

God's Creation and Faith Common Ground

Awareness

Ears that hear



Eyes that see



**“If you wish to
know the Creator,
learn about
Creation”**

St Columban – 530-615



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The Earth is the prophet now.
Are we listening?
Do we know how to?



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MRjPkl_4ImM

“The Earth is talking to us and we must listen to it and decipher its message if we want to survive.”

Pope Benedict XVI, July 2007

**How do we pay attention to the
Earth?**

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People struggling to integrate
the worlds of science and
religion in their own
intellectual and spiritual lives.

“Science can purify religion from error and
superstition; religion can purify science from
idolatry and false absolutes. Each can draw the
other into a wider world, a world in which both
can flourish.”

Pope John Paul II 1988 http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/letters/1988/documents/hf_jp-ii_let_19880601_padre-coyne.html

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A close-up photograph of a monarch butterfly emerging from its chrysalis. The butterfly is positioned vertically, with its head and thorax at the top, still attached to the chrysalis. Its wings are partially unfurled, showing the characteristic orange and black pattern. The chrysalis is a clear, segmented structure hanging from a green stem. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green, suggesting a natural outdoor setting.

What is needed is a metamorphosis of faith –
transformation (ecological conversion)

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SYDNEY FEN 2003 ONWARDS

Began with Wonder and the Will to Care
to combine

- **VALUES**
- **Dialogue**
- **Inter-faith sharing**
- **Respect for Science**
- **Faith development**
- **Lobby for earthcare**



SCIENCE HELD IN COMMON

Science of ecology
- relationship of living things

Language of ecology
- communities, mutuality etc



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FEN PROPOSAL

‘To form a *Faith and Ecology Network* to foster awareness on the connections between ecology and faith, cooperation and influence public environmental opinion.’



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Public Events, Forums, Prayer Vigils



- Adapted in response to needs
- Scientific-Professional presentation on issue
- Responses by faith groups
- Prayers and ritual shared
- Workshop and discussion opportunities
- Common Statement Produced

Earth: Our Common Home

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How FEN works



- Email network, Facebook, Twitter
- Sydney based – growing nationally
- Share news, theological papers, weblinks, encourage joint participation
- Planning Group of committed faith representatives
- Columban Mission Institute Administration



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Challenges



- Engaging mainstream faith communities, faith leaders
- Minority faiths struggle with own survival
- Broadening faith representation
- Growing capacity
- Sharing more theology
- Funding
- Improving e-communication – being heard - own website
- Handing over

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- **Comments?**
- **Resonate with you?**
- **Learnings?**

Faith Challenges?

Evolution teaches us.

Diversity

Language

What is happening now with
evolution of eg. Christianity?

Cosmic Understanding of God

God brings forth all life. The God of creation is the God who is given to us in Jesus.

The salvation that Jesus, the “Word Made Flesh” brings, is not just for humans, but for all the natural world.

Creation and incarnation are interconnected in one great movement of God’s self-giving love.

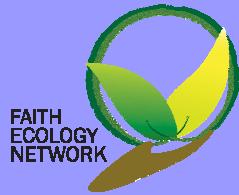
Denis Edwards, “Jesus and the Natural World”.

How do we tell the faith story for the young to know the past in order to carry on into the future?

Personal formation

The endangered earth demands a new prophetic way of being.

Don't get overwhelmed.



The Faith Ecology Network (FEN) is an interfaith network of people who are committed caring for the earth and to fostering advocacy.

Our network of people is currently representative of Aboriginal, Anglican, Bahá'í, Buddhist, Catholic, Greek Orthodox, Jewish, Hindu, Islamic, Quaker, and Uniting Church faith traditions.

FEN is an Australian hub for strengthening an interfaith dialogue between faith and ecology.

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