


Parish of Maghera, Newcastle, Co Down Ecological Awareness Journey.

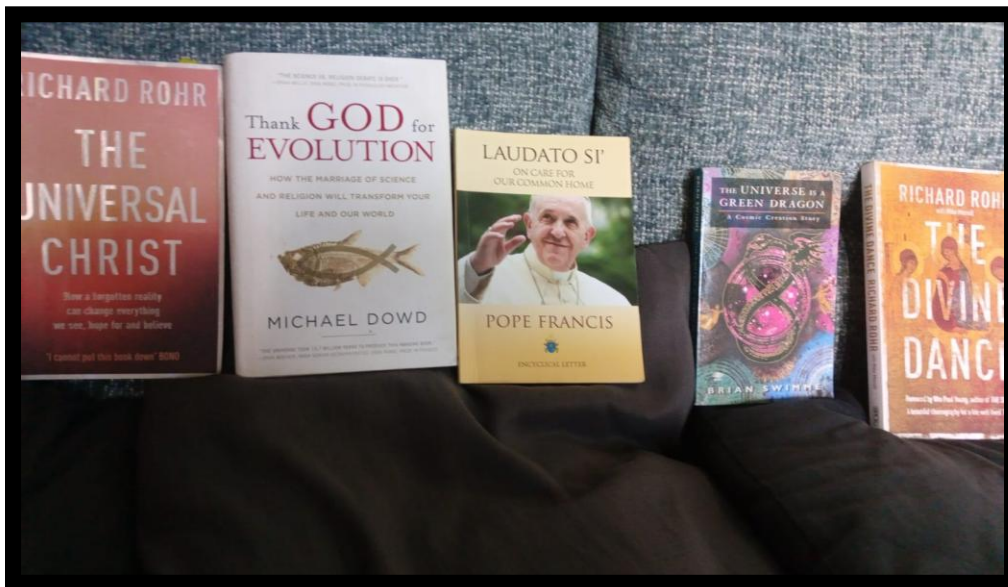
Theology reading group formed 2010. Meets every Thursday 2pm in Parish Centre lately via Zoom.
Some of us also studied online Yale University Coursera course "Journey of the Universe" by John Grimm and Mary Evelyn Tucker and the Laudato Si Animators course.
Creation Spirituality books studied include:

Prayer Before Study



If you wish it my friend,
You can be taught
If you love listening you will learn;
If you pay attention you will become wise.
(Sirach 6:32-33)

Lord, you have led us to the path of study as our way to build your kingdom. Help us to apply ourselves to the task with confidence and self-discipline. Grant that we may embrace this gift of knowledge with enthusiasm and openness of mind. Teach us not to worry so much about the answers but to cherish the questions. Help us to overcome our fear of failure and, like St. Paul, to keep the prize, a deeper understanding of our faith ever in sight.
We ask this through Our Lord Jesus Christ.
Amen.

