

Caring for the Environment in the Interest of Human Health

By Fred O'Brien



The environment is gifted with its own integrity and dynamic balance; and each and every person and the communities of people bear a responsibility for the care of the environment and of each other.

Environmental health sustainability can never be established, never guaranteed, except by the diligent observance of the divinely established pattern of the created order. See: Peace on Earth 1, (1963).

As our great elder, Job, recommends, we should ask the animals, birds, plants and the fish of the sea and they will teach us. Which of these does not know that the hand of God has done this? In Creator's hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of every human being. See 12: 7-10

"I've been considering the phrase 'all my relations' for some time now. It's hugely important. It's our saving grace in the end. It points to the truth that we are related, we are all connected, we all belong to each other. The most important word is all. Not just those who look like me, sing like me, dance like me, speak like me, pray like me or behave like me. ALL my relations. It means every person just as it means every blade of grass, rock, mineral and creature. We live because everything else does. If we were to collectively choose to live that teaching the energy of that change of consciousness would heal all of us — and heal the planet. We do it one person, one heart at a time... we are connected, we are the answer." Richard Wagamese 2015 First Nations, Ontario, Canada

Look at nature's own work to inform our actions Niels Stensen (1638-1686)



A bird watcher's testament

“Seeking novel ways to fill the idle hours, I decided to conduct a best-dressed garden birds competition. There was a good entry. The waistcoat section was particularly strong, with the robin displaying a nicely toned red, the grey wagtail chose an attractive yellow, and the chaffinch wore a very nice reddish pink. However, the bullfinch was a bit ostentatious with a particularly aggressive scarlet creation. In selecting the winner, I was looking for an overall dress sense showing a combination of class and sophistication. The pied wagtail, wearing an immaculate morning dress suit, would not have been refused entry to the royal enclosure at Ascot, and the blue tit chose a gorgeously cheeky outfit of blue, yellow and black, with a nicely toned blue bonnet projecting a picture of restrained but confident elegance. At the end of the day, I awarded the prize for best-

dressed garden bird to the goldfinch, with an endearing red, black and white head-dress and wearing a perfectly matched jacket of brown, black and yellow. Graeme Guthrie, Westport, County Mayo.



And with 'lock-down' and COVID-19, hopefully we have learned that each and every person and the communities of people bear a responsibility for the care of the environment and for each other.

"It is a small world, It is one world, and we are each other's keepers and we are keepers of the whole fragile earth which keeps us all." Niall O'Brien, Columban Missionary, 1986 (Foreword of **To Care for the Earth: A Call to a new theology**, by Sean McDonagh ISBN 0 225 66485 2

A blog from the Garden of Fred and Hilda O'Brien, ICEH, The Cloisters, Kilkee, County Clare, Ireland

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[Each and Every Person is an International Centre for Environmental Health: We All Have a Part to Play](#)

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[Niels Stensen: Scientist and Saint](#)