



Dear Friends of Eco-Congregation Ireland

Welcome to the Spring/Easter 2023 edition of the Eco-Congregation Ireland newsletter! The Eco-Congregation Ireland committee wishes everyone a peaceful Eastertide! If you have any information or stories you would like to share in our future newsletters, we would love to hear from you! Send them to info@ecocongregationireland.com.

Catherine Brennan SSL – A Tribute by Rev Andrew Orr

Dear Friends of Eco-Congregation Ireland,

We are sad to let you know today of the death of one of the founding members of ECI, Catherine Brennan SSL. She had been the Catholic representative on the ECI committee since our foundation in 2005, and she was the driving force in so many of our activities. Her enthusiasm was unbounded, as was her persistence and drive to care for the environment. She was a constant source of encouragement, keeping in touch with so many parishes and places across Ireland. She recognised from early days the need for the churches to work together, and that care for God's creation was an ecumenical and intergenerational activity.



She was an inspirational educator for many years, in a number of the schools run by her order, the sisters of Saint Louis, and this inspiration continued in her retirement with young and old alike. Despite constant bouts of ill health, she seemed to work indefatigably, and each one of our committee meetings brought news of parishes beginning their journey or receiving awards. Just last week she was arranging for a gold award to be presented to Ballineaspig parish in Cork City. In many ways, Eco-Congregation Ireland is her legacy. All of us who worked with her will cherish happy memories of her enjoyable company and companionship and constant smile. May she rest in peace and rise in glory. [You can read tributes to Catherine](#)

[on the ECI website here](#). The photo on the left was taken by Finbarr Keaveney and shows the ECI Climate Justice Candle at Sr Catherine's funeral.

ECI Climate Justice Candle Visits ...

Bride Street Church in Wexford

Fr Billy Swan sent us this report: I am the Administrator of Wexford Catholic Parish and I am a member of the Wexford Parish Care for the Earth Group. This group is an ecumenical group in the town, founded in

January 2022. The above photo was taken outside Bride Street Church in Wexford with the ECI Climate Justice Candle which we were privileged to have for a week recently. This photo was taken beside the 'pocket forest' which was planted in the grounds of our church last December, where a large number of trees were sown in a small area which maximises biodiversity and carbon sequestration. It is one of several initiatives of Wexford Parish Care for the Earth Group that include steps to address the issue of climate justice. Many thanks for allowing us to have the candle to add momentum and awareness to our work.



Wexford & Kilsoran Union of Parishes

Victoria Hawkins sent us this report: The Wexford Care for the Earth Group introduced our Union of Parishes to Eco-Congregation Ireland Climate Justice initiative. The Candle was hosted by Wexford and Kilsoran Union of Parishes for a couple of weeks. The candle was displayed within St. Iberius Church.



With its prime location on the main street in Wexford, many visitors to the town come into the church. The presence of the candle prompted conversation with the Rector about climate justice.



During the first week of hosting the candle, our prayers were focused on climate justice during a service of Holy Communion. The theme of the week was 'Shine a light on Climate Justice' initiative. The intercessions/prayers of the morning service were prepared by Eco-Congregation Ireland and led by Victoria Hawkins on Sunday 12th February. Our Rector Norman McCausland, O.L.M Ciaran Kavanagh and the

parishioners were delighted to take part. It was a great learning experience to join the many other churches and groups who have hosted this candle to highlight the injustices around climate change. The photo top right shows Victoria Hawkins with the candle and the photo on the left shows the candle in St Iberius Church.

Carrigrohane Union of Parishes

Revd Robert Ferris sent us this report: Over the Season of Advent 2022, the Church of Ireland in Carrigrohane Union of Parishes, Diocese of Cork hosted the Climate Justice Candle. The Candle was introduced at the United Celebration Service in December held at the recently opened Carraig Centre in Ballincollig. It was a reminder to the congregations present that we are to pray and act for Climate Justice. It then was then brought to the Christmas Day Service in St. Peter's Carrigrohane.