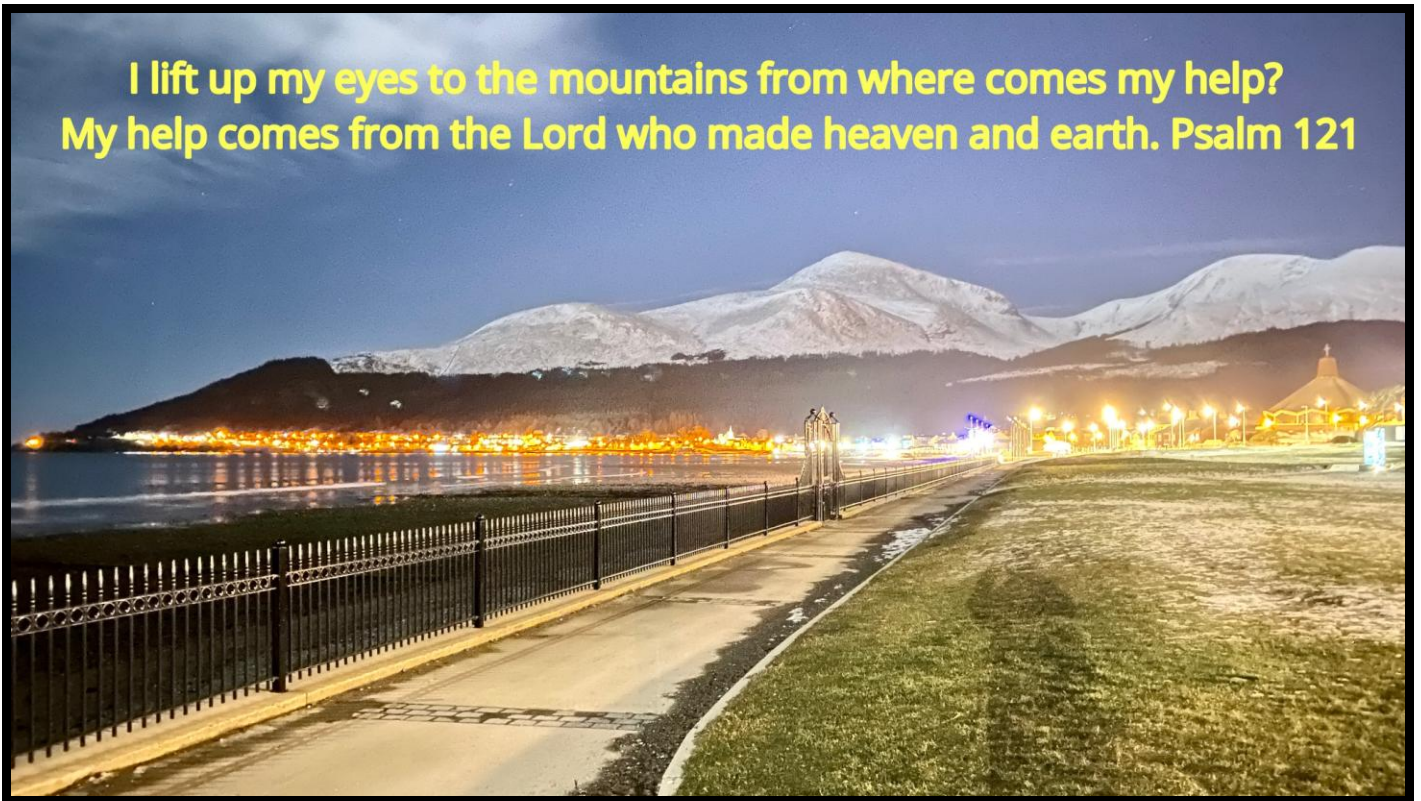


"Laudato Si" studied 2018 followed by visit by ECI representative Catherine Brennan SSL for talk on "Care for Our Common Home".



