



**OUT**

**OF**

**THE**

**STARS**

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# OUT OF THE STARS

## NEW COSMOLOGY MODULE FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS

### INTRODUCTION FOR TEACHERS/CHAPLAINS

This is a crucial time on our planet with the present worldwide economic crisis, global warming, the approaching end of cheap oil and the massive planetary loss of biodiversity (ie massive loss of species and habitats). Biodiversity underpins the life support systems on which we depend. The global economic system has failed us; economic growth and development does not work. We need an alternative local economic system. These are the signs of the times and we need to act on them in order to be relevant and to find a viable and sustainable way forward. Jesus challenges us to read the signs of the times – he upbraided the scribes and Pharisees for not being able to do so in Mt 16:3.

The planet is in crisis and we, the human species are in big trouble – the signs are all around us. We have seriously lost our way and have great difficulty finding our place in the family of things. Facing an uncertain future will especially impact on our young people. Experts are predicting a very difficult time ahead; young people of today will be the adults of tomorrow and will have to find creative and sustainable solutions to our environmental and economic problems. Einstein says the consciousness that resolves the problem must be different to the consciousness that has caused the problem in the first place. Education in a new consciousness is of paramount importance for young people now at this crucial time.

**OLD WORLDVIEW:** Since the industrial revolution we have become alienated from Earth and lost our way because of the old worldview of separate consciousness, out of which we have been living. All our social and planetary problems are the result of living out of this old world view of seeing everything separate from everything else, which is the old story we have been telling ourselves for the past 150 years. In this worldview the Earth is seen as a machine; there for our use. This old worldview is no longer viable. The need for a New Story and New Worldview is urgent: a worldview which would help us explore how both planet and people can move forward together. Thomas Berry says that either *the whole* sacred community, planet and people, moves forward together or we perish.

**UNIVERSE STORY:** Whether they are aware of it or not, every culture lives out of **an origin story** which shapes how they see the world (worldview) and out of this flows a culture's value system. We *do* have a New Story. Thomas Berry says we are the first generation to know the Great Evolutionary Story of the Universe, a sacred story that contains all other stories including our own. For the first time in its history, the human community has a single origin story whereby it establishes its identity. He explains how this Story carries a spiritual and psychic energy which inspires us to move into a different way of being on the planet. Berry emphasises how the Story of the Universe needs to be the context for education everywhere on the planet. It's

about listening deeply to the wisdom of the Earth and wider Universe. Everything flows from it. The Story is all embracing and holds all other stories in their integrity... whether Buddhist, Muslim, Christian, Hindu, Jewish or Indigenous Stories. It doesn't diminish any of them but simply expands them and puts them into an awesome context. As an Origin Story it can reconcile all religions rather than divide them so students of different religions should feel they can come to this with an open heart and mind.

What is urgently required then is an education towards a new consciousness and a new relationship with the Earth and the wider Cosmos: it is not an option but a must. This new awareness is about a monumental shift in consciousness, in what Pope John Paul II refers to as being equivalent to an 'Ecological Conversion. ***"Our task must be to widen our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty."*** Einstein here challenges us to vastly expand our notion of community to include the total community of life on the planet including the natural world. Until we do this we will end up disregarding Earth as our home and continue its devastation with our old worldview attitude of 'domination' and exploitation.

We need to accept who we are as Earth evolved to self reflective consciousness and come home to the true self, with an awareness of the bigger ecological and cosmological self. It will mean adopting a humbler attitude and exploring a more participative way of being with the Earth, which would be truly transformative for ourselves and the whole planet. At this critical stage it is of paramount importance for us to work towards bringing forth an environmentally sustainable, spiritually fulfilling and socially just human presence on this planet set within the divine gift of creation. This means making the shift from being human-centred to being life-centred; exploring how we need to adjust so that all species can flourish.

**'OUT OF THE STARS'** is about a paradigm shift of consciousness into a totally different way of relating to the Earth with the new awareness that we are not at the centre but simply just one part of the awesome web of life on the planet. This module on the New Cosmology for 15 –17 year old students explores a new world view within the wider context of the awesome story of creation, the unfolding universe, showing how we are mysteriously and mystically, woven into the interconnected sacred web of life from the contemplative stance. This new awareness will help us realise our total dependence on the planet for our very sustenance; how we are kin to all life and inside the dynamics of the earth/universe rather than observers. This module opens up the awe and wonder of the Earth to the students, offering a more sustainable way of living and opens the students to a new relationship with the God of an unfolding and expanding Universe. **'Out of the Stars'** is truly a holistic approach to the education of the young person. At the end of this programme a student will have a better sense of who s/he is in a cosmic sense. It will be a life changing journey. A person may never be the same again after an education like this.

## **RECOMMENDED READING**

There is recommended reading for each session of the module for teachers/chaplains. We would also recommend reading the text books for the leaving cert RE syllabus 'Religion and Science,' especially sections on Religion and Science and the New Cosmology in both teacher's and pupils' books. It is recommended that teachers also view the web links, download the Youtube video clips and download and listen to the

pod casts listed below. They will add considerably to a deeper understanding. All references to resources, as they pertain to each session, will be found at the back of the **text pages 37 - 83**

There are eight sessions. These are not necessarily considered in terms of 40 minute periods but as units in themselves that may take a class or two to deliver. A double period, as often found on a TY time table, would marry well with this programme. This is a programme that will fire the imagination because the essence of it is at the very heart of life itself. It is a cross-curricular programme and teachers will gain much by cross-fertilising with other experts and interested others in the school and larger community. Finally, the writers of this programme wish teachers and chaplains every blessing on this great educational journey....the most awesome, creative and exciting journey ever!

Kathleen Glennon and Mary Kate Hagan

## SESSION 1 - The Story of the Universe...Our Own Story - Part 1

**Background reading** for Teachers/Chaplains 'The Importance of Story...Identity' p.

40

### NEW UNDERSTANDINGS TO BE EXPLORED IN THIS SESSION

7. The Universe Story gives us our true identity...we have evolved out of the Earth like all other species
8. The Universe Story carries a spiritual and psychic energy which inspires us to move into a different way of being on the planet.
9. We are not spectators but live inside the dynamics of the Earth
10. We carry in our bodies the original molecules present at the beginning of time and the mystery of the Creator in the Moment of Creation.
11. We belong to the earth: we need to bond with the natural world in order to come home to who we really are.
12. We are made of the same substance/elements as everything else in the Universe - stars, stones, animals, plants, clouds

**INTRODUCTION** The title of this module is 'Out of the Stars' - we are going to bring you on an awesome journey to the stars and beyond – to the place of your birth. But before we do that let's first listen to Michael Jackson's Earth Song –sing along with it and notice.. what is the message of the lyrics... **SHOW U TUBE VERSION OF THE SONG OR CD/POWERPOINT**

### FEEDBACK FROM GROUP ON LYRICS

**If they haven't mentioned the following lines, read them out again...**

'Did you ever stop to notice  
The crying Earth the weeping shores?  
What about the bleeding Earth  
Can't we feel its wounds.'

'What about nature's worth?

**WE WILL BE LOOKING AT THIS LATER**

'What about us?'

'I used to dream. I used to glance beyond the stars'....

**WE WILL SOON JOURNEY TO THE STARS.**

'Now I don't know where we are. Although **I KNOW WE'VE DRIFTED FAR.'**



**We have drifted far** from the awareness of our connection with and dependence on the Earth and this has serious consequences for us as our planet is in peril.

## LOOKING BEYOND THE STARS

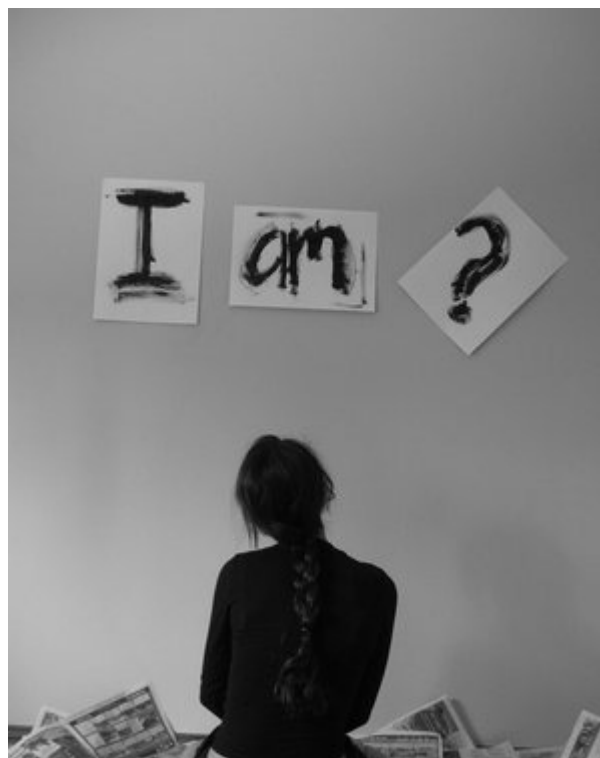
### WHO ARE WE?

We live in an awesome interconnected web of life where everything is connected and everything made of the same substance including this stone. Show the students a piece of rock or stone. Ask them to guess the age of the stone?

It is the oldest thing you will see on the planet...could be 300/400 million years old?

The elements in it were formed in the stars and so are the elements in our bodies too. How old are you by comparison? Who are you? In your family story....how far back can you go in your family tree...grandparents, great grandparents....? Your own personal **story** is important in helping to form your identity. Who are you anyway? Where are you going? It's not always easy to find our place.

Our story is important to help us find our place. Story is important in every culture.



1525r-89014 fotosearch.com

**We live within a story:** The great American Irish story teller, Megan McKenna, uses the Russian Dolls to explain this great mystery; we live *within* other more gigantic stories which hold the smaller stories.

Using the Russian dolls is a very clever way to gain an understanding of this. The first story and the biggest story, the biggest doll, is the 'Universe Story'. All other stories come out of this story which speaks about the formation of the unfolding ever-expanding Universe. Smaller than that story but still a huge story is the story of how a star cooled down enough to create the conditions for life on this planet and so began the story of evolution on this planet. Remember that the stories that precede our own story are, in fact, part of my story. In this sense each one of us is like a time

capsule containing the entirety of other stories in condensed or 'zipped' form. In each of us are the original molecules that were there at the beginning of the Universe along with the original Mystery out of which comes the story of everything.

**LEAD IN TO THE UNIVERSE STORY....** So our sense of belonging and our story go back much further than our great, great grandparents. Our story goes back to the beginning of time. We belong to the Universe from the very beginning – we are woven into it. The Universe is 13.7 Billion years old... to look back this far is to look back into deep time....to know the story of anything you need to know the story of everything... so the **STORY OF THE UNIVERSE IS OUR STORY TOO; IT IS THE STORY OF YOUR DEEP TIME SELF.** You are now going on an awesome journey into the **STORY OF THE UNIVERSE.....**a journey into deep time ....into your deep time self. You will see how you have come out of the stars, out of the ancient seas, out of the ancient forests and so has everything else on the planet and in the wider universe. You will see how we are woven into the Story of the Universe....and interconnected with all life.

### **IMAGE OF GOD**



As you now embark on this amazing Story allow it to expand enormously your image of God. Be aware of the creative power of God pulsating through ALL of creation.....see the Great Divine Mystery in everything as our Celtic and even pre-Celtic ancestors did. Allow yourself to open up to the awe and wonder of it all and try to see everything in the Story of the Universe as Gift...as you open your heart to this profound spiritual experience.

**SHOW UNIVERSE STORY POWERPOINT:** (play any quiet instrumental music with the PowerPoint)

**Activity:** Divide into small groups of 6 and share on the following questions:  
 What feelings did you experience as you journeyed through the Story of the Universe?  
 What was your favourite image?  
 What are you curious about?

Feedback to the big group a flavour of the small group sharings.

**INTERNALISATION - CENTRING/MEDITATION** – (with soft music in the background)



Light a candle, representing the power of fire inside you – which is the same power of the stars and galaxies - inside each one of us. I now invite you to close your eyes, breathe deeply down into your lungs – touching down into your stomach...be aware of it touching into your power centre. Focus on the rhythm of your breath as it flows in and out of your body..... like the ebb and flow of the tide. Feel it from inside you and the deep peace it brings you ..... feel its power within you. Relax and let go on your out breath. ....The Universe Story is



inside each one of us waiting to be known – waiting to be brought to consciousness .....You came out of the energy that gave birth to the Universe. Its story is your story; its beginnings are your beginnings .... How do you feel when you hear these words, ‘I am in the Universe.’ ..... PAUSE, then, ‘The universe is in me.’ ‘I belong to the Universe. How does this feel inside you. Imagine your breath opening you up to the Divine Energy of God inside you – feel it deep down into your lungs... your stomach. It is the same energy that powers the galaxies, stars, the sun and it is inside you.....you are powerful beyond measure.....breathe deeply into your own power.... (READ SLOWLY REFLECTION... ‘**Origin**’ Honor McCabe p.60 OR THE PRAYER BELOW INSTEAD) .... When you are ready gently open your eyes, bring your attention back into the room and feel your feet firmly grounded on the floor.

### **PRAYER TO GOD OF AN UNFOLDING EXPANDING UNIVERSE**

O Great Spirit, since time began, you have been communicating yourself to all creation through the unfolding evolutionary process. This awesome creative process has been urged on from within by you the Great Spirit. From the initial flaring forth to the unfolding of galaxies, from the distant stars to Earth that you have made to be our home, you have never ceased shaping, fashioning and urging us towards life. We are truly amazed at your astounding creativity. We are humbly blessed by the gift of self-awareness that you have given to us. Help us to be mindful that we are the universe conscious of itself and that this capacity is not for our benefit alone, but for the good the whole community of life. We thank you for ongoing creation and for your invitation for each one of us to be co-creators with you. Amen.



**Activity** - In the coming week, as we continue our journey of re-connecting with the earth, you are invited to walk in the woods or in the unending surf on a beach, or watch with awe a sunset on the horizon, paddle in the wilds and sense being most fully alive – most fully in touch with the earth.

### **SONG: OUT OF THE STARS**

## **Session 2 - THE AWAKENING UNIVERSE –part 2 – the story told by the scientist**

**Background reading for teachers/chaplains: ‘Creation’ by Celine Mangan OP p. 42.**

### **NEW UNDERSTANDINGS TO BE EXPLORED IN THIS SESSION**

1. We are woven into the web of life on the planet.
2. We are totally dependant on the life support systems of Earth to nurture us.
3. The Universe Story shows us how we are profoundly related to everything
4. We are Earth evolved into self reflective consciousness
5. The creative power of God pulsates through everything
6. The creative power of God is within me...I am powerful beyond measure.

### **WE’VE DRIFTED FAR from our connection with Earth....**

Last week we journeyed into our Deep Time self in the Story of the Universe, discovering that we are genetically related to everything in the Universe. Michael Jackson reminded us in his Earth Song that we have drifted far from our connection with the Earth but we are not really tuned in to the devastation of the planet; into the web of life. We see it as separate from us; not really affecting us.

### **TUNING INTO THE WEB OF LIFE ON WHICH WE DEPEND**

You all know very well what it means to be tuned in to your ipods, MP3 players, your mobile phones, the internet etc. But there’s one very important aspect of life that we are not tuned into and that is the Web of Life on our planet. Scientists describe it as a web – with everything connected to everything else. The Earth is our life support system and it is continually nurturing us and giving to us abundantly but we never even think about it – or appreciate it as it supports us every moment of our lives. Without the Sun, Air, Water and Soil supporting and nurturing us we would not be here ...we would not be able to get out of bed in the morning....our ancestors understood our earth connection very well – they were tuned in. We probably think that our breakfast this morning came from the supermarket....which is only a small part of the truth ....we are inviting you now to think a little deeper.

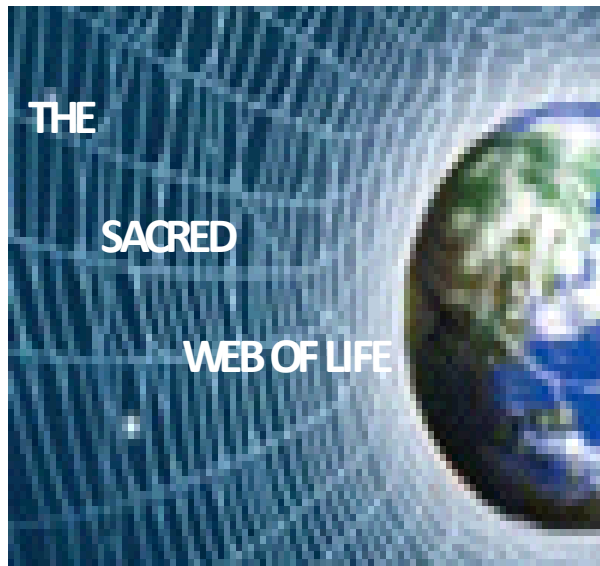
Just close your eyes and reflect on what you did when you woke up this morning; what did you do as you got ready for breakfast - then what did you have to eat or drink for your breakfast ...which of the elements of earth helped produce it before it reached the shops? Was it the sun, the soil and all the microbes in the soil, the air, the water....just think of one example....have you thought of one?