Revd Robert Ferris Rector of Carrigrohane Union of Parishes commented – *“As a Union of Parishes we have a very active Eco-Congregation Group who have been leading us in all sorts of initiatives over the years helping in the focus of the safeguarding the integrity of creation. The candle was able to help us focus prayer on the topic of climate justice issues. I thank both our own committee in the parish and also in Eco-Congregation Ireland for this initiative and pray that as churches pray as one we may also act together in this vital area for the common good.”*

We received it from Ardfallen Methodist Church and have passed it on to representatives from the Society of African Missions in Cork (pictured above at its handover).

Churchtown Quaker Meeting

Niamh Hardiman sent us this report: Churchtown Quakers are glad to have been able to host the Climate Justice Candle over two weekend days. On Saturday 25 March, there was a large gathering of the Dublin Area Quaker Community who came together to consider our Vision and Strategy Plan for 2023-2026. The presence of the candle fitted well with



our work of discerning how we bring forward our Quaker testimonies of openness to the Inward Light, simplicity in our living, the equality of all of humanity, and working in the life and power that takes away the occasion of all wars. The photo on the right shows some Friends from across all the Dublin Quaker Meetings.



On Sunday 26 March, the presence of the candle in our regular Meeting for Worship provided both the symbol of and a focus for our shared commitment to environmental care and climate justice. The photo on the left is of some Friends who belong to Churchtown Meeting. Brian Ó Súilleabháin, who is the convenor of EcoQuakers Ireland, is in both photos.

Latest News from ...

Holy Trinity Killiney

Joan Millar sent us this update: Holy Trinity has kept the prayer / thought for the month going with more of the congregation getting involved. This may be small but all the awareness of climate change in our daily lives is important. We have also planted some appropriate plants in our parish grounds and are using eco-friendly based weed killer for the paths.



Westport Eco-Congregation

Brid McAuley sent us this latest news: It was with great sadness we learned of the death of Sr Catherine Brennan. Sr Catherine was a wonderful encouragement to our group from our foundation to just a couple of weeks before her death. We all remember her enthusiasm and support and her encouraging phone calls. May she Rest In Peace.



Westport Eco-Congregation held two very successful events recently. In February we welcomed the authors of *Parish as an Oasis* – Kevin Hargedon and Dr Ciara Murphy. We had a lively discussion after their presentation as to how a parish can get involved in Climate Action. We were delighted that our audience consisted of representatives from neighbouring parishes as well as our own community. In early March we were extremely privileged to welcome Martin Palmer CEO of Faith Invest to a zoom event. The title of Martin's talk was Faith in the Future. Over 60 participants took part in this event and we were treated to a hopeful talk on the future of our planet. We welcomed participants from all over Ireland and beyond. Westport Eco-Congregation has a recording of this available, email westportecocongregation@gmail.com if anyone would like to listen to this event. For the first time in six years Westport Eco-Congregation were unable to hold an Earth Hour event this year – however we did promote Earth Hour in our local media and on social media.



Ormeau Churches Together and Newtownbreda Presbyterian

Ken Orr sent us this latest news: Ormeau Churches Together has been meeting again recently, building back after the Covid pandemic. Last weekend we held a Spring Social Walk, a popular event before the lockdowns. Despite a poor



weather forecast, members of Good Shepherd Parish, Newtownbreda Presbyterian and Ballynafeigh Methodist churches had a very pleasant afternoon exploring East Belfast and the Titanic Quarter. We walked from CS Lewis Square, through Victoria Park and over the new Sam Thompson bridge to the Titanic building. After a break for tea/coffee in the lovely Dock cafe (which operates on a donation system), we completed the circular walk by returning to the Square by a shorter route.



