



St Mary's  
Parish  
Haddington  
Road

Serving  
the  
Community

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the  
City

## Francis on Francis and on his love of nature

Spring is a time when we come to have a heightened awareness of the natural world. Life is coming to bloom, bringing moments of surprising, yet real, joy to those who take the time to see it. The poets celebrate it, most famously perhaps the wandering Wordsworth when he comes across 'A host, of golden daffodils;/Beside the lake, beneath the trees/Fluttering and dancing in the breeze'. G.M. Hopkins in his poem *Spring* declares with obvious joy: 'Nothing is as beautiful as spring/When weeds in wheel, shoot long and lovely and lush.'

On a different level, Pope Francis, in his first and ground-breaking encyclical, *Laudato si*, looks to St Francis, his 'guide and inspiration', as 'an attractive and compelling figure, [and] the example par excellence of care for the vulnerable and of an integral ecology lived out joyfully and authentically.' (10) The Saint of Assisi is 'the patron saint of all who study and work in the area of ecology, and he is also much loved by non-Christians.' The pope tells us that the saint 'was concerned for God's creation and for the poor and outcast. He loved, and was deeply loved for his joy, his generous self-giving, his openheartedness.' (10) St. Francis walked the walk in his way of life as 'a mystic and a pilgrim who lived in simplicity and in wonderful harmony with God, with others, with nature and with himself. He shows us just how inseparable the bond is between concern for nature, justice for the poor, commitment to society, and interior peace.' (10)

However, a love of nature is not simply a fleeting, aesthetic or spiritual experience, wonderful as these may be in themselves. The pope tells us that the saint 'helps us to see that an integral ecology calls for openness to categories which transcend the language of mathematics and biology, and take us to the heart of what it is to be human.' We are called to reflect more deeply on our attitude to the whole of the natural world and to embrace it. Francis writes quite sternly but certainly not without reason: 'If we approach nature and the environment without this openness to awe and wonder, if we no longer speak the language of fraternity and beauty in our relationship with the world, our attitude will be that of masters, consumers, ruthless exploiters, unable to set limits on their immediate needs. By contrast, if we feel intimately united with all that exists, then sobriety and care will well up spontaneously. The poverty and austerity of Saint Francis were no mere veneer of asceticism, but something much more radical: a refusal to turn reality into an object simply to be used and controlled.'(11)

In one of his most celebrated poems, Hopkins tells us that 'the world is charged with the grandeur of God' and, like St Francis, he 'invites us to see nature as a magnificent book in which God speaks to us and grants us a glimpse of his infinite beauty and goodness. "Through the greatness and the beauty of creatures one comes to know by analogy their maker" (*Wis* 13:5); indeed, "his eternal power and divinity have been made known through his works since the creation of the world" (*Rom* 1:20).

Spring is a time to think about nature again and as Pope Francis writes: 'to understand that 'rather than a problem to be solved, the world is a joyful mystery to be contemplated with gladness and praise.'(12)





**AMORIS LAETITIA**  
**St Patrick's Parish**  
**Ringsend**  
**Welcomes the World Meeting of Families Icon**  
**From**  
**3.00pm Monday 7th May 2018**  
**To**  
**10.30a, Wednesday 9th May 2018**  
*Please join us during this very special occasion*

### April-May Parish Diary 2018

- May 8: 10:30 -11:30: **Holy Hour for the Protection of Human Life**
- May 13: **The Ascension of the Lord: World Communications Day**
- May 19: **Parish Schools First Holy Communion:**
- May 20: 7:00pm **Concert: Dublin Orchestral Players**
- May 28: **Parish Pastoral Council Meeting**
- June 3: **11am Special Mass for the World Meeting of Families**, Fr Timothy Bartlett, Secretary General for WMOF2018

### OFFICIAL FAMILY PRAYER FOR WORLD MEETING OF FAMILIES 2018

God, our Father, We are brothers and sisters in Jesus your Son, One family, in the Spirit of your love. Bless us with the joy of love. Make us patient and kind, gentle and generous, welcoming to those in need. Help us to live your forgiveness and peace. Protect all families with your loving care, Especially those for whom we now pray: [We pause and remember family members and others by name]. Increase our faith, Strengthen our hope, Keep us safe in your love, Make us always grateful for the gift of life that we share. This we ask, through Christ our Lord, Amen

Mary, mother and guide, pray for us. Saint Joseph, father and protector, pray for us. Saints Joachim and Anne, pray for us. Saints Louis and Zélie Martin, pray for us

### Ecological Thoughts for a Spring Day

If we think of ourselves as coming out of the earth,  
 rather than having been thrown in here from somewhere else,  
 We see that we are of the earth; we are the consciousness of the earth.

These are the eyes of the earth  
 And this is the voice of the earth.

*-Joseph Campbell*

Apprehend God in all things, for God is in all things.

Every single creature is full of God and is a book about God.

Every creature is a word of God.

If I spent enough time with the tiniest creature—even a caterpillar—

I would never have to prepare a sermon.  
 So full of God is every creature.

*-Meister Eckhart*

### In Memoriam

6pm, John and Elizabeth Lynch (Anniversary)

### Masses and Confession

**Sundays:** Vigil, 6pm (Saturday), 9.30am, 11am, 5pm

-Rosary daily after 10am mass

**Adoration Blessed Sacrament, Weds 10.30-12.40**

### Church Collections

**W/e 29<sup>th</sup> April 2018**

1<sup>st</sup> Collection.... €940

Share Collection... €800

### THANK YOU

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Streaming and Website [www.stmaryshaddingtonroad.ie](http://www.stmaryshaddingtonroad.ie) email: [info@stmaryshaddingtonroad.ie](mailto:info@stmaryshaddingtonroad.ie)

Child Protection: <http://www.stmaryshaddingtonroad.ie/ministries/child-protection/> also [www.cps.dublindiocese.ie](http://www.cps.dublindiocese.ie)