### **Activity: The Web of Life**



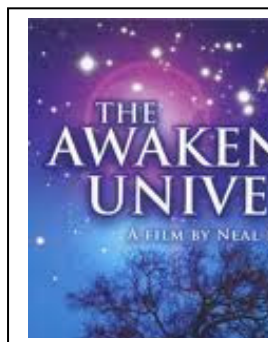
Invite everyone to stand, explaining that they are going to form a web with a ball of wool – as you hold the ball of wool, say your name and also name one way you connected with the web of life this morning without realising it. Just reflect on where everything comes from before it reaches you. (E.g. breakfast, a school book, a car etc). What aspect of Earth nurtured you? The next person indicates she/he wants to speak and the ball of wool is tossed

on. You will be weaving the web as you go along, everyone holding on to it firmly. When everyone is finished it can be put down on to the floor.



**Remind** the students of other aspects of the web of life that they may not have thought of – oxygen, water, shower, etc... Then place the image of planet earth in the centre of the web. Explain that the planet it is an interconnected web of life and we are going to see how we are woven into that astonishing web; point out how very disconnected we have become from what gives us life. We think we get all our needs met from the shopping centre, the supermarket but this is partly an illusion. We have lost our connection with the vital earth support systems which

continually feed, nurture, and support us - sun, soil, water and air. **Air** is the breath of life; **water** the drink and the **earth** the food of life. The food we buy in brightly coloured packaging disguises its biological origins in the earth. All food was once living; everything we eat comes from pre-existing life and much of it comes directly from the soil.



The Universe Story shows us how everything is an interconnected web of life. Relax now and enjoy this different version of THE AWAKENING UNIVERSE.

SHOW THE STORY OF THE UNIVERSE by Neal Rogin  
CLIP FROM DVD THE AWAKENING UNIVERSE

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RnEE90Y9BFk>

***CENTRING MOMENT*** Light a candle, representing the power of fire inside you – which is the same power of the stars and galaxies - inside each one of us. I now

invite you to close your eyes, breathe deeply down into your lungs – touching down into your stomach...be aware of it touching into your power centre. Focus on the rhythm of your breath as it flows in and out of your body..... like the ebb and flow of the tide. Feel it from inside you and the deep peace it brings you ..... feel its power within you. Relax and let go on your out breath. ....

### *Now*

In the aeons of time  
there came a moment  
when God said:  
“NOW!”  
Light sprang from darkness,  
order from chaos,  
and where there was no life before  
life teemed.  
God saw that it was – GOOD!  
So every once in a while  
God does it again  
God’s “NOW” breaks planets open,  
bursts stars apart,  
Shifts the continental plates,  
moves mountains and valleys,  
melts the icecaps,  
sends forth the Sun.  
It is incredibly disturbing –  
adjusting, adapting,  
Stoking the fires of passion  
for God’s endless possibilities.  
But a Word keeps calling:  
“LIFE!” Be in it with me,  
any moment, every moment,  
Alert for God’s “NOW!”

*by Raphael Consedine*

When you are ready gently open your eyes, bring your attention back into the room and feel your feet firmly grounded on the floor.

**Group work:** Explain to your group what you understood from the film.  
What questions does it resolve for the group and what questions does it throw up?

**Briefly in the big group get a flavour of small group discussions.**

***SONG – Out of the Stars p. 79-82***

**SESSION 3 – THE AWESOME WEB OF LIFE: CONNECTING WITH THE EARTH’S LIFE  
SYSTEMS ON WHICH WE DEPEND**

**Background reading** for Teachers/Chaplains: 'The Awesome Web of Life' Mary Southard p 43.

### **NEW UNDERSTANDINGS TO BE EXPLORED THIS WEEK**

1. Looking through the lens of the unfolding Story of the Universe we see how we are woven into the awesome web of life on the planet.
2. We are totally dependent on the life support systems of the planet for our very existence but we have lost this sense of connection
3. Biodiversity underpins the processes that make life possible
4. Loss of biodiversity – i.e. massive loss of various species and habitats affects the health of the whole planet including our own health and well-being.
5. We need to re-connect with the natural world and recover a sense of awe and wonder of its beauty and mystery revealed to us through the Story of the Universe.

### **SUM UP NEW UNDERSTANDINGS OF LAST WEEK**

- a. We have evolved out of the earth like every other species
- b. We carry in our bodies the energy of the earth
- c. We are made of the same elements as everything else in the Universe
- d. We need to come home to the earth, where we belong



You will remember in the last session we wove a web with wool and reflected on how we are totally interconnected in the web of life: we depend on it for sustenance. Today we are going to explore deeper how we are woven into this extraordinary web. Place an image of planet earth on the table. The planet is an interconnected web of life and we are going to explore how we are woven into that astonishing web.

### **REFLECTION ON A LOAF OF BREAD**



Bring along a loaf of bread and flour.  
Ask questions? What is bread made from? Flour  
Where does flour come from? Wheat  
Where does wheat come from? Trace back to the seed.  
What makes the seed grow in the field?  
Talk about how sun, soil, microbes, earthworms, air and water are in the making of that bread.  
We have lost our connection with the natural world and with the vital earth support systems which continually feed, nurture, and support us - sun, soil, water and air. The bread we buy in the supermarket has its biological origins in the earth. All food was once living; everything we eat comes directly from the soil.

### **REFLECTION ON POEM**





From air and soil  
From bees and sun  
From other's toil  
Our bread is won

And when we bite  
The soil, the air,  
The bees and light,  
Are still all there.

So we must think  
Each day afresh  
How food and drink  
Became our flesh

And then we'll see  
The air, the sun,  
The earth, the bee  
And we, all one.  
Orteza in 1998



We have seen how many beings as well as the four elements of earth, sun, rain and air are needed to produce wheat. We will now see how each of these has its own inner being, its own intelligence and its own self organising capacity in the Earth Cards.

**EARTH CARDS...(spread out on a centre piece.)** Invite volunteers from the group in turn, to pick up a card and read out to the group the awesome facts about the natural world and how we depend on it for our very lives then place each card around the globe. After every 5/6 has spoken all say/chant the following refrain together: *ALL SPECIES AND ELEMENTS ARE VITAL IN THE AWESOME WEB OF LIFE.*

‘Everything that lives, Lives not alone, Nor for itself’ William Blake

**Take a moment to contemplate:**

Pass a small bowl of sand around the classroom. Play some quiet music in the background. Invite the students to dip a single finger in. Numerous grains of sand will stick to the finger. Invite the students to separate **one single** grain. Contemplate the following: Scientific evidence takes us back to a time, 13.7 Billions years ago, when everything exploded into existence, came into being, out of a tiny volume, as small as a grain of sand, in which was compressed a trillion solar masses.



Did the poet William Blake have some intuition, just like Chief Seattle, about the mystery of evolution well before his time when he wrote?

*To see a World in a Grain of Sand  
And a Heaven in a Wild Flower,  
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand  
And Eternity in an hour.*

Simply gaze upon the single grain of sand for a moment and let the mystery play with your imagination, aware that it is made in the stars and is the same substance as you are. How does this make you feel?



## REFLECTION ON THE ROLE OF ONE SPECIES

The humble honey bee



Bees are known for producing honey, and while that industry is certainly an essential one, it's not the only reason why we need bees. Governments throughout the world are trying to combat a phenomenon called Colony Collapse Disorder, first observed in North America in 2004 and which subsequently moved to Europe. America has lost 36.1 percent of its beehives since 2007. Perhaps because bees are considered "bugs," they don't get the same attention as a mammal facing extinction.

But we should be paying attention to bee survival: bees are essential to the human food supply. The publication USA Today warns that if we don't do anything to protect the bees, we might end up reverting to diets composed solely of bread and water. Insect pollination supports one-third of human crop growth, and of this number, honeybees are responsible for 80 percent. What sort of crops? Apples, nuts, avocados, soybeans, asparagus, broccoli, cucumbers, strawberries and peaches, just to name a few. And since cows depend on bees to pollinate the plants they eat, we'd also be without meat if all the bees died off.

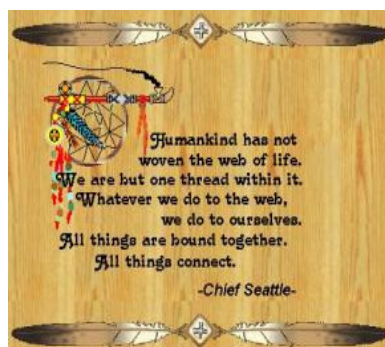
Einstein says that if the bee becomes extinct then the human will go four years later!

**E. O. Wilson at Harvard University insists that insects are the "cornerstone of life on Earth." We could lose wolves and bears and hawks and still survive, he says, but we would not make it if we lost the insects.**

**CENTERING MOMENT** – (with soft music in the background)

Invite one person to light a candle and place it on the table. Now close your eyes, breathe deeply down into your lungs – touching down into your stomach. Be aware of the rhythm of your breath as it flows in and out of your body..... like the ebb and flow of the tide. Feel the energy it brings inside you and the deep peace it brings you ..... feel its power within you. Relax and let go on your out breath. ....Be aware of the Life force within you .... It's in everything on the planet ..... it is the creative energy of God.....Divine Energy that is pulsating through everything. Breathe in this Divine Energy deeply inside you.....empowering you.....feel its power and strength within you.....feel yourself connected to the earth and to the mystery of every species on the planet.....

Read aloud in a meditative manner **Chief Seattle's Reflection** p 63. or St. Francis' Cantic of Creation p 70.



'Everything that lives,  
Lives not alone,  
Nor for itself'  
William Blake

#### SUM UP THIS SECTION –

We have just had a small glimpse at the amazing **biodiversity** around us and the importance of all the various species with whom we share this planet. We reflect on how all are needed for the health of the whole. We have been building up a picture of how we depend on the planet for our very existence without realising it.

**INVITATION** – In the coming week again go outdoors when the sun is shining and experience everything dancing its own dance of love in the sunshine, so that is the real story of life on earth. Everything you see is part of you, made of the same building materials and those materials have been used over and over again for a very long time in the systems of life on earth. Experience the dazzling diversity of living things – each one the result of a unique combination of sunlight, air, water and soil and so is different from every other living thing. Each living thing is a spark of sunlight energy including you.

**Song** Youtube 'What a wonderful world' – Louis Armstrong

## Session 4 – Alienation from the Earth



**BACKGROUND READING:** 'Transformed by Renewing our Mind' Michael Dowd p45.

### NEW UNDERSTANDINGS TO BE EXPLORED

1. We humans have disconnected ourselves from the earth; we see it as something separate from us; as an object to be exploited for our use and benefit.
2. We are living out of an Old Worldview, for at least the past 150 years.
3. In this worldview we see ourselves as separate from everything else and from the earth our home.

### SUM UP THE NEW UNDERSTANDINGS OF LAST WEEK

Over the past sessions we have been looking at how we are all interconnected in the awesome web of life.

We begin this week with a glimpse of the fragile state of the planet; how we are disrupting the delicate web of life and consequently causing hurt and pain to our planet.



**POWERPOINT:** We will now begin with a song and PowerPoint presentation called **EAGLE FLY (CD)**.

**Discuss:** What stands out in your memory about the song?

Is there anything that shocks you in it?

How do you respond to the words of the song...The earth 'is hurting too just as we are'

Pope Benedict similarly, asks us 'to *hear* the **cry** of the earth.' And this is also the title of the Irish Bishops' Pastoral. In what sense could the Earth be 'hurting' or 'crying'? Explore this with your friends.



The devastation you saw in the PowerPoint Eagle Fly is the result of us having cut ourselves off from the Earth. We have lost our way as a human species and become disconnected from the Earth.

### ALIENATION

Exploring the concept of 'Alienation':

The Earth is 'hurting' and we too, experience hurt. Take a few minutes to think of a time when you were hurting... e.g. when you felt alienated or cut off from family, classmates, friends or others – when you were isolated, closed out, disconnected? How did you feel then? Alone? Lonely? Cut off?

Take a few minutes to recall a time when you felt for the 'suffering' of nature. Maybe you witnessed an animal being abused or a park tree being vandalised. Describe the bond you felt with nature. People who abuse animals, trees, or any part of nature see them as objects with no inherent value: they see life through the lens of a particular worldview whereby everything appears to be separate from everything else.

## DEFINITION OF WORLD VIEW

One's world view is the way one sees the world; one's ideas, values and attitudes about the world and the human's place in it. It is a comprehensive system of beliefs.

## OLD WORLD VIEW

Without realising it, over the past 300 years, since the time of the Enlightenment and especially the past 150 years in particular, this is what we have done to the Earth – we have cut ourselves off from the natural world; disconnected from it even though we need it to survive. The earth is part of us, part of who we are. We have come out of it. We are now discovering that we are made up of the ashes of dead stars, that we are, as it were, cosmic dust in a state of consciousness. This is supported by the scientific finding that each living creature has a billion billion billion carbons in it. Only stars have carbon. Anytime we look at the stars we are reading our own stories.



Historically nature became mechanised since the Industrial Revolution. Modern science turned nature into an object of exploitation and manipulation for the exclusive gain of humanity – at the expense of the inherent value, beauty and integrity of the natural world as part of God's creation. Without realising it we have been destroying the life systems of the Earth which feed and nurture us. We feel we don't belong to the Earth. We have lost our way. We live with the belief that the Earth is not part of us and that it is just an object to be exploited for our own benefit. This is the way we view the world and we call this a **WORLD VIEW**.

In the past people thought the earth was flat – the sky touched the horizon and was an inverted dome over the earth; there was water above and below. God was also thought of as being outside the universe – was distant and uninvolved. Every culture lives out of a world view from which it forms a value system.

**Discuss:** Can you think of any cultures either from the past or present who have a different world view and see the Earth differently from we do? e.g. Native Americans and many other indigenous peoples around the world. Our Celtic and pre-Celtic ancestors saw everything in the earth as sacred. Some cultures believe animals created the earth and hold all species in high regard.

### PP SHOW OLD WORLDVIEW IMAGES (show first 3 slides only here)

**In the Western World, it is out of this worldview we have been seeing everything for the past 300 years since the Industrial Revolution.**

What do you notice about the pyramid in this world view?

Discuss the location of God in this Worldview.

How is God portrayed?

Ask students to divide into small groups and to look at life in the old worldview from the perspective of different species, e.g.

I AM EARTH

How am I treated in the Old Worldview?

What does this worldview allow humans to do to me?

I AM A POLAR BEAR [OR ANY OTHER ANIMAL] THREATENED WITH EXTINCTION

How does the old worldview define me?

Do I have any rights? Who protects my rights?

I AM A WOMAN

How do I see myself in relation to the male species?

How do I see myself in relation to other species?

The Old World view is about **‘separate consciousness’**, whereby everything is perceived as separate from everything else and this is the way we in the West have been seeing God and the world for the past 300 years. We call this the old worldview. It is important to acknowledge that these images of the world were the result of enquiring minds endeavouring to understand the mysteries of the universe. But it is no longer a viable or helpful way of seeing the world. This world view has led us to cause a very serious environmental and global warming crisis which we are now facing.

New scientific information this century is telling us that the old world view is not the way things are. Modern science has itself begun to correct the wrong turn it took. Since the 20<sup>th</sup> century, science has rediscovered the deep bond between the human and the natural world.

*‘A human being is part of a whole, called by us the Universe, a part limited in time and space. S/he experiences herself/himself, her/his thoughts and feelings, as something separate from the rest a kind of optical delusion to her/his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few people nearest us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty’* Albert Einstein

**‘Humankind did not weave the web of life. We are but one thread within it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves. All things are bound together. All things connected’.** Chief Seattle

*“Not until we connect to the Earth, will we ever consider it worth saving.”* Helena White

## PRAYER/REFLECTION

Listen meditatively to **‘We have Forgotten Who We Are’** p. 62

## DURING THE WEEK



Try this out. Walk bare footed in the grass. Stand with your feet firmly on the ground and imagine light entering through your crown and moving down your body, through the feet. Imagine the energy moving out through the soles of your feet and connecting with the earth, sending down energetic roots.

## Session 5 – COMING HOME – A NEW WORLD VIEW

**BACKGROUND READING:** Read again 'Transformed by Renewing Our Mind' Michael Dowd (especially The New Cosmology section) p 45.

**New explorations in this session:**

1. We need a New Worldview which sees our universe as a seamless whole, resplendent in its diversity and amazing in its beauty.
2. We need to see ourselves as mysteriously woven into that seamless whole where everything is connected to everything else.

**SUM UP NEW UNDERSTANDINGS FROM LAST WEEK**

**The Old Worldview has led us to see ourselves as separate from the natural world: this way of viewing earth has led us to exploit and abuse nature.**

**INTRODUCTION**

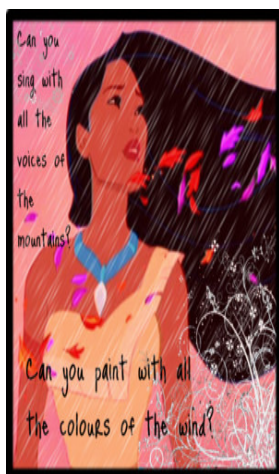
**The word ecology comes from the Greek word 'oikos' which means a house or a home.**

**What words do you associate with home?**

**Words like warmth, belonging, a place where you are accepted and loved etc.**

**We need to begin to see planet earth as a home not just for humans but for all species.**

**We need to regain our sense of connection with our home.**



**SHOW PP OF COLOURS OF THE WIND**

Ask the students which lines, words or image they remember from the song.

Focus on the contrast between the followings lines:

'The earth is just a dead thing you can own'

And 'Every rock and tree and creature has a life, has a spirit, has a name.'

