

Bonnybrook Parish Hedgerow

"Caring for our Common Home"

(Pope Francis, LS)

The bright winter sun stole over the wet soil as seventeen fourth class girls and boys came to help plant the next section of Bonnybrook Parish native hedgerow.

The sense of joy and hope was palpable when Catherine, the founder of Pocket Forests enterprise, laid out eight small spades and one hundred and fifty native saplings along the railings behind the already prepared hedge site.



Everyone laid to with a will, and before long there were baby willows, spindles, hawthorns, alders, crab apples, hollies, hazels, guilder roses and alder buckthorns planted in the rich soil.



In the kitchen, five generous women had the kettles on the boil, and as the last saplings were placed gently into the brown earth, adults retreated to the kitchen for a welcome and warm cup of tea and some fancy biscuits, while the children's eyes grew large with joy when they saw the variety of crisps and biscuits laid out in colourful array on the long table.

It was heartwarming to see the wonder on the children's faces as Catherine brought them through the "science" behind the hedgerow planting: how the soil welcomes the roots of the saplings, and as these grew, the mycelium fungi in roots enables the developing trees to "talk" to each other. So when Catherine comes back in May, there will be a flourishing hedge to welcome birds, bees and butterflies!



As the principal came to reclaim the class for school, the question voiced over and over was: "Can we come back next week to plant again!"