



Dear Eco-Congregation Friends

Welcome to the May/June 2020 edition of the Eco-Congregation Ireland newsletter. We are in difficult times. We hope you all are well and looking after each other. Some stories and reflections to encourage us in this difficult time.



Let's Create a VIRTUAL ECI Climate Justice Candle!

Sekeeta Crowley, one of [ECI's Climate Justice Candle](#) volunteers in Co Cork came up with the wonderful idea of creating a virtual ECI Climate Justice Candle community! Under the present circumstances it is no longer physically possible to circulate the ECI candle, however the need for prayer and action for climate justice has not gone away, and the risk of it being hidden during the Covid-19 crisis is real and at a time when it is needed all the more.

Therefore, [ECI invites you to designate one of your own candles as your very own Climate Justice Candle](#). It can be any size – simply make it look special and put it in a prominent safe place in your home. Print out one of the prayers given below (or write your own) and set it by the candle (but not so it risks catching fire!). What you then do is up to you. Involve the family in setting it up. Start a discussion with the children as to why you are doing it and why it is needed. Pray when you can. Perhaps choose a day and a time. Prayerfully consider actions you can take to reduce your own impact on the Earth and use the isolation time to talk to the family!

Post a photo of your candle on Facebook with Shine a Light on Climate Justice as a title and the link to the Eco-Congregation Ireland website – <https://www.ecocongregationireland.com/>. Please also email your photo to Eco-Congregation Ireland so that we can share it on the ECI website and Facebook page – send to info@ecocongregationireland.com. These stories will make up a wonderful collection of climate justice actions under lockdown! Don't forget to let us know where you are based. [Sekeeta has created a prayer card for use with your candle which you can print off](#), fold length-ways and put a piece of card inside to stiffen it so you can prop it up against something, should you so wish. Prayers front and back.

A Prayer for Our Earth (Laudato Si)

All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of your creatures.
You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.
Pour out upon us the power of your love,
that we may protect life and beauty.
Fill us with peace, that we may live
as brothers and sisters, harming no one.
O God of the poor,
help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this
earth,
so precious in your eyes.
Bring healing to our lives,
that we may protect the world and not prey on it,

Give us your love for the whole of Creation

Creator God, we confess that the way we are using fossil fuels and other destructive forms of energy today is destroying the forests, changing the climate, the seas, the soils, the biodiversity and the balance of life on our fragile planet, dispossessing the poor and future generations. Help us to choose life for all that is a risk-for neighbours near and far and for those that come after us. Give us the knowledge to learn what we do not know but long to understand, so that we may honour and nurture all that makes us one with you. We ask this through Christ Our Lord.

that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.
Touch the hearts
of those who look only for gain
at the expense of the poor and the earth.
Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,
to be filled with awe and contemplation,
to recognize that we are profoundly united
with every creature
as we journey towards your infinite light.
We thank you for being with us each day.
Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle
for justice, love and peace.

Thank you to all who have sent ECI photos of their VIRTUAL climate justice candles! They are:

Holy Faith Sisters



Fran Brady, Quaker Representative on the ECI Committee



Carrigaline Union of Parishes



Sekeeta Crowley, a volunteer with the ECI Climate Justice Candle Project in Munster





The Parish of Sean McDermott Street



St Joseph's Parish, Bonnybrook



The Cathedral of St Mary & St Anne, Cork

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Love Letter to the Earth: An Evening of Music, Poetry and Song

In celebration of the fifth anniversary of Laudato Si, this online event took place on May 24th. You can still view this online event at this YouTube link - <https://bit.ly/2XXpNNi>.



Climate Sunday: Giving a Voice to Local Churches

Marking World Environment Day, an initiative has been launched to provide focus for churches from across Britain and Ireland committed to action to combat climate change. Climate Sunday has been organised by Churches Together in Britain and Ireland with support from charities including CAFOD, Christian Aid, Tearfund, A Rocha UK, and Operation Noah. Local churches are encouraged to hold a local Climate Sunday any time during a one-year period starting on 6th September (the first Sunday in the annual season of Creationtide). Climate Sunday will provide free resources to suit every tradition and style of worship. [More details and information on their website.](#)



Vita Continues to Provide Clean Water and Sanitation to East African Communities

The spread of COVID-10 worldwide has highlighted more than ever the need to ensure universal access to clean water and sanitation. Currently, one in three people around the world do not have access to safe drinking water while three billion lack basic handwashing facilities.



