

Secondary

Colour coding: **yellow highlights** – to be downloaded on Caritas Australia’s CST online toolkit; **green hyperlinks** – takes you to the document/website/app direct when you click on the word

Big question:

How do I show respect for Creation?

Teacher Introduction

By the end of this unit, students will have explored the topic of God’s Creation and our responsibility to look after it, including how looking after creation is inextricably linked to respecting people. Students will develop an understanding of having a moral conscience, and will investigate moral decision making.

Teachers before you start

1. Watch the CST ‘stewardship of creation’ film and familiarise yourself with the pause point and other stopping points listed in this lesson suggestion.
2. Download the various resources referenced (worksheets, slides, etc.) and have them ready to go on your computer/interactive whiteboard.
3. Familiarise and decide on the use of online or app technologies.

Learn - Focus

God’s Creation and our responsibility to look after it

Launch/Tuning in/Engage

ALL: Watch the first section of Caritas Australia’s ‘Stewardship of Creation’ film (stop at 0:30).

Read Genesis 1 and 2 together. Explain that, no matter how we interpret how the world was created, we believe that it is God’s creation. It is beautiful and something to marvel at. It is sacred to us. It is also something that we must take care of – it is our God-given responsibility to be co-creators. The relationship between God, human beings and the whole of creation is indivisible.

Years 7-8:

Display Slides 1-4 (images of nature) and lead students into a meditation on nature.

Using the Think/Pair/Share routine, students **think** back to a time when they have been in nature – whether in a garden, in the bush, on the beach, or somewhere else. Alternatively, if you have an outdoor space, such as an Indigenous garden, you could take students there.

Students **share** with their partner:

- Whether they have experienced the sensation of feeling more at home with themselves when leaving behind the artificial surrounds of ‘stuff’;
- Whether they have ever felt closer to God when in a natural environment.

Display **Slide 5** (Genesis 1:28). When reflecting on this verse, Pope Francis asked “What does it mean to cultivate and care for the earth? Are we truly cultivating and caring for creation? Or are we exploiting and neglecting it?”

There are many prayers of praise for the earth’s beauty in the Book of Psalms. Direct students to **find** one that they like (they can use an **online Bible** or other Catholic sites such as **Daily Prayers**, **REsource**, **Church Resources** and **Prayer Windows**) and **illustrate** it, either using an image from the web (Caritas Australia’s **multimedia gallery** could be a good place to start), or by making your own painting. Students place the image in the middle of a bigger white sheet of paper. In the white blank

spaces, they should **research, write and illustrate** points around Pope Francis' questions – i.e., how the place in their image can be cultivated and cared for, and what exploitation and neglect needs to be avoided.

Decorate the corridors of your school with the psalms. You might like to put all of your pictures together to create a school mural celebrating the wonders of creation. You could also use them for an assembly and/or include one in the school newsletter.

(Adapted from: Australian Catholics, Spring 2012 vol 20 no 4)

Years 9-10:

Display **Slide 6**: *Why is creation sacred?*

As Christians, we believe God created the world. He *reveals* Himself to us, in part, through His creation.

Display **Slide 7**, and explain that during his visit to Australia in 1986, Pope John Paul II acknowledged that First Australians also recognise this deep spiritual connection with the land, and take special care to cultivate and care for the land because of it.

Students **research and illustrate** a First Australian Dreaming. Caritas Australia's partner, Djilpin Arts, have created the **Dust Echoes website**. It includes a series of animations telling stories from the Dreaming in a number of language groups from around Beswick.

Display **Slide 8**. Using the Think/Pair/Share routine, students **reflect** on the questions, and then **share** their thoughts with their partner or on a Google doc.

Extension activity/homework task: Students **design and conduct** a survey to collect data about diverse attitudes to creation. This survey should include questions that will elicit responses on the following:

- Has our society lost its sense of connection to the land?
- Have we, as a society, become disconnected from important things like where we get our food, clothing, electricity, gadgets etc.? (Are we conscious of the resources that we use in our daily life, and where those resources come from?)

