

A LESSON ON GIVING TO THE WORLD

GRADES 4-6 -- Caring for Creation - Lesson I (Year I, Day 5)

Goal: To introduce children to the concept that God has given us a beautiful gift in the creation of the entire world around us. Students will explore creation and see how caring for it is a prayer of thanksgiving to God.

Materials: Bible

Lesson: The purpose of these videos is to introduce the idea that God created all things, including the students! Not only did God create all things, He loves them and cares for them. In the creation story, human beings are given the task of caring for creation as God does.

Read: The Story of Creation (*Genesis Chapter 1*)

Discussion:

- What do we learn from the way God created the world? Was it random or purposeful?
- Is God far away from us or is God very much involved in how the world works?
- Does God seem happy with His creation? Why or why not?
- What is the role of human beings in creation?
- What command did God give us about creation? What does that mean?

Watch: [Laudato Si – CRS Elementary Animated Brief](#) from Catholic Relief Services

Discussion:

- How does it change the way we treat the earth when we recognize:
 - a) The earth is God's gift to us.
 - b) The earth is full of beauty and wonder.
 - c) The earth belongs to everyone.
- What are some ways that the earth is mistreated?
- Why do the poorest communities suffer the most when the earth is not properly cared for?

Activity: Nature Walk

Bring students outside to a local park or school yard for a contemplative nature walk. Encourage students to walk slowly in silence, paying attention to God's creation, noticing plants, flowers, seeds, berries, colorful leaves, birds and animals. Encourage students to say a prayer of thanks to God in their hearts for each unique aspect of creation which they notice.

Watch: [Call to Action](#) from Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum

Discussion:

- This video offered lots of ideas for reducing waste and energy. What other ideas do you have?
- What's one concrete step you can take to help the environment?
- Why is it important to care for creation?

Activity: Pope Francis encourages us not to be a "throw-away culture." We can get into the habit of using things and throwing them out. But, if we look again, perhaps they can be used in a new way. Have students come up with creative ideas for how to make something new out of something old. (For example: Out of plastic bottles, can birdfeeders, decorative ornaments or pen holders be made?) Ask the students: "Are you surprised by all the things that could be made of something that seemed like trash?" We are called to "look again" to see the hidden value of the earth and in each human person.

Prayer:

Father, we thank you with all your wonderful creatures and all of the beautiful plants and flowers on our earth. Everything in creation came forth from you; they are yours, filled with your presence and your tender love. Help us to always treat your creation with love and respect. Amen.

Lesson adapted from the plans on the Archdiocese of Los Angeles Office of Life, Justice and Peace website



CARE OF GOD'S CREATION

**CARE OF
CREATION**

[Find out more](#) about the Archdiocese of New York “**Care of Creation Initiative**”