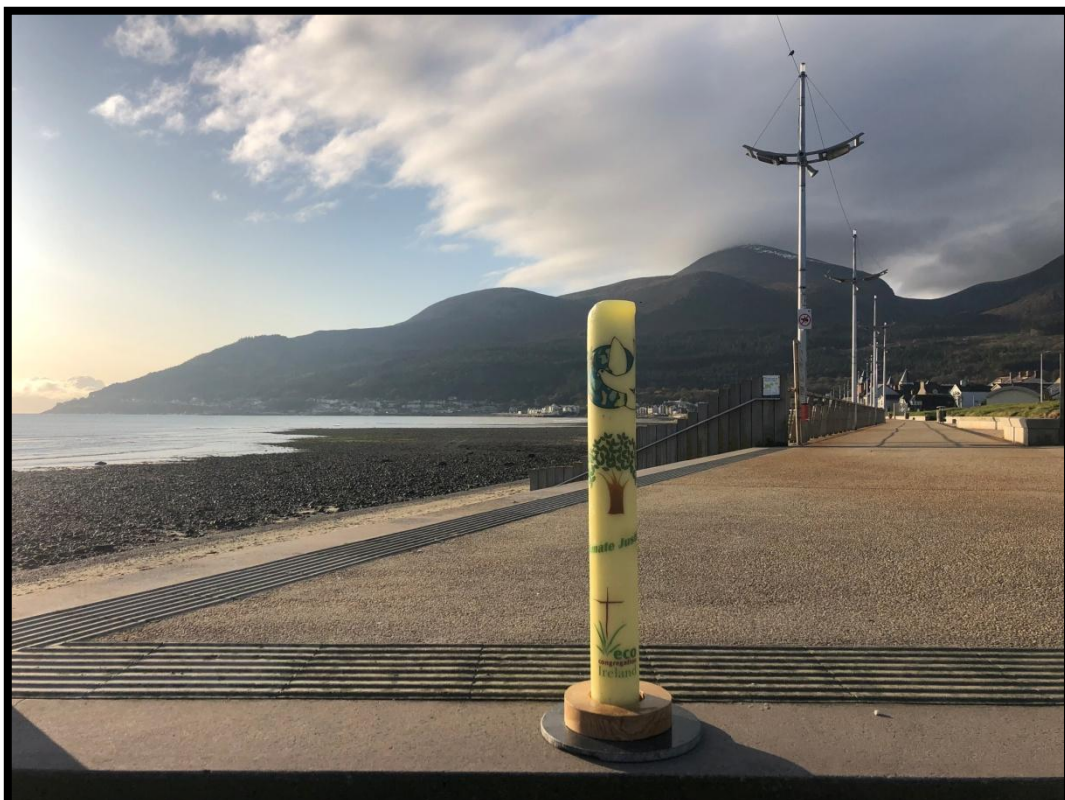
Parish of Maghera adopts Psalm 121 as Parish Psalm.

“I lift up my eyes to the mountains from where comes my help? My help comes from the Lord who made Heaven and Earth.” Psalm 121



**I lift up my eyes to the mountains from where comes my help?
My help comes from the Lord who made heaven and earth. Psalm 121**

Eco Congregation Ireland Candle visits Mourne mountains for the first time November 2019



ECI Awareness Certificate awarded to Parish 2019.

'Awe and Wonder' video created by Finbarr for Diocesan Laudato Si working group featuring quotations from Laudato Si and local Co Down natural beauty.

Watch the 3 minute video here:

