



ARISE!



Laudato Si'

Bronze Award

To begin the award, contact natalie.doherty@dublindiocese.ie



www.missionministry.ie



In the protection of biodiversity, specialists insist on the need for particular attention to be shown to areas richer both in the number of species and in endemic, rare or less protected species.

Certain places need 28 greater protection because of their immense importance for the global ecosystem, or because they represent important water reserves and thus safeguard other forms of life.

#LS37

They are like palm trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season, and their leaves do not wither. In all that they do, they prosper.—Psalm 1:3



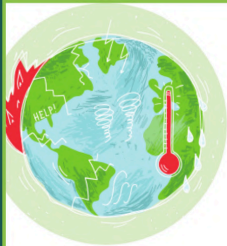
LAUDATO SI'

On Care For Our Common Home
24th May 2015



LAUDATE DEUM

*To All People of Good Will
on the Climate Crisis*
04th October 2023



WHAT IS HAPPENING TO OUR COMMON HOME

summarises the scope of current problems related to the environment. Issues discussed include pollution, climate change, water scarcity, loss of biodiversity, and global inequality.

THE GOSPEL OF CREATION

The Genesis creation stories in the bible are interpreted as enjoining responsible cultivation and protection of nature. The natural world is portrayed as a gift, a message, and a common inheritance of all people.



THE HUMAN ROOTS OF THE ECOLOGICAL CRISIS

Explores social trends and ideologies that have caused environmental problems, including the unreflective use of technology, an impulse to manipulate and control nature, a view of humans as separate from the environment, narrowly-focused economic theories, and moral relativism.

INTEGRAL ECOLOGY

Integral ecology is presented as the main solution the climate crisis. It affirms that humans are part of a broader world and urges us to consider the ethical and spiritual dimensions of how humans are meant to relate to each other and the natural world – drawing on culture, family, community, virtue, religion, and respect for the common good.



LINES OF APPROACH AND ACTION

Applies the concept of integral ecology to political life. It calls for international agreements to protect the environment and assist low-income countries, new national and local policies, inclusive and transparent decision-making, and an economy ordered to the good of all.



ECOLOGICAL EDUCATION AND SPIRITUALITY

Recommends a personal lifestyle focused less on consumerism and more on timeless, enduring values. It calls for environmental education, joy in one's surroundings, civic love, reception of the sacraments, and an "ecological conversion" in which an encounter with Jesus leads to deeper communion with God, other people, and the world of nature.



THE GLOBAL CLIMATE CRISIS

Pope Francis is critical of climate denialism and insistent on the urgency of taking action for the worsening crisis, saying what is required of us is "a certain responsibility for the legacy we will leave behind, once we pass from this world."

A GROWING TECHNOCRATIC PARADIGM

Our obsession with growth and progress is working against us. "The mentality of maximum gain at minimal cost, disguised in terms of reasonableness, progress and illusory promises, makes impossible any sincere concern for our common home and any real preoccupation about assisting the poor and the needy discarded by our society."



THE WEAKNESS OF INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

Francis exposes the self interest and lack of care that is inherent in multilateral power structures which currently exist. Instead we need power to come from the ground up. "It is no longer helpful for us to support institutions in order to preserve the rights of the more powerful without caring for those of all."

CLIMATE CONFERENCES: PROGRESS AND FAILURES

Pope Francis notes the agreements made at previous COP climate and biodiversity conferences, to loss and damage adaptation support to a commitment to transition to renewable energy. None have been implemented, despite much discussion at the time about them.



WHAT TO EXPECT FROM COP28 IN DUBAI?

The timing of Laudate Deum suggests it is directly aimed at the delegates at the COP28 climate conference in Dubai. We will only know COP28 has been a success if there is a binding agreement to a just transition that is drastic, intense, and demands the commitment of all nations.

SPIRITUAL MOTIVATIONS

A reminder that God "has united us to all his creatures" and to the world in which we live, therefore we must care for it. Francis urges individual action to cut down our carbon footprint as a way to transform society, but recognises that the big change must come from political decisions. He ends "Praise God" is the title of this letter. For when human beings claim to take God's place, they become their own worst enemies."