The first line epitomises the Old Worldview where we treat the earth as a dead thing, an object.

The second line epitomises another worldview - the New Worldview- where we treat the earth as sacred and recognise that it is alive; that every rock and tree and creature has a life, has a spirit, has a name.'

**PP SHOW THE TEXT ONLY OF *THE NEW WORLD VIEW* - A NEW WAY OF SEEING – A NEW WORLDVIEW** (Show one slide only here)

**Spend some time teasing out the values of the New Worldview. In this worldview 'every rock and tree and creature has a life, has a spirit, has a name' [Colours of the Wind]**

**Activity:** In groups of 5 invite students to draw an image/or diagram of this NEW WORLD VIEW using colour/crayons. Share these images with the whole class. Then show the slide of the New World View as another way of imaging it.

The New World View shows that the Universe is one single unbroken seamless whole from the beginning of time and we are mysteriously woven into that seamless whole where everything is connected to everything else. We see that everything has a role and is valuable and sacred in the awesome web of life. We need to look at the whole in order to get a clearer picture of any one part of life. In order to understand the story of anything we must first

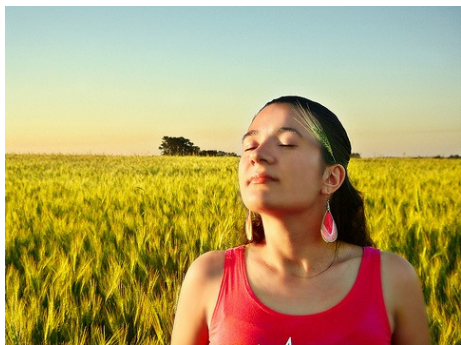


understand the story of everything. We see clearly that the Earth is our home and we need to connect with it in a new way.



We need to think in terms of 'the Tree of life' (A New World view) that has grown from one seed and developed over a time frame of several thousand million years. We humans are one small twig in the forest of related branches. On the twigs nearest to us are the creatures to which we are most closely related – in our case the 'anthropoid' apes and more distantly other primates. We are all governed by the same evolutionary processes. Our human genome is but one haunting, dominant chord in one melody of the symphony of life. We are formed of the passion, the fire, the mystery, the creativity, the beauty, the energy, and the intelligence that fashioned the stars.

### **CENTRING MOMENT – Breath is Gift (with soft music in the background)**



One aspect which shows how everything is interconnected is the breath we breathe. We'll see later how we cannot breathe without trees and plants supplying us with fresh oxygen every moment of our lives. So now close your eyes, breathe deeply down into your lungs – touching down into your stomach. Be aware of the rhythm of your breath as it flows in and out of your body ... like the ebb and flow of the tide. Feel it from inside you and the deep peace it brings you ... feel its power within you. Relax and let go on your out breath. ... There is only one air

system on our planet – all other species over the whole planet are breathing in and out the same air we too are breathing. Feel grateful to the trees and plants for supporting us in this amazing way ... Be aware of the Life force within you .... It's in everything on the planet ... it is the creative energy of God which is everywhere in the Universe ... Divine Energy and presence pulsating through everything. Breathe in this Divine Energy deeply inside you ... empowering you ... feel its power and strength within you.....

This is what St Paul meant when he said, 'In God we live, move and have our being'.

### **PRAYER...**

Creator God, sometimes we are so accustomed to our usual way of seeing that we fail to notice what is really there. Like the astronomers of old, we prefer a world fixed in place, with no movement to disturb our treasured vision of reality. Show us the places where we are content to remain set in our ways; help us to see with new eyes and to be open and changed by new discoveries and new revelations. Help us to expand our awareness of the oneness of everything in our planet home and in the wider universe. Deepen our love for the vast universe and help us come home to who we truly are. Help us open to the new awareness that your energy is pulsating through everything. Amen.....When you are ready slowly and gently open your eyes.

**SUM UP THE NEW UNDERSTANDINGS – ASK STUDENTS –** What have you learned today? What would you like to know more about?



**INVITATION** – The New World View invites us to re-connect with the natural world all around us and to feel the awe and wonder of the whole community of life of your home in the natural world. To help you to come home to who you really are, you are invited between now and next week to find your own very special magical safe place in nature; go there in silence without your ipod and enjoy the peace of wild things all around you in your home the Earth. Listen to the sounds of nature. What do you see? Look deeply at the colours. Allow yourself to open to awe and wonder. Be aware of reconnecting with the natural world on which we depend. **PLAY EAGLEFLY AGAIN**



**(OPTIONAL) ELM DANCE** - Joanna Macy does healing work with the people of Chernobyl after the nuclear disaster there. The people felt they were forgotten. She promised that wherever she would go all over the world she would tell their story and that of the ailing elm trees because the wood still holds the contamination from the disaster. There is one dance they use in their workshops with music from a Latvian song about trees. The purpose of the dance is for healing for the trees, the healing of all species and for the lives of the people.

**DIRECTIONS FOR THE DANCE:** Form a circle holding hands. If the numbers are big form two circles. It does not matter when in the music you begin the dance, except to start on a beat. Stepping with the right foot, take four steps to the right; then sway for four beats. When swaying in place, imagine that you can feel the energy from the heart of the Earth spiralling up through the floor into your body. When the energy reaches the heart centre, send it out for the healing of the elms and all beings. This is an act of intention. Then take four steps backwards. After four beats of swaying in place, the next four steps are toward the centre of the circle, raising your arms high and unlinking hands so they can wave like boughs of a tree. Remember to sway for four beats and then move four steps back from the centre and continue in this fashion.

**ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY** -Divide the class into small groups. Ask each group to discuss one of the following situations.

1. You are the Board of Directors of a logging company in the Amazon—2/3 members of the Board are working out of an Old World view, 3/4 members are working out of a New Worldview. Role play a Board Meeting. Reflect with the class on the role play.
2. You are a Local Council planning your budget for the year. Two members of the council want to buy a green field site in order to retain its biodiversity. 4 members want to use the site for development. Role play a Board meeting discussing this issue. Reflect with the class on the role play.
3. You are a family discussing your water consumption and your disposal of waste. The mother is operating out of A New Worldview, the Father is operating out of an Old Worldview and the children [3/4] are working out of a mixture of both worldviews. Role play a family meeting. Reflect with the class on the role play

## SESSION 6 ALL IS GIFT ... ALL IS SACRED

**BACKGROUND READING:** 'The Within of Things' John Surett p 58.

### NEW UNDERSTANDINGS FOR THIS SESSION

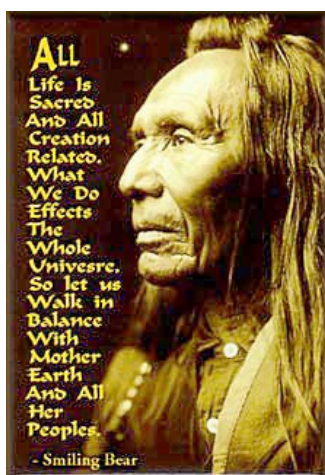
1. Everything in the Universe and on the planet is sacred
2. Everything has inner beauty, mystery, creativity, self organising intelligence.
3. Everything is gift including ourselves
4. Everything has the right to be in and of itself just because it exists.

### SUM UP NEW UNDERSTANDINGS FROM LAST WEEK

Living out of a New Worldview perspective enables us to see the interconnection of all living things and to treat them with respect and reverence.

### SONG: OUT OF THE STARS....

Comment on the song.....we will be exploring today how we and every creature are 'starlight, stardust and star wonder', how every creature has inner beauty, mystery, creativity and intelligence.



### INTRODUCTION TO POWERPOINT ON THE WEB OF LIFE

It is only this century that science allows us see inside to the inner essence of everything through the microscope and telescope – in the soil, in bacteria, in the stars, in dolphins and all species – in everything we are astonished to find inner beauty, mystery, creativity, self-organising intelligence and uniqueness. As we have seen the same elements in our bodies and in everything were formed in the stars. These same elements are in stones, trees, lions, eagles, earthworms, humans - all were formed in the stars. These elements are calcium, iron, carbon, potassium, etc. We are made of the same substance as everything else. **ALL ARE GIFTS - ALL ARE SACRED AND SPECIAL -- AND HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE JUST BECAUSE THEY EXIST.**

### WE WILL NOW VIEW THE POWERPOINT ON THE WEB OF LIFE

**ALTERNATIVE TO THE WEB OF LIFE POWERPOINT** - Bring in a variety of things from nature e.g. coloured snail shells, stones that glisten in the light, - speak about their potential to evoke wonder, awe, beauty, mystery. Invite students to take one and experience it with various senses....sight, touch, sound, smell etc....

### THE GIFT YOU ARE – INNER ESSENCE

Remind students again about the words from the song **...I am starlight, stardust, star-wonder....** Just as we explored the gifts of many beings in the natural world in session 3 and our connection with them, we are now going to celebrate **your own** uniqueness, your gifts, your creativity, your power, your passion and your interconnection with all of creation. We have seen how every species in the web of life is unique and has within itself ---creativity, beauty, mystery, etc. Each of us is also formed with the same creativity, love, and passion that formed the stars.

You are going to be given time now to think of your own inner essence; your own good qualities – like kindness, generosity, courage, thoughtfulness etc.

**Activity:** In groups of 4/5 we ask you to pick a star, write your name on it and take quiet time now to reflect and write down on the star, three qualities you see in yourself. Then pass your star around and others from the group will also add to your list the good qualities they see in you.

When this is completed return to the big group and each one is invited to **SHARE** how she/he felt about this exercise.

**STARDUST...**Then in twos put some gold/silver dust on each others' foreheads with some aromatherapy oil...saying .... The person's name....**in your one wild and precious life, always remember that you are starlight, stardust.....and star-wonder....**

(Consider buying, in any art shop, some stars that light up in the dark for this exercise. Students can place the star over their beds later reminding them that they are star dust with consciousness).

**REFLECTION/CENTRING...**We remember that everything in nature is also starlight, stardust and star-wonder.

**READ REFLECTION 'BIRTH' P. 62**



**INVITATION:** During the coming week choose a time to go outside alone, without your ipod, to the natural world to a safe place, to the web of life, – look around and be aware that everything you see in the natural world before you, is related to you – is made of the same building materials. Allow the awe and wonder of it to enter your heart. Be aware of how you feel.



## SESSION 7 - WALK GENTLY ON THE EARTH

**BACKGROUND READING** for teachers/chaplains – The Earth Charter Summary P. 50 OR The Concept Of “Living Well” - A Bolivian Viewpoint P 51.



### HOW CAN WE LIVE SO THAT ALL BEINGS ON THE PLANET CAN FLORISH?

#### NEW UNDERSTANDINGS FOR THIS WEEK:

1. In this New World View young people can make a difference
2. Peak oil and Global warming
3. Amazing Story of Youth in Kinsale
4. Calculating our Carbon Footprint
5. Commitment to an environmentally sustainable, socially just, spiritually fulfilling human presence on the Earth.
6. Being the hope and the change the world needs today.

Could begin with **Michael Jackson’s Earth Song** again.

This week we will explore how we can live out of the new understandings of the NEW WORLD VIEW explored in the past few weeks. At the beginning of this module we heard Michael Jackson’s challenging words... ‘WHAT ABOUT US?’ ... WHAT CAN WE DO? ...which is what this session is all about.

Firstly we will look at ‘The Story of Stuff’ Youtube video:

What did you learn about your relationship with ‘stuff’? Is this a relationship that liberates or imprisons you?

Conclude with: Wombat – global mindshift -Youtube video:

Can you relate to the planet as your home?

*‘A human being is part of a whole, called by us the Universe, a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings, as something separate from the rest a kind of optical delusion to his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few people nearest us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty’ Albert Einstein*

#### SHORT INPUT ON GLOBAL WARMING AND PEAK OIL

Peak oil and climate change together are the greatest threat ever to the planet and to ourselves – they are bringing about a massive global crisis. But largely we are in denial of this and are waiting for someone to come along with a solution so that we can continue with our lifestyle and economic growth as we have been doing for the past 150 years.

To all appearances there is little doubt now that we have lost our way as a human species. The signs are all around us. We are in big trouble with the present economic downturn, with the global warming crisis and Peak oil. Experts tell us that oil production will peak in the next few years which means we will come to the end of cheap oil which we have been enjoying for a very long time now – we will have come to the end of our oil-based economy which we have been totally depending on. It is disconcerting to realise that everything in our homes, schools, towns is depending on oil.

**Can you name some things that are made of oil?** Teacher brings in things that are made of oil.



I bet you didn't know the following things in your home are made from oil:  
**INVITE A STUDENT TO READ THESE**

Aspirins, sticky tape, trainer shoes, lycra socks, glue, paints, varnish, foam mattresses, carpets, nylon, polyester, CD's, DVD's, plastic bottles, contact lens, hair gel, brushes, tooth brushes, rubber gloves, washing-up bowls, electric sockets, plugs, shoe polish, furniture wax, computers, printers,

candles, bags, coats, bubble wrap, bicycle pumps, fruit juice containers, rawplugs, credit cards, loft insulation, PVC windows, shopping bags, lipstick. These are just a few things in our home made directly from oil – not counting everything else which needs fossil fuels and energy to manufacture. Oil and gas are feedstocks for plastics, paints, pharmaceuticals, fertilizers, electronic components, tyres and much more. Oil is so important that when it peaks soon, it will have vast implications across the realms of war and global politics, medicine, culture, transport, trade, economic stability and food production.

Almost everything in your home depends on oil....we are addicted to oil and its products. The global economic system of growth and development is an illusion...it has led us into this crisis...it has failed us...as a system does not work. We can see evidence of this all around us in the present economic downturn.

## WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT?

### EXPLORING HOW WE CAN LIVE SO THAT ALL BEINGS/SPECIES ON THE PLANET CAN FLOURISH A NEW ECONOMIC SYSTEM

An alternative to our present global economic system is **A LOCAL BASED ECONOMY** whereby the local community is enabled to support local businesses, enterprises, produce their own food, use local building materials, working together on environmental problems and on restoring biodiversity to the local area etc. Supporting local produce helps the environment as it cuts down on the thousands of miles which our food and resources travel. Finance is kept within the local communities instead of

within the multi national companies. We will see now how a group of young people initiated these ideas in Kinsale, Cork.

## YOUNG PEOPLE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE



**THE AMAZING STORY OF YOUNG PEOPLE MAKING A VERY BIG DIFFERENCE IN KINSALE AND AROUND THE PLANET....**The story is an extraordinary one of a group of students in the local Further Education College in Kinsale, Co Cork, along with their teacher Rob Hopkins, who begin writing a ground-breaking document - the first ever detailed 15 year plan for a town in the world – a timetabled strategy for weaning a town off fossil fuels. And what is more, that small Irish town actually adopts the action plan and starts to implement it. This [Kinsale Energy Descent Action Plan](#) was called ‘Kinsale 2021.’ Rob Hopkins had a simple idea for his students: to ask them to think

practically about all the aspects of a town that would need to be changed if a low-energy future was to happen, and how they could do so over a fifteen-year period. What was extraordinary about the project was the way they went about it seriously, meeting the movers and shakers of the town in a community think-tank, and researching and writing with every intent of making the project real. The first draft was launched at a conference in Kinsale in June 2005, and two of the students set up a not-for-profit company to handle the project, called Transition Design. Then the big step came when in December 2005 Kinsale Town Council unanimously passed the motion to support its initiative to act as process leaders in Kinsale’s transition to a lower-energy future and in developing the concept of a Transition Town; making the transition from fossil fuel dependency to a state of energy independence. Some of the areas were housing education, health, sustainable energy, local food, transport waste, youth and community involvement, economics.

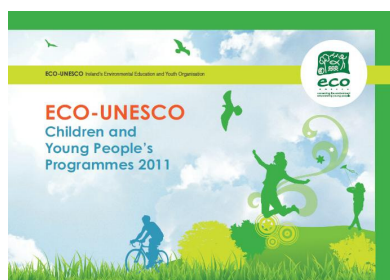
Kinsale really hit the headlines. Then from Kinsale it has spread to other parts of Ireland, England, Scotland Wales, Europe, New Zealand, Australia, North and South America, Asia and Africa. To write a practical and detailed plan, before Kinsale, was a step that most didn’t dare take.

## OTHER THINGS TO DO



### **IRELAND’S ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND YOUTH ORGANISATION.**

**ECO-UNESCO’s Young Environmentalist Awards (YEA)** is Ireland’s all island environmental awards programme for young people between the ages of 12 to 18.



ECO-UNESCO, The Greenhouse, 17 St Andrew Street  
Dublin 2 Tel: (01) 6625491 Email: [training@ecounesco.ie](mailto:training@ecounesco.ie)

### **JOIN A LOCAL WILDLIFE GROUP**



## **BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLANS IN EVERY COUNTY**

**Find out through your local Council about how to get involved in your local Biodiversity Action Plan**

## **HOW CAN WE LIVE SO THAT ALL OTHER BEINGS/SPECIES CAN FLOURISH?**

### **THE STORY OF STARFISH YOUTUBE.**

We can only play our own little part everyday. If everybody did this we might just save the planet. Thinking small is the first step in thinking big. Be the change that you want to see around you. Anything else is hypocritical.

