

*Chapter Two*  
*Vision in Action*



# *Vision in Action*



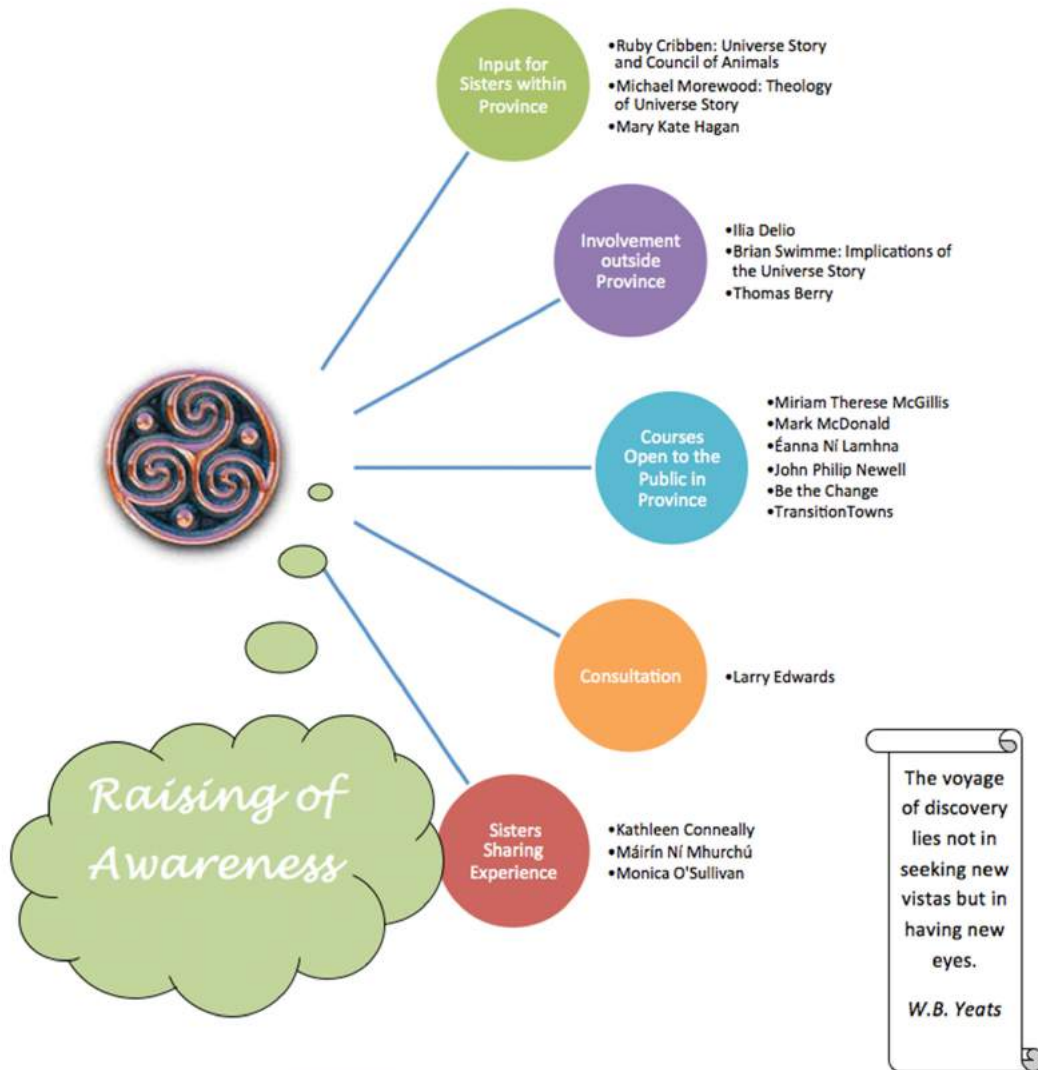
*“Let ours be the time remembered for the awakening of a new reverence for life, the firm resolve to achieve sustainability, the quickening of the struggle for justice.”*

*Diarmuid Ó Murchú*

*“From the very beginning, the entire creation has been groaning in one great act of giving birth. And not only creation but all of us ... we too groan inwardly as we wait for our very selves to be set free.”*

*Romans 8:22-23*

The seed of the evolving consciousness of the Western Province was helped in its germination by mutual engagement with many others, some of whom are illustrated here:



The day of my spiritual awakening was the day I saw – and knew I saw – all things in God and God in all things. *Mechthild of Magdeburg*

### *Programmes Promoted in the Western Province*

Sustainable Living Kit: developed by Presentation Sisters;  
and distributed to every community in the province.