Vita, an Irish NGO based in East Africa, has been working to deliver these vital services to rural communities in Ethiopia and Eritrea for over twenty years. As the global pandemic continues, Vita's mission to provide life-transforming water pumps and sanitation training to Africa's most vulnerable communities has never been more urgent. Thankfully, Vita's dedicated team are able to continue helping families like Tigist Awash's – a 12 year old girl whose family often contracted diseases from drinking dirty river water. Find out more about Vita's work and how to support it here >> <https://vita.ie/>.

Inter Faith Statement from Earth Day 2020

Lindsey Fielder Cook, Representative for Climate Change at the [Quaker United Nations Office](#) sent ECI this inter-faith statement, which organizations active at the international climate negotiations, created for Earth Day 2020. [You can read it here](#).

Roundfort, Robeen and Carras Eco-Congregation ... The First Six Months!

Mary Chambers, Trish Forde and Martin McDermott sent us this update: Roundfort, Robeen and Carras Eco-Congregation is a collection of three Churches and five Schools in South Mayo/North Galway. We are a 100% rural parish. In January we held our first event, an Unwanted Christmas Gifts Recycling Drive. For Lent, we ran a #Fast4Earth campaign and encouraged parishioners to consider sacrificing something for the environment. On March 28th, we held Mass by Candlelight from Robeen Church to mark Earth Hour. Due to the Covid-19 restrictions, our Parish Priest Fr. Mike Murphy celebrated Mass to an empty Church; but we were all present in spirit, and watched on the [Parish Facebook Page](#). The Mass even got some coverage in the [Western People Newspaper](#). With the restrictions in place, our plans for further events had to be re-considered. In April, we decided to run a Backyard Wildlife Competition, encouraging parishioners to upload wildlife photos that they took within 2KM of their home. We were blown away by the response! [Read their report in full on the ECI website here](#).



Update from Loving Sister Earth

Brian Grogan SJ sent ECI this update: NHWD (National Holy Wells Day) will be held on Sunday June 14, while respecting social distancing. Details are given on www.loving sisterearth.com on how to celebrate the gift of water at a Holy Well or in your home. Photos and activities for children are included and a brief history of Holy Wells in a Changing World. [Creation Walk: the Amazing Story of a Small Blue Planet](#), Dublin: Messenger 2020. This booklet by Brian Grogan SJ gives the story of creation in 30 steps, weaving in the Christian perspective. It offers reasons for hope for the future of our common home. '[Water as the Source of Life](#)' is a three-page summary of an important but unnoticed document from the Vatican on Water, March 2020. Season of Creation 2020 Liturgies: Loving Sister Earth was involved in the creation of these resources.



Rev David Coleman from Eco-Congregation Scotland - virtual speaker

Rev David Coleman, Eco Chaplain of [Eco-Congregation Scotland](#), our sister organisation, has prepared a YouTube video and in it he offers to speak to any churches or faith groups virtually! If you would like to have David address your group, you can contact him on chaplain@ecocongregationscotland.org. Now is the time for



some across-the-sea collaboration in our online life as churches! [View his video here](#). You can also visit [his Facebook page here](#).

Blessington Parish – Continuing Their Eco Journey

Before lockdown, the ECI Climate Justice Candle visited Blessington Parish in Co Wickow. [You can read their report on the candle's visit on the ECI website here](#) The candle was also brought to local schools for a simple prayer service thanking God for the gifts of creation and expressing sorrow for failing to care for our world. Well done to all! Their wonderful photos are below.

Carmel O'Neill sent ECI this update: At the moment we are working on creating a bio-diverse garden in the grounds of Lacken Church. Progress is slow due to people feeling anxious about the virus but hopefully that will improve in the coming weeks. In the meantime, our local Tidy Village Group have recreated an old Mass path which received funding from Wicklow County Council. It is an ongoing project, however with so many families confined to their homes this path is being used daily by local families eager to enjoy a short break outdoors and take in the beautiful scenery overlooking Blessington Lake.