**A new generation of story tellers are waking up to tell the story of our awakening world. Are you that story teller? Tell someone today, anyone!**

### **ONE OF THE WAYS YOU TOO CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE – CALCULATING YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT**

Give out sheets and invite students to calculate their own Carbon Footprint. For the calculator

go to <http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/14.05/carbon.html>

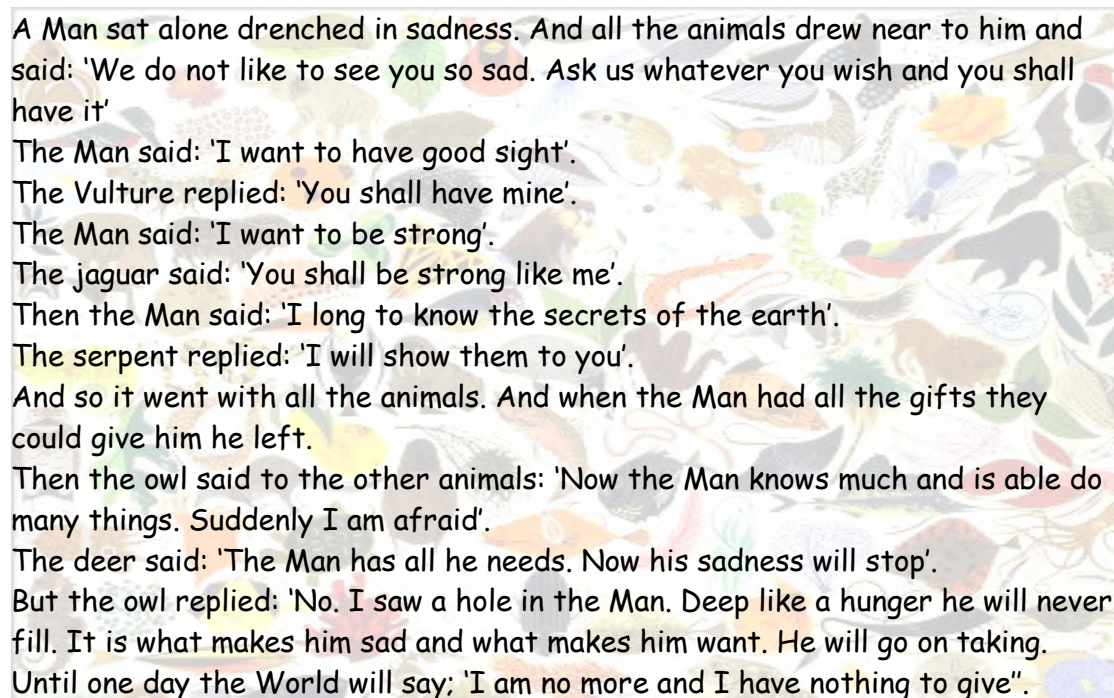
**Reducing your carbon footprint is about living within limits so that other species can flourish too. Only stars have carbon. You and I have a billion, billion, billion carbons within us..... Anytime we look at the stars we are reading our own stories. We need to remember too that our abuse of carbon is devastating the Earth.**

### **The following story allows animals to speak to us.**

**A Story from the Amazon:** (this story is best viewed on the film ‘Apocolypto’ directed by Mel Gibson. It is a fascinating clip. A teacher or student might consider *telling* the story rather than reading it. Alternatively, invite the students to *role play* this simple story taking the part of the various animals).

The indigenous tribe is gathered around the Sacred Fire and the spiritual leader tells the following story:





A Man sat alone drenched in sadness. And all the animals drew near to him and said: 'We do not like to see you so sad. Ask us whatever you wish and you shall have it'  
The Man said: 'I want to have good sight'.  
The Vulture replied: 'You shall have mine'.  
The Man said: 'I want to be strong'.  
The jaguar said: 'You shall be strong like me'.  
Then the Man said: 'I long to know the secrets of the earth'.  
The serpent replied: 'I will show them to you'.  
And so it went with all the animals. And when the Man had all the gifts they could give him he left.  
Then the owl said to the other animals: 'Now the Man knows much and is able to do many things. Suddenly I am afraid'.  
The deer said: 'The Man has all he needs. Now his sadness will stop'.  
But the owl replied: 'No. I saw a hole in the Man. Deep like a hunger he will never fill. It is what makes him sad and what makes him want. He will go on taking. Until one day the World will say; 'I am no more and I have nothing to give'.

**Discuss:** Can the human species ever be satisfied? How?

Our demand for possessions is but our longing to be *connected*. It is written into our DNA. What is it that connects us so that we can be fulfilled?

**Now listen to 'Chief Seattle's Reply' (Youtube)** as he responds to the request by the American Government to sell his lands. Contrast this speech to the prophetic story of the Amazon people you've just read above. Where are you in these stories? Are you simply looking in from outside as if it has nothing to do with you?

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## **GIVE OUT THE WAYS TEENS CAN HELP SAVE THE PLANET SHEET**

**INVITATION** – Give students time to name one thing they could commit to changing in the coming week from this sheet (or from the Carbon Footprint sheets). Explain to them that it's better not to take on too much initially. Choose something that's doable and when they've done that really well then go on to choose something else. **EACH PERSON IN TURN SAYS WHAT THEY HAVE CHOSEN TO DO FOR THE COMING WEEK**

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Read together **'Eco Desiderata'**

**OR**

### **Commitment**

We are the earth, through the plants and animals that nourish us.

We are the rains and the oceans that flow through our veins.

We are the breath of the forests of the land and the plants of the sea.

We are related to all other life as descendants of the firstborn cell.

With our new awareness and conviction regarding the interconnection of all things in the awesome web of life ....

We commit ourselves to take delight in and honour the wonder and creativity of ourselves and every living thing on the planet.

We commit ourselves to respectfully share this planet with all other species who have a right to exist.

We commit ourselves for the sake of the future of the planet to do all we can to walk more gently on our privileged planet.

**Song of their choice.**

## **SESSION 8: RITUAL AT END OF MODULE**

### **PREPARATION**

This ritual is best celebrated in a prayer room. If it is celebrated in the classroom create a 'sacred space' in the centre of the room. Arrange the chairs in circular formation. Place a coloured/white cloth on the floor and place a tall candle and the globe in the centre of the cloth.

(The ritual is designed for total class participation. Parts need to be assigned beforehand and the ritual practiced).

**One student** needed to light candle at centre of sacred space at the beginning of ritual

**Four students** needed to carry in each of the four elements --fire, water, earth and air.

**Four students** needed to carry in four scarves

**Twelve students** needed to read texts

**Students needed to recite** --either chorally or individually- **the Commitment Prayer** at the end of the ritual.

**Four songs** have been used during the course of the module. Use these in the ritual

### **MATERIALS NEEDED**

T lights on a tray or a tall candle

A jug of water and a bowl

A fairly large bowl of soil

Wind chimes

Four scarves ---red, brown, blue and yellow to represent the four elements

Matches

Perhaps a slide from the power point presentation can be shown as a back drop

### **RITUAL**

#### **LEADER**

*The leader invites a student to light the candle in the centre of the Sacred Space.*

We light this candle to remind us of the presence of the One who births forth time and space.

#### **OPENING SONG**

Any of the songs – perhaps Colours of the Wind

#### **LEADER**

We gather to reflect on the mystery of creation and to celebrate the wonder of ourselves and the beauty of every living being.

## **FIRE**

*A student enters –carrying **a lighted candle or a tray with lighted T lights**. The student places the container on the east side of the circle*

## **VOICE**

In the beginning there is fire

And fire is with the divine and fire is divine.

## **VOICE**

The universe begins with a spark of fire, an explosion of light.

In one splendid moment light streams everywhere.

That first spark contains the potential for all life in our universe.

## **VOICE**

The inner furnace of our metabolism burns with the power of the first spark –the spark that sends energy spinning through space and time.

*A student comes forward with a **red/orange scarf** and places it beside the container*

## **SONG: OUT OF THE STARS**

I come from the first moment of time

Formed in the flare of the flame

Born of passion and stardust

Galaxies call me by name.

I glow with the sparkle of sunlight

And waltz in the dance of the stars

My heart beats with the heart of the moon,

And rejoices in its kinship with Mars.

## **WATER**

*A student enters with **a jug and bowl of water**, places them on the circle at the southern point of the sacred space, and pours water from the jug into the bowl*



### VOICE

Two atoms of hydrogen and one of oxygen unite  
And we are gifted with the miracle of water!

### VOICE

Water flows from high in the mountains.  
Water runs deep in the earth.  
Miraculously, water comes to us,  
And sustains all life.

*Thich Nhat Hanh*

### VOICE

Our bodies are 75% water. The salt in our tears comes from the ancient seas.

*A student enters **with a blue scarf** and places it around the jug and bowl*

### SONG

I was born in the first cell in the ocean  
The salt of the sea in my tears!  
I roll with the tide and its motion;  
The sound of its waves in my ears!

### SOIL

*A student enters carrying **a bowl of soil** and places it on the western point of the sacred space.*

### VOICE

We stand on sacred ground.  
We walk on holy soil.

### VOICE

Soil is a vast and expanding mystery.  
Without soil we would have nothing to eat.

There are an astonishing five billion micro organisms in a handful of rich soil and  
about a million insects in the same handful  
All working away so that we have food.

### **VOICE**

Soil is made from pieces of rocks and decaying material-----  
It takes from 500-1,000 years for the earth to make 1 inch of topsoil.  
*A student enters **with a brown scarf** and places it around the bowl of clay*

### **SONG**

Deep in the clay I am rooted  
Deep in the soil of the earth  
I rotate with the turning of seasons  
And celebrate the wonder of birth  
  
Each cell in my body a miracle,  
Ancient with ancestral genes  
I am starlight, stardust, star-wonder  
At home in the earth with its beings

### **AIR**

*A student enters **with chimes** chiming and them on the north side of the circle.*

### **VOICE**

Air is essential for all livings beings.  
Without oxygen humans could die.  
Oxygen kisses the cell of our bodies awake.

### **VOICE**

All living things exchange the air with each other.  
We, humans, breathe out carbon dioxide which trees and plants take in.  
They breathe out oxygen which we and all animals inhale.

### **VOICE**

The dance of the air cycle, breathing the universe in and out again, is what you are, is  
what I am.

## **SONG EAGLE FLY**

### **COMMITMENT PRAYER**

We join the earth and with each other

To bring new life to the land

To restore the waters

To refresh the air

We join with the earth and with each other

To renew the forests

To care for the plants

To protect the creatures

We join with the earth and with each other

To celebrate the seas

To rejoice in the sunlight

To sing the song of the stars

We join with the earth and with each other

To recreate the human community

To promote justice and peace

To remember our children

We join with the earth and with each other

We join together as many and diverse expressions

Of one loving mystery: for the healing of the

Earth and the renewal of all life.

*UN ENVIRONMENTAL SABBTAH PROGRAM*

**SONG: Michael Jackson's Earth Song**

## **EVALUATION Template for Teachers**

**Session title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**What did you find helpful in this session?**

**What did not work so well?**

**Any other suggestions for this session?**

## SESSION RESOURCES

All sessions will require CD player, computer, speakers, projector and internet connection:

<b>Session1. The Story of the Universe</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Background Reading: ‘The Importance of Story ... Identity p.40</li> <li>• Michael Jackson’s Earth Song (UTube)</li> <li>• A stone or rock</li> <li>• Russian Dolls (good to have one’s own set for demonstration)</li> <li>• Universe Story powerpoint</li> <li>• Quiet instrumental music for Universe Story</li> <li>• Candle/lighter</li> <li>• Song Out of the Stars</li> </ul>	<b>Session 2. The Awakening Universe</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Background reading: ‘Creation’ by Celine Mangan p.42</li> <li>• Ball of wool</li> <li>• YouTube Dvd The Awakening Universe</li> <li>• Candle/lighter</li> <li>• Poem Now by <i>Raphael Consedine</i></li> <li>• Song Out of the Stars</li> </ul>
<b>Session 3: The Awesome Web of Life</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Background reading: ‘The Awesome Web of Life’ Mary southard p.44</li> <li>• Song/ ppt Colours of the Wind</li> <li>• A loaf of bread</li> <li>• Poem: ‘From Air and Soil’</li> <li>• Awesome Facts About Nature PPT</li> <li>• Background Music for Centering Moment.</li> <li>• Set of Earth Cards</li> <li>• Image of Planet Earth</li> <li>• Chief Seattle’s Reflection</li> <li>• Song: What a wonderful world – Louis Armstrong Youtube</li> </ul>	<b>Session 4: Coming Home</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Background reading: ‘Transformed by Renewing Our Mind’ p.45</li> <li>• The New Worldview on CD PPT</li> <li>• Crayons and paper</li> <li>• Background Music for Centring Moment</li> <li>• CD Elm Dance music [optional]</li> <li>• Song and PPT: Eagle Fly</li> </ul>
<b>Session 5: New World View</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Background Reading: Transformed by Renewing our Mind (New Cosmology) p.46</li> <li>• The New world View on CD PPT</li> <li>• Crayons and paper</li> <li>• Background music for Centering Moment</li> <li>• CD Elm Dance music (optional)</li> <li>• Song and ppt: Eagle Fly.</li> </ul>	<b>Session 6: All is gift and all is sacred</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Background reading: ‘The Within of Things’ John Surett p.58</li> <li>• CD ‘Out of the Stars’</li> <li>• Web of Life Powerpoint presentation</li> <li>• Small star-shaped pieces of paper (one for each person in the class)</li> <li>• Small stars or silver/gold stardust and stars that shine in the dark</li> <li>• Aromatherapy oil</li> <li>• Reflection: Teach us and Show us the Way. P.62</li> </ul>

<p><b>Session 7: Walk gently on the Earth</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Background reading: ‘The Earth Charter Summary’ p.50 OR Bolivia p51</li> <li>• Michael Jackson’s Earth Song on CD/DVD/Youtube <b>OR</b> Words of Earth Song on PPT</li> <li>• ‘The Story of Stuff’ Youtube video</li> <li>• ‘Wombat’ – global mindshift - Youtube video</li> <li>• Section on ‘What Kinsale Did’ – photocopy and cut into individual strips for students</li> <li>• ‘You can make a difference – ‘Story of Starfish’ Youtube</li> <li>• Handout on ‘Calculating your Carbon Footprint’ (one for each student)</li> <li>• Film ‘Apocolypto’ Youtube</li> <li>• Handout ‘Walk Gently on the Earth’ (one for each student)</li> <li>• Copy of ‘Eco Desiderata’ p.64</li> <li>• Song of their choice</li> </ul>	<p><b>Session 8: Closing Ritual</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• T lights on a tray or a tall candle</li> <li>• A jug of water and a bowl</li> <li>• A fairly large bowl of soil</li> <li>• Wind chimes</li> <li>• Four scarves ---red, brown, blue and yellow to represent the four elements</li> <li>• Matches</li> <li>• Perhaps a slide from the power point presentation can be shown as a back drop</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Index of Powerpoints –</b> cf accompanying disc</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Colours of the wind</li> <li>• Eagle Fly</li> <li>• Earth Song Michael Jackson</li> <li>• Out of the Stars</li> <li>• Universe Story</li> <li>• Web of life</li> <li>• World Views</li> </ul>	<p><b>Index of Podcasts</b></p> <p><a href="http://www.kandle.ie/2009/09/25/darwin-faith-comerford/">http://www.kandle.ie/2009/09/25/darwin-faith-comerford/</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.kandle.ie/2009/09/22/climate-change-responsibility/">http://www.kandle.ie/2009/09/22/climate-change-responsibility/</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.kandle.ie/2009/08/31/benedict-xvi-creation-care/">http://www.kandle.ie/2009/08/31/benedict-xvi-creation-care/</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.kandle.ie/2009/08/28/ecology-theology/">http://www.kandle.ie/2009/08/28/ecology-theology/</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.kandle.ie/2009/08/28/ecological-conversion/">http://www.kandle.ie/2009/08/28/ecological-conversion/</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.kandle.ie/2009/08/27/benedict-xvi-earth-precious/">http://www.kandle.ie/2009/08/27/benedict-xvi-earth-precious/</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.kandle.ie/2010/03/13/greener-lent-mcdonagh/">http://www.kandle.ie/2010/03/13/greener-lent-mcdonagh/</a></p>
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## Index of Youtube Downloads

(Most schools block access to Youtube so teacher will need to download these in advance).

<b>Video:</b> Wombat 1 min Colours of the Wind 3.23 Story of Stuff 21.15 God is Green/Channel4. 52min Sound of the ocean (20 minute: great for meditation) 6min How Big is God 5.4 min Thomas Berry and the Earth Community6.49 Thomas Berry: The Great Story 2.3 Chief Seattle's Reply 6.19	<b>Music:</b> What a wonderful world – Louis Armstrong Earth Song - Michael Jackson  <b>Web Links:</b> Awakening the dreamer.org transitionculture.org/2005/11/24/kinsale-energy-descent-action-plan/ Calculate your carbon footprint: <a href="http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/14.05/carbon.html">http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/14.05/carbon.html</a>
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## **BACKGROUND READING**

### **BACKGROUND READING – SESSION 1 – IMPORTANCE OF STORY...IDENTITY**

#### **The Old Story.....Old World View**

The signs are all around us that we have seriously lost our way as a human species with the devastating effects of global warming, the approaching inevitability of peak oil, the collapse of the economic system and the serious loss of biodiversity. This is a crucial time for the planet and ourselves. Without realising it we have devastated our planet on which we depend for our very sustenance. We have lost our connection with the natural world. We have become more and more alienated from the natural world, regarding it as a commodity to do with what we like.

