

## Dear Eco-Congregation friends

**Welcome to the March 2018 edition of the Eco-Congregation Ireland newsletter. Spring is here and we would like to wish all friends of Eco-Congregation Ireland a very happy Easter!**



### **Are you interested in learning more about Eco-Congregation Ireland?**

Perhaps your congregation or parish has an interest in the environment and has thought about becoming an Eco-Congregation? The Eco-Congregation Committee has Catholic, Presbyterian, Methodist, Church of Ireland and Quaker representatives on it and they are happy to come to speak to your group no matter how small! The contact details are listed at the end of this newsletter. Do you know we are on Facebook? You can access the Eco-Congregation Ireland Facebook profile [here](#) or just go to facebook.com and search 'Eco-Congregation Ireland'. It's a great place to keep up to date with ECI's activities and access current news and information from other NGOs and faith organisations.

### **In this newsletter:**

- Our Climate Justice Candle – The Journey Continues!
- Awards! Awards! Drumalis Retreat and Conference Centre, Larne, Co Antrim receives ECI Award!
- The Eco-Congregation Ireland Annual Review 2017 is now online!
- ECI Committee Members Attends Launch of 'Laudato Tree' project at Áras an Uachtaráin
- The Church of the Ascension of the Lord, Balally, Dublin Celebrates Earth Hour
- Update from South Belfast Quaker Meeting
- Update from Faith in Action Group, Ballineaspig Parish, Dennehy's Cross, Cork
- Sacred Heart Messenger to feature ECI articles
- Earth Day 2018: End Plastic Pollution – Countdown to 22 April 2018
- Cork Three Faiths Forum to Celebrate Earth Day 2018 – End Plastic Pollution!
- Care for Creation Day at the Sanctuary of St Patrick, Lough Derg, Co Donegal – Saturday 19 May 2018
- Update from An Gáirdín Organic and Ecology Centre, Portumna, Co Galway
- Cloughjordan Community Development Committee opens Biodiversity Week 2018 with Ecumenical Eco Service
- Launch of Next Phase of Peace Forest Ireland Project
- Reminder - Dromantine Retreat – Finding God in the Singing Heart of the World: An Exploration of the Creation Spirituality of Laudato Si'
- Dodder Action Day – 21 April 2018
- Update from Northern Ireland Creation Care Network
- Reminder - Launch and BioBlitz at Jubilee Farm, Larne, Co Antrim
- National Holy Wells Day – 17 June 2018
- New Derry Diocese Laudato Si Group
- Sisters of Mercy Eco Conference – Hearing the Cry of the Earth
- Kerry Christian Meditation Groups – Day of Reflection with Sr Nellie Mc Laughlin
- New Publication – 'Creation and the Cross' by Elizabeth A Johnson
- Article by Sr Nellie Curtin – 'The Spirit of Brigid in Earth, Air, Fire and Water'
- A Spring Day in Dalgan: Forty Shades of Green, Extolling the Wonder of Leaves
- The Wonder of Creation, The Miracle of life: An Invitation to Walk with God in Self-Discovery within the Mystery of the Unfolding Universe
- Roscrea Quaker Meeting, Co Tipperary produces Leaflet on Promoting Sustainability
- Update from the SMA Wilton Justice Group – A Call to Action!
- Future We Need Group Produces Leaflets on Plastic Pollution for Earth Day 2018
- Three Patrons Church Rathgar Lenten Talks
- Daughters of Charity Kenya Prepare Book of Reflections on Laudato Si
- Tralee Boys' Brigade Highlights Plastic Waste in St Patrick's Day Parade

- Reminder – FREE VOICE Ireland’s Free Recycling Guidance Workshops & Community Grants Available!
- Eco Challenge!
- Prayer for the Earth

## Our Climate Justice Candle – the journey continues!

In 2017 ECI’s Climate Justice Candle has visited 26 different churches and faith communities/events around the country. However, it has suffered quite a bit of wear and tear on its ecumenical and climate justice journey which unfortunately cannot be fixed, so we are in the process of having another candle made. This will take a few weeks, so our Climate Justice Candle project is on pause at the moment. When the candle is ready we will be in touch with you all to let you know. If you would like to be part of this initiative and use the new candle in a future event, simply drop us an email to [info@ecoggregationireland.com](mailto:info@ecoggregationireland.com).