Blessington Parish will also host their virtual climate justice candle at the Children's Prayer Service on Thursday June 11th at 11am. During the prayer service led by Fr Richard and Pastoral worker Aine Egan, Carmel O'Neill will make suggestions on how children can encourage bees and butterflies into their gardens. The prayer service can be viewed on the parish webcam on www.blessingtonparish.ie.



Methodist Centenary Church, Dublin – Reflection Under Lockdown

Maureen Rowan Harvey reflects on the life of her congregation since lockdown: Since November 2019, in the typically steady, democratic way things get done at [Centenary Methodist Church](#), we were getting started on becoming an Eco-Congregation. Then, suddenly, in March 2020, we were carbon-neutral. We stopped travelling, the buildings were empty, little fuel was used, there was no plastic anywhere. Our gathered church began gathering in a different way via services recorded on YouTube and meetings held on Zoom.



Covid-19 has challenged every aspect of our lives, but one of the consolations has been the way the natural environment has become a central part of worship. Church leaders and members of the congregation record videos of nature as a backdrop to prayers, and these are seamlessly blended by Rev Andrew Kingston, using his rapidly mastered skills with Quicktime software. An image of a clematis intensifies a prayer that God would draw close and surround us in time of pain and sorrow. By the waters of the river Dodder, Rev Andrew films and reflects on the 'strange land' in which we find ourselves, reminding us of Hebrews Ch 11 'faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen'. The manse garden is planted with biblical herbs, spices, wild flowers and vegetables – mustard, hyssop, sage, flax, rosemary, cucumber. These provide a basis for a sermon on the parable of the sower and on our global obligations to countries where nature is not so kind.

This time to pause and reflect will enable us to focus our efforts to be ahead of the next global catastrophe for which, unlike Covid-19, we have received lots of warning. The challenge of applying the wealth of resource material available from Eco-Congregation Ireland can seem daunting at times, given that our buildings are old, our roof needs replacing, our kitchen has multiple users, our members travel from all around the city. Like the mustard seed in the manse garden, however, we pray that our effort can start small and eventually put out 'great branches, so that the birds of the sky can lodge under its shadow.'

Latest News from the Care for the Earth Ministry Group, St Joseph's Parish, Bonnybrook

Margo Delaney sent ECI this reflection on the things we might want to keep doing after lockdown, their earth centred activities and the future: This has been a time for reflection, reading and prayer. Continue to set aside time for these and deepen an ecological consciousness. The Care for the Earth Ministry Group hopes to continue to participate in events focused on raising awareness of caring for the earth, our common home such as: Laudato Si' Week, the Love Letter to Mother Earth event and continuing their journey with the Living the Laudato Si' Pledge. The group also plans to tend their Care for the Earth Wildflower Garden and maintain efforts to create a sensory garden. You can read Margo's update in full [on the ECI website here](#).



Hillsborough Presbyterian Church, Co Down takes part in Mental Health Awareness Week

Grace Davin sent ECI this update: Hillsborough Presbyterian Church used our daily exercise as a focus for this year's Mental Health Awareness Week 18-24 May. The theme this year was kindness, so we looked at both kindness to ourselves as well as to others, and indeed to Planet Earth, and posted [these daily suggestions](#) on our website and Facebook page as to how we might aid our own mental wellbeing through exposing our senses to the sights, sounds, smells, tastes and sense of touch we are blessed with in our natural surroundings as we took our daily walks. We also promoted kindness to others in a variety of practical ways and prayer points related to the current situation imposed upon us due to Coronavirus restrictions. Some took part in the Love Letter to the Earth event organised by Trocaire which was inspirational.



