



Living the Faith – Step 5

Continuing God’s Creation

Aim

To use the creation story and Laudate Si to explore our role of stewardship of and partners in creation.

Resources needed

Leaders

- *Come and See notes*
- *PPT laptop and projector or TV*
- *Prayer focus items*
- *Bible or Scripture Texts*
- *Large sheets of paper, pens*

For Young People

- *Journals*

Prayer Focus

Green Cloth – *Ordinary time*

Plant or flowers – *God created everything*

Crucifix – *colourful Peruvian or other – Jesus came for all*

Globe / Atlas – *we are a world church*

Bible – *the word of God*

Candle – *the light of*

Prayer Book – *Prayer of the Church*

Liturgical Link

Regularly throughout the year, stories linked to creation and stewardship are included in the Mass readings. The creation story is the first scripture passage read at the East Vigil.

Overview

- In the beginning
- Harmony in relationships
- Care of the Planet
- Action Plan
- Prayerful Reflection

Preparation by Catechists

- *Familiarity with content and resources*
- *Be ready to share personal experiences and ideas to assist with action planning*
- *Pray for the young people and leaders*

Scripture Passages

- Gen 1,2:1-3 Creation Story 1
- Gen 2:4-25 Creation Story 2
- Gen 3:1-24 The Fall
- Mtt 22:36-40 The Command

Tenets of Faith (Faith Formation)

- God the Creator of all
- The four harmonies
- Care of the Planet
- Taking Responsibility

Gathering

- **Welcome and Overview:**
 - Thank the young people for coming back.
 - Give a brief reminder of the key points from the last gathering.
 - Offer an overview and the aim for this fifth step

Gathering:

- **Welcome & Overview:** Welcome the young people back for this important last step ahead of the Review, Commissioning and Celebration. Give overview and aim for today.
- **Introductory activity - *In the Beginning***
 - Early in this journey we looked at the importance of the Bible and the Creation Story.
 - Today we re-visit the story.
 - As you watch the video clip see what about the words or the images stay with you.

Gen 1,2:1-3 Video Clip: 'in the beginning' https://youtu.be/ean_aMNkAgM 4m51

 - Take feedback and then ask if anyone remembers the second creation account.
 - Fill in any missing bits or provide a summary of **Gen 2:4-25**

- FF**
- Both versions of the creation story tell of God's love for the world, everything was created from good and for good.
 - God's plan was for humans to exist in perfect harmony with God, one another and nature.
 - God provided everything that was needed for fulfilment in life and wanted humans to work with him to continue the work of creation.

- **Activity - What Next? - Gen 3:1-24**
 - Gather group around a white board or large sheet of paper.
 - Ask what happened next – using words or symbols note the key points and fill in gaps as necessary.

- FF**
- Sadly the perfect state was short lived.
 - Having been given the gift of free will, humans chose to disobey God, a path which destroyed the harmonious relationship with God, self, others and creation.
 - This event is known as the Fall.
 - In our lives we too 'fall' when we do not follow Gods ways. It may not always be deliberate, but none the less our attitudes and behaviour can damage our relationship with God.
 - The Church provides us with the Sacrament of Reconciliation so the relationship can be restored.
 - The coming of Jesus, into the world; word made flesh, was a clear sign of the extent of God's desire for live in harmony with all people.

Opening Prayer

- **Prayer focus:** refer to other items and their significance here and as appropriate later
- we begin our prayer with a hymn of praise to God for each new day the Lord gives us.
- **Song:** This the day, <https://youtu.be/cccJhMVFrLs> 1m36
 - As the first humans did, we too let God, and ourselves, down at times. Despite that God never stops loving us.
In prayer let us acknowledge our failings and ask God for forgiveness.

Leader God our Father, though you love us unconditionally, we fail to love as you do.

All Forgive us our sins.

Leader Lord Jesus, you forgave sinners and called them to new ways of living.

All Help us to do the same.

Leader Holy Spirit at times we are weak, and too easily give in to selfish desires.

All Strengthen our will that we may be examples of God's goodness to all we meet.

Leader God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with us,

All Today and every day, Amen.

Harmony in relationships

- **Restoring Harmony - Introduction:** In the story of the fall we see how the relationship between God and humanity was destroyed.
 - Every action in life has consequences.
 - The act of disobedience also damages the relationship of human beings with each other, and with self. Let us explore a little of what that means.

Activity - Care of Self:

- Working in two (or four) groups, each with a large sheet of paper one headed Relationship with Self the other Relationships with Others, each has 2 columns - headed Good and Bad
- Each group has a couple of minutes to note down 4-5 examples of attitudes and behaviours that make people feel good and bad about the relationship with self or others.
- Bring the groups back together to share their work.
- Identify the similarities, and common threads that help build up or tear down our relationship with self and others.
- As a group, suggest what might be the best ways to restore these relationship and maintain harmony

- FF**
- All human persons, are created in God's image. Just as God breathed life into Adam in the creation story, (Gen 2:7) so too God has breathed life into each of us.
 - It is not always easy to love everyone, but Jesus came into the world so we could

learn to do that better. He stressed the importance of forgiveness, and of prayer.

