



RUAH WOODS INSTITUTE EARTH/CREATION PARISH DAY

| Earth Day Theme by Age Group | Ruah Woods Institute's REVEALED K-12 Theology of the Body Curriculum Lesson to Teach by Age Group |
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| K-1 st | Grade K - Lesson 1: Creation is a Gift (part 1) |
| 2 nd -3 rd | Grade 3 - Lesson 1: Gift-of-Self (Focus on the objective: "The student will explain what happens when you view creation as a gift"). |
| 4 th -5 th | Grade 5 - Lesson 1: Creation is a Gift |
| 6 th -8 th | Grade 6 - Unit 1: Creation is a Gift |
| High School CTBM | Course 7 - Lesson 7: Care of Creation |
| Suggested Prayer: | Earth/Creation prayer ideas |
| Suggested Parish Project: | 10 Ways Celebrate Earth Day as a Catholic |





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Introduction: (10 min)

Welcome all parents and children together for this special Earth focused day.

Distribute the prayer below (or have it displayed on a screen to pray together). Encourage the parents to say the prayer with you.

Prayer of Thanksgiving for the Earth

Oh amazing Creator, there is no end to the awe we feel in the face of your magnificent creation. Words cannot convey our gratitude for such an undeserved gift. We praise you for the beauty that stops us in our tracks wherever we turn. We revere you for the beauty of creation that has brought forth life and goodness for billions of years. We thank you for the multitude of ways that the natural world sustains and nourishes us in body and spirit. We are humbled that we are part of such a display of your glory. Our hearts overflow with love for You, revealed in the wonder of creation. May all the angels and saints join us in our song of gratitude, praising You forever and ever. Amen.

Before dismissing the grade level groups SAY: "And God saw everything that he had made and behold, it was very good" (Gen 1:31).

Breakout sessions/activities: (45-60 min)

Grades K-1st:

*DRE/Catechist: Read Kindergarten, Lesson 1: pg. 7 in teacher's guide to prepare for this day.

Kindergarten Lesson 1

See objectives/materials needed: pages 7-30

Grades 2nd-3rd:

*DRE/Catechist: Read Third Grade, Lesson 1: pg. 7 in Teacher's Guide to prepare for this day.

Third Grade: Lesson 1 — Gift-of-Self (Focus on the objective: "The student will explain what happens when you view creation as a gift")

See objectives/materials needed: pages 7-12

*When reading the story focus on the beauty of creation and viewing creation (the Earth and those in it) as a gift from God.

Grades 4th-5th:

*DRE/Catechist: Read Fifth Grade, lesson 1, pg 7 in Teacher's Guide to prepare for this day.

Fifth Grade Lesson 1: Creation is a Gift

See objectives/materials needed pgs. 7-12





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Middle School 6th-8th:

Grade 6, Unit 1: Creation is a Gift (pgs. 2-19)

High School:

Course 3: The Mission of Jesus Christ (The Paschal Mystery)
Lesson 5: The Dignity of the Human Person

Group Four-Parent Session:

See Appendix 1

Closing Activity/Prayer (Together) (20 min)

Recap the theme

Closing activity: Ideas: spiritually adopt a pre-born baby, cards for pro-life organizations/mothers support agency/diaper drive

Give them a dinner table question- send

Announce parish project





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Appendix 1

RUAH WOODS INSTITUTE PARISH EARTH DAY

PARENT BREAK-OUT SESSION

LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION (provide an area for large group that is convenient to transition to small group discussion)

Introduction (5-10 minutes)

Leader/Clergy/Catechist: [READ SLOWLY AND PRAYERFULLY] We welcome all of our parents gathered here today. The theme for our families today is the celebration of EARTH DAY. In the account of Genesis, God reveals himself as the Creator. He dispels the darkness with light. He creates stars, galaxies and planets, and chose to dwell on Earth with us in a unique and special way through his Incarnation. He puts dry land and sea where before there was nothing. He makes trees and vines and grasses and flowers spring up and be fruitful. He gives living creatures a beautiful, wild land to live in and explore. And to the human person, he gave a very special gift: the gift of being created in his image and likeness.

As God's children, are we taking seriously the call from God to responsibly care for all of creation? Do we promote a deep reverence for everything God has created, including one another?

We are going to take some time to share and reflect upon the beauty and mystery of Creation, and our call to protect and preserve it. We will discuss ways to implement more reverence and care for our Earth, God's creatures, and for one another.

Let us break into small groups to continue our discussion further.

SMALL GROUP BREAKOUT:

1. Provide an area for each group of 5-9 to have their own discussion.
2. Provide a copy of the small group discussion questions below for each parent.
3. Assign a small group leader to facilitate, using these guidelines and ask them to briefly share Respect and Sacred Confidentiality with their group:
 - a. Respect—Listen with attention and concentration and try to understand before being understood. Avoid interrupting others and give everyone a chance to speak.
 - b. Sacred Confidentiality—What the group shares remains within the group unless given permission by the participant to share with the larger group. Avoid gossip.
 - c. Flow—The facilitator should not use this time to answer questions or teach, but to allow each participant a short amount of time to share without dominating the conversation.