Orlagh in the City Community – Meeting Virtually

Lorcan McDermott from the Orlagh in the City Community, Laudato Si' Eco Group sent ECI this update: We've transformed our book club from real to virtual, meetings are every two weeks instead of monthly with forty minutes of discussion on Zoom. We've just finished Sean Mc Donagh's 'Laudato Si' An Irish Response'. The scope of contributions, with chapters on anthropology, sociology, natural sciences and theology is wide ranging, a very useful start to debate. We are about to begin Elizabeth Johnson's 'Ask the Beasts, Darwin and the God of Love'. The book looks at the value of the natural world in the framework of religious belief. A timely read, with the current biodiversity crisis. The recent Laudato Si' Fifth Anniversary webinar series has been very informative, particularly the case studies describing how the message of Laudato Si' can be realised in many different environments. Our walks in nature have been postponed, a good time for virtual walks!



Latest news from the Parish of Our Lady and St. John in Carrigaline, Co. Cork

Janet Twomey sent ECI this update: It seems the lockdown has slowed so many of us down. Running and racing from one task to another and perhaps over-committing to pieces of work or social engagements had become the norm for many people. There were hardly enough hours in the day to get all the things on our endless to-do lists done. Then all of a sudden, we were forced to stay at home, within the confines of our homes and if we were lucky, our gardens. We now had all the time in the world to literally smell the roses and to witness the exciting activities of our feathered friends! In a sense, these past numbers of weeks have allowed us to rediscover nature.



The picture here is of a leaf skeleton, which was found in the garden of a colleague in East Cork. I received it as an attachment to a message with a note, "I think you'd like this". I couldn't quite make it out at first. It was only when I looked closer, I saw the frame of a leave without the greenery. It reminded me of the current situation in which we find ourselves. We too have sort of been stripped of our human greenery, all those things we have taken for granted – travelling to our jobs, meetings our friends for coffee and inviting family members for dinner, but what remains, like the leaf, is our

true essence. That can never be taken from us. As Pope Francis reminds us in his letter about caring for our earth "Nature is a constant source of wonder and awe" (LS85).

Although the Eco Group in the Parish of Our Lady and St. John in Carrigaline hasn't been able to meet in the past number of months, we stay connected by email. Group members have been involved in a number of activities. Before the lockdown, the Terracycle initiative being run out of our Parish Centre was very successful seeing lots of people dropping off their biscuit and crisp packages which aren't accepted through the usual recycling. Group members were involved in the organisation of a public meeting – 'Climate Change: The Challenge for Carrigaline' in the local community centre. The topics for discussion on the evening were energy, waste, transport, biodiversity and local action. We also participated in the 'Love Letter to the Earth' online event organised by Trocaire to mark the 5th Anniversary of Pope Francis' encyclical Laudato Si'. Joanne has also been involved in SECAD My Town My Plan workshop and is currently preparing a proposal for more sustainable transport in our town. We look forward to meeting as a group again later in the year!

Rathgar Laudato Si Group stay active!

Miriam Mooney Sent ECI this latest news: Some of us from Rathgar Laudato Si group have been involved in recent Stop Climate Chaos virtual meeting and webinar with TDs on 6th May – demand to join the event exceeded the technological limit of 100! It was an opportunity to highlight the necessity of listening to the scientists and acting on the research to address Climate and Biodiversity Emergency as we have done in addressing the Covid-19 emergency. Some have been emailing their TDs to ensure the Climate and Biodiversity Emergency is kept in their minds.

There was recent opportunity to view the important documentary 'The Story of Plastic' provided by Friends of the Earth and to attend a webinar with inspiring speakers on 14th May. This webinar is available on Friends of the Earth Website for all to view and it is hoped that the documentary will be widely available in near future.



Some of the Fridays for Future group, who had been outside the Dáil every Friday until the Covid-19 restrictions, have continued to keep in touch online. We have been sharing a photo of our Fridays for Future home-based actions on Twitter every Friday – thanks to Jane Mellett (Trocaire) who is one of the group, for managing the technology and the graphics! There has been a constant presence either in person or virtually for past 75 weeks!! It's so helpful to connect with others concerned about Climate Crisis and Climate Justice to help sustain us and maintain our hope for a better future.