## Awards! Awards! Drumalis Retreat and Conference Centre, Larne, Co Antrim receives ECI Award!

At a moving and inspiring celebration on Sunday 25th February 2018, Drumalis Retreat and Conference Centre was awarded an Eco-Congregation Ireland Award. Presenting the plaque Sr Catherine Brennan SSL said that Drumalis was “a beacon of Light” showing prophetic leadership in addressing the ecological crisis of our time. Hundreds of participants in the programmes at Drumalis have been challenged to celebrate the gift of creation and become ecologically responsible inhabitants of the earth which they share with many other species.



Present at the celebration were representatives of many other groups associated with the environmental activities of Drumalis: Friends of the Earth, Larne Lough, Women Religious of Ireland who are pioneers in this field, An Tairseach Wicklow, Jubilee Farm, Creation Care NI and the Sisters of the Cross and Passion. The Mayor of Mid and East Antrim, Councillor Paul Reid, attended along with Council officers and public representatives. He congratulated Drumalis for the contribution they had made within the local community as a place of peace, welcome and inclusion. Sr Nellie McLaughlin RSM gave a moving summary of the development of the Drumalis Environment Group through the past 20 years. Others present shared their own experience of eco events at Drumalis and how they had been awakened in their understanding of the issues at stake. Joe Furphy from Eco-Congregation Ireland read a poem. You can read a full report of this wonderful event and view more photos [on the ECI website](#).

## The Eco-Congregation Ireland Annual Review 2017 is now online!

It includes ECI's highlights for 2017, including presenting awards to An Tairseach Dominican Farm and Ecology Centre, Wicklow and St James Church of Ireland & St Anne’s Catholic Parishes in Shankill, Co Dublin and the journey of our Climate Justice Candle in 2017. Also, the ECI Committee has decided to issue two certificates in the earlier stages of the journey towards the final Eco-Congregation Ireland Award, marking stages on the way - the Awareness Award and the Endeavour Award. [Read our Annual Review 2017 on the ECI website](#).

**ECO-CONGREGATION IRELAND**  
Annual Review 2017

**Eco-Congregation Ireland 2017 Awards**

The ECI Committee presented the 2017 Awards to the following churches and groups:

- An Tairseach Dominican Farm and Ecology Centre, Wicklow
- St Anne's Church of Ireland & St Anne's Catholic Parishes in Shankill, Co Dublin
- St James Church of Ireland & St Anne's Catholic Parishes in Shankill, Co Dublin
- St Anne's Church of Ireland & St Anne's Catholic Parishes in Shankill, Co Dublin
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The presentation of the awards took place in the main hall of the Drumalis Retreat and Conference Centre on Sunday 25th February 2018.

**5 Eco-Tips to Whet your Appetite for God's Creation**

1. Reduce your use of plastic bottles and use a reusable water bottle.
2. Turn off lights and electronics when you leave a room.
3. Use energy-saving light bulbs (LED).
4. Turn off the tap when brushing your teeth and use a water-saving shower head.
5. Recycle your waste correctly.

## ECI Committee Members Attend Launch of 'Laudato Tree' project at Áras an Uachtaráin

A reception to mark the launch of "Laudato Tree", meaning Praise to the Trees, was held at Áras an Uachtaráin on Monday, 26 March, 2018. Three members of the Eco-Congregation Ireland committee were among the large gathering of people from faith-based organisations who attended this inspiring event, which gave hope and encouragement to all present. Inspired by Pope Francis' 2015 environmental encyclical 'Laudato Si' and the 'Great Green Wall' project across 11 African countries, the 'Laudato Tree' project aims to build support for climate action and tree planting, in Ireland and the Sahel region of Africa. Fran Brady, Quaker representative on the ECI committee shared a report of this inspiring event and you can [read it in full on the ECI website](#). The above photo is by Maxwell Photography.



## The Church of the Ascension of the Lord, Balally, Dublin Celebrates Earth Hour

To mark Earth Hour on Saturday 24th March, the [Balally Parish Environment Group](#) invited people to turn off their lights and devices and to come to the church for an hour of prayer, poetry and music. During that hour, parishioners reflected on the threat to our fragile planet and on our Christian duty to preserve God's beautiful creation for future generations and to stand in solidarity with those whose lives are already being devastated by the effects of climate change.



Earth Hour this year coincided with the start of the week when The Stations of the Cross would remind all of the suffering of Jesus before his death. By watching a short video 'The Stations of the Forests' those present were reminded too, of the suffering of our threatened earth. Prayers, poems and readings from Scripture celebrated the beauty of God's Creation and acknowledged our duty to care for the earth. The vigil ended with a final commitment to make the necessary changes in our own everyday lives to fulfil this Christian duty.

