

The Cosmic Walk



The Cosmic Walk was created by Sister Miriam Therese MacGillis, OP at Genesis Farm. It is a way of making the 13.8 billion year Universe process experiential. The distances between the markers on the walk represent the time intervals between some of the significant events in the evolutionary journey.

The first station represents the initial flaring forth of the universe itself.

Out of mysterious emptiness, the cosmos flared forth into being. All the energy that would ever exist was formed in that spectacular explosion of cosmic birth.



Begin the walk with this reflection.



We wish to know what came first? What was the beginning. We do not know...and yet we have named it...the originating mystery...the primary potential...the mystery beyond the void...God...whose presence flows in and through an ongoing creation.

The walk should be synchronized with the reading of the text in the accompanying booklet. The stones represent the time between the events in bya (billions of years), mya (millions of years) and then thousands of years and specific dates as we near the present time.

The Cosmic Walk is meant to be a mindful and prayerful experience. It asks that we be silent and immerse ourselves in the wonder of this unfolding story. It demonstrates the unbelievable periods of time from the initial flaring forth to the increasingly short periods of time as we approach the present. Most of all, it makes us aware of the brief existence of the human species on this planet and the enormous responsibility we have for the future of life.



Time for Continued Reflection or Discussion



After completing the walk, you will arrive at a clearing in the woods. This is a space for solitary quiet or, if the walk was taken by a group, for gathering and discussion.

Tree stumps are arranged in a circle to provide rustic seating.

For those who cannot do the walk but would like to experience it, it is possible to arrange for being able to "ride the walk" in a golf cart.



It is all a question of story; we are in trouble just now because we do not have a good story. We are in between stories. The old story, the account of how the world came to be and how we fit into it, is no longer effective. Yet we have not yet learned the new story. Our traditional story of the Universe sustained us for a long period of time. It shaped our emotional attitudes, provided us with life purpose and energized action. It consecrated suffering and integrated knowledge. We awoke in the morning and knew where we were. We could answer the questions of our children. We could identify crime, punish transgressors. Everything was taken care of because the story was there. It did not necessarily make people good, nor did it take away the pains and stupidities of life or make for unfailing warmth in human associations. It did provide a context in which life could function in a meaningful manner.

Thomas Berry