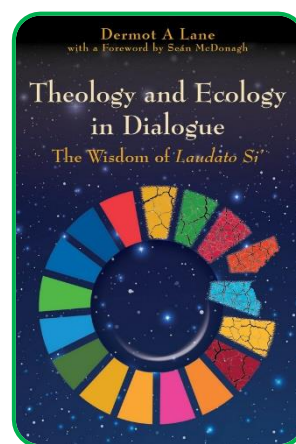
News from Friends of the Earth

In case you missed it, you can watch the Stop Climate Chaos webinar on '*What contribution can agriculture make to climate action?*' [here](#). Friends of the Earth [published the results of a national poll](#) on attitudes to climate action. FOE is asking us to help ensure all TDs in the new Dáil know about these results. [Here's the link again to send your TD](#) the results of this poll on Irish attitudes to climate action. [Visit the Friends of the Earth website to learn more and keep up to date with their work](#).



Theology and Ecology in Dialogue: The Wisdom of Laudato Si by Fr. Dermot Lane

Fr. Dermot Lane has just published a new book in time for the 5th anniversary of Laudato Si'. The title of the book is: 'Theology and Ecology in Dialogue: The Wisdom of Laudato Si'', Messenger Publications, 2020. This new book builds bridges between theology and ecology. It challenges theology to re-imagine who we are, who the Spirit is, who Christ is, where creation is going, and what is the role of liturgy in society—all in the glare of the climate crisis. You can order the book on the [Messenger Publications website here](#).



Latest News from the Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice

For the anniversary of the publication of Laudato Si, JCFJ is publishing an issue of Working Notes entitled "Integral Ecology: Five Years On?" which will include essays from researchers across Ireland on topics ranging from fossil fuel subsidies to sustainable agriculture. The issue will be available online at <https://www.jcfj.ie/working-notes/>.



The Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice has signed up for the Cycling Works Initiative which is calling for safer commuting for those on bikes by implementing a plan to provide cycling infrastructure in Dublin. More information is available at <https://www.jcfj.ie/2020/05/20/cyclingworks/>.

The Cathedral of St Mary & St Anne in Cork Shines a Light on Climate Justice – Virtually!

Ann Harnedy shared this with us: After 11:30am Mass in the Cathedral of St Mary & St Anne in Cork, on Sunday, May 24th, Bishop Fintan led the entire Diocese of Cork & Ross in Laudato Si Prayers. Bishop Fintan read these prayers in response to Pope Francis' invitation to join him in prayer that day, to mark the 5th anniversary of the publication of Laudato si in 2015. Naturally in these present times this was done by webcam! When the Climate Justice candle visited the parish in February a decision was taken to commission our own mini climate justice



candle to remind us visually of the objectives of our group and to continue to pray for climate justice. Our little candle shone out virtually across the Diocese as Bishop Fintan led us all in prayer. Above is a still from the TV and it shows the candle burning brightly in The Cathedral!

Focus on Care for our Common Home in Limerick Diocese

Rose O'Connor sent us this update: As part of our pastoral response in this time of Pandemic we have been developing online resources to support the people of the Diocese. 'Care for our Common Home' has been an important theme for us. Bishop of Limerick, Brendan Leahy's pastoral letter for Lent 2020, entitled 'Listening to Nature's words of love; caring for our Common Home', focused on the theme of ecological conversion and invited people to look more closely at their relationships with God, with others and with creation. There were three areas identified for people to consider were and [you can read them here](#).



The Diocese participated in a Laudato Si' virtual book club run by Jane Mellett, Laudato Si' officer with Trócaire through Zoom from the 15th of April to the 20th of May. Each week a chapter of Laudato Si' was expertly brought to life. Jane kindly undertook a Zoom chat with Bishop Brendan on Laudato Si' as a feature for Earth Day on the 22nd of April on Laudato Si. A recording of the chat and other resources we shared for Earth Day can be found at this link: <https://www.limerickdiocese.org/resources/category/resources/earth-day/>

During Laudato Si' week Bishop Brendan had a Zoom chat with Michael Long from Cabragh Wetlands on his perspective on Laudato Si'. We shared a daily thought for the day on our Facebook page, invited people to pray the Laudato Si' prayer each day at noon and offered a reflection and suggested practical action for people to consider taking on. Our Laudato Si' Week videos, prayers and other resources are all available at this link: <https://www.limerickdiocese.org/resources/category/resources/laudato-si-week/>

The Selesian Cosmology Group's Latest Activities

Teresa Devine sent ECI the latest news from the Selesian Cosmology Group:

'To find the universal elements enough; to find the air and the water exhilarating; to be refreshed by a morning walk or an evening saunter; to be thrilled by the stars at night: to be elated over a bird's nest or a wildflower in spring....these are some of the rewards of the simple life.' John Burroughs (1837-1921) American literary naturalist and conservationist. We are living through a unique moment in our human story and yet we share the wonderful signs of life in the natural world around us like John Burroughs three centuries earlier!