## Update from South Belfast Quaker Meeting

Two events that have taken place at [South Belfast Quaker Meeting House](#) recently have included hosting the second meeting of [Repair Cafe Belfast](#) on Saturday 24th February and holding an After Meeting Conversation on Sunday 18th February about ethical food use, and building links and relationships with immigrants and refugees, which concluded with a shared locally-sourced lunch for everyone. Repair Cafe Belfast is a pop-up community event where people can get help to fix broken things. The cafe is keen to move around the city and for its visit to south Belfast, it came to South Belfast Quaker Meeting House, who were delighted to be able to host the cafe. There was [an article on the BBC website](#) about the event.



After Meeting Conversation - this was a follow up conversation seeking to explore issues around food and ethics and encouraged everyone to think about what they consume and how to minimise our impact on the planet. One younger member of the meeting talked about becoming a vegan and how following a plant-based diet can cut nitrous oxide emissions and help achieve the end of world hunger. Members also explored ways to make connections and cultivate community on an individual level and a global level.

## Update from Faith in Action Group, Ballineaspig Parish, Dennehy's Cross, Cork

Ballineaspig Parish has had a busy few months! They have joined the national 'Sustainable Energy Community' Network as the first step in promoting energy efficiency and wider use of renewable energy; they have held Lenten talks including environmental biologist Kevin Corcoran, Dr. Micheál Lehane, Director of the Office of Radiation Protection & Environmental Monitoring and renowned Zoologist, Dr. John Breen; during March they organised a free gardening demonstration facilitated by Sheila Crean and they organised a free vegetarian cookery demonstration. You can read more about [their activities on the ECI website](#) and view their photos.



## Sacred Heart Messenger to feature ECI articles

The [Sacred Heart Messenger](#), now in its 130th year of continuous publication is a magazine promoting the love of God in the heart of Christ, the faith that does justice and a forward-looking approach to church. Sacred Heart Messenger regularly features short articles inspired by Laudato Si, and from now on will use some of the ECI website material in the publication.



The editor will look for an article now and then, as they hope to keep the urgency of climate change, global warming situations, waste of resources and the urgent need for the huge amount of plastic used. The publication takes some articles from their Centre for Faith and Justice and from other authors. [Check out their website](#) – consult it for table of contents and some 'free reads' each month. Donal Neary SJ, the Editor of Sacred Heart Messenger and ECI are happy to co-operate to spread the news of climate justice!

## Earth Day 2018: End Plastic Pollution – Countdown to 22 April 2018

From poisoning and injuring marine life to disrupting human hormones, from littering our beaches and landscapes to clogging our waste streams and landfills, the exponential growth of plastics is now threatening the survival of our planet. In response, Earth Day 2018 will focus on fundamentally changing human attitude and behaviour about plastics and catalysing a significant reduction in plastic pollution. Earth Day 2018 is dedicated to providing the information and inspiration needed to fundamentally change human attitude and behaviour about plastics. Learn more and get involved via the [Earth Day website](#).

**EARTH DAY | April 22, 2018**  
**END PLASTIC POLLUTION**



**EarthDay.org**   
#EarthDay2018 #EndPlasticPollution

## Cork Three Faiths Forum to Celebrate Earth Day 2018 – End Plastic Pollution!

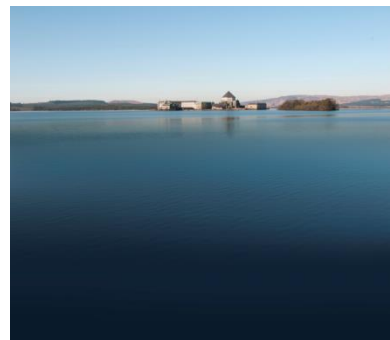
The Cork Three Faiths Forum invites all to their [Earth Day](#) Celebration on Saturday 21st of April 2018 at 2pm, Bishop Lucey Park, Grand Parade, Cork. The theme for this year is 'End Plastic Pollution'. Their aim is to show solidarity with each other, the Creator and all of Creation. As Judaism, Christianity and Islam all share a common concern for creation they wish to highlight the need for us all to live in right relationship with the Earth and to collaborate with each other in order to address the causes of climate and ecological degradation. You can learn more about [Cork Three Faiths Forum on Facebook](#).