What is Laudato Si'?

Laudato Si' is an encyclical of Pope Francis published in May 2015. It focuses on care for the natural environment and all people, as well as broader questions of the relationship between God, humans, and the Earth. The encyclical's subtitle, "Care for Our Common Home," reinforces these key themes.

An encyclical is a public letter from the Pope developing Catholic teaching on a topic often in light of current events. Laudato Si' is addressed to "every living person on this planet" (LS 3). Hence, it is offered as part of an ongoing dialogue within the Catholic Church and between Catholics and the wider world.

What does Laudato Si' mean?

The title of an encyclical is typically drawn from the first words of the document. The first words of Laudato Si' are Italian and translate as "praise be to you." They are part of a quotation from St. Francis of Assisi's "Canticle of the Creatures" that opens the encyclical in which the saint praises God by meditating on the goodness of sun, wind, Earth, water, and other natural forces.

What are the main sections of Laudato Si'?

Laudato Si' is divided into six chapters, each of which can be read in a sitting of 20 to 30 minutes.

"Chapter One: What is Happening to Our Common Home" summarizes the scope of current problems related to the environment. Issues discussed include pollution, climate change, water scarcity, loss of biodiversity, and global inequality.

"Chapter Two: The Gospel of Creation" draws on the Bible as a source of insight. The Genesis creation stories are interpreted as enjoining responsible cultivation and protection of nature. Past attempts to justify the absolute human domination of other species are "not a correct interpretation of the Bible" (LS 67). The natural world is further portrayed as a gift, a message, and a common inheritance of all people.

"Chapter Three: The Human Roots of the Ecological Crisis" explores social trends and ideologies that have caused environmental problems. These include the unreflective use of technology, an impulse to manipulate and control nature, a view of humans as separate from the environment, narrowly-focused economic theories, and moral relativism.

“Chapter Four: Integral Ecology” presents the encyclical’s main solution to ongoing social and environmental problems. Integral ecology affirms that humans are part of a broader world and calls for “comprehensive solutions which consider the interactions within natural systems themselves and with social systems” (LS 139). While the study of ecosystems has become well-known in the science of ecology, integral ecology expands this paradigm to consider the ethical and spiritual dimensions of how humans are meant to relate to each other and the natural world – drawing on culture, family, community, virtue, religion, and respect for the common good.

“Chapter Five: Lines of Approach and Action” applies the concept of integral ecology to political life. It calls for international agreements to protect the environment and assist low-income countries, new national and local policies, inclusive and transparent decision-making, and an economy ordered to the good of all.

“Chapter Six: Ecological Education and Spirituality” concludes the encyclical with applications to personal life. It recommends a lifestyle focused less on consumerism and more on timeless, enduring values. It calls for environmental education, joy in one’s surroundings, civic love, reception of the sacraments, and an “ecological conversion” in which an encounter with Jesus leads to deeper communion with God, other people, and the world of nature.

How does Laudato Si’ relate to past Catholic teaching?

Pope Francis is not the first pope to address environmental issues. Pope St. John Paul II taught on numerous occasions about a duty of stewardship toward nature. For example, in his 1991 encyclical *Centesimus Annus*, John Paul II wrote about nature as a gift from God and the need for humans to cooperate with God in promoting the rightly ordered flourishing of the environment (CA 37). Further, *Centesimus Annus* outlined a connection between natural ecology and “human ecology” (CA 38), anticipating the concept of integral ecology in *Laudato Si’*. Pope Benedict echoed these same teachings during his papacy, for example, in his 2009 encyclical *Caritas in Veritate* (see CV 48-52).

As outlined in *Laudato Si’*, its vision of an integrated approach to concern for all people and the environment has roots in Scripture and the history of Catholic thought, in particular in the tradition of Catholic Social Teaching, tracing back to the late 19th century. Further, Catholic scholars and activists have been outspoken on the connection between social and environmental issues for many years.

What is unique about *Laudato Si’* is how Pope Francis develops and expands on these themes at length in a highly prominent way, devoting an entire encyclical to the topic at a time when the wider world is also becoming actively engaged in the pursuit of environmental sustainability.