- Prayer is the key to maintaining the relationship with God, and also with self.
- Personal and community prayer are both important, including regular attendance at the Sunday Eucharist, where we grow in unity with God and the parish community and keep holy the Sabbath, as did the Jews.
- When asked by the Pharisees which was the greatest commandment, Jesus gives a threefold answer, to Love God, Neighbour, and self. (Mtt 22:36-40).
- In essence if we love God, the harmonious relationship that results will spill over into all other relationships.
- Love of self is not about putting ourselves at the centre, but an awareness of being created in God's love, and so worthy of dignity and respect.

- **Care of the Planet:** There is a fourth aspect of harmony to be nurtured, harmony with the planet of which God gave stewardship to humanity. (Gen 1:28)
 - In 2015 Pope Francis created an important document (encyclical) for the world, entitled *Laudto Si, Care of our Common home*.
 - The document shows how the activity of humans has been damaging our planet.
 - Pope Francis stresses '*that our planet is a homeland and that humanity is one people living in a common home.*'
- **Activity - Earth Song** The Michael Jackson video clip highlights some of the devastation the planet is undergoing, because of human actions.
 - Encourage the young people to note in their journals thoughts and feelings that arise when watching the clip.
 - Ask them to look for any links to the 2nd creation story, and the story of the fall.

<https://youtu.be/XAi3VTSdTxU> Earth song Michael Jackson (*use abridged version*)
 - After watching invite responses, be prepared for some deep feelings being expressed.

FF - The image of people pushing their hands in the ground and letting the soil run through their fingers is symbolic of God creating humans from the dust of the earth

- It also suggests that we are allowing life on the earth to slip through our fingers.
- Not quite what God had in mind when entrusting humanity with care of creation.

Activity - Concern for the Planet Drawing on their responses to the video, and general concerns they may have about the world invite the young people, working in two, or three groups each with a large sheet of paper header 'Concerns for the Planet' to

- Quickly list as many concerns as possible in 1 minute
- Try to come to an agreement of the one or two items they believe to be of greatest importance – these they highlight, allow just a couple of minutes
- Bring the groups back together, place sheets side by side to compare concerns and priorities.

Going Deeper

Activity - Care of the Planet

- Choose one of the video clips below – or an alternative for the group to watch.
- Encourage the young people to jot down notes in their journals noting in particular:
 - Anything that surprised or shocked
 - Support of their own views
 - If all the issues of concern identified on the sheets were mentioned
 - Any concerns raised that the groups had not thought of?

<https://youtu.be/lcP5E2trsX4> Laudato Si – an urgent appeal for action - Earth care Australia 3.27

or

<https://youtu.be/B9I3BjfyS9Q> One Climate one world - CAFOD Call to action 3.30

- Invite feedback and comment as appropriate

- FF**
- The Encyclical is taken from the canticle of St Francis, a man deeply in touch with creation – check what the group know of him.
 - The Genesis story shows humans being created in harmony with creation and asked to care for it.
 - That was always God's plan. All through the Old Testament there are many references to God as creator of all things, and the interconnectedness of all created things.
 - Amongst the many Christian scholars to have shared this vision of creation St Francis of Assisi was probably most attuned to the reality.
 - He referred to the sun as brother and moon as sister, showing the deep connection with them.
 - In the past 150 years or so, the modern era, advances in science and technology have led to a shift in attitude towards nature that suggests nature is there to be ordered, manipulated and mastered by humans.
 - This is not in keeping with Catholic beliefs or acceptable to anyone with a biblical view the world

Notes taken from Bishop Barron on Laudato Si <https://youtu.be/zWEK8JXQo0M>

- **Activity - Action Plan:** Bearing in mind the concerns initially highlighted by themselves, and the those expressed in the Earth Care / CAFOD video invite the young people, individually, to:
 - consider which couple of concerns they feel able to make a practical response to.
 - make notes in their journals to show:
 - the concern or messages being responded to
 - reasons for the choice
 - simple practical steps that can be taken to respond, immediately, and over time
 - ways in which to share and encourage others to take the issue on board

Closing Prayer

- Gather in a circle / semi-circle around the prayer focus.
- Invite individuals to look at the globe and think of a concern or situation they would like to pray for. - Play gentle music, or Laudato Si softly in the background.
- Pass round the candle and each in turn offer their prayer. All respond to each prayer then join in the short concluding prayer.

Response: Creator God hear our prayer

Prayer: Praise be to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever, Amen

Song: *Laudato Si* <https://youtu.be/TmnVw6uxQeo> St Francis and Pope Francis 3m

Closing Remarks and Next Step

- Invite response to the Step 5 gathering
- Living the Faith Step 6 – Review, Commissioning and Celebration
- Encourage personal and prayer support of one another and attendance at Mass