For example, one activity could be to ask survey respondents to make a list of all the things they use in their daily life. Next to each, they should then write down what natural resources are used to make them. E.g. if they use paper at school/work, next to it they would write that it comes from trees.

After gathering the survey responses, students **analyse** the data and **display** the responses. These could be displayed creatively using online data visualisation tools such as **Visual.ly**, to create interactive infographics.

ALL:

Introduce the inquiry: As a class we are going to explore what stewardship of the environment is, and how we can 'be green'. **Display** the **poster** in the classroom so that it is visible throughout the module. You could use the quotes on the poster as extra stimulus material when introducing the inquiry and 'big question'.

Learn - Explore

Looking after creation – respecting people

Access/Look/

ALL: Watch the rest of **Caritas Australia's 'Stewardship of Creation' film**.

Preparing to find out

Display **slide 9** to reflect on the film through a class discussion around the two questions.

Use this text to introduce the link between looking after creation and respecting others:

The film clearly shows that it is often people's actions which threaten our environment – and that these actions can have an impact not only on the environment, but also on our health and the way humans interact with their environment. When we think more deeply about our responsibility to the world, we begin to see that there is a connection between stewardship of creation and the other social teachings about how we should treat ourselves and others. For instance, is the dignity of people being upheld if we trash the environment? And what about the most vulnerable and marginalised who are often the people who experience the negative impacts of a world that is exploited and neglected – does this demonstrate a preferential option for the poor?

At the heart of the Gospel and of all Catholic social teachings, there is a deep respect for life, and a concern for life's flourishing. When we don't care for our environment, we are preventing current and future generations from fully living and appreciating our world.

You could also read the Parable of the Talents ([Matthew 25: 14-30](#), [Luke 19: 12-28](#)) to introduce further the concept of stewardship.

Years 7-8:

As a class, play the 'We're all connected!' game. You will need a roll of string and enough clear space for everyone to be standing round in a circle.

Step 1: Give one person the end of the string. Another person rolls out the string until they are standing opposite the first person. They hold the string with their finger and hand the roll to the next person, who rolls it out to another edge of the circle. This continues until there is a criss-cross star network effect (see picture below).

Step 2: Once the network is complete, the game can begin! You might ask students to first start by saying their names, or saying what they had for breakfast that morning. One person starts by answering and then 'plays' their string. The person they are connected to answers the question next and plays their string; and so on until everyone has answered the question. After the first easy question, which familiarises students with how the game works, you can move onto the following:

- What is the possession you care about the most?
- Name one thing you do every day to be a good steward of the environment (putting rubbish in recycling bins, picking up rubbish that has been thrown on the floor, turning off the lights when not in use, etc. Encourage students to think 'outside the box' – introducing the concept that being a good steward of creation isn't just about being 'green', but also about being ethical consumers (knowing where what we buy comes from and that it has been ethically and fairly produced and traded) and aware of how our connections to the land also extend to our connections with people (e.g. Nude Food, not buying bottled water, etc.). The activity following this ('Love thy neighbour as thy iPhone!') will enable students to unpack this concept more, so you might like to play this game again at the end of the session to see whether students come up with different and new ideas.)

The aim of the game is to make this dynamic network, as in the picture below, where everyone speaks and shares their ideas.



Credit: MDF/CAFOD

Display slides 10-17 ('Love thy neighbour as thy iPhone!').

In small groups, students **create a short film** demonstrating the 'new commandment': "Love thy neighbour as thy iPhone!" Shoot the movie using phones, iPads etc., and edit it via Windows MovieMaker or iMovie.

Display slide 18. As a class, brainstorm a list of at least 12 questions about the message conveyed in this quote and the iPhone PPT.

1. Use these question-starts to help you think of interesting questions:

Why...?

How would it be different if...?

What are the reasons...?

