**EARTH-CROÍ – STEP TWO – FÁILTE**

**FÁILTE MEANS WELCOME.**

Fáilte is as much an attitude of the heart as it is a greeting.

A Greek historian, Diodorus Siculus (C. 80-20 BCE) said of the Celts (he called them the Keltoi):

*‘They* *also invite strangers to their banquets, and only* ***after*** *the meal do they ask who they are and of what they stand in need.’[[1]](#footnote-1)*

That observation shows fáilte as a practice of welcome, non-discrimination and generosity.

Nature embodies fáilte. Mother Nature is always giving. In the regularity of the seasons the land dies back and seeds lie dormant in the earth through winter. Then in spring the seeds begin to push up through the soil to new life. In summer everything flowers and comes to fullness of fruition. And in autumn the Earth offers us Her harvest – ‘You’re welcome!’

There’s a lovely new practice these days called re-wilding which is about letting Nature restore land to its natural habitat, allowing species native to that area to return and multiply. Even in places ravaged by human despoliation and pollution – if Nature is allowed space and time – new growth and wildlife will flourish once again.

The Chernobyl disaster was a nuclear accident that occurred at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant in Ukraine in April 1986 and almost 40 years later, remains a contaminated exclusion zone for human habitation. Yet the U.N. Environment Programme website published an article in 2020 entitled **How Chernobyl has become an** **Unexpected Haven for Wildlife.[[2]](#footnote-2)** Almost 40 years after the event, this protected area is abounding in biodiversity and thick forests – an accidental experiment in rewilding, even in this place of apocalyptic devastation.

The Earth has suffered from years of industrialisation, pillaging of essential, matchless resources and pollution of air, sea and land. Every species is impacted, with plastics filling the oceans, land-fill sites – and even outer space! Nature’s default is that nothing is wasted and her generosity is boundless fáilte. But we need to give her a chance – for the sake of us all!

**PRACTISING FÁILTE**

**Welcome your family** – do you have some space to welcome Nature? Plant trees, herbs (weeds are often healing herbs), put up a bird-box/ Feeder. If you find spiders or other insects, don’t kill them - if you don’t want something in your space, just gently put it somewhere else. Stop mowing your grass so often. Plant wildflowers for bees…

**Get to know your family** – the names of the plants, trees, insects, birds flowers, grasses, herbs and their healing powers.

**Welcome the seasons** – each season has its own energy and gifts. Welcome the rest and hibernation of winter, the hope of spring’s new growth, the energy and vigour of summer, the fulfilment of autumn’s harvest.

**Welcome yourself!** – show yourself the care and compassion that Mother Earth shows us in Her abundance. She teaches us not to worry - there will always be enough. Find nurture for your hunger and woundedness in Nature’s healing nourishment. Feed your body as naturally as possible with good food. Drink clean water, breathe fresh air…deeply…

1. Ó Duinn, S. *Where Three Streams Meet*. Dublin: The Columba Press, 2000 p.30 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [www.UNEP.org](http://www.UNEP.org) Click on ‘News, Stories and speeches’ article title above is 16.9.20. Accessed 10.1.25 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)