

A River Flows

written for, and dedicated to, Eco Congregation Ireland, on the occasion of the National Ecumenical Prayer Service, 25 November 2015, St Teresa's Carmelite Church, Clarendon St., Dublin, in preparation for The UN Climate Summit, Paris.

There was, merely, a void. And a void
is nothing. Breathless. Voiceless. Without form.

But love is a creative force, and love cares, and love
gives creation into the care of humankind.

There was a river that flowed out of Eden; but now the pond,
that was a lake in winter, has been scummed under the long

carelessness; cygnet and swan-feathers, ruby cedar leaves, such
miracles, float by; over the lazily lolling stream, a bridge,

painted and small-arched, is a path into, and out of, immortality;
there are mallard, flapping, there is the sudden squawk of a water-rail,

the weary-sounding flopping wings of a heron, labouring
towards the trees; rats infest, and poison has been laid. A buckled

supermarket trolley wallows in the scum, and in the small
waterfall, dented coke-cans and ripped plastics curdle

in the backflow. Such lives and labours, of beast
and human, are both near and distant, like gaseous planets

passing through space with unheard raucousness. And yet,
be praised, O Lord, through all your creatures: through

Brother Sun and Sister Moon, through Mother Earth and Sister
Bodily Death, as there was once, merely, a void. And a void

is nothing. Breathless. Voiceless. Without form. Teach us
to care, to create, to love. To give voice to your Creation.

John F. Deane