<https://youtu.be/wSCyQUlgKbl>

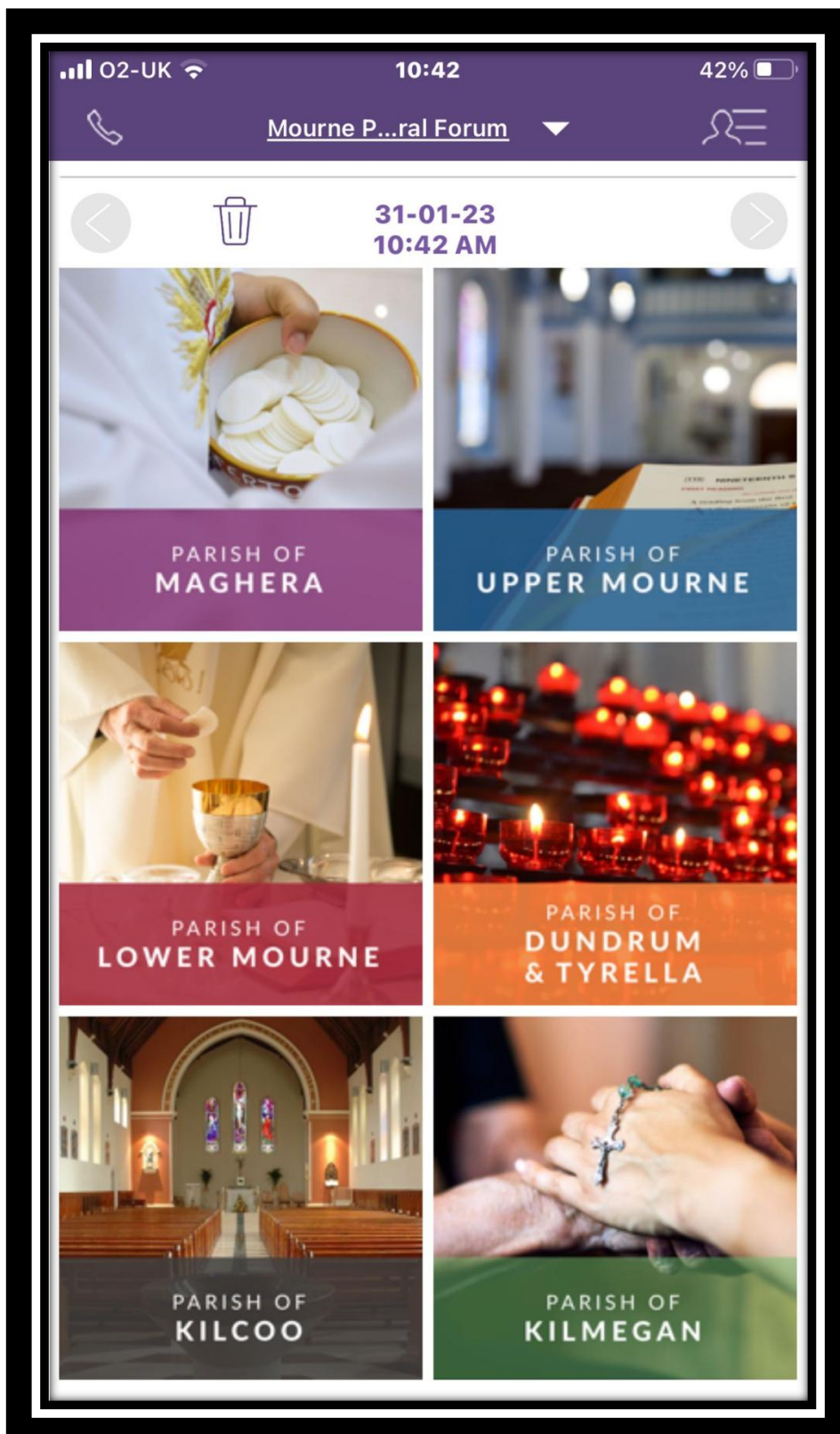
Season of Creation celebrated for the first time 2021.



Bike park installed in church grounds to encourage cycling to mass:



Our Parish took the decision to stop wasting paper (printing 800 bulletins & buying 800 missalettes every week) and opted for a Facebook & Website bulletin, we only print one A3 page bulletin per week, it's displayed in the church. Rota for weekday readers, Eucharist ministers, ushers etc aren't printed either. We encourage that they are made available on Apps. We invested in a Parish App for that purpose:



Tree planting at Our Lady of the Assumption church. Watch the video here:

<https://youtu.be/UF2mJ8MjSg8>

Eco Congregation Candle visits St Mary's Primary School, Newcastle, March 2020.
Eco Assembly held for P4-P7 children on how everything is connected and how we need to care for our world



ECI Endeavour certificate awarded to Parish February 2022



**Eco-Congregation
Ireland**

Endeavour Award

is presented to

**Parish of Maghera,
Newcastle, Co Down**

Catherine Brennan SSL
Eco-Congregation Ireland

February 2022
Date

A Sacred Garden was proposed for Bryansford Summer 2021



A Community effort and the Sacred Garden was taking shape!



Our Parish Priest Fr. Jim Crudden was very encouraging and supportive!
The Sacred Garden was opened July 2022 exactly a year from its conception!



The Sacred Garden was designed by Angela Drayne from Bryansford Village!