Suppose that...?

What if...?

What if we knew...?

What is the purpose of...?

What would change if...?

2. Review the brainstormed list and star the questions that seem most interesting. Then, select one or more of the starred questions to discuss for a few moments.

3. Reflect: What new ideas do you have about the topic, concept or object that you didn't have before?

Years 9-10:

Display slides 18-21: Pope Francis' message to those who recycle.

Tell students that as they are reading/listening to the slides, to make note of things that they find interesting, important, or insightful.

Students choose three items from their notes that most stand out for them. Using the *Colour, Symbol, Image* routine to **distil the essence of ideas non-verbally**, students:

- Choose a colour that they feel best represents or captures the essence of one of these.
- Choose a symbol that they feel best represents or captures the essence of the next idea.
- Choose an image that they feel best represents or captures the essence of the final idea.

Students first **share** their colour with a partner or group, and then share the item from the reading that it represents. Students must explain why they choose that colour as a representation of that idea. Repeat the sharing process until every member of the group has shared his or her Colour, Symbol, and Image.

Teacher's Note: This routine is used to enhance comprehension of reading, watching or listening, and to reflect on previous learnings. It is helpful if students have had some previous experience with highlighting texts for important ideas, connections, or events. The synthesis happens as students select a

colour, symbol, and image to represent three important ideas. This routine also facilitates the discussion of a text or event as students share their colours, symbols, and images.

In this section, students explore the 'who, what, why, where, when, how' of the problem of rubbish and stuff in the world, focusing on our attitudes to life – to others and the environment.

In his message, Pope Francis highlights the fact that we are living in a 'throwaway culture'. In the film, Maristely says that "We see a lot of consumerism in society. People just want more and more things. We try to help these people understand that it is not a car or a new mobile that will give them a better future, but that other things, such as helping others or using kind words will."

Students complete the Caritas 'Culture of Waste' worksheet.

**Learn -
Demonstrate**

*Explain/ Finding
out/Sorting out*

Developing a moral conscience – 'be green'

ALL – Introduction: Knowing that we are all interconnected and that our actions impact on others around the world – particularly the most vulnerable and marginalised – means we need to take responsibility for our actions and decisions. How can we truly 'be green' – it is more than just recycling, reducing and reusing. It goes straight to the heart of what we buy and use each day, so that we consume and waste less – and so that what we do consume is as ethical and responsible as possible.

Years 7-8:

Explain that in this section, we will be thinking about the power people have to change things, at the personal, local, national and international level.

Starting at the first – personal – level, we will explore how our own power lies in our choices.

Teacher Background: *In Catholic teaching persons must always act in accord with their informed conscience. Conscience is informed by the weighing of the relevant facts and considerations, by the teaching of the Church, by serious thought and prayer, and by the seeking of appropriate guidance. People must do all they can to avoid an erroneous conscience. A Christian understanding of true freedom recognises that freedom is not without limits and must be exercised responsibly. Freedom and responsibility belong together in Christian thinking. (Credit: Archdiocese of Canberra & Goulburn)*

Students **find** a Scripture story in which Jesus demonstrates how we should behave towards others – and that it is an *active choice*. Students **think** of a moral dilemma facing them that challenges their ability to be a good steward of creation, taking into account impact on the environment *and* on people. One example is purchasing an ethical mobile phone – this is given in the Caritas worksheet.

Students complete the Caritas 'decision making' worksheet to **research** their options, **demonstrate** their findings and **make a decision** based on their findings, which will include their personal values and be based on Christian informed decision making principles.

Extension task:

Explain that the worksheet is an example of the students' own power – it shows how their informed decision making can make a difference and enable them to be good stewards of creation.