Important Dates

February

- World Wetlands Day
- World Thinking Day

March

- National Tree Week
- World Water Day
- Earth Hour 8:30–9:30pm

April

- National Spring Clean Month
- World Health Day
- World Heritage Day
- UN Earth Day

May

- World Migratory Bird Day
- International Day of Families
- International Day for Biological Diversity
- World Turtle Day

June

- UNEP World Environment Day
- World Oceans Day
- Global Wind Day
- World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought
- EU Sustainable Energy Week

July

- World Population Day
- International Bog Day

August

- International Day for World Indigenous People
- Heritage Week

September

- Season of Creation
- International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer
- World Water Monitoring Day
- World Car-Free Day

October

- Feast of St Francis of Assisi
- International Walk to School Month
- World Habitat Day
- World Animal Day
- World Food Day
- International Day for the Eradication of Poverty

November

- International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict

December

- International Volunteer Day
- International Mountain Day

Session 1 - What's Faith got to do with it?

In the beginning...

All religions agree that nature is an act of divinity and should be treated as such...

Almost all religions address the issue of the creation of the universe, or universes, in different forms and with varying degrees of clarity or detail. However, all religions agree that the creation is an act of God and should be treated as such.

Spiritual leaders at all levels are critical to the success of the global solidarity for an ethical, moral and spiritual commitment to protect the environment and God's creation. These leaders can become observers, make public commitments, share the story of their commitments and the challenges and joys of keeping them, and invite others to join them. In addition, they can display their sustainable behaviours, serving as role models for their followers and the public.

What does Christianity say...

There are approximately a hundred verses in the bible that talk about the protection of the environment. Christians therefore have environmental responsibility and encourage behavioral change for the good of the future.

Some examples of scripture and writings can be seen below:

“Do not pollute the land where you are. Bloodshed pollutes the land, and atonement cannot be made for the land on which blood has been shed, except by the blood of the one who shed it.” **(Numbers 35:33)**

“When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, ‘Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted.’” **(John 6:12)**

“We must treat nature with the same awe and wonder that we reserve for human beings. And we do not need this insight in order to believe in God or to prove his existence. We need it to breathe; we need it for us simply to be.” **(Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, 2010)**

“The urgent challenge to protect our common home includes a concern to bring the whole human family together to seek a sustainable and integral development, for we know that things can change. The Creator does not abandon us; he never forsakes his loving plan or repents of having created us. Humanity still has the ability to work together in building our common home.” **(Pope Francis, 2015)**

Session 1 - What's Faith got to do with it?

What does the Bible say... Genesis 1

INTRODUCTION (1:1-2):

- Genesis chapter 1 explains how God created the world in 6 days.
- Verses 1-2 describe the world before God started His creative work.
- Everything was darkness and void, and God's Spirit was "hovering over the face of the waters."

DAY 1 (1:3-5):

- On the first day, God created light by speaking it into existence.
- God called the light Day and the darkness Night.

DAY 2 (1:6-8):

- God created an "expanse" to separate the waters.
- He called the expanse "Heaven."

DAY 3 (1:9-13):

- God created the dry land, called Earth, and separated it from the waters, which He called Seas.
- Next, He made the vegetation, plants, and trees that grow on the earth.

DAY 4 (1:14-19):

- On day 4, God created the sun, moon, planets, and stars and placed them in the heavens.
- He assigned them the job of giving light to the earth and created them in a way that allowed humans to use them to keep time by marking days, seasons, and years.

DAY 5 (1:20-23):

- God created sea life and birds.
- God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas and let the birds multiply on the earth."

DAY 6 (1:24-31):

- The sixth day, God created the animals that live on dry land.
- Then God created man in His own image.
- He appointed humans to have "dominion" over all the other created beings.
- After looking over all He had created, God concluded it was all "very good."

DAY 7:

- God rested

Session 1 - What's Faith got to do with it?

The Lens of Faith

The topic of the environment and caring for our planet is a hot one! Not only because of rising temperatures but because it is an issue affecting everyone on this earth. Not just every person but all life on the earth. Everyone is called to action and there are many ways to respond. Unfortunately, you can't do everything (as much as you'd like to) and many people focus on one area at a time e.g. pollination, recycling, clean and safe water, and reducing carbon footprint, to name just a small few.

