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OUR CATHOLIC HERITAGE

Organized according to the 4 pillars of the Catechism

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Our Loving God

UNIT 2

Jesus taught us that we are all God's special children. God has given us the gift of his wonderful creation. We thank God for all the gifts we have received.

Children, let us love one another.
Based on 1 John 4:7



Jesus went from town to town around the Sea of Galilee. He taught people about our loving God. When we show our love for others we follow Jesus.

UNIT 2

Our Loving God

Summarizing the Unit

Read aloud the title of the unit and the summary paragraph below it about being God's children.

Discussing the Photographs

Invite the children to look at the pictures and to describe what they see.



Discussing the Scripture

- Read aloud the Scripture verse and have the children repeat the words after you.
Say "These words will help you understand the Bible story in Chapter 7."
- Read aloud the caption that explains the connection between the pictures and the Scripture verse. You may wish to have the children find the Sea of Galilee on the map on page 20 and to trace around its shore line with a finger.
- You may want to revisit this page at the conclusion of the unit to reinforce what the children have learned about God.



Catch-up Catechesis

Topics To help children who need Catch-Up Catechesis, this unit covers the following topics.

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| Ch. 5 God as a loving Father and Creator | Ch. 7 Why God made us |
| Ch. 6 Baptism as a celebration of welcome | Ch. 8 Prayer of thanks |
| How Catholics follow Jesus | |

Our Catholic Heritage You may also wish to refer to the Our Catholic Heritage section in the back of the book to learn about the Trinity, pp. 260–261. to learn more about Baptism, p. 265. to learn about heaven, p. 264.



Faith Words

Chapter 5

create
Creator

Chapter 6

Baptism
grace

Chapter 7

heaven
holy

Chapter 8

Lord's Prayer
hallowed

Introducing the Song

Begin by reading through the words of the song with the children. Discuss the meaning of any unfamiliar words. Next, listen to the recording. It can be found on the BLEST ARE WE music CD 1. Then have the children sing along with the recording. When you feel they are ready, have them sing along with the instrumental track.

Using the BLEST ARE WE Song Book

The BLEST ARE WE Song Book contains hymns and psalms that can be used in a parish setting as well as in the religious education of children. Each chapter contains suggestions from the song book.

Choosing Additional Songs

Each At-a-Glance Planner has several music suggestions that directly correlate to the specific themes discussed in the chapter. These and all suggested songs/hymns can be used in place of or in addition to the unit song or program song.



Suggestions for movement and additional music can be found at www.blestarewe.com.

Special Notes

Collaborate with your parish director of music ministries to find appropriate times during parish celebrations to use the program song or the unit songs. If possible, have someone play the chosen song on a piano or another instrument during the session. Invite the children to play rhythm instruments or clap their hands to accompany the music. Guitar chords and keyboard accompaniment can be found in the BLEST ARE WE Accompaniment Book.

Come All You People

Words and Music by Alexander Gondo
Arranged by John L. Bell

Arrangement © 1994, The Iona Community (GSA Publications, Inc., exclusive North American agent)



66 Unit Song

When to use the unit song:

- before or after the opening prayer
- during the prayer celebration
- at the end of the session
- during special celebrations

When to use the instrumental tracks:

- as the children enter the room
- during the opening prayer
- as background music during independent work time
- during the prayer celebration (especially during a meditation prayer service)
- during the Feasts and Seasons lessons

God Is Our Loving Father

Chapter

5

Background for the Catechist

God reveals himself to us in many ways. One of the most wondrous and visible ways is through creation. We believe that God made all things in the universe. We also believe that all things—trees, flowers, animals, rocks, clouds, sun, planets, rivers, and people—show us God's eternal love and goodness.

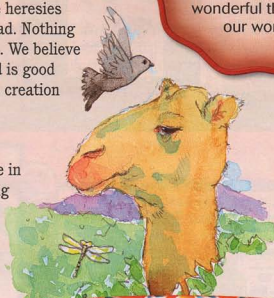
Some widespread heresies in church history have taught that God is good but that the world (God's creation) is evil. Some heresies have regarded "spirit" as good but physical matter as bad. Nothing could be farther from the truth we believe as Christians. We believe the Creation story found in Genesis teaches us that God is good and that everything God creates is also good. God loves creation and asks people to take good care of it.

Responding to God's Love

We respond to God's gift of creation by helping people in need, by caring for plants and animals, and by protecting the environment. Whenever we show our love and care for the world, we give God thanks for the awesome gift of life. Such thanksgiving is a basic attitude of Christian prayer and worship. It is our fitting response to the Creator's love.