Issue of Water Conservation: information flyer produced  
and sent to every community in the province.

Questionnaire on Sustainable Living: sent to each sister  
and results published in the province.

### *Places where our Sisters have studied Earth Literacy*

Genesis Farm, New Jersey, USA

Sophia Centre, Holy Names University, California, USA

An Tairseach, Wicklow, Ireland

Centre for Ecology/Spirituality, Glenburn, Australia

Centre for Ecology/Spirituality, Tabgha Farm, Australia

Dalgan Park, Ireland in association with Lampeter University Wales

### *Publications by our Sisters on Environmental Themes*

Books published by Kathleen Glennon are: *Earth Rituals for the Celtic Year, Healing and Wholeness* and *A Sense of Place*. Some of those published by Anna Burke are: *When Blessings Flow, Sacred The Hour, While They Were at Table* and *The Quality of Mercy*. Many of the Sisters of the Western Province write about the natural environment. Some of these are mentioned above. Among other contributions are poetry books by Rose Moran, Goretti Feeney and Rosalie Murray. Sisters

also contribute regularly to our Provincial Newsletter: *Scéalta ón Iarthar*. In the following article, Anna Burke shares her inspiration for writing:

### **At the Source**

The character of the Emerald Isle may be changing rapidly but in some kind of an interesting and thought provoking way there are ancient elements that still rumble at the core. Many people who have long left the formal expression of religious tradition still join in when the Rosary is introduced, still walk the Way of the Cross on Good Friday and return with the family to the parish church for Midnight Mass. You could call it custom, routine, respectability but you could also call it hunger for the connection, for sustainability, for the Source. When I put pen to paper I am called into the moment by the common threads that weave the web of life in every changing time. This pulse beats across space and place and it spills out in word and song from land and sea and sky.

*Sacred the Hour*: The Rosary in Mystery recalls moments where human longing and the groan of creation come together to sing Ave. These moments are critical stopping points on the journey especially When Silence Falls in our lives and when the people gather in the cosmic prayer of love, broken and shared While They Were at Table. Although words can confine the impact of the River they also help us in a little way to converse with the flow and to hold the moment. When I write, I feel connected.

All my books are little books. They are about moments, the ones that take your breath away, where the very stones cry out. In *Where Blessings Flow* I am listening to the sacred touch anointing every blade of grass, the heather and the buttercup, filling the senses with the Holy Water. In this ecological environment of holy presence, blessings flow in a Living Spring.

When I wrote *When Silence Falls* I was attempting to contribute to the ancient and deeply valued prayer journey of the Stations of the Cross. Again the words took me into the universal story of sorrow and gladness, of falling and rising, of sunrise and sunset. I saw again his blood upon the rose and his cross in every tree. I had often wondered how the Stations of the Cross have outlived the changing cultural landscape and the answer seems to lie in their universal language and in the connection they weave with the cry of the earth and the silence of the lambs.

In 2012, Ireland hosted the Eucharistic Congress. We recalled 1932 and how the people gathered back then to sit together at the table of the world. When I wrote *While They Were at Table* I was aware that a Eucharistic Congress is a meeting of the nations where the Bread of Life is shared. It is the ultimate evolutionary action attracting all things into the fullness of being.

In his encyclical *Deus Caritas Est* Pope Benedict XVI reminded us that Christian charity “is first of all the simple response to immediate needs and specific situations.” (*Deus Caritas Est*, 46). “Anyone who needs me, and whom I can help, is my neighbour. The concept of ‘neighbour’ is now universalised, yet it remains concrete.” (DCE, 15). The book *In The Secret of My Heart*, which I wrote in 2010, is inspired by the call of Benedict XVI to a heart that “sees where love is needed and acts accordingly,” (31b).

The call of Pope Francis to a Jubilee Year of Mercy has deepened the conversation and in unfolding God’s Mercy we experience what a universal language sounds like and how easily it is read across the boundaries of history and geography. In *The Quality of Mercy* I look again at Mercy, pouring from the Heart of Jesus, written in the question. It was to this quality that they came for sustenance and healing; it is to this quality that we look in unfailing hope for climate justice, the kind that opens the door and sets us free.

*Anna Burke (Provincial Leadership Team)*