As people of faith, we are called to do the same. So what makes our approach any different to the people around us? As people of faith, we respond and see 'Caring for Creation' through the lens of faith.

What is the Lens of Faith? We all see life through a certain lens. A lens is an object that allows us to see clearly. It is used to correct the defects in our vision. Spiritually, we need a lens of faith to help us have vision. Without faith, our vision gets lost, and we will find ourselves just trying to make it in life.

When we look at the earth, creation and everything in it, we look at it and say that it is an act of God and should be carefully respected and cared for.

The People before us...

St. Francis of Assisi spent much of his time preaching about animals, exhorting that all creatures are brothers and sisters under God. Born in 1181 in Italy, St. Francis is today celebrated as Patron Saint of Ecologists. Throughout most of his youth, he served as a soldier, but after a "conversion experience," he renounced his family's wealth and devote his life to God. He was a popular preacher at the time. His death in 1226 brought three million people together for his funeral.

In 1979, Pope John Paul II declared St. Francis the Patron Saint of Ecologists. In some ways, St. Francis of Assisi could be viewed as the original Earth Day advocate. Not only did he care for the poor and sick, but he preached multiple sermons on animals, and wanted all creatures on Earth, including humans, to be treated as equals under God. Some of his sermons included stories about birds, fish, and rabbits.

Through the lens of faith, we are called to walk in the footsteps of St Francis in caring for the earth today.

Session 1 - What's Faith got to do with it?

Prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
and where there is sadness, joy.

Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console;
to be understood as to understand;
to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive;
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

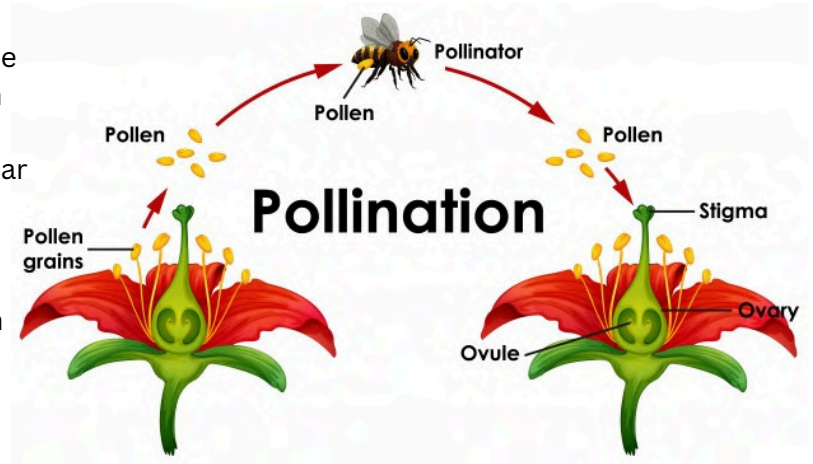
Amen.



Session 2 - Pollination Nation

What is Pollination?

1. Pollen is transferred onto the body of the Bee from the **stamen** of the first flower. (The pollen brushes onto the bee's body while it collects pollen to bring back to its nest, and drinks nectar from deep inside the base of the flower)
2. When the bee visits the second flower (to collect more pollen and to drink nectar), pollen rubs off its body onto the **stigma**.
3. The **pollen** from the first flower moves down the **style** to join with the **ovules** in the **ovary** where it will become a seed for a new plant.



BACKGROUND:

- Pollen is a fine powder that is made inside flowers and helps them to reproduce.
- Pollination happens when pollen is moved from one flower to another and allows the plant to create seed, which is often wrapped in yummy fruit.
- When a bee lands on a flower, it uses its long tube-shaped tongue (called a proboscis) like a straw to drink the sweet nectar inside the flower.
- Bees also collect pollen to bring back to the nest to feed to the baby bees.
- While the bee is busy getting a drink, and collecting pollen, tiny grains of pollen also get stuck to the bee's body.
- These grains of pollen come from the male part of the flower, the stamen.
- When a bee flies to a different flower to get more nectar, some of the pollen grains will fall off of the bee and onto the new flower.
- If they land on the pistil of the flower (the female section of the flower), then the flower gets pollinated and will be able to create a fruit and seed.
- The plant provides nectar for the bees, and the bees help the plant to reproduce!
- Birds, butterflies, moths, bats, and flies can also pollinate flowers.
- Some flowers can also be pollinated by the wind (green flowers are usually wind-pollinated).