## Care for Creation Day at the Sanctuary of St Patrick, Lough Derg, Co Donegal – Saturday 19 May 2018

The island setting at Lough Derg, an unspoilt corner of creation, offers the attraction of somewhere that's a bit different to bring into consciousness how connected we are to each other and to creation. This new event will explore the call of Pope Francis in his encyclical *Laudato Si* – Care for Our Common Home. Inputs and reflections will also centre on practical ways we can reclaim and make our contribution to the whole community of life. Two guest speakers will share ways to begin and to promote flourishing communities of life for all life; relationships among people, with all God's creatures and nature:



- Nellie McLaughlin RSM, is a founding member and director of Green Sod Land Trust, Ireland;
- Dr Jonny Hanson is a Christian environmentalist and entrepreneur. He is the co-founder and managing director of Jubilee, a Christian creation care organisation, based in Drumalis, Larne.

For further information contact the Lough Derg office on +353 (0) 71 9861518 or email [info@loughderg.org](mailto:info@loughderg.org). Visit the [Lough Derg website](#) to learn more. The picture above shows The Sanctuary of St Patrick, Lough Derg, Co Donegal.

## Update from An Gáirdín Organic and Ecology Centre, Portumna, Co Galway

Noreen Lyons from An Gáirdín Organic and Ecology Centre sent ECI an update on reflection days they held as part of their programme to implement *Laudato Si*. Between April and December of last year 2017 they hosted three day-long seminars on *Laudato Si* and covered topics such as:

- 1 Care for Our Common Home: Reconnecting with the Sacred in Nature ([read their report](#))
- 2 Nurturing Nature: Exploration of the Wonders of the Natural World
- 3 New Stories from Nature: Thinking afresh in a Time of Climate Change.



An Gáirdín hoped to continue these reflection days on *Laudato Si* during 2018, so in March 2018 they hosted two workshops – [How We Got Here, Understanding Climate Change on March 5th and Plastic Waste on March 10th](#). Their next reflection day is on Saturday April 21st when they will be looking at Food Security and Climate Change and how one person in this country is practically meeting this challenge in his farming methods. More information on the [An Gáirdín website](#).

## Cloughjordan Community Development Committee opens Biodiversity Week 2018 with Ecumenical Eco Service

[Cloughjordan Community Development Committee](#) will run a series of events to mark [2018 National Biodiversity Week](#), May 19 - 27. There will be guided woodland walks, movement and mindfulness practices, the Community Wetlands Forum will be meeting to review their strategic plan, a butterfly walk, a guided bog walk, *Laudato Si* reflections, a special nature in music event and more. The opening of the 2018 Cloughjordan Biodiversity Week Festival will be by way of a special Eco-Service involving the local Roman Catholic, Church Of Ireland and Methodist communities.



## Launch of Next Phase of Peace Forest Ireland Project

The next phase of the Peace Forest Ireland Project will be launched by the Right Honourable, the Lord Mayor/Ardmhéara of Dublin Mícheál MacDonncha in the Mansion House on the 15 May 2018. The Peace Forest Ireland Project was initiated by [Forest Friends Ireland](#) and is a joint project of Forest Friends Ireland and Raheny Rotary Club. This module of the project plans to plant peace trees in all the border counties, one for each child born in the year 2017. If you wish to attend this launch please contact John Haughton 0852536650 or email [jjhaughton@gmail.com](mailto:jjhaughton@gmail.com) without delay as places are limited. This phase will involve finalising partners to work with Forest Friends Ireland and Raheny Rotary and will also involve the setting up of appropriate structures at different levels to ensure the long term success of the project. Prospective partners who make application before the above launch will be placed on a priority list with a view to their inclusion as partners in this initiative. Expressions of interest should be made to email [forestfriends.ie@gmail.com](mailto:forestfriends.ie@gmail.com).