Togher Parish, Co Louth

Lenten Pledge 2023 - James Carroll sent this report: Lent is a time when we usually challenge ourselves to make difficult choices about our lifestyle. This year the Care for the Earth Group in Togher Parish, Co. Louth extended an invitation to all the parish community to focus some of their choices to tackle climate change and to make some practical pledges during Lent 2023. A special invitation and daily challenges were shared in particular with the enthusiastic pupils in our two parish schools. Each week a different pledge theme and focus was chosen. These themes were food, fashion, plastic, energy and natural world. It is hoped that going forward good habits will have developed during Lent, that will continue throughout the year. The three Cherry Trees planted by the parish in the parochial grounds will be a constant reminder to us all that the following pledges should be made and worked on throughout the year and not just during Lent.



FOOD: Instead of giving up chocolate, maybe you could try to have one meat-free day every week or buy more locally sourced food? We pray for those who do not have enough to eat and those who are experiencing famine or poor harvests.

FASHION: Think about making better use of the clothes you already have by swapping clothes with friends and family to refresh your wardrobes as well as thinking about the environmental and social impact before you buy new clothes. We pray for those working in the textile industry, particularly in poor countries, who are subjected to long hours, low pay and dangerous working conditions. We remember especially the many young children who are forced into such work.

PLASTIC: Think about how your way of life produces so much plastic waste which causes pollution, particularly to our water sources. What can you do to cut down your use of single use plastic items? We pray for the protection of our planet and remember those who work tirelessly to clean up polluted rivers and oceans and help restore life to them.

ENERGY: Think about reducing your energy consumption. Turn off lights when you leave the room. Consider turning down your thermostat by one degree. We pray for those that have no access to electricity and for those who struggle with air pollution.

NATURAL WORLD: God created this beautiful world for us. What can you do to show your love for God's creation? Take time each day to enjoy nature. Plant a tree or make your garden a haven for birds, bees and butterflies. We pray that God deepens our gratitude for all He has created and awakens in us a renewed commitment to care for the earth.

South Belfast Quaker Meeting

Sustainability Morning

Kerry Nicholson sent us this report: On Saturday 25th March 2023 members of South Belfast Quaker Meeting met at Frederick Street Meeting House in North Belfast to review and update their Sustainability Plan. Originally the South Belfast Meeting House was unavailable due to it being booked by an external group, so Frederick Street Meeting House were approached to see if they could host our event, which they gladly did. Subsequently, South Belfast's Meeting House became available, but it was decided to continue with Frederick Street's building as an opportunity to build connections between the two Meetings.



The event started with scones, tea & coffee. The scones were made without using dairy products (using vegan alternatives) as a way to get people thinking about food and not take things for granted. In 2022, the EcoQuaker Ireland group (a committee of Ireland Yearly Meeting) produced a booklet called 'Regenerating Our Common Home' to assist Meetings across the island of Ireland work toward Carbon Zero in their Meeting Houses and members lives. This booklet formed the framework for the discussions and work for the morning.

Themes explored included the definitions of sustainability, carbon zero, carbon neutral, and carbon sequestration. Areas examined included premises & buildings, working with younger people, cooperation between different Meetings, finance: cost versus environmental benefit, and speaking truth to power. In 2016 South Belfast Meeting members developed an initial Sustainability Plan and then updated it slightly in 2021. This event was a chance to review it completely to see what we have achieved, do a bit of blue sky thinking about what else we need/want to achieve, along with encouraging the various committees that operate in the Meeting to consider environmental impacts in their decision making.

We spent time in small groups looking at the different themes and then came back into the larger group to try to bring some structure to the range of ideas. All this work will now be brought together into a new Sustainability Plan which will be presented to the whole membership of South Belfast Meeting to be agreed (hopefully) as our way forward. The morning finished with homemade soup some of which was made with vegetables from a local organic farm delivery box scheme, so the food was grown within 10 miles of where it was eaten.