Faith Focus

God, our loving Father, created us out of love and created all the wonderful things in our world.



Time for Reflection

How do you find God in the world around you?
How do you take time to appreciate nature?

Catechist Prayer



Heavenly Father and Creator, I praise you for the wonderful world you have made—for planets, stars, mountains, rivers, plants, and animals. Help me open myself to the natural world; may it lead me to discover firsthand your infinite love and goodness. Help me convey to the children a genuine love for nature and the desire to take good care of it. May the children always be filled with thanks, wonder, and awe at your many gifts. Amen.



Overview

Chapter

5

Multimedia Resources

Books

- *All Things Bright and Beautiful*
Cecil Frances Alexander
(Morehouse Publishing, 2000)
The words of the well-known hymn reflect God's creation of animals, flowers, mountains, sun, rivers, humans, and our ability to enjoy all that God made.

Videos

- *The Story of Creation*
(30 min.) "The Beginner's Bible series" (Oblate Media & Communication)
This retelling of the Creation story helps children discover that God made the world out of love.

Audio

- BLEST ARE WE Scripture CD 1,
(English: track 4 / Spanish: track 19)

Music

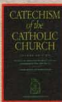
- "Come All You People/Uyai Mose"
(Unit 2 song, page 66)
BLEST ARE WE music CD 1, track 3
BLEST ARE WE Song Book #3
Gather Comprehensive II Hymnal #744
- "All You Works of God"
BLEST ARE WE music CD 4, track 2
BLEST ARE WE Song Book #17
Gather Comprehensive II Hymnal #498
- "Canticle of the Sun"
Marty Haugen
Gather Comprehensive II Hymnal #495

Learning Focus

This chapter will help the children

1. understand that God created all things to show his love.
2. realize that God cares for us and for all that he creates.
3. discuss ways that we can care for God's creation.

Catechism Connection



The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC) refers to the Church's beliefs that God created us out of love and desires for us to know him. Because God is our Father and Creator, he takes care of all that he has made.

CCC references: 44, 68, 317, 353, 2644

GDC and NDC Connections



The *General Directory for Catechesis* (GDC) encourages adaptation of content, including Scripture, according to the age and circumstances of those being catechized.

GDC references: 169, 170

The *National Directory for Catechesis* (NDC) presents the application of the catechetical principles associated with teaching about God as Creator.

NDC references: Ch. 4 Section 28A-1

For the Prayer Corner



Arrange the prayer corner as described on page T24.

You may wish to continue the display of creation pictures from the previous lesson and/or have the children cut out some new ones.

Consider placing a plant and some fruit on the prayer table. These pictures and gifts of creation can be used during the closing prayer celebration by having volunteers hold them up at the appropriate times.

Visit www.blestarewe.com



Visit our Catechists and Kids sections for

- interactive and printable activities.
- the Liturgical Calendar.
- Lesson Planning Resources.

Name _____

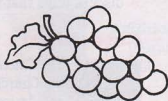
Gifts from Our Loving Father

- Use the letters below to complete the words.

t a g f h o n



lower



rapes



ca



fis

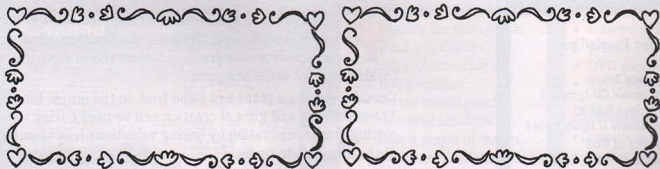


a ts



m on

- Draw two pictures that show things God made.



To the Teacher: Use this activity to extend the Share discussion.

BLEST ARE WE 1

5a

CHAPTER 5

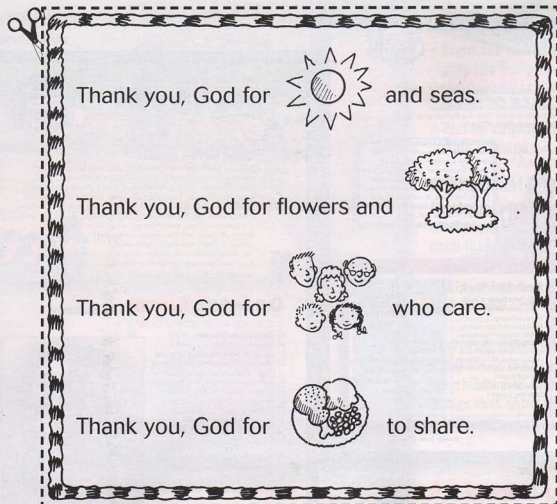


Warm-Up Activity Master can be used for early-arriving children.
Or Icebreaker for **Share**.

