this topic further.

This material is part of  
the prayer and education website  
of the De La Salle Brothers  
in Great Britain:

[www.prayingeachday.org](http://www.prayingeachday.org)