

## God in Nature

I will say a few words today about finding God in Nature,  
and respecting all forms of life that God has made.  
We read God's word here in the church every day.  
However, we can easily forget that in the long history of humanity,  
books and the written word, are only a recent phenomenon.

Long before writing was invented,  
ancient peoples everywhere, read a different Bible.  
They read the original Scriptures, the Sacred Scriptures of God,  
written in every field and flower, in tree and creature,  
revealed in the turned pages of the seasons.

Long before Christianity, our Celtic ancestors too,  
found God behind the thin veil of nature.  
They spoke to God, not in buildings, but in sacred groves.  
The early Irish monks found God,  
in places like Gougane Barra, Glendalough, Skeilig Mhichil and so on.

St. Bernard, the monk of Clairvaux, wrote, and I quote:  
**"What I know of the divine sciences and Holy Scripture,  
I learnt in woods and fields"**. end of quote.

Teilhard de Chardin, priest and scientist, said, and I quote,  
**"Through nature I am immersed in God."** end of quote.

Jesus had a deep love for nature.  
He walked the fields of Nazareth for 30 years,  
the roads of Galilee and Jerusalem for only three.

His parables grew out of the fields of seed time and harvest time,  
and carry the sweet scent of wild flowers,  
like the red lilies, that blanketed the hills of Galilee in Springtime.

**"Consider the lilies of the fields, how they grow...  
I tell you, not even Solomon in all his glory,  
was clothed like one of these."** (Mt. 6:28,29)

So, today, as our home planet is being poisoned and plundered,  
I want to speak about the Scriptures of the Fields,  
of barn owls and curlews, of daisies and buttercups,  
before they are gone forever.

Wild flowers are found now, only in uncultivated land.  
The honey bee is in crisis, due to spraying of chemicals on fields.

What of birds and wild animals? Must they go too?  
The mantra of the corncrake is silent.  
The plaintive call of our curlew is seldom heard,  
and is on the critical list, because of habitat loss.  
The numbers of our other native birds have dropped drastically,  
in the last 50 years, because of habitat loss,  
and due to our use of chemicals, on fields and on the insect the eat.

Every animal, insect, tree, and flower, have a right to be here,  
because God put them here.  
To remove a single species,  
be it plant or insect or animal, that God put here,  
is to vandalise the work of God, and lessen his presence.  
Pope Francis in “**Care for our Common Home**”, calls it a sin.

Not only are we destroying nature, and other forms of life,  
but we are also destroying the future for our children and grandchildren,  
with global warming and climate change.  
If all the water locked up in the Artic and Antarctic ice sheets,  
were to melt, our coastal cities would go under.

The governments of the world and our own government,  
**can stop global warming, and must do it now, before it's too late.**

Let us listen, then, to the cry of the earth,  
before that cry dies forever.  
As far as we know, planet earth is the only outpost of life, in the universe.  
We carry the torch of life, not only for the earth, but for the universe.  
let us not extinguish it.  
I will finish, by reading, part of a message, sent by the Indian chief,  
Chief Seattle in 1854, to the White Man Chief in Washington,  
when the U.S. government wanted to take the land from his people.

I'll let the Chief speak for himself, and for his people. I quote:  
"Every part of the earth is sacred to my people.  
Every humming insect is holy to my people.  
We are part of the earth, and it is part of us.  
The perfumed flowers are our sisters,  
the deer, the horse, the great eagle, these are our brothers.

We know that the white man does not know our ways.  
The earth is not his brother, but his enemy.  
They treat their mother the earth, and their brother the sky,  
as things to be bought, plundered, and sold.

The air we breathe is precious to our people,  
for all things share the same breath, the beast, the tree, the people.  
This I know, the earth does not belong to us, we belong to the earth.  
The earth is precious to our God, and to harm the earth,  
is to heap contempt on the God who made it." End of quote.  
I will stop there.

**Prayer After Communion,  
A prayer, from an indigenous Indian tribe in North America**

"O great Spirit, whose voice I hear in the wind,  
and whose breath gives life to all the world, hear me.  
Let me walk in beauty,  
and may my eyes ever behold the red and purple sunset.  
Make my hands respect the things you have made,  
and my ears sharp to hear your voice.  
Let me learn the lessons you have hidden in every leaf and rock.

I seek strength, not to be greater than my brother, or sister,  
but to fight my greatest enemy, myself.  
Make me ready to come to you, with clean hands and straight eyes.  
So, when life fades, as the fading sunset, my spirit may come to you."  
Amen.