Name _____

God Our Creator

- Read the picture prayer on the card below.
- Color the prayer card.
- Cut out the card so that you can take it home.



- Play the picture prayer with your family.

To the Teacher: Use this activity after reading "God Creates the World." Before the children take their work home, be sure they have identified the rebuses correctly: *sun, trees, people and food.*

CHAPTER 5

5b

BLEST ARE WE 1



Wrap-Up Activity Master can be completed during the session. Or at home.

Take Home PAGES

Pre-chapter home activities for families



Beginning at Home

Many of the children will have spent some time with their families working with the Take Home Family Time pages at home. You can help the children connect with what was done at home by discussing the saint featured or using A Prayer for the Week at an appropriate time.

Getting ready for Chapter 5

Take Home

God Is Our Loving Father

We look around us at all that God created and see signs of a loving Father. God not only gave us the gift of life, but continues to care for us. In this chapter the children will learn about God the Father's love for us and for all creation. They will discuss ways of caring for creation and will pray a prayer of thanks.

ACTIVITY

Pick a Card Remove the fours, threes, twos, and aces from a deck of cards. Shuffle the removed cards and put them face down. Invite each family member to pick a card and to name that number of gifts from God. In other words, if a four is turned over, name four gifts; if an ace is turned over, name one gift.

WEEKLY PLANNER

On Sunday
At Mass we give thanks for all God's gifts. On the way to church, ask yourselves, "For what gifts are we thankful?"

On the Web
www.blestarewe.com
Visit our Web site for the saint of the day and the reflection question of the week.

Saint of the Week
Saint Francis of Assisi
(about 1181-1226)
Francis experienced a conversion that led him to choose a simple lifestyle. The Gospel inspired him to follow Jesus with joy, even in suffering. Francis founded three religious orders. All members are asked to help the poor and to see God in all creation.
Patron Saint of: ecology
Fest Day: October 4

A Prayer for the Week
God, our Creator, we thank you for this wonderful world. Help us to be your partners in caring for the earth and all its creatures as Saint Francis did. Amen.

Family Time Level 1 67



Sunday Connection

Visit Our Web Site Catechists and parents can visit www.blestarewe.com for

- resources related to the Sunday liturgy.
- a summary of the Sunday Scripture readings.
- the Reflection Question of the Week.
- seasonal activities.



More About the Saint of the Week

Saint Francis of Assisi Was the son of a successful Italian merchant. Became a rich socialite. Converted during an illness to become the "poorest of the poor." Founded the Franciscans for men, the Poor Clares for women, and The Third Order for the laity.

Getting ready for Chapter 5

Take Home

Scripture Background

Before the Time of Jesus
Genesis and Creation Genesis, the first book of the Bible, tells the story of creation and of God's encounter with his first people. The Genesis account was not intended to be a scientific or historical account of creation. The authors of Genesis used the literary form of an allegory to reveal important truths about the nature of God. These truths include the preexistence of God, his wisdom and goodness, God's power through which all things are made, and the creation of man and woman in God's own image and likeness. The belief that God created everything good is repeated over and over again in Genesis. You can read about creation in Genesis 1, 2.

OUR CATHOLIC TRADITION in Science

Tellhard de Chardin Many people think there is a conflict between believing in the Bible and believing in evolution. They believe that if God created the world, then evolution could not have taken place. A French Jesuit priest in the early twentieth century tried to help us see God's hand in the scientific universe. Pierre Teilhard de Chardin believed that evolution was the ongoing work of God. He once wrote that he wanted to teach people how to see God everywhere, even in the most hidden places in the world.

68 www.blestarewe.com



Praying

A Prayer for the Week

The prayer for the week relates to the creation theme of the chapter. If your prayer corner display includes pictures or actual works of God's creation, call attention to them as you lead the prayer.



5 God Is Our Loving Father



O God, everything you made is wonderful!
Your love will last forever.

Based on Psalm 136:4

Share

God made all things.
All things show God's love.
Look at the picture.
Tell how each thing
shows God's love.

Draw something you like that
shows God's love.

Why did
God make
the world?