Thomas Berry says this is the old story out of which we have been living for the past 150 years and it is no longer viable. All cultures live out of a story which gives us our worldview and forms our value system which we live by. The Story we have lived out of in the Western world is the Genesis Story, 'fill the earth and subdue it....have dominion over.....every living thing....' which we have taken to the very limit. All institutions of the western world have been living out of this old story whether they realise it or not. All cultures of the world have not been living out of this story eg the American Indians who saw the Great Spirit in the earth and regarded every species and every stone as sacred.

#### **The Importance of Story**

Thomas Berry, says we need a new story for a transformed worldview – in fact he says we are in between stories at this crucial time. Story is important for us – our personal story - it gives us our identity – where our roots are - e.g. the story of our family, of country, our Christian/Catholic story, all of these have shaped us into who we are today and are very important to us.

#### **The New Story.....The Story of the Universe**

Over this past 50 years a new story is emerging – we have new information and insights about the universe which we didn't have before through the technology of the telescope and the microscope. Indigenous people would have intuited these insights but now we have the scientific evidence informing us of the origins and development of the universe; how things came to be, how everything is unfolding and how we fit into the scheme of things. It is our creation story. The language of some scientists today telling the New Story resembles that of the mystics. We call it the New Story because the information is new to us. Because it takes light so long to travel to us from far distant places of the universe, we can look back through the telescope through deep time to our origins – to how everything began. The age of the universe is 13.7 Billion years. It is the longest story ever told and is big enough to hold all of who we are and all other stories – e.g. whether Buddhist, Muslim, Christian, Hindu, Jewish or other – all of these held in their integrity – it doesn't diminish any of them but simply expands them and puts them in an awesome context.

The Story of the Universe tells us who we are, giving us our identity....showing us how we have mysteriously evolved along with other species. The New Story carries a psychic energy at the heart and soul level, which inspires us to move into a different way of being on the planet – to find our place in the family of things in the awesome web of life. The Story of the Universe expands enormously our image of God – the God of an unfolding expanding universe. It reveals the creative energy of God pulsating in and through the entire web of life.



## **SOME LEARNINGS/IMPLICATIONS OF THE STORY OF THE UNIVERSE**

- \*we have evolved out of the earth like all other species
- \*we are not at the centre of the universe-this is the big shift we need to make in our thinking and attitudes.
- \*the universe is an unbroken seamless whole from the beginning of time. We are woven into that seamless whole- into the mysterious interconnected web of life.
- \*the earth is not dead – it is a living and dynamic system.
- \*everything is sacred and has a right to be, just because it exists.
- \*we are the self-reflexive consciousness of the earth
- \*we are a very young species, arriving late in the evolutionary journey. Still searching for our place on the planet. We need to listen to the wisdom that has come before us for billions of years
- \* There is serious need for us to form a new relationship with our planet and re-connect at a deeper level with the earth – to recover a sense of awe and wonder for the natural world.
- \* Everything is interconnected and needed for the health of the whole: you cannot take one part out to fix it without the rest. The whole must move forward together to try to find solutions for the total community of life on the planet. How can we find ways to move forward together so that all species and being of the planet may flourish?

## **Creation** *Celine Mangan OP (for Session 2)*

*This article acknowledges the significance of the climate change crisis, exploring the right Christian response through the words of the gospel and the teaching of the magisterium.*

We are more aware today of the effects of climate change in our world and the impact we are having on the environment. But has this anything to say to us as Christians?

As long ago as 1990 the then Pope, John Paul II, implied that it certainly has, when he said in his address for World Peace Day that year: 'In our day, there is a growing awareness that world peace is threatened not only by the arms race, regional conflicts and continued injustice among people and nations but also by a lack of due respect for nature, by plundering of natural resources and by a progressive decline in the quality of life.'

More and more we see land devastated by floods and landslides because of deforestation or unsuitable building, pollution of water supplies and the extinction of many species of plants and animals.

There have been those who have said that we as Christians are not only not innocent of blame in relation to the pollution of the earth but that we are part of the problem. They say this particularly because of the way the story of the creation of the world in the first chapter of Genesis has been interpreted.

The usual translation given in our Bibles for a command of God to humans at the end of the chapter is that they are to *dominate* over the other creatures that were created, 'the birds of the air, the fish of the sea and the beasts of the field'. The word 'dominate' is an unfortunate translation from the original Hebrew of the Bible. It would be better translated as '*shepherding*' or '*having a care for*' the other species that inhabit this world with us.

When you look closely at that first chapter of Genesis, you get a wonderful picture image of the world being birthed out of darkness, 'midwifed' as it were, by the Spirit:

'In the beginning, when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep and the Spirit of God hovered over the face of the deep. Then God said: Let there be light...'

The story goes on to outline in days one-to-three, the places which would be inhabited, while the occupants of those places emerge in days four-to-six:

Day 1: Creation of light;  
Day 4: 'Peoplings' of light: sun etc;  
Day 2: Heavens and waters;  
Day 5: Birds of air, fish of sea;  
Day 3: Dry land, vegetation;  
Day 6: Animals, humans;  
Day 7: Day of Rest.

Humans take their place in the sequence after the animals on day six; in the story we are firmly within the circle of creation rather than being at the apex of it. But of course, human beings have always had a tendency to make themselves special.

It is not only in the last few centuries since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution that we have felt free to dominate and exploit the earth. In a book from just before the time of Jesus, a Jewish writer, in retelling the story of creation in Genesis, pushed the animals up to day five so that humans could have day six all to themselves!

Other Jewish writers down the centuries have taken the opposite stance. One liturgical text, for instance, goes so far as to say: 'For the sake of the cattle you created humans, O God.'

The creation stories of the Bible - and there are many of them, not just the one we have been talking about from Genesis chapter one - are not in conflict with the scientific accounts of how the world came into being. St. Augustine long ago said that the Bible does not teach us 'how the heavens go' but 'how to get to heaven'.

The Bible is concerned to teach us spiritual truth: how to live spiritually in our world, with God and with other beings in creation. Maybe in the past we took the notion of living spiritually to mean getting out of the world to be with God, and this led us not to respect the other creatures that God has made.

Passionist priest and ecological writer, Thomas Berry, says that we need to change our emphasis in spirituality from a spirituality of alienation from the world around us to a spirituality of intimacy with the natural world. We should have a spirituality concerned not only with justice to humans but with justice for all the other creatures that make up the earth community.

At the end of the Book of Job, there is a telling antidote to humans thinking that they dominate the world. Job had been pestering God to appear to him so that he could tell God a thing or two about the way he was ruling the world, in particular how God was treating Job himself. But when God does appear in the story, he talks not about Job and other humans but about the mighty animals that he has created and delights in, animals which would have been considered inimical to humans in Job's time.

The great medieval writers spoke of two books that revealed God: the book of the scriptures and the book of nature. Maybe we need to read more of God in the book of nature today but also to read the book of the scriptures, our Bible, in a way which helps us to respect the wonderful world God has created. Future articles in this series will try and do just that.

***We are distant cousins to the stars and near relatives to the oceans, plants, and all living creatures on our planet. Sally McFague, *The Body of God*, p. 104.***

### **SESSION 3 BACKGROUND READING – THE AWESOME WEB OF LIFE**

(The following is an adapted extract by Mary Southard in 'An Amazing Journey' The Universe and Me)

Our planet Earth is an intricate web of interconnecting systems supporting a rich tapestry of life forms: microbes, vegetation, animals, insects, birds, humans. So integral is the function of this web of life that earth behaves as if it were one living organism! Earth maintains its temperature, the balance of chemicals in its atmosphere and seas. Nothing is wasted; each organism becomes nourishment for another in the sacred communion of life. Love unfolds a Universe which is a communion of diverse beings, each of whom is sacred, each of whom is beloved.

The entire universe is bonded together in such a way that everything on the planet is an interconnected, interdependent web of relationships - a seamless whole. Everything that exists is in relationship to everything else, is bonded to everything else in the web of life. Nothing is itself without everything else. Naturalist John Muir expresses it like this, "When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the Universe." This is a bizarre statement and yet it is exactly what the new science is revealing to us. Everything is interconnected at various levels – energetically and genetically. In terms of energy...the same energy pulsates through galaxies, the radiance of the sun, whales, grass, the deep oceans, clouds and humans. We totally depend on the life support systems of the Earth to keep us alive - the sun, soil, air and water. We need to re-connect and form a new relationship with each of these dynamic systems. We share the same DNA with all other life forms on the planet. The chemical elements in everything were formed in the stars. Our common ancestry with everything goes back a very long way. Everything we see in the natural world is genetically related to us.

We need to establish deep and primary bonds of communion experiences with each other and the wider earth community, forming a deep respect for all. We need to develop a bonded community with the other-than-human beings in the place where we live and in the wider planet.

We need to come home to the total Earth community, to hear as our own the cry of devastated forests and poisoned air, denuded soil and polluted rivers, species who no longer find habitat. You cannot have well people on a sick planet: what affects one part affects all in this interconnected web of life on the planet. In this all-embracing community, there is no room for exclusion, for dismissal or denial. A sacred oneness permeates the whole fabric. It will live or die together.

## Transformed by Renewing Our Mind

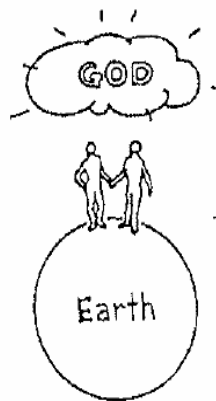
By Michael Dowd (1991)

Introduction: In this piece, Dowd contrasts two worldviews of cosmologies: the disconnected cosmology of western culture, and the transformation which flows from knowing the Universe Story. The excerpt begins:

Philosopher and historian Thomas Kuhn once remarked, “When paradigms change, the world changes with them.” These unsettling times because we are in the midst of a great paradigm shift. Recent discoveries in the natural sciences have led to a new understanding of reality. The most fundamental ways that we have of understanding ourselves, our world, and how God relates to the whole process are shifting. We must now update our internal imagery to fit what we empirically know to be true. The reason this is essential is because our unconscious pictures of reality influence us far more than the abstract concepts we say we believe .....

The mental pictures that most of us have unconsciously held of ourselves in relation to God and the rest of creation were based on the old cosmology. As paradigms, these images have influenced every facet of life in the West. But we must now update our internal imagery, integrating the new cosmology. If we are to be faithful to the truth as we now understand it, our mental images must reflect the awareness that we are the latest development of a process that has been spiritual from the beginning, and that we are part of an organic, living universe in which everything is interrelated and interdependent. The following sketches illustrate the difference between the old and new cosmologies.

### The Old Cosmology

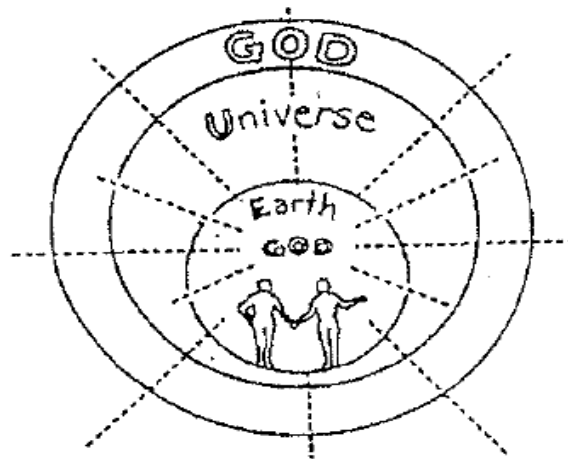


Westerners have generally imagined God as transcendent to creation, as illustrated above. We saw ourselves as separate from and above the rest of nature also, for we intuitively knew that we were created in God's image. We believed that we lived on a planet that we were to be stewards of. What were important were our relationship to God and our relationship to other human beings. Though Earth was the stage upon which this drama was played out, it was not an integral part of things.

Western economics law and ethics each function out of this view of reality. Morality, for example, has been concerned with human behaviour only toward God and each

other, but treatment of Earth has not generally been considered a moral issue. Corporations can legally poison the air, water and soil and forests and species can be obliterated because our morality and laws are human-centered rather than life-centered.

### The New Cosmology



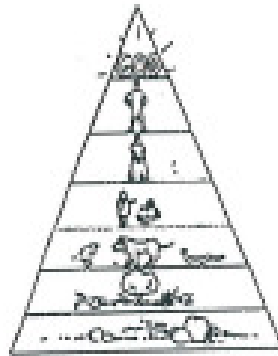
The new cosmology sees God as intimately revealed in the diversity of creation, yet infinitely more than the whole of creation. Humans are recognized as an integral part of Earth, not superior to it. The new cosmology and the old cosmology agree that the most important thing for humans is our relationship to God. But there are two important differences in how this is understood. In the new cosmology, God is acknowledged to be embodied in creation rather than separate from it. And in the new cosmology the “our” in “our relationship to God” is the entire community of life, rather than humans in isolation. We are deceived if we think that we can love God and honor God’s holiness without loving others (human and non-human) and honouring the holiness of nature (see 1 John 4:20-21)

The universe reveals God. Nature is a showing forth of divinity. Therefore, praising and glorifying God has everything to do with humanity being that part of creation which enables the body to appreciate its beauty and celebrate its divinity. The old cosmology said, “Worship the Creator, not creation.” It must have been important for Western humanity to believe dichotomy. But times are different now. The new cosmology says, “If we don’t worship the Creator in and through creation, our “worship” will lead to death rather than life.”

Another difference between these cosmologies is the way each understands the organization of creation. The following diagram is an example of what is sometimes referred to as the Western hierarchy of value.



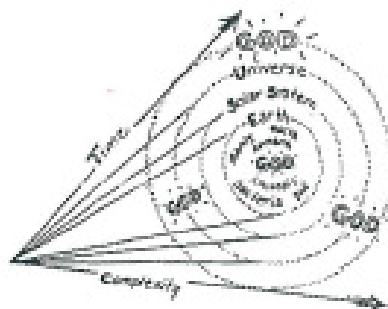
## The Old Cosmology



Most of us learned to see the value of things in an unchanging patriarchal and hierarchical way. God was Father; men were superior to women; male children were more important than female children; animals were above plants' plants are above insects, worms, and bacteria; and at the bottom of the pyramid are the inanimate rocks and elements of Earth. We believed that this was the way God set things up in the beginning and intended that they remain. Although we have been rarely conscious of it, most Western institutions assume this perspective. But we now see things quite differently.

## The New Cosmology

The new cosmology understands that everything is changing, that we are part of a time-developmental universe. As time continues, creation becomes more complex and more capable of realizing its inner, spiritual potential. In other words, the universe is maturing. God is seen as both transcendent and immanent. Everything that makes up Earth is seen equally as a revelation of God and necessary for the healthy functioning of the body. We are each part of a living communion of diverse personalities bound together in an inseparable relationship in space and time. Humans have no existence outside of the ecological cycles of Earth, which in turn has no existence outside of the solar system. The solar system has no existence outside the Milky Way galaxy. The Milky Way has no existence outside of the universe. And the universe has no existence outside of God. Everything is totally interrelated and interdependent. God's immanence makes the entire process divine.



Finally, it makes a world of difference – literally – how we perceive an individual human being in our imagination. From the old perspective, a farmer might be imaged something like this:

### The Old Cosmology

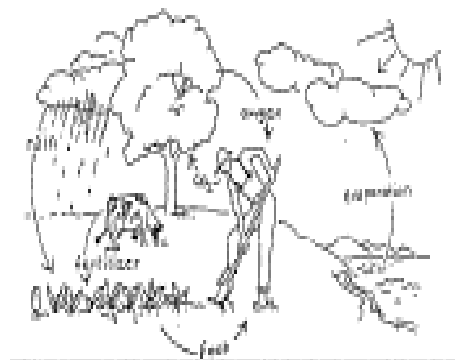
This illustration is a misleading abstraction. There is no such thing as an isolated human being – except in our imagination.



Any human in actual existence exists only as a member of the wider community of life, air, water, and soil. To think of ourselves as separate from the rest of nature as we have may have been important for our evolutionary development. To continue seeing ourselves this way any longer, however, is suicidal. The following image is a truer depiction of a farmer.

### The New Cosmology

Our true condition is that we are each an integral member of the entire life community. We are neither stewards, nor caretakers, nor anything else that assumes we are separate from nature. We have no existence apart from the living Earth. We are the Earth.



We are the self-conscious and spiritually aware organization of elements of this living planet. WE are totally dependent upon the health of the wider community of life for our own health. Our own destiny, as individuals or as a species, and the destiny of Earth are identical. What we do to Earth, we do to our Self.

As our mental images of reality reflect the new cosmology, we will find it much easier to integrate it into our daily lives. We will also experience God's loving presence and transforming power in a way that was impossible as long as we were operating from unconscious images of the old cosmology.