Why is Pollination important?

Pollination is important for a strong, healthy ecosystem. One in three bites of food you eat depends on pollinators. Do you know which foods depend on pollination? All of these and MORE! Apples, Almonds, Oranges, Avocados, Peaches, Pears, Plums, Cherries, Alfalfa, Blueberries, Vanilla, Cranberries, Tomatoes, Kiwi, Figs, Coffee, Strawberries, Blackberries, Raspberries, Lemons, Limes, Eggplants, Kumquats, Nectarines, Grapes, and Cacao.

Session 2 - Pollination Nation

When does Pollination happen?

Successful pollination requires year-round efforts. Plants evolved with differing flowering times that decrease competition among pollinators. Continuous blooms throughout the growing season provide pollinators with a constant food supply.

Spring: Pollinators need early blooming plants to provide food after hibernation or northern migrations. Bulbs, spring ephemerals and spring blooming fruit trees are visited during this time.

Summer: Our gardens achieve their peak bloom when many pollinators reach peak populations. The long days of summer provide pollinators the maximum time to forage for nectar.

Autumn: Late blooming plants provide many pollinators with needed fuel before hibernation or for the southern migrations of pollinators like monarchs and hummingbirds.

Winter: Even when there appears to be little to no activity, pollinators are in the garden. Leave decaying plants alone—they may be sheltering pollinating insects as they overwinter.



Where do Pollinators live?

Pollinator habitat depends on the pollinator and their life cycle stage. For example, bees can use leaves, mud, sand, plant resins and even abandoned snail shells for their nests, while many butterfly larvae live and feed only on one specific plant.

Pollinators also need foraging habitat with diverse nectar-providing plant species.

Human activities such as farming, housing development, and road construction can fragment a pollinator's habitat, disconnecting where the pollinator lives from where it forages for food. Pollinator habitats need to be within easy range of food and clean, shallow water.

Do you know how bees find a flower patch? Honey bees communicate through a waggle dance in which scout bees return to the nest and dance to inform other bees about the distance and direction of a newly discovered flower patch.

Session 2 - Pollination Nation



Who Pollinates?

Plants and pollinators evolved side by side over millions of years. Natural selection has resulted in physical adaptations in both plants and pollinators. Plants developed many complex ways of attracting pollinators. Similarly, pollinators evolved with specialized physical traits and behaviours that enhance their pollination efforts. Each participant, plant and pollinator, usually gains a benefit from pollination.

Bees: Flower nectar provides bees with the sugar to fuel their flights. The proteins and amino acids in pollen are vital nutrients needed by young bee larvae back in the nest. Bees are not picky and frequently visit a large variety of flowers.

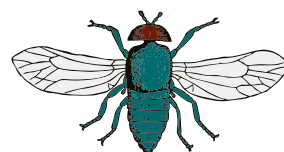
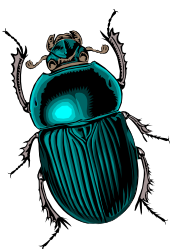
Beetles: Beetles are referred to as “mess and soil” pollinators. Less elegant than other pollinators, beetles blunder their way through delicate blossoms searching for food, a mate, or perhaps the bathroom. Beetles frequently visit magnolias and flowers close to the ground.

Butterflies: Butterflies often visit round flowers with flared petals that lead to narrow throats that conceal nectar. Butterflies land on the wide petals, then delicately probe the flower’s nectary (the gland that produces nectar) with their long proboscis (tongue). Butterflies frequently visit salvias and sunflowers.

Flies: Some flies act just like bees, visiting sweet-smelling flowers. Others have more disgusting tastes. They are attracted to flowers with putrid odours, meat-like colours, or fur-like textures that lure them in by pretending to be the fresh dung of dead animals that flies desire. Flies frequently visit Dutchman’s pipe, pawpaw, and some viburnums.