Johnstown Parish Eco Group

Geraldine Murphy sent us this update: The Johnstown Parish Eco Group have been working on the church gardens since last summer. We now intend to plant fuchsia, lavender and other pollinator friendly shrubs and flowers. For the last fortnight, we have had a Climate Action Tree in the church. We invited parishioners to make a pledge or prayer to reduce their carbon footprint and hang it on the tree. Some examples: Walk more and use the car less; use public transport; print less documents saving paper; buy only what is on my shopping list; buy my clothes from Charity shops. A third action we, in Johnstown, Killiney Parish, have taken recently is to sell Fairtrade items after three Masses on weekend 4th/5th March, including tea, coffee, wine, jam, marmalade, chocolate and bananas amounting to approximately €500.



First Portadown Presbyterian

Launch Creation Carers Group

Anna Louise Shepherd sent us this news: First Portadown Presbyterian Church launched their Creation Carers Group on Saturday 4th March. We had 14 people present (12 and 2 children). We explained a little more about the Awareness Award that the church had been given by Eco-Congregation Ireland and what the categories involved.



We started with a community outreach activity, whereby we have enrolled on the ABC council's Adopt -A-Street scheme. Armed with litter pickers, high vis tops and gloves we divided up into small groups to mindfully and prayerfully walk around the area we have adopted. As we are an urban church many travel in to the streets purely to participate in worship or other church activities and rarely take time to study the area. We were fortunate to have a local resident in the group who was able to tell us more about some of the issues in the area which was useful to understand.



Although the streets include several derelict sites we discovered a tunnel that few had ever explored which goes under the railway line to an area known as Hoys meadows, now maintained by the council Dept of Parks and Recreation. It includes picnic tables and frontage onto the River Bann, so now it has become a possible spot for a church picnic or outdoor activities in the future!

We also realised we had a roundabout on our patch and so are now hoping to submit a planting design to the Roads Dept so that we can sponsor and maintain that as a means of improving the environment. The group hopes to meet once a

month and carry on ongoing litter collection, but also hope to plan some information sessions and engage the youth organisations in projects too.

Roundfort Carras and Robeen Eco Parish

Martin and all of the Eco Congregation Group sent us this update: Back in January, we issued an "Unwanted Christmas Gifts" appeal, asking parishioners to donate any unwanted or unused Christmas Gifts after Mass. We had a tremendous response, and at the end of January we were visited by Natalia who is a co-ordinator for multiple direct provision centres around County Mayo. With the donations, Natalia was able to help residents of 4 different centres, who were thrilled to receive the gifts.

One Saturday morning in early February, a group of us got together to pot up over 100 native trees. Afterwards, we presented each First Communion and Confirmation candidate in the parish with one of the trees, which they can plant in their garden and watch it grow and mature with them. Because the trees are native, they will be a great benefit to the local birds, bees, and other insects, as well as the obvious benefits they bring to the students and their families.



For Earth Hour this year, on March 25th, we held our Saturday night vigil mass by candlelight. Members of the Eco Congregation Group took part in the liturgy of the Mass, alongside pupils from the local primary school. Symbols were presented at the start of Mass by Georgina, Grace and Joan representing care of the earth, care for the poor, and the Christian call to a simplistic lifestyle. The primary school pupils also prepared paintings and drawings for the Mass on the themes of "The beauty of God's

creation" and "Care of the Earth", and they also provided the Choir for the evening.

We were saddened to hear of the passing of Sr. Catherine Brennan just a few days before the Mass. We remembered Sr. Catherine during the Mass and offered up prayers for her, as she is no doubt praying for all of us.

On April 19th at 8PM, we will be screening the Laudato Si movie, "The Letter", which tells the story of how we can all come together to care for our common home. We look forward to welcoming our parishioners on the night and discussing with them the collective actions we can take as a parish.



Carrigaline Union of Parishes

John Andrew sent us this latest news: St Mary's, our Carrigaline church is celebrating its bicentenary this year. As part of the celebrations, with a view to increasing biodiversity in the church grounds, we plan to extend our pollinator friendly garden and introduce some areas with Irish native wildflowers, such as Angelica and Red Campion.



