PPC Discussion Document 10[1]

Identify actions to promote care for the earth

Introduction

Pope Francis in *Laudato Si* has invited all of us, individually and collectively through bodies such as Parish Pastoral Councils to take up the urgent challenge of caring for *'our common home'*.

One of the ways we have not cared for *'our common home'* is by allowing a huge loss of biodiversity. Biodiversity is the term used to describe a healthy balance in our world by having a wide variety of species of plants and animals (including bees), which helps maintain our earth in its optimum state encouraging the healthiness of our planet.

Checklist for Biodiversity in Parish Grounds

Step 1:   In assessing parish grounds have we:

- Plants and shrubs that flower in autumn and winter? e.g. Ivy, Viburnum;
- Flowering trees? e.g. Alder, Crab Apple, Mountain Ash;
- A native plant? e.g. Hazel, Holly, Honeysuckle ;
- A compost area? And mulching? www.stopfoodwaste.ie;
- A pond or water with wildlife in it?

If we can say yes to any of the above, we are already helping in the fight against the loss of biodiversity and helping to reduce bee decline.

---

[1] This discussion document has been developed by The Pastoral Renewal Team of the Kerry Diocese and is shared with the Parish Pastoral Councils of the Elphin Diocese with permission.

Step 2:   Is there another step we can take as a parish to encourage biodiversity?

- Use organic pest control www.thegardenshop.ie
- Leave an area of grass unmown, leave an area for wildflowers, etc.
- Plant vegetables and herbs;
- Use only plants native to our area;
- Plant a native hedgerow; Hawthorn, Dog Rose, Blackthorn
- Install a water butt - http://www.howtogarden.ie/install-water-butt/
- Leave a wood pile in a shady corner;
- Make an insect hotel - http://ecoevolution.ie/blog/building-insect-hotel/
- Collect our leaves and make leaf mould.

Step 3:   Identify specific actions

- What will we do to continue to prevent the loss of biodiversity?
- How will we do this?
- Who will take responsibility for it? Can we involve others in this exciting project?
- Is there further help we need on this topic? If there is, where can we source it?