

PRESS RELEASE

National Holy Wells Day **Sunday 17th June 2018**

There is a deep belief in this country of the sacredness of water. It is reflected in the tradition of Holy Wells. Our Celtic spiritual tradition developed a deep understanding of the interconnectedness of everything, which led to a reverence for all of creation which is to be found, for example, in *St Patrick's Breastplate*: "I arise today, through the strength of heaven, the light of the sun, the radiance of the moon, the splendour of fire, the speed of lightning, the swiftness of wind, the depth of the sea, the stability of the earth, firmness of rock".

The world urgently needs ecological conversion. Global warming and the exploitation of the earth have brought us to a crossroads: we will soon perish unless we change the ways in which we live and act. We are being challenged to make concrete choices to avert the looming disaster, and water is at the centre of the crisis.

All living things depend on water for their survival, so the protection and conservation of water is a major issue for us and all other species. At present it is being polluted and coveted for profit by vested interests. In his 2015 encyclical *Laudato Si'* Pope Francis says '*access to safe drinkable water is a basic and universal human right, since it is essential for human survival, and as such, is a condition for the exercise of other human rights*' (LS 30).

Loving Sister Earth is a movement which is responding to Pope Francis' call for us all to take responsibility for "*Our Common Home*" We are doing this by inviting people to reconnect with our Celtic spiritual tradition of gathering to pray at Holy Wells. There are about 3,000 such wells scattered across the country. Many have been lost over time but some are now being restored. They are places where it is easy to fall in love with nature: only those who truly do so will have the sustained commitment to protect it.

On Sunday 17th June 2018 the annual **National Holy Wells Day** will be celebrated. It is an ecumenical initiative of Loving Sister Earth & The Columba Community, Derry. We invite people to visit their local Holy Well and pray there for the protection and fair distribution of water. If however a person can't visit a Holy Well we invite them to pause at midday to pray for and celebrate the gift of water whether in the kitchen or the garden or simply drink a glass of water mindfully, wherever they happen to be and think of what changes they can make to conserve it. The invitation is to pray and act for all of creation--humans, fish, birds, animals and plants-- all need clean water.

You can be a superhero and help to save the planet: now is your time to shine!!!

The Resource page of www.lovingsisterearth.com offers a short ritual you might perform on the day.