Global Climate Strike in Newcastle, Co Down

On Friday 3rd March school children, teachers and parents from Newcastle, County Down took part in the Global Climate Strike at Our Lady of the Assumption Church in solidarity with Greta Thunberg and Fridays For Future. Laudato Si Animator Finbarr Keaveney led the [call to action](#) and there was a wonderful musical contribution from St. Mary's Primary School, Newcastle, Co. Down which you can view [here](#).



Blessington, Lacken and Vallemount

Carmel O'Neill sent us this update: The months of February and March were busy in our parish with a number of events being held in this all important Lenten and growing season. On Fri Feb 10th, third class pupils took part in a tree planting ceremony in the carpark of Blessington church. Fr Richard blessed two holly trees, one male and female. We hope that with cross pollination these trees will produce red berries in the winter months. Prayers of thanksgiving were offered for the beauty of our trees and their contribution in reducing carbon levels. We now have three new trees in this area and the Red hawthorn planted in Oct is already showing healthy buds.



An Interfaith Service was held in Blessington Church to mark Women's World Day of Prayer for Taiwan. Prayers of intercession were offered for Taiwan as Mother Earth faces problems with waste disposal, over utilization of hillsides and habitat destruction. A donation of 143 euro was given to the women in Taiwan who face discrimination and oppression especially among the migrant community.

In response to the devastating earthquake in Turkey/Syria pastoral worker Aine held a ceremony of Hope for the children who are preparing for Holy communion in the parish. Carmel spoke on the importance of hope and how hope becomes a reality with the generous response made by people all over the country to the victims of the Turkey/Syria earthquake. Each child was asked to donate 2 euro and 124 euro was given to Trocaire.



The theme of Hope continued through Lent as Sr Enda Mullan, an ecologist and a Holy Faith Sister gave a very enlightening talk at mass on Hope in Creation. Sr Enda outlined the stark reality facing us with rising sea levels, loss of land for farming and the declining species in our flora and fauna. But she also stressed that as God poured his breath on the world at Creation so all will He breathe new life in to our efforts to save the world from destruction. A summary of her wonderful talk will appear shortly in our parish newsletter.



In response to our efforts to be more environmentally friendly, Fr Richard Behan has installed three new candle shrines in Blessington Church. The old candles were wasteful with the plastic bases going to landfill. These new shrines will not only reuse the old wax from the wax tray but will also improve the air quality in the church.

The new community garden at the back of the parochial house in Valleymount is progressing well. Deacon Gerry organised the delivery of gravel for the pathways while the Men's Shed have built 8 raised beds which have been filled with topsoil. The planting of vegetables will begin in April. [You can view all of Carmel's photos on the ECI website here.](#)

Other News ...

Latest News from Vita

Maggie Bukowa, Communication Officer with Vita sent us this latest news:

Vita Implements Community Led Communication Ethos

Vita Ireland rolled out a community led communication initiative in



Ethiopia which empowered the Arba Minch community with communication and filming skills. The community learnt story telling skills such as camera operations and handling, story board development, interviewing techniques and filming. This initiative gave the communities confidence and skills to tell and

document their own stories.

This is part of Vita's strategy to deploy a community led ethos across the whole organisation and its programming. The community led communication ethos will enhance the community's true voice with regards to the impact of various Vita projects on their lives and wellbeing. Communities will be able to tell their own stories in their own voices. They will be able to interview each other and make their own stories without external interference or influence. Visit [Vita Green Impact Fund – Vita Impact](#) for a sample of a community filmed by the community.



Water Access Revitalises Eden Village in Eritrea

Mother of three Hanna Mihterab, lives in Eden village in the Anseba region of Eritrea. Hanna and her eldest son, 13-year-old Adonai, used to collect water from a stream that is two kilometres from their home every day. They would carry 20 litres of water in jerry cans on their backs. On some days, they would make two or three trips in a day in order to wash the family's clothes, bath or if extra water was needed for visitors. Hanna's sons were missing school and didn't have time for their homework. The water from the stream wasn't clean, meaning Hanna had to boil it before the family could drink it. Even with her best efforts, some days the children had diarrhoea due to the water.