## Reminder - Dromantine Retreat – Finding God in the Singing Heart of the World: An Exploration of the Creation Spirituality of Laudato Si'

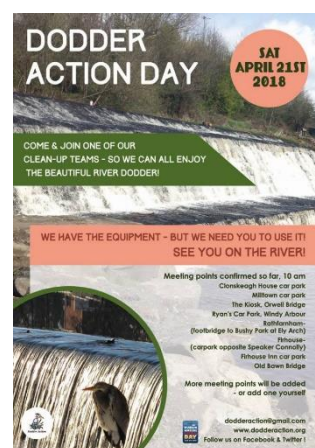
Dromantine Retreat and Conference Centre, Newry, Co Down is offering a retreat based on creation spirituality conducted by Dr John Feehan and Fr Hugh O'Donnell, SDB – *Finding God in the Singing Heart of the World: An Exploration of the Creation Spirituality of Laudato Si'* from Friday 4 May 2018 - Thursday 10 May 2018. An adventure in creation spirituality: a week of encounter, discussion and reflection, in which participants explore the mystery of God's presence in the natural world: in rock and the heavens, plants and animals; looking each day at a different facet, in the wonderful landscape of Dromantine with its lake, extensive woodlands, large variety of trees, shrubs and flowers. [More information here.](#)



## Dodder Action Day – 21 April 2018

Dodder Action Day takes place this year on Saturday April 21st at 10 am. Groups will be meeting to clean the River Dodder banks from source to sea, a tradition started five years ago by the Dodder Action Group. They provide all the gear but you bring the fun and community spirit! Volunteers clean for an hour or two and then usually repair to a local coffee shop or hostelry!

If you enjoy the wonderful natural resource that is the river do join them to give something back to it. There will be meeting points in Tallaght, Firhouse, Rathfarnham, Orwell, Milltown, Clonskeagh, Donnybrook and Irishtown, [exact meeting points on their website](#) or follow them on Facebook. This year for the first time the canal cleaners will join the group under the banner of Dublin Waters Action Day, with the support of Clean Coasts, An Taisce, Dublin City Council, the Water and Communities Office (LAWCO) and other agencies.



## Update from Northern Ireland Creation Care Network

The Northern Ireland Creation Care Network met on Saturday 10 March in Lowe Memorial Presbyterian Church, Finaghy, Belfast. The most exciting news was provided by Darren Houston who described the BallyNature Day event held recently in the village of Ballynure, Co Antrim when over 1,500 people attended and had the opportunity to visit 49 stalls, mostly occupied by major conservation organisations as well as by many small groups. It is expected that the 2019 event will be on an even larger scale!



Discussion ranged over many topics, including Drumalis' ban on the use of plastic water bottles at its events; the poor quality of some environmentally-friendly cleaning agents; the growing realisation of the importance of maintaining good soil health; difficulties faced by waste bin users following local government changes; the role of car boot sales in reuse of materials; problems relating to the disposal of paper waste following the cessation of its transport to China; and the excessive packaging used by many manufacturers allied to the needless use in supermarkets and greengroceries of plastic bags to carry loose vegetables etc. There were also reports on proposed conservation-based activities at Corrymeela, on actual work at Drumalis, environmental outreach art in Whiteabbey and the lecture programme of Christians in Science. The group hope to hold their autumn meeting in Ballynure, Co Antrim.

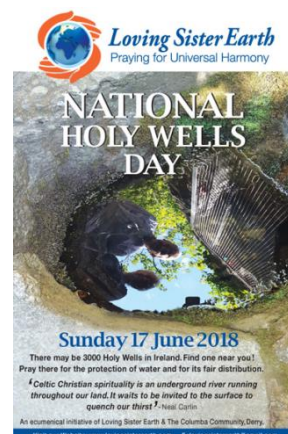
## Reminder - Launch and BioBlitz at Jubilee Farm, Larne, Co Antrim

From Friday 22nd June at 5pm to Saturday 23rd June at 5pm, [Jubilee Farm](#) will be having their launch and BioBlitz, in partnership with Drumalis and Mid and East Antrim Council. More details to follow in due course but expect 24 hours of walks, talks and activities, with good food, good music, and good fun. A save-the-date flier is available [here](#). Everyone is welcome!



## National Holy Wells Day – 17 June 2018

There are around 3,000 Holy Wells in Ireland. Since early Christian times these have been seen as places of prayer and healing. National Holy Wells Day invites you to become aware of how precious water is. Visit a local Holy Well and pray for the protection of water. Plan with others how you can protect the water in your area. Sr Agnes Curley, RSM has written an article called 'Well, Well, Well' about her work in Tuam for National Holy Wells Day. You can read her article on the [Loving Sister Earth website](#).