An Oak Leaf sculpture in Corten Steel and an Acorn carved from a fallen Tollymore Oak (local Artist Alan Burke.) The Eco Congregation Ireland Candle visited for the opening celebration!



Our Parish Youth Groups meet outdoors in the Sacred Garden.




GIFT (Growing in Faith Together) Youth Group (Future Generations)



Ogham Native Tree Avenue at St Patrick's Cemetery, Bryansford

Along the path by the sacred garden there are twenty small carved square pillars. On the top of each pillar is a leaf and a fruit of the tree in front of which it stands. On the front edge is carved one or more strokes. These strokes are the letters of an ancient Irish writing system called Ogham. Ogham consists of four sets of five strokes on a central line. The Latin-alphabet name of each stroke-group is the first letter of a tree-name in the Irish.



B	L	F	S	N	H	D	T	C	Q	M	G	Ng	Str	R	A	O	U	E	I
Beithe	Luis	Fern	Sail	Nin	hUath	Dur	Tinne	Coll	Quert	Muin	Gort	nCetal	Straif	Ruis	Ailm	Onn	Ur	Elad	Ida
Birch	Rowan	Alder	Willow	Ash	Hawthorn	Oak	Holly	Hazel	Apple	Bramble	Chestnut	Broom	Blackthorn	Elder	Elm	Whin	Heather	Aspen	Yew

The Irish harp is played by plucking the strings with the fingers of the right hand, then the left, back to the right and finally with the left hand. The shortest strings are B,L,F,S,N and the longest, A,O,U,E,I. A curved bar on the top of each pillar holds a copper pipe which, when swung against the bar produces the note represented by the ogham letter. Modern western music shows these notes as follows.



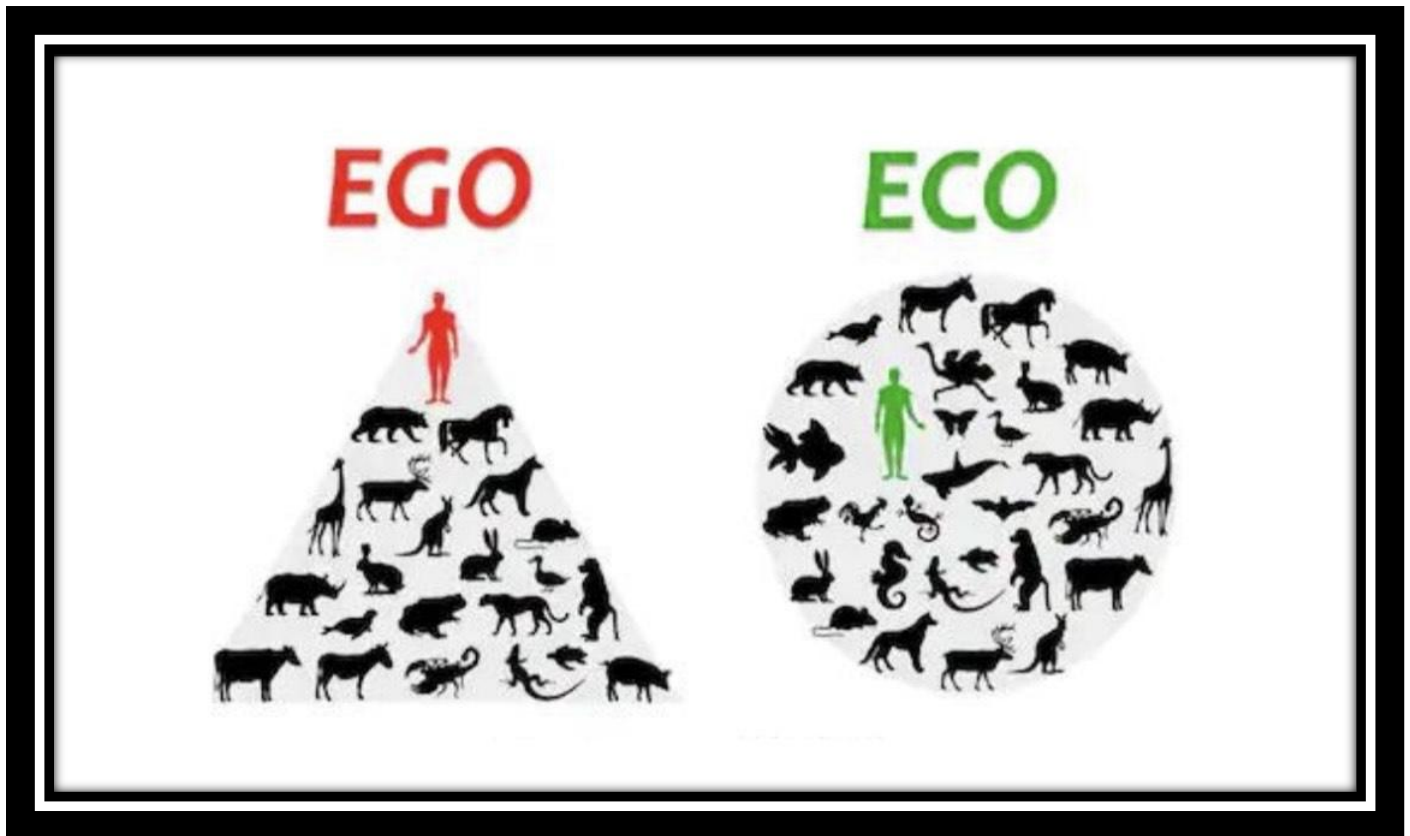
This interpretation of the Ogham script is based on *The Poets' Secret* by Seán OBoyle published in 1980 by Gilbert Dalton. The pillars were carved by his granddaughter, Eilis OBaoill, and the pipes tuned by his son, Cathal.