Moths: Most moths go unnoticed even though they outnumber butterflies 10 to 1. Why? They are often active at night and dull in appearance. Night-blooming flowers have sweet scents and white or cream-coloured blossoms that reflect the moonlight to attract moths after the sun sets. Moths frequently visit four o’clocks, moonflowers, and tobacco.

Wind: Not all pollination relies on animals. Wind pollinates grains, most nuts, many trees, and the wild grasses that provide forage for livestock. The odds are small that a pollen grain will find its way to a corn silk, but each kernel of corn is a tiny fruit resulting from successful wind pollination.



Session 2 - Pollination Nation



How can you help pollinators?

Pollinator populations are at risk. Decades of stressors including the loss, degradation, and fragmentation of pollinator habitats; the improper use of pesticides and herbicides; and diseases, predation, and parasites have all hurt pollinators.

You can help pollination by creating a pollinator-friendly habitat without sacrificing aesthetics.

Add diversity to your landscape with a beautiful tapestry of native plants that evolved with local pollinators and thrive under the conditions in your region. Reach out to your local County Council Office to research what they are doing and the best plants.



A Prayer for Our Earth

All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe
and in the smallest of your creatures.
You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.
Pour out upon us the power of your love,
that we may protect life and beauty.
Fill us with peace, that we may live
as brothers and sisters, harming no one.
O God of the poor,
help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth,
so precious in your eyes.
Bring healing to our lives,
that we may protect the world and not prey on it,
that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.
Touch the hearts
of those who look only for gain
at the expense of the poor and the earth.
Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,
to be filled with awe and contemplation,
to recognize that we are profoundly united
with every creature
as we journey towards your infinite light.
We thank you for being with us each day.
Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle
for justice, love and peace.

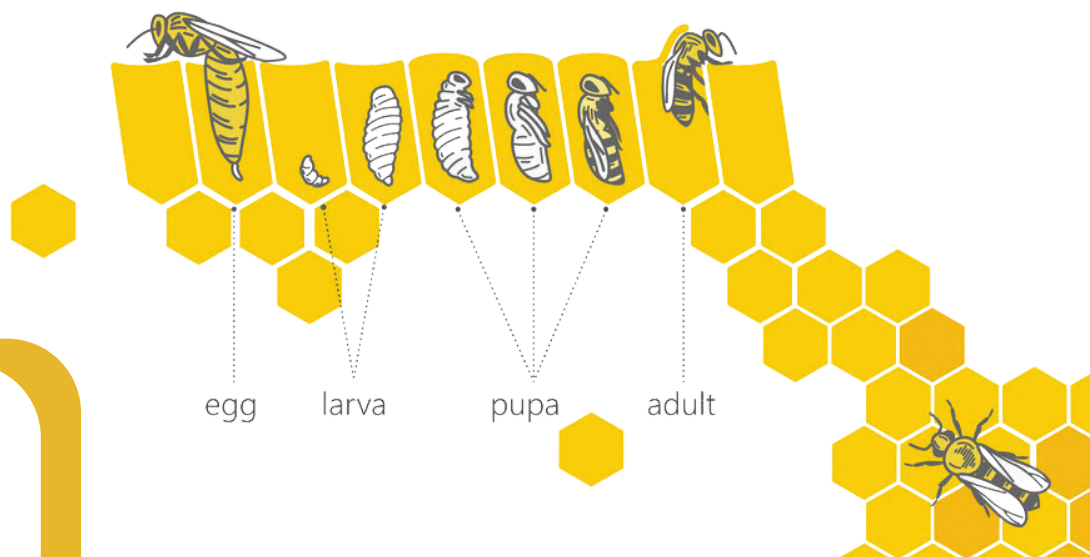
Session 3 - The Bees Knees



General Facts on Bees...