## New Derry Diocese Laudato Si Group

There is a small group of committed people in the Derry Diocese that have formed a group called 'Laudato Si' in response to the encyclical of Pope Francis. They have been meeting monthly for some time and had a launch of their group in Ardmore Parish Hall. On Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> February the group had their first one-day workshop in Buncrana to raise awareness in Inishowen, hoping to repeat this





elsewhere in the Derry diocese. They wrote to all the priests in parishes in Inishowen to ask them to encourage a few people in their parish or parish council to join them and also to advertise it in their bulletins. If you are interested in joining this group or learning more please contact: Contact Noel Bradley on [laudatosisignore2017@gmail.com](mailto:laudatosisignore2017@gmail.com) or [mandybradley@eircom.net](mailto:mandybradley@eircom.net) or 0876965554.

## Sisters of Mercy Eco Conference – Hearing the Cry of the Earth

The Sisters of Mercy are sponsoring a conference 'Hearing the Cry of the Earth' in The Bush Hotel, Carrick-on-Shannon, Co Leitrim on 26 May 2018, 9.30am - 4.00pm. Guest Speakers: Fr. Sean Mc Donagh – Laudato Si; Dr. Cara Augustenburg – The Damaged Planet; Dr. Lorna Gold – What We Can Still Change. No Charge – but booking essential. Tea, coffee and lunch provided. Booking essential to 083 460 8546 or to [elizabethmcnamee123@outlook.com](mailto:elizabethmcnamee123@outlook.com) before Friday 18 May!



**ECO CONFERENCE**  
*You are Invited*  
*Hearing The Cry of The Earth*

Guest Speakers:  
Fr. Sean Mc Donagh – Laudato Si  
Dr. Cara Augustenburg – The Damaged Planet  
Dr. Lorna Gold – What We Can Still Change

**Venue**  
Bush Hotel, Carrick-on-Shannon, Co. Leitrim  
Saturday, 26 May, 2018  
9.30 – 4.00

Tea, Coffee and Lunch provided  
No Charge – but booking essential

**To Book**  
Text or Phone: Name and Parish to 083 460 8546 or  
[elizabethmcnamee123@outlook.com](mailto:elizabethmcnamee123@outlook.com)  
Before 18 May  
Spread the word... Invite your friends

Sponsors: Sisters of Mercy



## Kerry Christian Meditation Groups – Day of Reflection with Sr Nellie Mc Laughlin

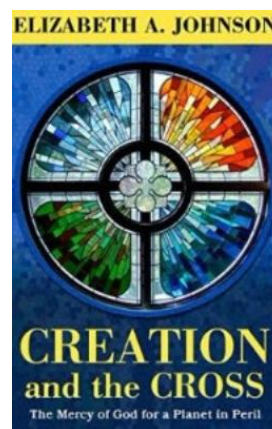
Kerry Christian Meditation Groups (John Main Tradition) are holding a Day of Reflection on the topic 'Out of Wonder' on Saturday 28th April 2018, 10am - 4pm (registration from 9.30am) in Our Lady and St. Brendan's Pastoral Centre, Upper Rock Street, Tralee. The speaker will be Sr Nellie Mc Laughlin. Prior booking essential. For further information and booking please contact: Sylvia Thompson 085 863 2623 [sylviajms11@gmail.com](mailto:sylviajms11@gmail.com) or Ann Fagan 064 6632381. Cost: €20 or €15 (Concession Rate) includes tea/coffee. Lunch not included (bring a packed lunch or eat locally). More information on the [ECI website](http://www.eci.ie).



## New Publication – 'Creation and the Cross' by Elizabeth A Johnson

Theologian Elizabeth A Johnson engages readers in conversation about a central Christian belief in a God who saves and how this belief affects life and practice at our crucial ecological juncture. In the process, she shows how the beauty and power of our faith tradition is deepened by being rooted more firmly in the ecological reality of the earth.

Mary Tinney from [Earthlink](http://www.earthlink.org) has written a review of this book which you can [read here](#). Earth Link is endorsed by the Sisters of Mercy, and open to all who share their concern for the whole Earth community. Earthlink is a movement of the Sisters of Mercy Brisbane, North Sydney, Parramatta and the new Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea. You can [subscribe to their newsletter here](#).