*Indeed, I consider that this shift [to an emphasis on our capacity to identify with the larger collective of all beings] is essential to our survival at this point in history precisely because it can serve in lieu of morality and because moralizing is ineffective. Sermons seldom hinder us from pursuing our self-interest, so we need to be a little more enlightened about what our self-interest is. It would not occur to me for example, to exhort you to refrain from cutting off your leg. That wouldn't occur to me or to you, because your leg is part of you. Well, so are the trees in the Amazon Basin; they are our external lungs. We are just beginning to wake up to that. WE are gradually discovering that we are our world.*

- Joanna Macy

*Nature is the unseen intelligence that loved us into being.*

- Elbert Hubbard

*Divinity is the enfolding and unfolding of everything that is. Divinity is in all things in such a way that all things are in divinity.*

- Nicholas of Cusa

## **(Session 7) THE EARTH CHARTER SUMMARY**

### **PREAMBLE:**

We stand at a critical moment in Earth's history, a time when humanity must choose its future. As the world becomes increasingly interdependent and fragile, the future at once holds great peril and great promise. To move forward we must recognize that in the midst of a magnificent diversity of cultures and life forms we are one human family and one Earth community with a common destiny. We must join together to bring forth a sustainable global society founded on respect for nature, universal human rights, economic justice, and a culture of peace. Towards this end, it is imperative that we, the peoples of Earth, declare our responsibility to one another, to the greater community of life, and to future generations.

### **Principles**

#### **I. RESPECT AND CARE FOR THE COMMUNITY OF LIFE**

1. Respect Earth and life in all its diversity.
2. Care for the community of life with understanding, compassion, and love.
3. Build democratic societies that are just, participatory, sustainable, and peaceful.
4. Secure Earth's bounty and beauty for present and future generations.

#### **II. ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY**

5. Protect and restore the integrity of Earth's ecological systems, with special concern for biological diversity and the natural processes that sustain life.
6. Prevent harm as the best method of environmental protection and, when knowledge is limited, apply a precautionary approach.
7. Adopt patterns of production, consumption, and reproduction that safeguard Earth's regenerative capacities, human rights, and community well-being.
8. Advance the study of ecological sustainability and promote the open exchange and wide application of the knowledge acquired.

#### **III. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE**

9. Eradicate poverty as an ethical, social, and environmental imperative.
10. Ensure that economic activities and institutions at all levels promote human development in an equitable and sustainable manner.
11. Affirm gender equality and equity as prerequisites to sustainable development and ensure universal access to education, health care, and economic opportunity.
12. Uphold the right of all, without discrimination, to a natural and social environment supportive of human dignity, bodily health, and spiritual well-being, with special attention to the rights of indigenous peoples and minorities.

#### **IV. DEMOCRACY, NONVIOLENCE, AND PEACE**

13. Strengthen democratic institutions at all levels, and provide transparency and accountability in governance, inclusive participation in decision making, and access to justice.
14. Integrate into formal education and life-long learning the knowledge, values, and skills needed for a sustainable way of life.
15. Treat all living beings with respect and consideration.
16. Promote a culture of tolerance, non-violence, and peace.

## **The Concept Of “Living Well” - A Bolivian Viewpoint**

**By Bolivia Delegation at the UN** 11 October, 2010    [Countercurrents.org](http://Countercurrents.org)

*We should live in a simple way for others to be able to live as well.*

**Mahatma Gandhi**

*He who is richer is not who has more, but who needs less.*

**Zapotec saying, Oaxaca, Mexico**

We suffer the severe effects of climate change, of the energy, food and financial crises. This is not the product of human beings in general, but of the existing inhuman capitalist system, with its unlimited industrial development. It is brought about by minority groups who control world power, concentrating wealth and power on themselves alone.

Concentrating capital in only a few hands is no solution for humanity, neither for life itself, because as a consequence many lives are lost in floods, by intervention or by wars, so many lives through hunger, poverty and usually curable diseases.

It brings selfishness, individualism, even regionalism, thirst for profit, the search for pleasure and luxury thinking only about profiting, never having regard to brotherhood among the human beings who live on planet Earth. This not only affects people, but also nature and the planet. And when the peoples organize themselves, or rise against oppression, those minority groups call for violence, weapons, and even military intervention from other countries.

### **Living Well, Not Better**

Faced with so much disproportion and wealth concentration in the world, so many wars and famine, Bolivia proposes Living Well, not as a way to live better at the expense of others, but an idea of Living Well based on the experience of our peoples. In the words of the President of the Republic of Bolivia, Evo Morales Ayma, Living Well means living within a community, a brotherhood, and particularly completing each other, without exploiters or exploited, without people being excluded or people who exclude, without people being segregated or people who segregate.

Lying, stealing, destroying nature possibly will allow us to live better, but that is not Living Well. On the contrary, Living Well rather means complementing one another and not competing against each other, sharing, not taking advantage of one's neighbor, living in harmony among people and with nature. It is the basis of the defense of nature, of life itself and of all humanity, it's the basis to save humanity from the dangers of an individualistic and highly aggressive, racist and warmongering minority.

Living Well is not the same as living better, living better than others, because in order to live better than others, it is necessary to exploit, to embark upon serious competition, concentrating wealth in few hands. Trying to live better is selfish, and shows apathy, individualism. Some want to live better, whilst others, the majority, continue living poorly. Not taking an interest in other people's lives, means caring only for the individual's own life, at most in the life of their family.

As a different vision of life, Living Well is contrary to luxury, opulence and waste, it is contrary to consumerism. In some countries of the North, in big metropolitan cities, people buy clothes they throw away after wearing them only once. That lack of care for others results in oligarchies, nobility, aristocracy, elites who always seek to live better at other people's expense.

**Nobody says : I will only take care of myself**

Within the framework of Living Well, what matters the most is not the individual. What matters the most is the community, where all the families live together. We form part of the community as the leaf forms part of the plant. Nobody says: I will just take care of myself; I don't care about my community. It is as absurd as if the leaf said to the plant: I do not care about the community; I will only take care of myself. It is just as preposterous as if the leaf would tell the plant: I do not care about you, I will only take care of myself.

We are all valuable, we all have a space, duties, and responsibilities. We all need everybody else. Based on complementing each other, the common wealth, organized mutual support, the community and the community life develop their ability without destroying man and nature.

**Work is happiness**

Not working and exploiting our neighbors will possibly allow us to live better, but that is not Living Well. When one is living well, work is happiness. Work is learning to grow up, melting into the fascinating reproduction of life. It is an organic action such as breathing or walking. Within the Living Well framework, work is general, for everyone and everything, from a child to a grandfather. It's for men, women and even nature itself. Among us, nobody lives to benefit from the work of others. Private accumulation is unknown and unnecessary. Community accumulation always fills the warehouse.

In our communities we do not seek, we do not want anyone to live better, as development programs tell us. Development is related to living better, and all the development programs implemented among different States and governments, starting from the church, have encouraged us to live better.

Development depends on an ever-increasing use of energy, primarily oil. We have been led to believe that development is the salvation of mankind and that it will help us to live better, but without oil there is no development. And for us, with or without oil, sustainable and unsustainable development means anti-development, which is the cause of major disparities in nature and between people.

**Development can be a disaster**

Consequently, Living Well is contrary to capitalist development and goes beyond socialism. For capitalism, what matters the most is money, making a profit. For socialism, what matters the most is the man, because socialism tries to meet the increasingly growing needs of man, both material and spiritual.

Within the Living Well framework, what matters the most is neither man nor money; what matters the most is life. But capitalism does not care about life, and the two development models, the capitalist and the socialist, need rapid economic growth, causing a dissipation of energy and an insatiable use of fossil fuels to boost growth.

Therefore, development has proved to be a failure, as evidenced by the crisis of nature and the severe effects of climate change. It is now the leading cause of global crisis and the destroyer of planet Earth, because of the exaggerated industrialization of some countries, addicted consumerism and irresponsible exploitation of human and natural resources.

The industrialization and consumerism of Western "civilization" threatens Mother Nature and the subsistence of the planet, to such a degree that it must not be spread to the whole of humanity, because natural resources are not enough for all of us nor renewable at the same pace in which they are being exhausted.



## **Living Well in the Global Crisis**

The most important crises are:

- The exponential increase of human-induced climate change affecting all regions of Earth;
- The water crisis, where urbanization, industrialization and increased use of energy is lowering the level of groundwater resources;
- The crisis in food production by the impact of climate change and the increasing production of biofuels;
- The imminent end of the era of cheap energy (we are reaching the peak of oil production). In the lapse of 100 years we are finishing fossil energy created over millions of years, and this is bringing about dramatic changes in all the theories about the operation of society;
- The significant depletion of other key resources both for industrial production and for human welfare, including fresh water, genetic resources, forests, sea and wildlife, fertile soils, coral reefs, and most of the local, regional and global elements we have in common.

Unless they are reversed, this combination of dangerous tendencies may soon bring global environmental and social crises up to an unprecedented scale, and they may also cause the collapse of the most basic economic and operative structures of our society.

### **On the verge of catastrophic change**

Climate chaos and global warming threaten the loss of much of the world's most productive lands, physical upheavals in many places caused by storms and rising waters, desertification of many agricultural lands, and economic and social tragedy that will last for long in the future, with very severe problems for the most impoverished nations and peoples.

Without having found alternative sources of energy that can replace inexpensive oil and gas supplies in the amounts to which we have become accustomed to (and alarming new evidence regarding the limits of accessible coal), Peak Oil threatens the long term survival of industrial nations and industrialism itself, at its present scale. Long distance transportation, industrial food systems, complex urban and suburban systems, and many commodities basic to our present way of life —cars, plastics, chemicals, pesticides, refrigeration, etc— are all rooted in the basic assumption of an ever-increasing inexpensive energy supply.

Other scarce resources — fresh water, forests, agricultural land, biodiversity of many kinds, are dramatically decreasing in number due to the overuse of industrialized nations that every year surpass 30 percent of the resources that the Earth can regenerate, rendering the survival of humans and other species far more difficult than at any other time throughout the history of mankind. We also face the possible loss of 50% of the world's plant and animal species over the next decades.

So the planet's ecological, social and economic systems are on the verge of catastrophic change, and very few societies are prepared for this. Efforts by governments to respond to the impending emergency are thus far grossly inadequate. Efforts by corporations and industries to reform their behaviors remain largely enclosed by structural limits that require continued growth and profit above all other standards of performance.

### **Living Well Life to counteract against the Global Crisis**

In this Global Crisis, all the problems have the same structural base, and can be faced using the same structural changes. The solution for each one is the solution for all. All the new models must begin by accepting there are fundamental limits to the capacity of the Earth to sustain us. Within those limits, societies must work to set new standards of universal

economic sufficiency and a Living Well conception that does not depend on the excessive use of the planet's resources.

The construction of a Living Well vision to counteract Global Crisis in this era of climate chaos and diminished resources in our finite planet, means ending consumerism, waste and luxury, consuming only what is necessary, achieving a global economic "power down" to levels of production, consumption and energy use that stay well within the environmental capacities of the Earth.

It also means stopping energy dissipation, i.e. bringing about a rapid withdrawal from all carbon-based energy systems, and rejecting large-scale so called "alternative" energy systems designed to prolong the industrial growth system. These include nuclear energy, "clean" coal, industrial scale biofuels, and the combustion of hazardous materials and municipal waste, among others.

Equally important is a dramatic increase in the practices of energy conservation and efficiency, i.e., powering down, decreasing the personal consumption in countries where it has been excessive, and reorienting the rules of economic activity — trade, investments, norms. It is also important to modify all of society's main activities that are related to those norms (transport, manufacture, agriculture, energy, building design, etc). Our current dependence on export-oriented production, enormous amounts of long distance transportation, ever-expanding use of resources and global markets, cannot possibly be sustained in a finite planet.

### **Local production for local consumption**

In order to adapt ourselves to the true reality of a post carbon era, we will have to satisfy our fundamental needs such as food, housing, energy, production, and means of support, from local systems and resources. This means encouraging regional and local self-sufficiency, sustainability and control; economic localization and community sovereignty, local production for local consumption, local ownership using local labor and materials.

Thus Living Well means redesigning urban and non-urban living environments, the restitution of the local, regional and national communal goods, and a quick transition towards renewable energy at a small scale, that must be oriented to the locality and also owned by the local community, without hampering the natural balance, and including wind, solar, small scale hydro and wave, local biofuels.

Living Well also means promoting an orderly reconstruction of the countryside and the revitalization of communities by way of an agrarian reform, education and application of eco-agricultural microfarming methods, based on our cultural and communal practices, the wealth of our communities, fertile land, clean water and air. All of these approaches are in preparation for the inevitable de-industrialization of agriculture, as cheap energy supply declines.

Furthermore, Living Well means reallocating the trillions of millions destined for war in order to heal Mother Earth who is injured by the environment issue.

### **Less will be more**

Our Living Well proposal emphasizes harmony between humans and with nature, and the preservation of "natural capital" as primary concerns. It is well known that the protection and preservation of balance in the natural world, including all its living beings, is a primary goal and need of our proposal, and that mother nature has inherent rights to exist on the Earth in an undiminished healthy condition.

Living Well also means unplugging the TV and internet and connecting with the community. It means having four more hours a day to spend with family, friends and in our community,

i.e., the four hours that the average person spends watching TV filled with messages about stuff we should buy. Spending time in fraternal community activities strengthens the community and makes it a source of social and logistical support, a source of greater security and happiness.

For societies that now accept the images of “the good life” widely promoted in the media, this “good life” is based on hyper consumption of commodities, the new strategies to use less resources, to accumulate less, and to be ruled by modest standards of living also become arguments for greater personal fulfillment. Driving less and walking more is good for the climate, the planet, and our health. Buying less means less pollution, less waste, less time working to invest in shopping. Less stress, more time for the family, friends, nature, creativity, recreation and leisure which are activities on which people spend little time nowadays.

Among presently over-consuming societies, less really will be more. Basic compliance with Living Well conditions include sufficient food, shelter, clothing; good health and the values of strong community engagement; family security; meaningful lives; and the clear presence and easy access to a thriving natural world.

### **We are part of Mother Nature**

In this context, Living Well means living a sovereign and communal life in harmony with nature, where we can work together for our families and for society, sharing, singing, dancing, producing for the community. It means living a modest life that reduces our consumption addiction and maintains a balanced production.

Rather than eroding the Earth, depredating nature and within 30 or 50 years ending with gas, oil, iron, tin, lithium and all other non-renewable natural resources required for a living better, Living Well guarantees life for our children, for the sons and daughters of our children and for those that will come after them, saving the planet using our rock, our quinoa, potatoes and cassava, our beans, broad beans and corn, our mahogany, coconut and coca.

In the construction of Living Well, our economic and spiritual wealth is tied directly to a high regard for Mother Earth and a respectful use of the wealth that she gives us. The only alternative for the world in this Global Crisis, the only solution to the crisis of nature, is that human beings acknowledge that we are part of Mother Nature, that we need to restore the complementary relationships, the mutual respect and harmony with her.

### **Boosting community energy with creativity and collective action**

For this new experience of facing global crisis, for this new experience of Living Well to be successful, it will be necessary to boost local and international actions. We should follow the example of the millions of people on this Earth who are not waiting for official recognition of the global crisis, we should follow the example of the uncountable numbers of people and communities across the planet who, with creativity, enthusiasm and joint action are already actively trying to create or update a great variety of alternative practices at local, community and regional levels, in both rural and urban contexts.

Out of our own initiatives in our communities and also with help from governments that boost Living Well, with a broad unity of forces and social movements, we have to wake up community energy, boost community energy in our communities, which is the main capacity we’ve got to transform society and build a Living Well vision. We have to follow the example of these people and communities, starting to rebuild our communities and nations OURSELVES, with our own hands, our own hearts and our own brains, starting to take responsibility for the building of a Living Well Life for all within the limits of nature. We cannot rely only on governments and international movements to solve our problems.

### **Powering down**

Out of our own initiatives in our communities and also with help from our governments, let us begin to regain our ancestors' harmonious living, strengthen our own way of life, the identity and spirituality in our communities. Let us begin to organize our productive and community life in the countryside and in our neighborhoods, making education work, as well as communication and health, let us build our schools and roads, resolve between all of us our internal relations and the issues of land and territory, water, forests, and so on.

Let us build a Living Well vision and the sovereignty of our communities within the balance between man and nature, where we can rebuild our bonds, respecting everyone's right to consultation when making our own decisions, where we can freely determine our own aims, our forms of organization, the joint planning of our communities, the designation of our authorities, all based on the knowledge we have of ourselves and with full awareness of the responsibility that this entails.

To start powering down, we can reduce significantly our energy use: driving less, flying less, turning off the lights, buying local seasonal food (food takes energy to grow, package, store and transport), wearing a jumper instead of turning on the radiator, use a clothesline instead of a dryer, going on holiday closer to home, buying second hand things or borrowing them before buying new ones, recycling.

We can also nurture a Zero Waste culture at home, within our school, workplace, church, community. This means developing new habits, such as using both sides of the paper, carrying with us our own mugs and shopping bags, making compost out of food leftovers, avoiding bottled water and other over packaged products, repairing and mending rather than replacing...

### **Our own health, learning and communication**

Out of our own initiatives in our communities and also with help from governments that boost a Living Well vision, let us start to run our own health system taking after the ways that have always kept us healthy, where the health of the community is as important as that of our own body and where abundant healthy food free of chemicals is our medicine. Faced with the growth of increasingly manipulated consumption, let us rebuild the healthy domestic food production. Let us prevent diseases instead of looking for drugs to cure them, and let us use our own natural medicine which will not cure a disease by creating another.

Let us start to run our own education, or rather our own communication, learning in the way that we have always taught our children in our communities as part of the community practices and responsibilities, i.e. through community learning, through which we create communal energy and learn through daily work, within the social school that would be the community, where we learn that we cannot live outside of communal life. Rather than education, let us re-establish our own communication; strengthen the real communication between father and son, between students and teachers.