- There are 100 bee species in Ireland: the honeybee, 21 species of bumblebee, and 78 species of solitary bee.
- Bees are the most important pollinator of crops and native plant species in Ireland. They are a key component of our wildlife and one of the busiest, least appreciated work forces we have. A study from the Department of the Environment found that bees are worth €53m a year to the economy.
- In Ireland crops such as apples, strawberries, raspberries, tomatoes, blackcurrants, peppers, courgettes and pumpkins are reliant on bees for pollination.
- It is estimated that almost three quarters of our wild plants rely on insect pollinators, of which bees are most important.
- This www.pollinators.ie website provides information on the 99 native bee species, their decline, what needs to be done, and how you can help.

Life Cycle of a bee



Types of Bees...

- Bumblebees
- Honey Bees
- Solitary Bees

Session 3 - The Bees Knees



Bumblebees

- Like the honeybee, bumblebees are social bees. They live in colonies with a queen, many female workers, and some males.
- Ireland has 21 native bumblebee species. Of these, 6 species are cuckoo bumblebees. These cuckoo species don't make their own nests, but instead lay their eggs in the nest of a true bumblebee who will inadvertently bring up their young.
- As with all bees, only the females can sting! Female bumblebees can sting more than once. Bumblebees are not at all aggressive and are interested only in collecting pollen and nectar.
- Four of Ireland's bumblebees are endangered and 2 are vulnerable. The Great yellow bumblebee is on the verge of extinction from Ireland.
- Bumblebees are more primitive and don't make honey like honeybees. Instead they store a little bit of nectar in wax nectar pots in their nests for emergencies. This means that a bumblebee colony is never more than a few days away from starvation, making Ireland and its climate a challenging place to live!
- Using DNA extracted from a tiny portion of bumblebees legs, researchers identified a new Irish bumblebee species in 2007. It is called the Cryptic bumblebee, *Bombus cryptarum*.
- Bumblebees can travel up to 5km to feed but commonly forage within 1km of their nest.
- Bumblebees have very powerful wing muscles. They have evolved a special adaptation that allows them to decouple these muscles from the wing. This allows them to use the wing muscles to generate heat and then reattach them before flying off.



Session 3 - The Bees Knees



Honey Bees

- Ireland has one species of honeybee (*Apis mellifera*). There are an estimated 24,000 bee hives in Ireland.
- The honeybee is native to Ireland but honeybees of French, Dutch, Italian and Russian extraction were imported here after disease wiped out many hives between the wars. The Irish honeybees fell in with this new company and today many of Ireland's hives contain honeybees that are more cosmopolitan rather than native to these shores. Today the importation of honeybees is strongly discouraged to avoid introducing pests and diseases.
- Fortunately Ireland does still have reserves of the pure native strain of the Dark European Honey bee. The Galtee Bee Breeding Group was founded in 1991 with the object of conservation, study and improvement of local strains of our indigenous honeybee. The [Native Irish Honey Bee Society](#) was set up in 2012.
- A hive can contain up to 50,000 honeybees.
- Worker honeybees have a barbed sting. They can only sting mammals once as the sting catches in the skin and tears loose from the bees abdomen, leading to death in minutes. Honeybee queens have a smooth sting which they could use multiple times, but they rarely leave the hive, instead using their sting to dispatch rival queens.
- In the Stealthy Insect Sensor Project, Los Alamos scientists trained honeybees to recognize explosives. Honey bees natural reaction to nectar is to stick out their tongue. Los Alamos scientists trained them to do this when they detected explosives instead.



Session 3 - The Bees Knees



Solitary Bees

- 95% of the world's 20,000 species of bee are solitary rather than social bees. Ireland has over 100 bee species, of which 80 are solitary bees.
- Solitary bees do not form colonies with a queen and workers, like bumblebees or honey bees. Each female makes her own small nest. Within each cell, she lays a fertilised egg and leaves a food reserve composed of regurgitated nectar and pollen. The larvae feed on the provisioned food before pupating and spending the winter hibernating to emerge as adults the next year.
- Solitary bees look very different from bumblebees. They are much smaller and occur in a range of different shapes and colours. Some species are small and black like ants with wings, while others have black and yellow striped bodies like wasps.
- Irish solitary species nest in various different ways. Leafcutter solitary bees cut circular pieces out of leaves with their teeth and carry them back to line their nests, often in hollowed out twigs or bamboo canes. Mining solitary bees make their nests by digging holes in the ground. One solitary species called *Osmia aurulenta* lives in sand dunes and will only nest in empty snail shells.
- Climate change will bring new solitary species to our shores. Since 2015 the following species have been recorded in Ireland for the first time: Wool Carder Bee, Tree Bumblebee, Ivy Bee, Hairy-footed Flower Bee.