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Small Group Discussion (25-35 minutes) — READ ALOUD IN YOUR SMALL GROUP THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPHS AND DISCUSS THE QUESTIONS THAT FOLLOW:

- “God looked at everything he had made and found it very good” (Genesis 1:31). Why does God create this wild, wonderful and good world? God is already complete, so he didn’t need the world—no one made him create it—but we know that God does create the world, so we know that he cares about the world. God cares about it so much that he loves the world into existence. The world is a gift from God—it is given entirely out of love. He wants to share and give life to others.
 1. What does this statement reveal about God?
 2. If God ‘gifted us’ into existing, what does that say about us?
 3. How do we ‘pay it forward’ and work toward giving life to others?
- Each person is created as the pinnacle of creation in a unique, exclusive, and unrepeatable relationship with God Himself. All of creation is a gift for the human person, who alone can understand that creation is a gift and appreciate its worth. God puts us in charge of the rest of creation so that we can take care of it while also providing for our needs.
 1. In what ways do we use the Earth to provide for our needs?
 2. In what practical ways can our families care for the well-being of the Earth?
- One of the most important things that we, as parents and teachers, can communicate to our children is a wonder and awe at the goodness of creation.
 1. What are some special moments in your life when you have experienced the wonder and awe of creation?
 2. What are some practical ways to help our children have wonder and awe at the goodness of creation?

Earth Day Family Mission — (To share with your family at home)

1. Choose a ‘person’ or ‘persons’ to whom your family will demonstrate an act of kindness.
2. Choose a ‘place’ of nature that needs nurturing and care.
3. Choose a living ‘thing’ (animal/s) that needs special attention or love.
4. Create a plan/mission and a calendar date to execute the family plan for each of these.

Family Prayer Honoring Creation: Thank you Lord for the gift of creation, for the sun and the moon, for the trees and the hills, the valleys and forests, for the animals and pets that share this earth with us. Thank you especially for the good times with family and loved ones, enjoying Your bounty and celebrating Your love. We are mindful that we do not always reverence You as we should, and we often fail to see You in your creation. Please enlighten our minds and hearts to see You in everything, especially in each and every person since you have made us in Your Trinitarian Image. Amen

by CMF CURO

LARGE GROUP WRAP UP (10-15 minutes)

Leader/Clergy/Catechist: Thank you for your participation and sharing with one another. Are there any highlights that each group would like to share with the large group?

Before we return to our children, I want to remind you that God is asking us to be proactive in promoting reverence and care for creation. Let’s support one another in celebrating Earth Day by implementing the ideas suggested:





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(Share the details of the following)

1. View all of creation with special lenses of a deep reverence for God's dwelling place within us and around us.
2. Possible ideas for Earth Day Family Mission to implement in your home (plan of action).
3. Parish Pro-Life Project

Let's return to our children where we will conclude with prayer.

10 Ways to Celebrate Earth Day as a Catholic:

(Some ideas from Teaching Catholic Kids Blog, and Joe Paprocki's Catechist's Journey Blog)

- 1. Take a nature walk around the parish and praise God for his creations.
- 2. Write a prayer to thank God for one of the Earth's creatures.
- 3. Read the stories of saints who befriended God's creatures (St. Ailbhe, St. Francis, St. Gertrude).
- 4. Explore Church teaching/scripture in the great outdoors (camping, hiking, botanical gardens, etc..).
- 5. Learn more about the Church's ecological teaching.
- 6. Take the St. Francis Pledge to Care for Creation and the Poor.
- 7. Plant a garden at your parish/or home and share the things you grow with friends and neighbors.
- 8. Learn new ways that your parish or family can be better stewards of God's creation — the Earth.
- 9. Read Laudato Si (Pope Francis encyclical on caring for our common home).
- 10. Take up a collection/make a donation To Catholic Relief Services (CRS).

The **St. Francis Pledge** is a promise and commitment by Catholic individuals, families, parishes, organizations, and institutions to live our faith by **protecting God's Creation** and advocating on behalf of people in poverty who face the harshest impacts of global climate change¹². It encompasses several key actions:

1. **Pray and Reflect:** We pledge to **pray and reflect** on our duty to care for God's Creation and protect the poor and vulnerable.
2. **Learn and Educate:** We commit to **learning about and educating others** on the causes and moral dimensions of climate change.
3. **Assess Our Impact:** We assess how we, as individuals and within our families, parishes, and affiliations, contribute to climate change through our energy use, consumption, and waste.
4. **Act Responsibly:** We take **action to change our choices and behaviors** to reduce our impact on climate change.
5. **Advocate for Principles:** We advocate for **Catholic principles and priorities** in climate change discussions and decisions, especially as they affect those who are poor and vulnerable³.

In essence, the St. Francis Pledge encourages us to be stewards of the Earth, mindful of our impact, and compassionate toward those most affected by environmental challenges.