### **Let us protect our own seeds**

Let us defend the women, traditional defenders of the seeds and food safety, custodians of natural variety and of local and quality food for our families, whose life revolves around fertility, child care, countryside, seeds, the care of water, trees and other resources, and whose farming practices in the communities are part of communal life in harmony with nature.

We do not solve world hunger with Terminator seeds from agricultural business, but bringing back and protecting our rich ancestral seeds, storing them and fighting against their usurpation by large transnational corporations that defend themselves through intellectual property, patents and the use of transgenic seeds having as an excuse productivity increase.

Let us protect the life of indigenous country communities, which allows the cycle of seed and inputs to be closed within the very same communities, freeing us from the need to import them. Let's practice a small-scale production, which will protect natural resources for the present and future generations, and give us all healthy and varied food.

Let us build a Living Well vision, retaking our own appropriate technologies, which are not expensive and can be managed through community administration, monitoring and control, using our own funds from our own savings banks or credit unions. We can do our own self-training, which can mature if we bring together researchers and professionals who have a vision of sympathy, support and respect for reorganization processes of the communities and the peoples.

### **To strengthen all our procedures...**

Living Well means giving back fertility to the planet, now in the hands of sterile corporations, reforesting the world, living a modest life close to soil in communities or small family farms, which are those that have preserved the trees and the harmonic variety of species, that have more water at their disposal and survive better.

Waking up the ethical and moral values of our peoples and cultures, we can make this new millennium, a millennium of life and not of war, a millennium for Living Well, for balance and complementarity. Together we can build a culture of patience, the culture of dialogue and fundamentally the Culture of Life, a way of life that is not dependent on excessive consumption of non-renewable energy that emit greenhouse gases but is based on the harmonious relationship between man and nature.

In order to strengthen all the procedures that may lead us to Living Well, we encourage a broad discussion and debate regarding this proposal, so we can find a common approach that will lead to a fundamental change in the way societies operate, and how we live, as communities, families and individuals.

*Article distributed in English by the Bolivia delegation at the UN. April 2010*

## **The Within of Things**

By John Surette, SJ (1993)

Remember a time when you watched the moon. While watching did you think some thoughts, feel some feelings, or desire something for your life? The moon evoked these within you. You didn't cause them. The moon from within itself – as an interiority – entered into a relationship with you. As a result of that interaction the thoughts, feelings and desires were evoked.

Everything in the Universe has its own interiority, its subjectivity, its voice, its own self-organizing ability, its psychic/spiritual dimension, its holiness, its sacredness. Each leaf on the tree says: "See me ... I am different from every other leaf on the tree." Everything that exists is different from everything else that exists because each has its own within and is a word spoken by Ultimate Mystery.

After the initial Flaring Forth of the Universe some fourteen billion years ago, as the temperature began to drop, stable atoms of hydrogen and helium formed from the sub-atomic particles. There was nothing giving them instructions. The early Universe from its interiority, its psychic dimension, simply knew how to do this. The universe as a subject expressed itself as hydrogen and helium.

Four and a half billion years ago Earth was a ball of molten rock that had within the ability to organize itself into a crust and atmosphere, oceans, continents, amino acids and living cells. Each cell knows how to be present and function within a total living organism. It needs no directions from the outside. Its genetic memory carries all the inner instructions that it needs.

That molten rock also forms itself much later in time into you and me, with our hopes and fears, our song, dance, poetry, and prayer. We are totally implicated in Earth's Story. We are an expression of the Universe. In us Earth has arrived at reflexive consciousness and becomes aware of itself. Each of us in our interior depths carries the memory of all that went before us in life's unfolding. This is the way it is intended to be. The Universe is not a puppet show. Rather, everything in it has the power to organize and shape itself in concert with the community that surrounds it.

We could think of the primordial Fireball as a "seed," containing within itself everything that would unfold through eons of time: galaxies, Earth, living cells, and we humans. It all has a spiritual aspect. For those who have eyes to see the process itself is sacred, the process is a sacrament.

We have inherited a Western humanistic tradition that has devalued matter by radically separating it from spirit. Building upon this the scientific enterprise has stripped the Universe of its interiority. Consequently, everything has become just "stuff" for us. At best we use it and worst we destroy it. Witness our diminishment and destruction of Earth's life systems, chemistry, and geology. Witness all our difficulties in relationships, family, and church. Witness the eight thousand recorded wars of human history.

We have lost our ability to hear the voices of the natural world including one another. We have turned our natural habitat – our "home" – into a wasteland rather than living



in the mysterious and creative reality that surrounds us. Our inner life suffers as a result of this. We are urgently in need of a spirituality that will nurture a more viable relationship with Earth and will recognize the deep mystery of existence within everything.

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*Every being is its own unrepeatable truth that influences the continuing evolution*

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This mystery is rooted in the Divine. Every atom, every leaf, every person is an interiority that carries revelation. Because we live in an evolutionary Universe we await with joy dimensions of the Divine which have yet to be revealed. Every being is its own repeatable truth that influences the continuing evolution. We are called to abandon our efforts to control and manipulate that truth. We are invited to obey the truth, to be reverent in its presence, to be temperate in its use, to be humble before its depth.

Native Peoples know about the sacred dimension of everything. They look at a stone and see the stone but also see the presence of the Spirit. They see not only the without of the stone but also it's within. Our Christian mystics know about the depth of things. Frances of Assisi could talk to a bird as one interiority to another, as an "I" to a "Thou." Teilhard de Chardin could bless matter and acclaim it as the "Divine Milieu." Ignatius of Loyola could "find God in all things" and allow their sacredness to flood in on him, evoking a response from within him.

## REFLECTIONS/POEMS

### ORIGIN

I am stardust that's come to awareness  
Years in their trillions are in my making  
From flaring forth, through whirling galaxies  
Spiralling, speeding in space-time domain  
Within earth's molten rocks I came to rest  
O Wondrous Mystery!

I am earth's clay that's come to reflection  
Promethean bound though I walk in space  
Cradled and fed by air and by water,  
Where the daffodils dance I once belonged  
Through earth's living things all I've come to  
birth  
O Wondrous Mystery!

I am spirit in humanity frail.  
Ages long and cultures too led to mind  
Seeking, reaching back into beginning,  
That dazzling darkness where Great Spirit  
broods,  
The Eternal that I, strive to know.  
O Wondrous Mystery!

Honor McCabe (Adapted)

### ***WE HAVE FORGOTTEN WHO WE ARE.***

We have forgotten who we are  
We have alienated ourselves from  
the unfolding of the cosmos  
We have become estranged from  
the movements of the earth  
We have turned our backs on the cycles of life  
*We have forgotten who we are.*  
We have sought only our own  
security  
We have exploited simply for our  
own ends  
We have distorted our knowledge  
We have abused our power  
*We have forgotten who we are.*  
Now the land is barren  
And the waters are poisoned  
And the air is polluted  
*We have forgotten who we are.*

Now the forests are dying  
And the creatures are disappearing  
And humans are despairing  
*We have forgotten who we are.*

We ask forgiveness  
We ask for the gift of remembering  
We ask for the strength to change  
*We have forgotten who we are.*  
*We join with the earth and with  
each other.*

To bring new life to the land  
To restore the waters  
To refresh the air  
*We join with the earth and with  
each other.*

To renew the forests  
To care for the plants  
To protect the creatures  
*We join with the earth and with  
each other.*

To celebrate the seas  
To rejoice in the sunlight  
To sing the song of the stars  
*We join with the earth and with  
each other.*

To recall our destiny  
To renew our spirits  
To reinvigorate our bodies  
*We join with the earth and with  
each other.*

To recreate the human community  
To promote justice and peace  
To remember our children  
*We join with the earth and with  
each other.*

We join together as many and  
diverse expressions  
of one loving mystery: for the  
healing of the earth  
and the renewal of all life.

UN Environmental Sabbath Programme

### ***BIRTH***

You were born of the shining of distant stars,  
You drew their beams with you from afar.

You were born of the gold of the radiant sun,  
Of the light of the world ere the earth begun.

Born were you of the silver eye,  
Of the guardian moon keeping watch on high.

You were born of the wild winds roaming free,  
Born of the flames' intensity.

Born of the wave that laps the shore  
And the rock that hides the glittering ore.

You were born from out of the whole,  
You bear the world  
Within your soul.

*Anonymous*

### **Teach us, and show us the Way** by Chinook (Anonymous)

We call upon the earth, our planet home, with its beautiful depths and soaring heights, its vitality and abundance of life, and together we ask that it

Teach us, and show us the Way.

We call upon the mountains, the Cascades and the Olympics, the high green valleys and meadows filled with wild flowers, the snows that never melt, the summits of intense silence, and we ask that they

Teach us, and show us the Way.

We call upon the waters that rim the earth, horizon to horizon, that flow in our rivers and streams, that fall upon our gardens and fields and we ask that they

Teach us, and show us the Way.

We call upon the land which grows our food, the nurturing soil, the fertile fields, the abundant gardens and orchards, and we ask that they

Teach us, and show us the Way.

We call upon the forests, the great trees reaching strongly to the sky with earth in their roots and the heavens in their branches, the fir and the pine and the cedar, and we ask them to

Teach us, and show us the Way.

We call upon the creatures of the fields and forests and the seas, our brothers and sisters the wolves and deer, the eagle and dove, the great whales and the dolphin, the beautiful Orca and salmon who share our Northwest home, and we ask them to

Teach us, and show us the Way.

We call upon all those who have lived on this earth, our ancestors and our friends, who dreamed the best for future generations, and upon whose lives our lives are built, and with thanksgiving, we call upon them to

Teach us, and show us the Way.

And lastly, we call upon all that we hold most sacred, the presence and power of the Great Spirit of love and truth which flows through all the Universe, to be with us to

Teach us, and show us the Way.

### **Chief Seattle's Poem on Youtube**

<http://www.halcyon.com/arborhts/chiefsea.html>

### **OR Reflection below**

#### ***Reflection Inspired by Chief Seattle***

Every part of this earth is sacred,  
Every shining pine needle, every sandy shore.  
Every mist in the dark woods,  
Every clearing and humming insect is holy.  
The rocky crest, the juices of the meadow, the beasts and all the people,  
All belong to the same family.  
Teach your children that the earth is our mother.  
Whatever befalls the earth befalls the children of the earth.  
The water's murmur is the voice of our father's father.  
We are part of the earth, and the earth is part of us.  
The rivers are our brothers; they quench our thirst.  
The perfumed flowers are our sisters.  
The air is precious,  
For all of us share the same breath.  
The wind that gave our grandparents breath also receives their last sigh.  
The wind gave our children the spirit of life.  
This we know, the earth does not belong to us;  
We belong to the earth.  
This we know, all things are connected  
Like the blood which unites one family.  
All things are connected.  
Our God is the same God, whose compassion is equal for all.  
For we did not weave the web of life;  
We are merely a strand in it.  
Whatever we do to the web  
We do to ourselves.  
Let us give thanks for the web in the circle that connects us  
Thanks be to God, the God of all!

#### **FROM AIR AND SOIL**

From bees and sun  
From other's toil  
Our bread is won

And when we bite  
The soil, the air,

The bees and light,  
Are still all there.

So we must think  
Each day afresh  
How food and drink  
Became our flesh

And then we'll see  
The air, the sun,  
The earth, the bee  
And we, all one.

Orteza in 1998

### **Eco Desiderata Ed Glaze III**

Go angrily amid the pollution and waste  
taking a long-term environmental view,  
surrendering the things of materialism, as necessary.

As far as possible, without surrender,  
be on good terms with the environment.  
Live your life quietly and cleanly; and listen to Nature,  
even the plants and animals, for they too have their story.

Avoid lazy and wasteful persons; they are vexatious to the spirit.  
If you compare yourself with Nature,  
you should become plain and humble;  
for always there will be greater wonders than humans.  
Enjoy your planting as well as your harvesting.

Exercise caution in your population growth;  
for the world has limited resources.  
Never be careless about growth;  
for in spite of all economies of scale  
it is as dangerous as the bomb.

Keep interested in your own community, however small;  
for it can change and become a threat  
to the environment over time.  
But let this not blind you to what freedoms there are;  
all responsible persons must strive for ecological living,  
and remember what savings there are in recycling.

Obtain knowledge of survival to aid you in ecological living;  
and do not distress yourself with reminiscing;  
the world must change due to our pollution and overpopulation.  
Beyond a wholesome discipline, always be gentle with Nature.

Humans are only animals,  
especially with no natural right of superiority.  
We are but one species among many,  
no more than the trees and the animals  
they have an equal right to be here.



And whether or not it is clear to you,  
there is no doubt that humans have not been living as they should.

Therefore be at peace with Nature, whatever you conceive it to be;  
and whatever your labors and aspirations  
in our threatened environment keep waste to a minimum,  
since everywhere life is under threat.

Without all our wars, pollution and overpopulation  
it could again be a beautiful world.  
Be ecological. Sacrifice for the future.

## SONGS

### **'Earth Song' - Michael Jackson**

What about sunrise  
What about rain  
What about all the things  
That you said we were to gain  
What about killing fields  
Is there a time  
What about all the things  
That you said was yours and mine  
Did you ever stop to notice  
All the blood we've shed before  
Did you ever stop to notice  
The crying Earth the weeping shores?

Aaaaaaaaaah Aaaaaaaaaah

What have we done to the world  
Look what we've done  
What about all the peace  
That you pledge your only son...  
What about flowering fields  
Is there a time  
What about all the dreams  
That you said was yours and mine...  
Did you ever stop to notice  
All the children dead from war  
Did you ever stop to notice  
The crying Earth the weeping shores

Aaaaaaaaaah Aaaaaaaaaah

I used to dream  
I used to glance beyond the stars  
Now I don't know where we are  
Although I know we've drifted far

Aaaaaaaaaah Aaaaaaaaaah

Aaaaaaaaaah Aaaaaaaaaah

Hey, what about yesterday  
(What about us)  
What about the seas  
(What about us)  
The heavens are falling down  
(What about us)  
I can't even breathe  
(What about us)  
What about the bleeding Earth  
(What about us)  
Can't we feel its wounds  
(What about us)  
What about nature's worth  
(ooo,ooo)  
It's our planet's womb  
(What about us)  
What about animals  
(What about it)  
We've turned kingdoms to dust  
(What about us)  
What about elephants  
(What about us)  
Have we lost their trust  
(What about us)  
What about crying whales  
(What about us)  
We're ravaging the seas  
(What about us)  
What about forest trails  
(ooo, ooo)  
Burnt despite our pleas  
(What about us)  
What about the holy land  
(What about it)  
Torn apart by creed  
(What about us)  
What about the common man  
(What about us)  
Can't we set him free  
(What about us)  
What about children dying  
(What about us)  
Can't you hear them cry  
(What about us)  
Where did we go wrong  
(ooo, ooo)  
Someone tell me why  
(What about us)  
What about babies  
(What about it)

What about the days  
(What about us)  
What about all their joy  
(What about us)  
What about the man  
(What about us)  
What about the crying man  
(What about us)  
What about Abraham  
(What was us)  
What about death again  
(ooo, ooo)  
Do we give a damn

### **Colours of the Wind** - Vanessa Williams

You think I'm just an ignorant savage  
And you've been so many places; I guess it must be so  
But still I cannot see, if the savage one is me  
How can there be so much that you don't know?  
You don't know...

You think you own whatever land you land on  
The earth is just a dead thing you can claim  
But I know every rock and tree and creature  
Has a life, has a spirit, has a name.

You think the only people who are people  
Are the people who look and think like you  
But if you walk the footsteps of a stranger  
You'll learn things you never knew you never knew

Have you ever heard the wolf cry to the blue corn moon  
Or asked the grinning bobcat why he grinned  
Can you sing with all the voices of the mountain  
Can you paint with all the colours of the wind?  
Can you paint with all the colours of the wind?

Come run the hidden pine trails of the forest  
Come taste the sun-sweet berries of the earth  
Come roll in all the riches all around you  
And for once never wonder what they're worth

The rainstorm and the river are my brothers  
The heron and the otter are my friends  
And we are all connected to each other  
In a circle in a loop that never ends

Have you ever heard the wolf cry to the blue corn moon  
Or let the eagle tell you were he's been  
Can you sing with all the voices of the mountain  
Can you paint with all the colours of the wind?  
Can you paint with all the colours of the wind?

How high does a sycamore grow?  
If you cut it down then you'll never know  
And you'll never hear the wolf cry to the blue corn moon  
For whether we are white or copper skinned  
We need to sing with all the voices of the mountain  
We need to paint with all the colours of the wind

You can own the earth and still  
All you'll own is earth until  
You can paint with all the colours of the wind

### **EAGLE FLY....But don't fly away**

Eagle fly but don't fly away  
I offer this prayer that you might stay  
I know your wings are tattered...  
...by the things we've done  
I hear your cry for us to awaken

Mother Earth is giving all that she can give  
Her loving breath of life she gives so freely  
How could we be so blind not to see  
That she is hurting too just as we

### **Chorus**

**Upon the wind you spread your wings and fly  
Through the mist we hear your haunting cry  
But with the help from all our brothers  
We'll make a better day  
Eagle fly...but don't fly away**

From your lofty view on mountain high  
You've seen the selfish things that we have tried  
We poisoned every river and we stripped the land  
We put those lonely tears in your eyes

### **Chorus**

**Upon the wind you spread your wings and fly  
Through the mist we hear your haunting cry  
But with the help from all our brothers  
We'll make a better day  
Eagle fly...but don't fly away**

Eagle fly...Eagle fly....fly

Standing on the threshold of a brand new dawn  
A world in which our children may grow wiser  
Skies are blue, waters clear and grass so green  
Our earth will be healed, this is our dream

**Chorus**

**Upon the wind you spread your wings and fly  
Through the mist we hear your haunting cry  
But with the help from all our brothers  
We'll make a better day  
Eagle fly...but don't fly away**

Eagle fly....but please don't fly away  
Don't fly away

**Denean**

## **Canticle of Creation**

Most high, all-powerful, all good, Lord  
All praise is yours, all glory, all honor  
And all blessing.  
To you, alone, Most High, do they belong.  
No mortal lips are worthy  
To pronounce your name.