A repaired water point in the village has changed Hanna's life. This water point is 200 metres from where Hanna lives, she can fetch water in 10 minutes. The water point was repaired by Vita with funding from its partners.

Hanna has more time for the family now that she doesn't have to travel far for water, and the children are healthier from drinking clean water. Hanna is using less firewood every week as she no longer has to boil the water for the family. This means fewer greenhouse gases are emitted, not just by Hanna's family but by all the families with access to the newly repaired water point. Since the water point was repaired, Hanna has not needed to visit the health clinic and has saved money on medical expenses. Her children's school attendance has improved.

Moreover, she has ample time for other activities. In her free time Hanna grows tomatoes, green peppers cabbages and onions. She uses these vegetables to feed her family and sells the surplus to the neighbouring families.

Faith and Farming Workshop

Ethel Whyte is helping to organise a workshop on Faith and Farming: . A couple at my church, Michael and Miranda Jemphrey, work with Wycliffe Bible Translators in Africa and introduced me to their colleagues who are collaborating on the "Faith and Farming" initiative. Katharine (from Dublin) and Malgwi (from Nigeria) have been introducing groups of farmers in various countries across Africa to this series of workshops looking at what the Bible has to say about farming. We are now keen to share their experience with farmers here in Ireland, north and south. May I invite you to join us for the workshop?

The workshop is on Saturday 22 April 10am - 1 pm in the T3 conference centre, House of Vic-Ryn, Moira Road, Lisburn, Co. Antrim, BT28 2RF ([Vic-Ryn Lisburn - Google Maps](#)).

The programme for the morning will comprise:

- 10.00 am Arrival, tea and coffee
- 10.15 am Welcome and introductions
- 10.30 am Katharine will introduce the Faith and Farming initiative in Nigeria
- 11.00 am Malgwi will tell us more about the workshops and the impact they are having
- 11.30 am Tea and coffee break
- 11.45 am We will break into small groups to discuss how our faith has played a role in how we farm and what we can learn from our Nigerian and African co-farmers. This will be introduced by Michael and myself
- 12.30 pm We will come back together for summing up, conclusions and discussion about going forward
- 1.00 pm End of the workshop with lunch provided for those who are able to stay on

Our desire is to encourage the farming community on this island as they continue to face pressure to change from many quarters. This workshop will provide an opportunity to discuss our own farming lives and together draw guidance and sustenance from God's word and how He has been working with farmers



in Nigeria / Africa. We're asking folk to let me know by Monday 17 April that they are coming and to indicate if they will be staying for lunch. Register here - ethel.white@live.co.uk.

Church and Peace event on Banking and Ethics

Why Should we be Concerned about the Financial Services we use?

The financial sector of the economy claims that it provides financial services. But there is a question which is never asked: "What do these services provide for the common good?" The event will be facilitated by Tony Weekes. Tony is a member of the board of C&P. For twenty years he was an academic economist, and for fourteen years was a non-executive director of the Ecology Building Society, an experience which taught him much about the economics of the real world and about how finance can be used for the common good. Register via this Eventbrite link: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/banking-ethics-tickets-560447001067>.



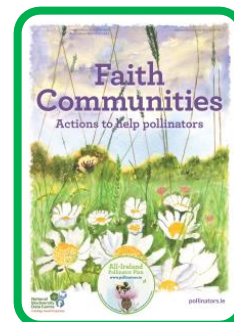
Season of Creation 2023: Let Justice and Peace Flow

The theme for Season of Creation 2023 has been launched. Prophet Amos cries out: 'But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!' (Amos 5: 24) and so we are called to join the river of justice and peace, to take up climate and ecological justice, and to speak out with and for communities most impacted by climate injustice and the loss of biodiversity. As the people of God, we must work together on behalf of all creation, as part of that mighty river of peace and justice. A celebration guide, introducing the theme with an invitation to participate in diverse activities celebrating the Season of Creation, is in the final stages of preparation. The guide offers an opportunity to intensify care for creation across the ecumenical space. Additional resources, including an invitation to a variety of webinars and prayer services, will be available online. More information is available at: www.seasonofcreation.org