Our group has been engaging with a few activities that have kept us in contact and informed on Care of our Common Home. We have had a zoom meeting with content on climate change for discussion and those who could join us were present. Some of the group were able to join the Laudato Sí book club, which ran for six weeks dealing with the six chapters of Laudato Sí. Trócaire launched this initiative and Jane Mellett was our host for the six weeks. Jane has suggested that the large group who managed to be part of this journey might continue with further study on the global issues touched on in the document. Members of the group also signed up to the activities for Laudato Sí week, which mark the celebrations of the fifth anniversary of the launch of the encyclical. Our group joined the Zoom Webinar on May 24th 'Love Letter to the Earth'. In order to mark Laudato Sí Week we arranged to host a Zoom conference with our province and we will take chapter 6 of Laudato Sí.

Tuam calling!

Agnes Curley RSM reflects under lockdown ... Lockdown wasn't so bad. The weather was beautiful. I didn't cut my grass for one month and such an array of dandelions which attracted so many bees that they were music to my ears. The birds sang constantly and there were so many of them. Then the most wonderful surprise of all, a call from Fr. Brian Grogan S.J looking for my address to send me a copy of his latest book "Creation Walk, the amazing story of a small blue planet". Thanking me he said "for all you do for our small blue planet". What a lovely gesture from a wonderful Earth lover!



Lockdown has intensified my awareness of everything. In the bog I saw a frog, haven't seen one for years and the same day a caterpillar went its merry way across the road and what a beautiful sight. I continue to pick litter in my area and I just hope and pray somehow some way we can stop the terrible littering right across the countryside at this time. Be assured our beautiful world is well cared for in Tuam!

The Swift bird has arrived and while that species is very endangered we have increased their numbers by the erection of Swift boxes in the Mercy and Presentation schools sponsored by Srs. of Mercy. Galway Co. eCouncil also put boxes in our new housing estate. Ann Quinn has a special wild garden in the Paris centre grounds. So while lockdown continues our God of Surprises continues to keep us surprised! May we all continue to laugh and sing beneath Gods clear blue sky!

Nest boxes for swifts in St John the Baptist Parish

Fr Martin Hogan from Saint John the Baptist Parish, Clontarf Road, Dublin sent ECI this latest news: Thanks to the initiative of a parishioner, Anto Kerins, five nest boxes for swifts have been installed on the side wall of the presbytery overlooking the church car park. There is a smaller box with an electronic calling device which is intended to attract the swifts. A grant has been procured from Dublin City Council towards the purchase of the nest boxes. Swifts come to Europe each Summer from Africa arriving in this country at the end of



April/beginning of May and they make their way back to Africa in August, a round trip of 14,000. We will be keeping our eyes peeled for swifts around the church this summer. Hopefully, they will lay some eggs and we will have young swifts around for a couple of months before they fly off. For more information see swiftconservation.ie.

IEN Online Nature Resources

Irish Environmental Network has created a list of online nature resources and hopes it will allow people to continue to interact with nature through the digital realm. It includes workshops, training, activities for all ages, films, nature live streams, e-books and citizen science projects. You can also add any resources you come across. [The list can be viewed here.](#) [You can add any links you find using this form.](#)



IEN is also working to create a complete map of environmental groups in Ireland. This map will allow people to see what environmental groups are in their area and make it easier for people to get involved in local activities. It also allows other groups to see what else is in their area and give them the opportunity to reach out for collaborations. All environmental groups are welcome to join, so if you wish to add your group/church/parish you can do so here <https://len.ie/>.