Session 3 - The Bees Knees



Why are bees considered the greatest Pollinators..?

- Bees are part of the biodiversity on which we all depend for our survival.
- They provide high-quality food—honey, royal jelly and pollen – and other products such as beeswax, propolis and honey bee venom.
- As the landmark 2019 report from the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) notes, “Sacred passages about bees in all the worlds’ major religions highlight their significance to human societies over millennia.”
- Beekeeping also provides an important source of income for many rural livelihoods. According to IPBES, the western honey bee is the most widespread managed pollinator globally, and more than 80 million hives produce an estimated 1.6 million tonnes of honey annually.
- And pollinators contribute directly to food security. According to bee experts at the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, a third of the world’s food production depends on bees.
- When animals and insects pick up the pollen of flowers and spread it, they allow plants, including many food crops, to reproduce. Birds, rodents, monkeys and even people pollinate, but the most common pollinators are insects, and among them, bees.

Top 10 Ways to protect Bees and Other Pollinators...

1. Don't mow, let it grow!
2. Manage native hedgerows for biodiversity.
3. Plant pollinator friendly trees.
4. Avoid using insecticides, fungicides and herbicides.
5. Create nesting habitats for pollinators.
6. Choose nectar and pollen-rich plants for your garden.
7. Think twice about getting a hive of honeybees.
8. Be careful with wildflower seed mixes
9. Don't install a large bee or insect hotel
10. Spread the word

Session 3 - The Bees Knees



A Christian prayer in union with creation

Father, we praise you with all your creatures.
They came forth from your all-powerful hand;
they are yours, filled with your presence and your tender love.
Praise be to you!
Son of God, Jesus,
through you all things were made.
You were formed in the womb of Mary our Mother,
you became part of this earth,
and you gazed upon this world with human eyes.
Today you are alive in every creature
in your risen glory.
Praise be to you!

Holy Spirit, by your light
you guide this world towards the Father's love
and accompany creation as it groans in travail.
You also dwell in our hearts
and you inspire us to do what is good.
Praise be to you!

God of love, show us our place in this world
as channels of your love
for all the creatures of this earth,
for not one of them is forgotten in your sight.
Enlighten those who possess power and money
that they may avoid the sin of indifference,
that they may love the common good, advance the weak,
and care for this world in which we live.
The poor and the earth are crying out.
O Lord, seize us with your power and light,
help us to protect all life,
to prepare for a better future,
for the coming of your Kingdom
of justice, peace, love and beauty.
Praise be to you!
Amen.

Action Project List

Identify & protect existing sources of food and shelter for pollinators on land managed by your parish

Select and maintain a section of parish land to cut grass as normal but let the Dandelions bloom!

Select and maintain a section of parish land to create a wildflower lawn

Plant pollinator-friendly trees and shrubs somewhere in the parish grounds

Pick a safe spot to provide nesting areas for Bumblebees

Start a new practise where the use of herbicides can be avoided

Do a survey to record and identify the pollinators found on land managed by your parish

Do a survey of the parish community to see their level of knowledge on pollination and bees. Publish the results

Do a fundraiser to buy the necessary pollinator friendly bulbs for the parish or materials for a bug hotel

Create and distribute pollinator-friendly garden guidelines to homes in the parish

Integrate the need to safeguard the earth into prayer/worship and hold a small prayer service on caring for creation

The option is open to do some other project you are interested in completing for your action project once it fits.

Action Project Report

Name of Project

Time -----

Date -----

Location -----

Who was Involved?

Aim of Action Project

Method Used

Faith Connection:

How did you see through the Lens of Faith?

Reflection: Share any final thoughts



Archdiocese of Dublin

ARISE!



natalie.doherty@dublindiocese.ie



www.missionministry.ie