Pledge Your Parish for Pollinators

Across the island of Ireland, pollinators are in decline. These important insects are crucial for the growth of many of our fruits and vegetables, as well as flowers and wild plants. Fortunately, there are simple ways we can help them. The All-Ireland Pollinator Plan is inviting you to pledge your parish for pollinators and join a network of places around the island of Ireland where pollinators can survive and thrive. For more information, visit their faith community pages: [Faith Communities » All-Ireland Pollinator Plan \(pollinators.ie\)](https://pollinators.ie).



QUNO Programme Assistant Positions

The Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) in Geneva is offering three programme assistant positions from September 2023 to August 2024. These positions will work in Human Rights & Refugees, Peace and



Disarmament, and Human Impacts of Climate Change programmes, respectively. For the complete job descriptions, application and eligibility requirements, please click [here](#).

The one-year paid positions are an opportunity for young professionals to increase experience in international affairs, and learn about Quaker peace and justice work at the United Nations (UN). QUNO works across UN and intergovernmental processes, providing programme assistants with opportunities to be involved in multilateral governance.

An Tairseach – Summer Retreats and Talks

All information on the An Tairseach website here - <https://antairseach.ie/>



An Tairseach

Organic Farm & Ecology Centre

SUMMER RETREATS & TALKS

CREATION, EVOLUTION & FAITH WITH JOHN FEEHAN
TUESDAY 11TH - FRIDAY 14TH APRIL
 9:30am to 4pm, 4 day course

Whether on the macro scale of cosmology or the micro level of subatomic particles, the diversity of living creatures, or the mysteries of the human mind, John Feehan's profound insights into the beauty and wonder of the natural world have led him to become passionate about our responsibility as humans to care for our common home.

€150 includes course content & tea/coffee & snacks



INCARNATING THE HUMAN: NEW THEOLOGICAL HORIZONS WITH DIARMUID O'MURCHU
MONDAY 24TH - WEDNESDAY 26TH APRIL
 9:30am to 12:30pm, 3 days

Based on the scholarly study of our seven-million-year evolutionary story, this module explores the implications of naming and integrating our identity as Earthlings; along with the ensuing responsibilities that arise from this expanded understanding of our human identity.

€90 includes course content, teas/coffees & snacks.



EMERGING MODELS OF CHURCH: PARISH AS OASIS WITH KEVIN HARGADAN & CIARA MURHY
TUESDAY 2ND MAY, 9:30am to 12:30pm

This course introduces you to an alternative model of church, one which functions from the margins and tends lovingly to our Common Home, which can exist and thrive in our ever-changing world. A practical and accessible overview, which draws on real life projects and examples, as to how local churches can contribute to healing the environmental crisis. This conference seeks to equip people with a hands-on understanding of the ideas unpacked in Laudato Si'.

€30 includes course content, teas/coffees & snacks.




"THE CRY OF THE EARTH, THE CRY OF THE POOR" PASTORAL LETTER OF ARCHBISHOP DERMOT FARRELL
 Panel of speakers including Ms Jane Mellett of Trocaire & Dr Lorna Gold of Faith Invest
WEDNESDAY 3RD MAY, 9:30am to 12:30pm
 Join us in person or via Zoom

The purpose of the programme is to build awareness and highlight the significance of the Archbishop's pastoral letter given the realities that are impacting Earth and her community of life today. Hear key inputs from the pastoral, as well as encouragement and support for those attending. We are collaborating with OP Justice Office, Trocaire & AMRI in planning the day and engaging key catholic constituencies.

€30 includes course content, teas/coffees & snacks. €20 to join via Zoom



STEPPING INTO THE DOUGHNUT WITH MOZE JACOBS & ALICE GLENDINNING
TUESDAY 9TH MAY, 9:30am to 12:30pm

Doughnut economics is a visual framework for a sustainable economy. The holistic model is shaped like a doughnut and combines the complementary concepts of respecting the planetary boundaries and redesigning the social boundaries. The workshop, originally developed by the Doughnut Economics Action Lab (DEAL), offers an embodied and socially interactive approach to this alternative economic model.