Latest news from Westport Eco-Congregation

As part of Laudato Si Week, our friends at [Westport Eco-Congregation](https://bit.ly/3bGCyRk) have shared the following interview with Jane Mellett the Laudato Si' Officer at Trócaire. Jane talks about the significance of Laudato Si, its relevance now in this time of Covid-19, and what we can do to play our part both individually and collectively >> <https://bit.ly/3bGCyRk>. Members are also taking part in a Laudato Si' Study Group with Jane Mellett. This free event takes place on 'Zoom'. Anyone who is interested in becoming more involved in the Care of our Earth is welcome to join the group. For more information, call 0868745314 or email westportecocongregation@gmail.com.



Eco Challenge!

EcoQuakers Simplicity Letter - Live simply so that others may simply live - Mahatma Gandhi

During lockdown, EcoQuakers Ireland have created a simplicity letter to be circulated to all clerks of Meetings in Ireland. This letter encourages Quakers to re-visit their Testimony of Simplicity: 'As Quakers, we follow a testimony of simplicity and believe that a simple life is the most beneficial for ourselves and our society. As we begin to emerge from a national shutdown, we remind Friends of that testimony of simplicity and how many lives were saved during this crisis, and how many more can be saved in the future, by living simply. We encourage Friends to continue the practices of simple living developed during this shutdown and to use them in preventing climate breakdown.' [You can read the Simplicity Letter here](#). EcoQuakers also produced a document entitled 'Things that lockdown made us do'. [You can read it here](#). The points in this document were posted as daily considerations on the [Quakers Ireland Facebook feed here](#).

Prayer/Reflection for the Earth

This prayer was shared for Earth Day 2020:

Today we hold the earth.

We hold all who suffer directly or indirectly from Covid-19.

We hold everyone who suffers from storms and droughts intensified by climate change.

We hold all species that suffer.

We hold world leaders delegated to make decisions for life.

We pray that the web of life may be mended through courageous actions to limit carbon emissions.

We pray for right action for adaptation and mitigation to help our already suffering earth community.

We pray that love and wisdom may inspire my actions and our actions as communities so that we may with integrity,

look into the eyes of all living beings and truthfully say we are doing our best to care for them and the future of the children.

May love transform us and our world with new steps towards life.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen



A Reflection by Fr Hugh O'Donnell

Fr Hugh O'Donnell is a poet and ministers with the Salesian community in the parish of Sean McDermott Street in Dublin. He shares the following reflection with us, entitled 'An Aftertaste': 'Supper' seems yet another word on its way out; going, going...With that remark, I am probably dating myself as I recall my grandfather warming a cup of milk to take the chill off it, then drinking it with a plain biscuit or two before bedtime. Of course, that was when the accepted order ran – breakfast, dinner, tea, supper.



I was moved in this direction when I stumbled upon an evocative sentence from a letter written by Emily Dickinson to her dear friend, Elizabeth Holland in 1866 which reads, 'the supper of the heart is when the guest has gone'. In a preceding line, she had written, 'when you went the love came. I supposed it would', implying that the memory of friends having spent time together survives with a delightful aftertaste, as a small repast.

It reminded me then of the early disciples breaking bread together and how they understood it as a 'supper of the heart', a sustaining memory; the friend has gone but what was understood so deeply by his farewell gesture continues to nourish them.

And there are places, too, that nourish us long afterwards because of an encounter we have had – this slant of hill, a huddle of trees, a stretch of stream where something spoke to your heart once and ever after, or that time when a street fox crossed your path. Whatever the special place, the memory of that experience can still warm and fill you with a longing that draws you back and back.

Reflections on Coronavirus

Lena Deevy, Co-ordinator of the Little Sisters of the Assumption JPIC Group in Ireland shared this reflection with us. The reflection is written by Carol Dorgan, a committee member. [You can read the reflection here.](#)

In her reflection Carol says: 'What is your hope as you journey through this? Mine is that we would learn that we are greater than we think: we can live more simply, less dependent on "things" - possessions; we can live more respectfully and appreciatively on earth, courageously discerning the difference between what we need and what we want, always mindful that we share our world with all other living creatures, who are equally precious to God. Perhaps we are journeying towards a renewed more relational creation!'



With kindest regards,

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