

A LESSON ON GIVING TO THE WORLD

GRADES 4-6 -- Caring for Creation - Lesson II (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: Gloves, garbage bags

Lesson: These videos explain that we are supposed to treat the earth with respect and not waste its resources. The poor are disproportionately affected by harm to the environment. To care for the earth is also to care for the health and wellbeing of the most vulnerable. It is possible to live sustainably and ensure that the earth's resources are able to be used fairly by all generations.

Watch: [Laudato Si Animation](#) from Catholic Relief Services

This video is an animation of Pope Francis' letter to the world on care for our common home.

[Laudato Si Animation \(simpler\)](#) (This version may be better for younger students)

Discussion:

- Who do the fruits of the earth belong to?
- Have we done a good job of caring for our common home?
- Who is most affected by damage to the environment?
- How does the digital world cause pollution?
- What do you think it means to live simply?

Watch: [The Lorax](#) (full 25 min 1972 movie)

Discussion:

- The Lorax says that the Once-ler is greedy. Can you think of ways that the Once-ler proves his greed? (*Greed is defined as a selfish desire for food, money, or possessions over and above what one needs.*)
- Is it true that everyone needs money?
- How much money do people need?
- Is it right to make a lot of money while destroying the environment?
- What is pollution? (*Something in the environment that is harmful or poisonous.*)

- What are some examples of pollution in *The Lorax*?
- What are some ways humans pollute the air? (*Fires; smoking; vehicle fumes, cars, airplanes, boats; household products, paint, aerosols, cleaners; wasting electricity.*)
- What are some ways humans can care for the air? (*Riding a bike or walking to school, recycle, plant a tree, conserve energy, choose natural products.*)
- What happens to the fish when you put all of this pollution into the water?
- Can you think of some other problems this might cause? (*No drinking water, no swimming*)
- What are some ways humans can care for the earth?
- What is the difference between a want and a need?
- What do people need?

Activity: Clean Up the Earth: To teach the students about taking care of the environment, take them outside in the area around the school and have them pick up any garbage they see. Warn them not to pick up any glass or cigarettes. If applicable, have them separate what they pick up into trash and recycling.

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



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