€30, includes course content, tea/coffee snacks



THE FIRE WE CARRY WITH ARLENE FLAHERTY OP
MONDAY 5TH - SATURDAY 10TH JUNE
 9am to 5pm. 4 full days. Arrive Monday evening, depart Saturday morning.

In the Great Flaring Forth over 13.8 billion years ago, the Creator's love seeded the universe with love. Over 2,000 years ago, a Second Flaring Forth emerged in Jesus of Nazareth. Through his life and work, he illuminated how love, the fire we carry, brings about healing, conversion, new consciousness, and abundant life for all. How might our loving and living as followers of Jesus, bring about another Flaring Forth? What impact can this have for a vulnerable Earth and her community of life today?

€500, includes course content, accommodation, all meals, teas/coffees & snacks.



'EVERY BUSH AFLAME' SCIENCE, GOD & THE NATURAL WORLD WITH JOHN FEEHAN
MONDAY 17TH - SATURDAY 22ND JULY
 9:30am to 4pm, 4 day course

Few aspects of the natural world are more intricate and exciting than the exquisite ways in which flowering plants have developed relationships with insects and other animals and sometimes with the wind – to bring about the cross-pollination of their flowers. This year's summer school will explore the many aspects of pollination and pollinators through talks and discussion, field outings and laboratory microscope sessions: and allow time and space for reflection on the deeper spiritual significance of it all.

€650 includes course content, accommodation, all meals, teas/coffees & snacks.



CELEBRATING CREATION WITH ANNE CURTIS RSM & COLETTE KANE OP
MONDAY 31ST JULY - SATURDAY 5TH AUGUST
 9am to 5pm. 4 full days. Arrive Monday evening, depart Saturday morning.

Join us in Celebrating Creation! Through the medium of music, dance and poetry, input and meaningful rituals, this course aims to celebrate the God of Creation, providing resources to enhance liturgies in the context of evolutionary consciousness, using the lens of creation spirituality and eco-theology.

€650 includes course content, accommodation, all meals, teas/coffees & snacks.




BOOKING ESSENTIAL

www.antairseach.ie/events/events-calendar

0404 61833 info@antairseach.ie




Prayers/Reflections for the Earth

A Reflection by Fr Hugh O'Donnell – in Memory of Catherine Brennan SSL

Slow Lane: Aurora Borealis

'Aurora Borealis, the Northern Lights', Anne said, 'how wonderful' as I considered how its magnificence could be delivered in words. She didn't need that. 'Leave me with the magic', she cut in. Which reminded me of my mother's response to my attempt to explain why the prayer plant raises its leaves in praise as night falls. 'It's praying', she said, 'that's enough'.

Good messages both of them because they pushed me back to the source of our best response, namely, wonder and praise. And the wonderful must never surrender to any formula of words. We stand before a sunset, for instance, and say 'ah' for it is truly an awe-moment. And, if we must reach for a word, let it be 'grace'! In fact, St Paul found that word to be his best ally when he wrote about the Good News which for him was all grace and graceful, given gracefully and plucked the strings of gratitude in those who heard it.

Just so for Gerard Manley Hopkins who remarked that the mystery of the Incarnation – of the ever-beyond-us God entering our bloodstream in Jesus – could never be reduced to 'an equation in theology' for its wonder 'leaves the mind swinging, poised but on the quiver'. Quivering.

Just so, we talk of 'climate change' or 'global warming' and have no sense of what we mean unless we have had to walk further each day to fetch water or lost our home or, as a reindeer farmer, seen our reindeer fall through thinning ice. (Photo above of Lapland courtesy of Martina Weltner).



With kindest regards,

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The Catholic representative position is currently vacant following the death of our friend Catherine Brennan SSL. Until a new rep is appointed, please contact the Chairperson.

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