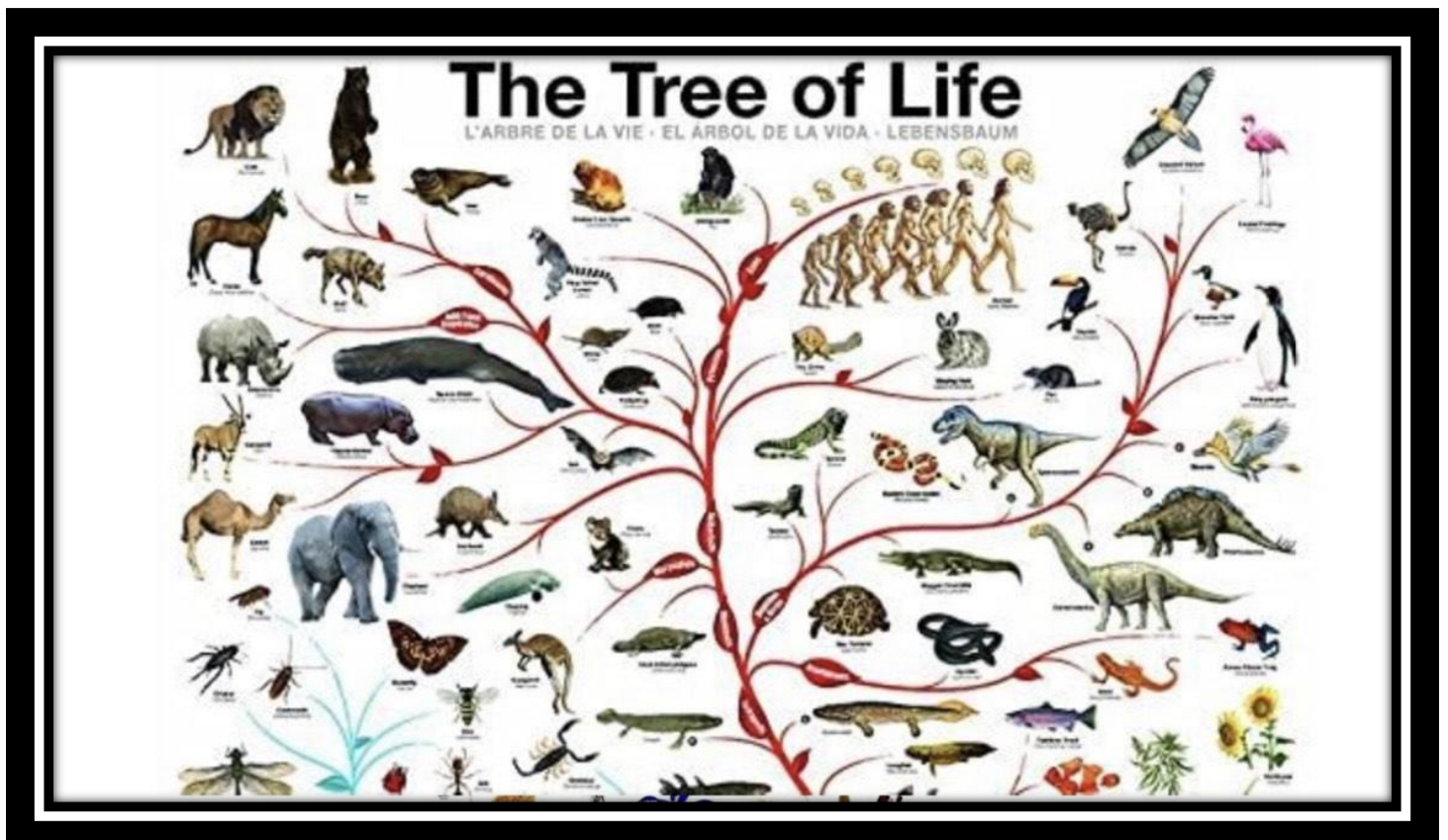
Cathal and Eilis OBaoill

Blessing of the Animals November 2022. Watch the video here:

https://youtu.be/uUqET_W69Bk



Two Posters we displayed at the Blessing of Family pets:



Finbarr created this 25 page Story of the Universe Creation Walk resource adapted from Fr Brian Grogan's book Creation Walk for Catholic Bishops of Ireland "Laudato Si" Working group. It can be displayed under the Stations of the Cross.

THE CREATION WALK INTRODUCTION

The Creation Walk is the story of the Universe, a story full of mystery, wonder and awe. It includes the story of our Common Home, Mother Earth, and the story of you and me. Because it is a divine story, appropriate scriptural quotations accompany the scientific account.



The story of the Cosmos has remained unknown until our own time, although it was talked about ever since humans sat around campfires 100,000 years ago and tried to understand where they had come from. Less than 100 years ago, in the 1930's, astronomers discovered that the Universe is expanding: this enabled them in the 1970's to work back to the moment when the Universe began, roughly 13.8 billion years ago. Only 50 years ago, in 1969, photos from the Apollo 8 spacecraft showed humans the whole Earth for the first time.

We then are the first generations to know the history of our home and our own remotest origins. The articles that follow will help you to walk through time, from its beginning until today: with the interplay of science and divine revelation, you will learn the extraordinary story of how we came to be where we are today. Knowing how the Universe has unfolded will bring us closer to the Creator, because God is author both of the book of Scripture and the book of Nature.

Full Creation Walk can be downloaded here:

<https://www.catholicbishops.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/5-Creation-Walk-Stations-1-25.pdf>

These are some of the milestones in the Ecological Awareness Journey of our Parish family.

Hope you enjoyed journeying with us!

Parish of Maghera, Newcastle, Co Down

Below L-R: Fr Jim Crudden PP. "Bryansford Bees" Finbarr Keaveney (Laudato Si Animator), Angela Drayne (Sacred Garden Designer), Brenda Webb (Parish Manager)



Below L-R: Norah and Cathal OBaoill with spade. GIFT Youth Group (Future Generations)