Believe 69

Additional Activity

Share Taking an Imaginary Nature Walk

- Invite the children to close their eyes and to imagine that they are walking in a park, in the woods, near a lake, or on a beach. Consider softly playing a meditative CD with sounds of nature.
- Ask the children to pretend that they can see some of the wonderful things God made. (Pause)
- Have the children open their eyes and invite volunteers to tell about their imaginary wonders.

Share



Praying with Scripture

Gather the children in the prayer corner.

- Remind the children that in the last lesson, they praised God because he is so wonderful. Tell them that in today's lesson, they will learn about some of the wonderful things God made.
- Light the candle near the Bible. Then pray the Scripture verse at the top of the page by inviting the children to repeat the words after you.
- End by singing together the Unit 2 song on page 62.

Personal Experience

Read aloud the text about God making all things. Invite volunteers to tell how each thing pictured shows God's love.

Ask "What are some of your favorite things that God made?" (Accept all reasonable answers.)

Doing the Activity

Read aloud the directions. Then invite the children to draw some favorite things that show God's love.

Call attention to the Page
Turner questions throughout
the chapter.



Hear & Believe

Discussing the Scripture Story

The Illustration Invite the children to look at the rebus art in the Creation story on this page. Have volunteers take turns identifying the pictures.

Ask "Who created all of these things?" (*God*)

Focus the children's attention on the illustration of the man and woman in the garden on pages 70 and 71.

Ask "Who do you think these two people are?" (*The children will probably say they are Adam and Eve.*)


















The Scripture Direct the children's attention back to the Creation story on page 70. Invite the children to say the name of each rebus picture as you read aloud the story.

Read the story again having the children name the rebus pictures.

Say "The whole story about creation is found in the Bible. It is at the beginning of the Old Testament. The story tells about the wonderful things God made."

Hear & Believe

Scripture God Creates The World

God made the  and  at night. God made the  for warmth and light. And on the land, God planted  , while in the sky flew  and  . The  sprang up from the earth. Sweet  and  came to birth. The  and  swam in the seas. And on the land were  . Soon  and  did appear, with  and  ,  and deer.

Based on Genesis 1:1-25

70



Scripture Background

The Book of Genesis

- Genesis, the first book of the Bible, gives us the account of God's first encounters with the people he created in his image and likeness. Not intended to be a scientific or historical account of the first humans, the Book of Genesis gives us insight into the nature of God. Being all good and all loving, God creates everything that is good, according to his own nature.
- God remains faithful in the covenants he made with his people. Adam and Eve, however, did not appreciate their relationship with God and turned away from him, bringing sin and selfishness into the world. Throughout the Old Testament, God remains a faithful and loving God despite the unfaithfulness of some of his people.



God Creates People

God saw that everything he made was good. Then God made people to be like himself. God told the people to take care of everything. He blessed the people and all that he had made.

Based on Genesis 1:26–31

Our Church Teaches

God is our loving Father. He wanted to **create** a beautiful world. God made the world out of nothing. God created everything in the world to show his love for us. God cares for us and for all creation. God is our **Creator**.

We Believe

God created all things to show his love for us.

Faith Words

create
To create means "to make something out of nothing."

Creator
God is our Creator. God made everything in the world.



How can we care for God's creation?

71

Discussing Another Scripture Story

Read aloud "God Creates People."

Say "God made people to be like himself. He made them to be good and caring."

Ask "How can we help God care for creation?" (Answers might include *by taking care of pets and plants; by not wasting water; by recycling, and so on.*)

Understanding Doctrine

Read aloud "Our Church Teaches."

Emphasize that God is our loving Father and Creator, and that God cares for us and all creation.

Ask "Why did God create everything in the world?" (*to show his love for us*)

We Believe/Faith Words

Read aloud the We Believe statement at the top of the page.

Ask "How does God's creation of people show his love for us?" (*Accept all reasonable answers, such as God didn't want us to be lonely; God wanted us to have parents to love and care for us.*)

Ask volunteers to explain the meaning of the Faith Words in their own words. You may wish to have the children complete the definitions in the Write-in Glossary.

Additional Activity

Scripture Playing a Creation Guessing Game

- Invite a volunteer to think of something God created and to whisper its name in your ear. Then have the child say, "I'm thinking of something God created that begins with ____" (*naming the beginning consonant*).
- Allow the volunteer to call on as many as three children to guess the answer.
- Give the child who answers correctly the next turn. If no one answers correctly, the volunteer should tell the answer and then choose another child to take the next turn.