All praise be yours, my Lord, through all that you have made,  
And first my lord Brother Sun,  
Who brings the day; and light you give to us through him.  
How beautiful is he, how radiant in all his splendor!  
Of you, Most High, he bears the likeness.  
All praise be yours, my Lord, through Sister Moon and Stars;  
In the heavens you have made them, bright  
And precious and fair.  
All praise be yours, my Lord, through Brothers Wind and Air,  
And fair and stormy, all the weather's moods,  
By which you cherish all that you have made.  
All praise be yours, my Lord, through Brother Fire,  
Through whom you brighten up the night.  
How beautiful is he, how merry! Full of power and strength.  
All praise be yours, my Lord, through Sister Earth, our Mother,  
Who feeds us in her sovereignty and produces  
Various fruits with colored flowers and herbs.

## **On Pardon and Peace**

All praise be yours, my Lord, through those who grant pardon  
For love of you; through those who endure  
Sickness and trial.  
Happy those who endure in peace,  
By you, Most High, they will be crowned.

## **Sister Death**

All praise be yours, my Lord, through Sister Death,  
From whose embrace no mortal can escape.  
How dreadful for those who die in sin!  
How lovely for those found in Your Most Holy Will.  
The second death can do them no harm.  
Praise and bless my Lord, and give him thanks,  
And serve him with great humility.

## **Conclusion**

We all owe a great debt to St. Francis of Assisi and to his *Canticle of the Creatures* for leading us to the conviction that all brother and sister creatures make up one family under God's loving care! May all these wonderful creatures continue to lift our hearts upward to God in this glorious prayer of praise!

(Session 7) MEASURE YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT  
Patrick Di Justo

**Start**

Begin with the 500 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> you generate in trash per year.

Trash total: 500

**Home**

Estimate how much CO<sub>2</sub> your home produces in a year.

- ☐ ☐ Apartment in small building (four or fewer units):  
13,400 pounds
- ☐ Single Family attached house: 14,700 pounds
- ☐ Single Family detached house: 15,500 pounds

**Bonus: Alternative heating**

If you heat your house with something other than electricity, you get a discount. Multiply your total home CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by a CO<sub>2</sub> efficiency factor.

- ☐ Natural gas CO<sub>2</sub> efficiency factor: 0.4
- ☐ Home heating oil CO<sub>2</sub> efficiency factor: 0.3

Home total: 0

To find how many pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> your family car expels, consider fuel efficiency and the number of miles you drive each year (click an amount below).

MPG	MILES PER YEAR		
	9,000	12,000	15,000
10	<u>18,000</u>	<u>24,000</u>	<u>30,000</u>
15	<u>11,970</u>	<u>15,960</u>	<u>19,950</u>
20	<u>9,000</u>	<u>12,000</u>	<u>15,000</u>
25	<u>7,200</u>	<u>9,600</u>	<u>12,000</u>
30	<u>6,003</u>	<u>8,004</u>	<u>10,005</u>
35	<u>5,143</u>	<u>6,857</u>	<u>8,571</u>

**Other Land Travel**

Miles traveled by school bus in a year (0.2 pounds per mile).

Miles traveled by rail in a year (0.6 pounds per mile).

Miles traveled by service bus in a year (0.7 pounds per mile).

Other land travel total: 0

**Air Travel**

Multiply the number of short (local), medium (cross-country), and long (overseas) round-trip flights you take

each year by their average per-person CO<sub>2</sub> output.

Short-haul flights  
(600 miles round-trip)

X pounds <sup>318</sup>  
=

Medium-haul flights  
(6,000-8,000 miles round-trip)

X pounds <sup>3,220</sup>  
=

Long-haul flights  
(8,001-15,000 miles round-trip)

X pounds <sup>4,485</sup>  
=

**Air travel total:**

### Food

- ☐ If you eat meat, add 771 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub>
- ☐ If most of your food comes from your own region, add 40 pounds.
- ☐ If most of your food comes from within your continent, add 233 pounds.
- ☐ If you frequently buy food from overseas, add 3,064 pounds.

**Food total:**

### Recycling

- ☐ If you are a casual recycler, subtract 50 pounds.
- ☐ If you recycle rigorously, subtract 125 pounds.
- ☐ If you fanatically try to recycle everything you can, subtract 250 pounds.

**Recycling total:**

### Score

**Final total:**

## Results

Whatever your score, you can help counter the effect by investing in clean energy credits. These offsets go toward renewable energy sources like wind and solar power. Each dollar donated to TerraPass, Carbonfund.org, or Climate Care buys you roughly 256 pounds of guilt-free spewing.



**Up to 15,000 pounds per year: Deep Green**

Way to go -- you make the rest of us look like Hummer-loving carbon bombs. You're not going to get your score much lower without serious sacrifice. Spending about \$60 on carbon credits would make you a saint.

**15,000 to 40,000 pounds per year: Fair-weather ecofriend**

Hey, you live and work in the real world -- and that means car and air travel. With some simple adjustments you can probably cut your load quite a bit. Or you can divert about \$100 from your gas money to carbon credits to help absolve you of your sins.

**More than 40,000 pounds per year: CO<sub>2</sub> addict**

They can have the keys to your SUV when they break into your well-heated McMansion. But You're going to have to drop \$200 or more annually to make up for the damage you're doing to the environment.



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## WAYS TEENS CAN HELP SAVE THE PLANET

1. **Recycle.** Your mobile phone, television, computers and monitors don't belong in the landfill. If you can't donate these devices to someone, get online and find your local eWaste Recycler.
2. **Unplug.** Mobile phone chargers continue to draw electricity even when the phone isn't plugged in. The same problem applies to your other electronic equipment—your laptop, iPod, digital camera, and BlackBerry. Unplug all your chargers when they are not in use.
3. **Go solar.** Buy a [solar power pack](#) to charge your phone, camera and other small devices. There are some cool ones out there. If you can't go solar, at least use rechargeable batteries.
4. **Kill your fax.** Sure, save it for emergencies if you must, but you can save a tree by reducing paper. Just scan and email instead of faxing paper.
5. **Reduce junk mail.** Convert to online statements and get your name off mailing lists. Ask companies to stop sending catalogs and have them send email offers instead.
6. **Watch Green TV.** Green television programming is all the rage. Watch a [“green” program](#) and learn how you can do more to be “earth friendly.”
7. **Download.** Reduce the need for plastic CDs by downloading music and games. Electronic distribution eliminates the need for packaging as well!

8. **Hook up.** Join a “think green” [social network](#) to meet people like you and find out more about what you can do locally.
9. **Ask a teen.** Teens are the target for much of the “green” campaign because they care, they [take action](#) and they can [influence others](#). If you want to know how you can make changes, ask a teen – there’s a good chance they will have the information you need. (All of the above taken from [www.alcatel-lucentlab.com](http://www.alcatel-lucentlab.com) )
10. **Become active** – try to walk daily outdoors and connect with the natural world around you; join dolphin, whale, bird watching groups; astronomy or rambling clubs.

**Encourage parents to:**

Use long-lasting light bulbs  
Don’t leave electrical appliances on standby. Turn off switches.  
Use only as much water in the kettle as you need.  
Use the shower instead of the bath.  
Use cooler washes, the shortest cycles and fuller loads in washing machines.  
Avoid buying over-wrapped goods.  
Avoid plastic, which is made from oil and that’s running out by the day.  
Walk, cycle or use public transport wherever possible.  
Additional Resources

**What is the Higgs Boson? Or the ‘God particle.**

There are two general schools of thought, therefore, on what has been nicknamed 'the God particle': those who believe it exists and are waiting for it to be found; and those who think it's fiction and do something else with their time.

The first group adhere to the Standard Model of particle physics, an evolving theory which has its roots in the early 1960s, that reckoned a series of tiny 'subatomic' particles combined to form the atoms that make the universe.

All of the photons, gluons, neutrinos and the rest were subsequently discovered but the Higgs boson was not.

The second bunch believes that the world is built without the damned elusive particle and their model is therefore labeled the 'Higgsless'. One hopes they are not disappointed.

The Higgs boson, the 'Standards' believe, will offer an explanation as to why those tiny specks stick together, so if it does not exist, some other 'glue' will have to be found.

Scientists close to finding the God Particle

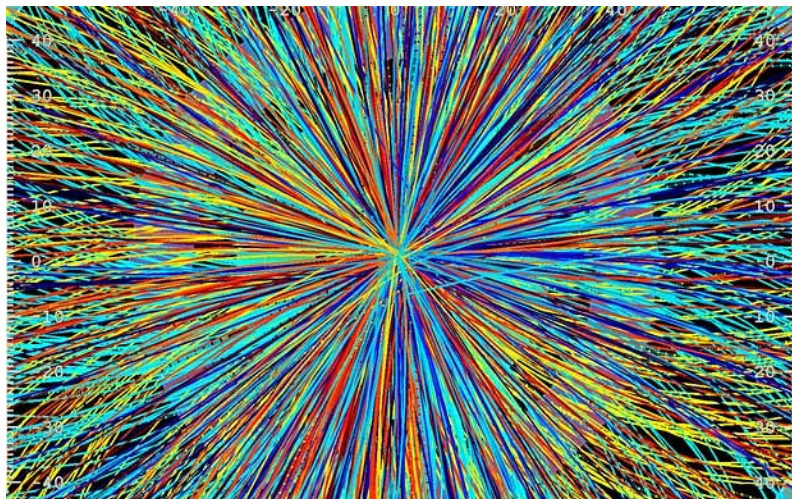
But at a press conference on Monday, the physicists in charge of the Large Hadron Collider said that they had only established where the Higgs boson was not to be found, and that its location continues to elude them.

However they added that as the amount of data created by the atom-smashing experiments increases, they now expect to know whether or not the most-wanted particle exists within 18 months.

If it is tracked down, it will explain how particles come to have mass and provide the final piece in the Standard Model of physics that was first set out in the 1970s, while if it turns out not to exist then the textbooks could be ripped up.

Rolf-Dieter Heuer, director general of the European Organisation for Nuclear Research (Cern), told reporters: "I would say we can settle the question of the Higgs boson, the Shakespearean question 'to be or not to be' at the end of next year."

Buried 300ft below the border between France and Switzerland, the Large Hadron Collider is a 17-mile ring of superconducting magnets around which two beams of particles are sent at close to the speed of light, and then smashed into each other. (sic)



## Exercise on 'A Divided World'

## (Distribution of the world's resources)

Select 20 people to represent the population of the world

(Remind the participants that individual people in any country may be very rich or poor. What this exercise is concerned about is the overall distribution of resources in relation to the population)

### Division of Population

<b>Asia</b> (excluding Japan)	57% of world population -	11		
people				
<b>Africa</b>	12%	”	”	
- 2 people				
<b>Latin America &amp; the Caribbean</b>	8%	”	”	-
2 people				
<b>Europe &amp; CIS (former USSR)</b>	15%	”	”	
- 3 people				
<b>North America incl. Japan &amp; Australia</b>	8%	”	”	-
2 people				

**Each continent holds a placard with its name on it**

### **Division of FOOD** - use paper plates or real food (biscuits) (% produced by each continent)

<b>Asia</b>	<b>15% of the world's food -</b>	<b>3 food symbols</b>	
<b>Africa</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>” ” - 1 ”</b>	} <b>Two-Thirds Poor world</b>
<b>Latin America</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>” ” - 2 ”</b>	
<b>Europe</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>” ” - 10 ”</b>	} <b>One - third Rich World - 80%</b>
<b>Nth. America</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>” ” - 4 ”</b>	

### **MONEY** - use symbols or real coins

**Two-Thirds World (Poor) gets 15% of the world's wealth- 3 symbols / coins**

### **EDUCATION** - use pencils or biros

**Two-Thirds World (Poor) gets 11% of the world's educational resources- 2 symbols**

### **HEALTH-CARE** - use red-cross cards

**2-Thirds World (Poor) gets 6% of the world's medical & health-care - a half symbol**

**1-Third World (Rich) gets 94% ” ” ” ” - 19 + a**

## Discussion & Action

- How do those representing the continents feel about their situation?
- How should Asia feel when they have most of the population?
- How should Europe and North America feel when they have a quarter of the world's population and access to so much of its resources?
- Did you learn anything new about the way the world is divided?
- What do you think are the causes of these divisions?

*Get the group to suggest some reasons why the resources of the world are so unfairly divided (historical, geographical, economical, political, other. . . .)*

*Relate this unfair division to the need to make the Millennium Development Goals work to halve world poverty.*

- Should rich countries be more willing to share what they have? How could this be done?
- Find out similar statistics about other ways the world is divided (e.g. by religion, skin colour . . . )

*“Be part of the solution, not part of the problem.”*

### Irish Statistics: Provided by C.O.R.I.

#### Health

- The death rates for all cancers among the lowest occupational class is over twice as high for the highest class, it is nearly three times higher for strokes, four times higher for lung cancer, six times for accidents
- Prenatal mortality is three times higher in poorer families than in richer families
- In the Republic of Ireland 38% of those at risk of poverty suffer from a chronic illness compared to 23% of the general population.
- In Northern Ireland 47% of unskilled workers suffer from long-standing illness compared to 30% of professionals and managers.
- The rate of hospitalisation for mental illness is more than 6 times higher for people in the lower socio-economic groups as compared with those in the higher groups
- Members of the Traveller community live between 10 and 12 years less than the population as a whole
- The rate of sudden infant deaths among Travellers is 12 times higher than for the general population

- In 1993 327 suicides were recorded and by 2005, the latest year for which data is available, the number of suicides had increased to 431. Over time Ireland's suicide rate has risen from 6.3 suicides per 100,000 people in 1980 to 10.4 suicides per 100,000 people in 2005 (OECD, 2005 and CSO, 2006:65).

### Alcohol

- A EU survey shows that Ireland is spending three times more than any other country and ten times more than Greece.
- Young Irish people also top their table for binge drinking. The survey shows 32% of 15 and 16-year-olds had binge drunk three or more times in the month.
- Addiction - we can also estimate that 23 million Europeans (5% of men, 1% of women) are dependent on alcohol in any one year. In every culture ever studied, men are more likely than women to drink at all and to drink more when they do, with the gap greater for riskier behaviour.
- Alcohol is a key cause of harm to people other than the drinker, including some 60,000 underweight births throughout Europe, 10,000 'innocent' deaths that occur to bystanders or passengers from drink drivers and up to 2,000 murders that occur each year.

### Poverty

- The OECD report entitled 'Growing Unequal?' published October 21st, 2008 shows that Ireland's level of inequality is almost as bad as it was in the mid-1980s having fallen in the period between then and the start of the present decade.
- The income of the richest 10% of people is, on average across OECD countries, nearly nine times that of the poorest 10%.
- A number of countries are bunched together around the OECD average. This group comprises most of the English-speaking countries (Ireland, Canada and the United Kingdom, for example) and some Southern European nations, such as Greece, Italy and Spain

### Education

- Ireland is at the bottom of the EU league from spending on childcare and early education
- 0.2% of GDP is invested in such services only (2008)
- A 2004 study for the Department of Education found that more than 30 per cent of children in disadvantaged primary schools suffer from severe literacy problems.

# Song out of the Stars

Music by: Lynda Morgan

Voice

Piano

C Am F G

5

Voice

Pno.

C Am F G C I

9

Voice

Pno.

come from the first mo-ment of time, formed in the flare of the flame; Born

C Am F G

13

Voice

Pno.

of \_\_\_\_\_ pass-ion and star-dust, Gal-ax-ies call me by name. I

C Am F G

51

17

Voice

glow with the spar - kle of sun - light, and waltz with the dance of the

C Am F

Pno.

20

Voice

stars; My heart beats with the heart of the moon and re -

G C A

Pno.

23

Voice

joi - ces his kin - ship with Mars.

F G C

Pno.

26

Voice

Am F G C

Pno.

52



30

Voice

Piano

Am F G C Am

I was born in the

34

Voice

Piano

C F

first cell in the oc - ean, — the salt of the se - a in my

39

Voice

Piano

G A F

tears; I roll with the ti - de and its mo - tion; —

44

Voice

Piano

C G

the sou - nd of its waves in my ears.

53

49

Voice

Pno.

C Am F G

53

Voice

Pno.

C Am F G C

\* The music of verses 1 & 2 is the same for verses 4 & 5. Allow extra notes for the extra syllables.

4. Deep in the clay I am rooted,  
Deep in the soil of the earth;  
I rotate wit the turning of seasons,  
And celebrate the wonder of birth.

5. Each cell in my body a miracle,  
Ancient with ancestral genes;  
I am starlight, stardust, star-wonder,  
At home in the earth with its beings.

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