## Article by Sr Nellie Curtin – 'The Spirit of Brigid in Earth, Air, Fire and Water'

Since the last ECI newsletter, many of us have celebrated St Brigid's Day. Sr Nellie Curtin prepared the following article for the International Little Sisters of the Assumption JPIC newsletter entitled 'The Spirit of Brigid in Earth, Air, Fire and Water'. In her article Sr Nellie describes a celebration





of St Brigid's Day with the people of Tallaght and shares with us how Brigid connects us all as community and with the Earth. [Read her article on the ECI website.](#)

## **A Spring Day in Dalgan: Forty Shades of Green, Extolling the Wonder of Leaves**

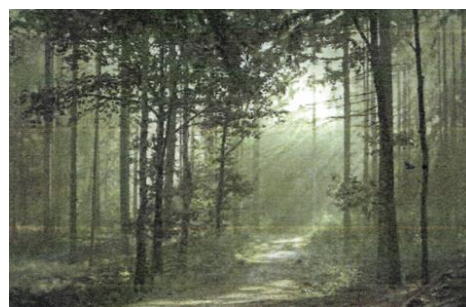
An inspirational day retreat at the Columban Ecological Institute, St Columban's, Dalgan, Navan, Co Meath: *A Spring Day in Dalgan - Forty Shades of Green: Extolling the Wonder of Leaves* with Dr John Feehan. Saturday 14th April 2018, 9.30am – 3.30pm: (Registration 9.15am).



The day begins with an introductory lecture, followed by an outdoor exploration of the wonder and adventure which spring offers within the grounds of Dalgan. Leaves will be the subject matter and extolling their wonder and beauty will be the focus of this exciting day. In the afternoon, you will look at your findings with the new eyes given to us by the microscope. If you wish to attend, please contact Elizabeth Mc Ardle at [devofficemail@gmail.com](mailto:devofficemail@gmail.com). Places for this day are limited due to microscope numbers and early booking is advised. The cost is €20, payable on the day. Participants are asked to bring a packed lunch, notebook and pen. Suitable outdoor clothes, rain wear and walking boots are all recommended. The day will go ahead whatever the weather. All welcome!

## **The Wonder of Creation, The Miracle of life: An Invitation to Walk with God in Self-Discovery within the Mystery of the Unfolding Universe**

An inspiring 5-day retreat in the beautiful surroundings of An Tobar, Spiritan Spirituality & Retreat Centre, Ardbraccan, Navan Co Meath with Sr Nellie McLaughlin on May 7 - 11 2018. For more information phone 046-9078973 or email [antobarnavan@gmail.com](mailto:antobarnavan@gmail.com). The Evolutionary Story of the Universe will be the context for the retreat as participants explore together how the Universe *'in all its manifold relationships, shows forth the inexhaustible richness of God'* (LS 86). All welcome!



## **Roscrea Quaker Meeting, Co Tipperary produces Leaflet on Promoting Sustainability**

The Religious Society of Friends Roscrea Meeting has produced a very helpful 'Promoting Sustainability' leaflet to offer advice on sustainability to other Friends. Following a resolution made by Ireland Yearly Meeting of Religious Society of Friends in April 2016, Quaker Meetings and individual Quakers all over Ireland began asking if their lives might be part of a system of harm, and how they might live sustainably and fairly. As a small Meeting, without its own Meeting House, Roscrea Quakers have produced a leaflet to offer tips on Sustainable practices to Friends and visitors. It is hoped that some of the content of this leaflet will be of help to others. [Learn more and view the leaflet here.](#)



## **Update from the SMA Wilton Justice Group – A Call to Action!**

Kathleen O'Connor a member of the Wilton Justice Group sent ECI an update report entitled – 'Call to Action!' The group organised two events during Lent, both calling us to action. The first event was the showing the film "Plastic Ocean", which highlighted the damage that plastics are doing to sea life. The second event was a talk with slides on global warming presented by Richard Morrison an expert on climate reality and the effects of global warming and climate disturbance. You can [read Kathleen's report in full on the ECI website.](#)



## Future We Need Group Produces Leaflets on Plastic Pollution for Earth Day 2018

The Future We Need Group is a group made up of religious congregations who work together inter-congregationally on issues of justice and care of the earth. Members include representatives from Columbans, Mercy, Presentation, Franciscans and Salesians. The group has recently been focusing on the issue of plastic pollution and decided to produce a leaflet for each of the four weeks (March 25 – April 22) leading up to Earth Day. The group has produced the first three leaflets which they have shared with ECI and the fourth will be ready later. You can [view these very helpful leaflets on the ECI website](#).