Catechist TIP

Identifying Things God Created

Most six- and seven-year-olds find it difficult to differentiate between things created by God and things made by people. To help the children understand the difference, tell them that God created things we see in nature. Then hold up a branch from a tree. Brainstorm a list of things that people can make from wood, such as a table and paper.



Respond

Discussing the Story

The Photograph Point out the photograph of Anna in her backyard garden.

Invite volunteers to name things in the photograph that God created.

The Story Invite the children to look at the photograph as you read aloud “Caring for Creation.”

Ask “Why do you think Anna liked the statue of Saint Francis best of all?” (*Possible answers: Saint Francis loved everything in the world; he cared for plants and animals; he was kind to people.*)


Invite volunteers to answer the question at the end of the story.

Respond

Caring for Creation

Anna liked to play in her yard. She liked the little flower garden. Best of all, Anna liked the statue of Saint Francis. Anna learned that Francis loved everything God created. Francis took good care of plants. He was kind to animals. He helped people in need.

Anna picked up her watering can. She said, “Thank you, God, for making our world.” Then Anna began to water the flowers.

 How did Anna care for God’s creation?



72



Cultural Awareness

Respecting All of Creation

Tell the children that Native Americans have always held a great respect for nature and for all of creation. The following are some specific examples.

- The Delaware Nation, who called themselves the *Lenni Lenape*, which means “original people,” considered forest animals important gifts from the Great Spirit.
- Blackfoot Indians considered the buffalo to be a great gift from God and hunted them across the Great Plains for food and other products.
- The Sauk and Fox Nations believed that all living things were to be respected because the Creator gave them to their people as gifts.



Activities

1. Draw yourself in the heart.
Think about how much God loves you.
2. Here are some ways we care for God's creation.
Draw a line from each way to its matching picture.

Help people in need.

Be kind to animals.

Share God's gifts.



How can we thank God for loving us?

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Doing the Activities

1. Drawing Themselves

Direct the children's attention to the first activity.

- Invite the children to draw themselves in the heart-shaped space.
- Remind the children that they are a very special part of God's creation.

2. Matching Sentences with Pictures

Have the children point to the second activity while you explain the directions.

- Read aloud each sentence. Give the children sufficient time to complete the matching activity.
- Invite volunteers to share their responses.

Additional Activity

Respond Planting Seeds

- Invite the children to decorate paper cups that will be used for planting seeds.
- Help the children add soil, seeds, and water. Use bean seeds, or other seeds that grow rapidly and require little care.
- Discuss the kind of care seeds need in order to grow into healthy plants.
- Place the children's seed cups on a sunny windowsill or have the children take their plants home to care for them.



Enriching the Chapter

Reading About Creation

Consider enriching the chapter by reading a book about the wonders of creation. There are many popular books available at your local library or bookstore, such as *And If the Moon Could Talk* by Kate Banks (Farrar Straus & Giroux), or *Absolutely Awesome* by Michael and Caroline Carroll (Tyndale House).

Respond

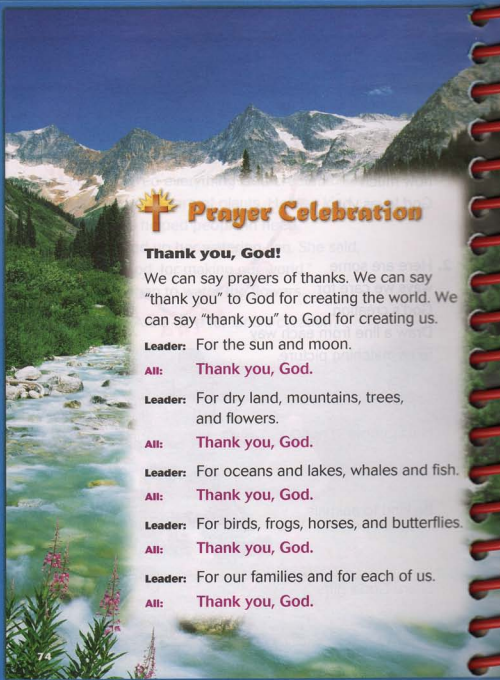
Preparing for Prayer

- Tell the children that in the prayer celebration they will thank God for some of the wonderful things he created.
- Explain that you will be the leader, and that they should say, "Thank you, God" each time they see the word, "All."
- If you displayed pictures or objects representing the gifts of God's Creation mentioned in the prayer, call the children's attention to them.

A Prayer of Thanks

Play the Unit 2 song and invite the children to listen to the words as they gather in the prayer corner.