Students identify and add three new elements to their worksheet:

- Ways the local community could be involved in the process. (In the phone example, local shops could stock or provide the option to buy the more ethical phones, and schools could provide mobile phone recycling collection centres);

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ways the government could be involved in the process. (In the phone example, the Australian government could put pressure on mobile phone companies and on other country governments to regulate conflict-minerals and implement fair working conditions); • Ways the international community could be involved in the process. (In the phone example, international trade law could be strengthened to make selling phones with conflict-sourced minerals illegal). <p>Years 9-10: Using the 'Circle of Viewpoints' thinking method (see instructions below), students explore either of the following paragraphs from the 2010 World Day of Peace Message:</p> <p><i>Humanity needs a profound cultural renewal; it needs to rediscover those values which can serve as the solid basis for building a brighter future for all. (Par 5)</i> What are these values? How do we develop and maintain these values: individually, as families, locally, nationally and globally?</p> <p><i>May this be clear to world leaders and to those at every level who are concerned for the future of humanity: the protection of creation and peacemaking are profoundly linked. (Par 14)</i> What efforts are needed by individuals, organisations, business and governments to respond to the ecological crisis?</p> <p>Students brainstorm a list of different perspectives and then use this script skeleton to explore each one:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I am thinking of these values from the point of view of [the viewpoint you've chosen – individuals, families, business owners, economists, politicians... etc.] 2. I think [describe the topic from your viewpoint]. Be an actor – take on the character of your viewpoint. 3. A question I have from this viewpoint is ... [ask a question from this viewpoint] <p>Debrief: Ask students what new ideas they have about the topic that they didn't have before? What new questions do they have?</p>
<p>Act</p> <p><i>Apply/Extend/elaborate/Going further</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">What can we do? Being green and being ethical consumers</p> <p>Years 7-8: Students consolidate their knowledge by illustrating their decision-making flow chart through any of the these three ways:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In pairs. Both students draw a cartoon with captions illustrating their moral dilemma, leaving the final choice bubble blank; then ask the other to decide what the outcome should be by completing the cartoon. Cartoons can be drawn by hand or created online using tools such as Toondoo, Pixton and Read Write Think. 2. In a small group, students develop an advice column or talk-show scenario where Jesus gives advice about how to make informed decisions on their moral dilemmas based on conscience, the Scriptures and the ethical teachings of the Church. Using Twitter (or Fake Twitter (Twister) if you are unable to use Twitter itself) would encourage students to summarise this advice in up to 150 characters. 3. In groups, students decide on one of their dilemmas to write and act out. Those watching the play can interact by saying "pause!"; all the actors freeze, and the student can chance the course of events by adding an extra element into the decision making process. At the end of

	<p>the drama, the audience makes the final choice for action using the Christian decision making process.</p> <p>Students create an individual/class 'Stewardship action plan', listing actions they will take in the next week, month and year to become better stewards of creation. Reflecting back on the parable of the Good Samaritan who DECIDED to stop and help, students make the link with their own decision making of NOT picking up litter, NOT recycling, NOT buying ethical goods, etc.</p> <p>Years 9-10: In the Caritas 'Stewardship of Creation' film, Maristely and those who work at the recycling cooperative talk about being more, rather than having more. They constantly make the link between this value system and their everyday lives.</p> <p>Display Slide 22. Discuss in pairs or small groups. Alternatively, a class debate could be held. Students create an individual/class 'Stewardship action plan' using the Caritas 'Be More' workbook.</p>
<p>Pray</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Taking up God's invitation to show his love to others- to love and care for myself and others</p> <p>Students complete pages 8-10 of the Caritas CST Reflection Journal.</p> <p>As a class, say the following prayer and reflect on how it is connected with what has been learnt throughout this unit. Students could also write their own prayers.</p> <p>Come Lord, What is the point of your word and your Spirit If our lives do not alter? Change our lives, Shatter our complacency. Make your word our life's purpose. Take away the comfort of routine Take these small talents of ours and multiply them. Push us uncomfortably. For only thus That other peace is made, Your peace. Amen (Adapted from a prayer by Dom Helder Camara- printed in SSW 2001)</p>