## Three Patrons Church Rathgar Lenten Talks

As part of a series of 4 evenings reflecting on the social teachings of the Gospel, the Inter Church Fellowship Group organised a talk on 21<sup>st</sup> February given by Rev Dr Donal Dorr SPS and the Rev Donal Neary SJ. Donal Dorr (at the invitation of the [Three Patrons Parish Laudato Si Group](#)) spoke on “Experiencing God in Nature”. In his illustrated talk he reflected on extracts from Laudato Si and quotations from religious leaders, poets and authors and how theology and spirituality can be enriched by taking account of evolution revealed by modern science. Donal Neary spoke about the Jesuit form of prayer called “The Examen” which is a technique of prayerful reflection on the events of the day in order to detect God’s presence and discern his direction for us. He described how this form of prayer can be applied to enhance our self-awareness of God’s creation.



## Daughters of Charity Kenya Prepare Book of Reflections on Laudato Si

Sr Claire Mc Kiernan shared the news with ECI that the Daughters of Charity in Kenya decided to write a piece on Laudato Si as part of their efforts to respond to this document. On the [Daughters of Charity website](#) you can read these reflections. Reflection topics covered are: Water is Life; The Garden of the World; Resurrection Hope; Climate Change; Our Common Home; Plant a Tree; A Healthy Relationship with Creation.



## Tralee Boys' Brigade Highlights Plastic Waste in St Patrick's Day Parade

Members of 1st Tralee Boys' Brigade, Church of St John the Evangelist highlighted the danger to fish life from waste plastic in the ocean in the St. Patrick's Day Parade.



## Reminder – VOICE Ireland’s Free Recycling Guidance Workshops & Community Grants Available!

Many of us are confused about what can and cannot be recycled in our recycling bins. VOICE Ireland's Recycling Ambassador Programme will show you - categorically - what you can recycle in your household bin, in this free, fun, interactive workshop. The Recycling Workshops are being offered across Ireland, to help people improve Ireland’s recycling rates and reduce levels of contamination in household recycling bins. Don’t miss this opportunity to learn how to get your recycling bin sorted. [More details of the programme](#). Sylvia Thompson (087 648 8274) is one of the team of recycling ambassadors giving these workshops and she would be thrilled to offer them to friends of Eco Congregation Ireland.



Contact [Michele@voiceireland.org](mailto:Michele@voiceireland.org) to learn more about the new Community Grant in Support of The Recycling Ambassador Programme or [click on this link](#).

## Eco Challenge!

Anne Newton, parishioner of [Nun's Cross Church, Killiskey Parish, Ashford, Co Wicklow](#) shares eco tips, published in their monthly church announcements sheet, and the following is particularly appropriate as the theme of this year's [Earth Day is 'End Plastic Pollution'](#).



Anne writes: 'Most of us will have heard the recent reports about the extent of plastic pollution, particularly in oceans. There are the obvious signs, where plastic containers are thrown out and collect in gyres (large scale eddies) far out to sea or are washed ashore, despoiling coastlines. However, there are other more insidious ways in which our oceans are affected. Fish ingest small pieces of plastic, which can fill their stomachs so that they can actually starve as they cannot then eat sufficient nutritious food. Additionally, micro plastics increasingly are being shown to pollute the seas and their fauna. These micro plastics are present in products as diverse as, for example, cosmetics and fleece jumpers; when the latter are washed, the micro plastics can end up far out to sea following disposal through waste pipes.'

These days, it is nigh on impossible NOT to use plastics, but we can, indeed must, reduce our use of them. Some nations are already banning the use of one-off plastic cups; we can all follow suit ourselves. Look at all the plastic containers at home and see if some changes can be made – bars of soap instead of hand wash and shower gel is one example. Set yourself a target to cut down on their use in the next few months. Good habits stick.'

## Prayer for the Earth

The theme of the [Women’s World Day of Prayer 2018](#) was ‘All God’s Creation is Very Good!’ and the resources were prepared by the Christian women of Suriname. The UK branch of Women's World Day of Prayer offered this prayer:

**O Lord, our Sovereign,**  
how majestic is your name in all the Earth.  
All your creation is very good.  
When we consider the awesomeness of your creation,  
we realise the great responsibility we have in caring for it.  
Your world contains an abundance of riches  
over which you have given us dominion.



We do not always take seriously  
how our thoughtlessness and laziness impact upon creation.  
As we reflect on the ways in which we have wasted, misused or taken for granted what you have so  
generously provided,  
we ask for your forgiveness and pray  
that you will show us how to be better stewards.  
O Lord, Our Sovereign,  
how majestic is your name in all the Earth. Amen *by Elizabeth Burroughs, WWDP 2018*

With kindest regards,

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