- Light the candle on the prayer table and remind the children that God is with us and will listen to our prayer.
- Read aloud the introductory lines. Then lead the children in the thank you prayer.
- Close the prayer celebration by singing together the Unit 2 song on page 66.



Prayer Celebration

Thank you, God!

We can say prayers of thanks. We can say "thank you" to God for creating the world. We can say "thank you" to God for creating us.

Leader: For the sun and moon.

All: Thank you, God.

Leader: For dry land, mountains, trees, and flowers.

All: Thank you, God.

Leader: For oceans and lakes, whales and fish.

All: Thank you, God.

Leader: For birds, frogs, horses, and butterflies.

All: Thank you, God.

Leader: For our families and for each of us.

All: Thank you, God.



Looking Ahead to Chapter 6

Take Home

Tear out the Take Home Family Time pages for the next chapter. Remind the children to work on these at home with their parents or guardians.



Cultural Connections

www.blestarewe.com/familytime



Visit our Web site for the Take Home Family Time pages in Polish, Portuguese, Spanish, and Vietnamese.



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Chapter Review

- A Complete** the sentences with the words on the flowers.



1. Our loving Father and Creator is _____

God

2. God made _____ people
to be like himself.

3. God's creation shows his _____ love
for us.

4. The word _____ create
means "to make something out of nothing."

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Chapter Review

Reviewing the Chapter

- The exercise on this page can help the children remember the content of the chapter they have just completed. Some of the items serve as a review of the Learning Focus on page 66C.
- Be sure to review the concept that God, our loving Father, created us and all of creation out of love.

Completing the Exercises

- Depending upon the reading levels of the children, you may wish to read aloud the sentence-completion exercise. Make sure the children know the words on the flowers. Point out that each word completes one of the sentences.
- You may wish to tell the children that they can look back in the chapter to find the answers if they cannot remember them. Allow the children time to complete the sentences.
- Be sure to discuss the responses with the group and to go over concepts that were misunderstood or forgotten. Then have the children correct any mistakes they may have made.

Answer Locator

1	p. 71
2	p. 71
3	p. 69
	p. 71
4	p. 71



Wrap-Up

Time permitting, Chapter Review and/or Faith in Action can be completed during the session. Or at home.

Self-Evaluation

This session was

- ☐ one of the best
☐ pretty good
☐ in need of improvement

What worked out best was _____

For next time I would change _____

I will be sure to prepare for _____

Faith in Action

Parish Ministry

Parish Groundskeepers

- Many parishes hold an annual fall and spring "Clean-up Day" that reflects the Catholic social teaching **Care for God's Creation**. Parishioners of all ages find ways to make the parish grounds look beautiful.
- Check on what your parish does or can do in this regard. Remind the children to invite their families to take part in the parish's efforts to care for the earth.
- Since the first Earth Day on April 22, 1970, Americans have focused on preserving God's gifts of creation in spectacular ways. To discover the possibilities for earth stewardship today, go to www.earthday.net/resources.

Doing the Activities

1. Parish Connection

Read aloud the directions for the parish grounds activity.

- Discuss with the children some things of God's creation that are around the church.
- Invite the children to suggest ways parish families could help care for the church grounds.

2. Everyday Life Connection

Read aloud the directions for the second activity.

- Ask volunteers to describe what is happening in each set of pictures. Pause while the children circle their choices.
- Encourage the children to explain how their choices help God's creation.

Faith in Action

Caring for God's Creation All Saints Parish invites its families to make the church grounds look beautiful. Some families plant flowers. Some water the plants. Others get rid of the weeds. The families who help show their love for God's creation.

In Your Parish



Activity Picture the grounds around your parish church. What things that God created do you see? Tell how the families in your parish could care for God's creation.

In Everyday Life



Activity Each day we make choices. Some choices help God's creation. Some choices hurt it. Circle the choices that help God's creation.



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Level 1 Parish Ministry



Catholic Social Teaching

Care for God's Creation

- "Praise be to you, my Lord, through our Sister, Mother Earth." These words of St. Francis of Assisi remind us to show respect for the Creator by being stewards of creation.
- As Catholics we have a sacramental vision of the universe. We see the work of God in all creation. To fulfill God's command in Genesis to be stewards of the earth, we should reverence life in our words and actions, both personally and as a community.
- Respectful stewards conserve water, protect animals, manage land responsibly, and help reduce chemical air emissions. Discuss with the children ways they and their families can care for God's creation.

