



# Catholic Schools Week 2020

Catholic Schools: Living in Harmony with God's Creation



## CATHOLIC SCHOOLS: LIVING IN HARMONY WITH GOD'S CREATION

**26 JANUARY – 2 FEBRUARY 2020**



## From the Curriculum: Level 4

Christian Faith	Word of God
<p><b>Mystery of God</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• God's love is constant, unconditional and everlasting (Is 54:8; Jer 31:3; CCC 220).</li> </ul> <p><b>Creation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation is a sign of God's love, glory, goodness, splendour and power (CCC 32, 293; Job 12:7- 9; Ps 19).</li> </ul> <p><b>Mystery of the Church/Kingdom</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Christians co-operate together for social justice (UR 12).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Sacred Scripture</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The new Law is summarised in the commandment of love (CCC 782).</li> <li>• Jesus' Public Life (CCC 422-24; 430-55; 535-40; 543-56)</li> <li>• The Prodigal Son (Lk 15:11-32)</li> </ul>
Liturgy and Prayer	Christian Morality
<p><b>Prayer</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prayer is the raising of one's mind and heart to God or the requesting of good things from God (CCC 2559, 2562-63).</li> <li>• Prayer is a personal relationship with God (CCC 2558, 2565).</li> </ul> <p><b>Sacraments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reconciliation is principally a gift of the heavenly Father (RP 5, 10).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Social Teaching of the Church</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include some of the following: Justice issues in the local community (environmental, economic, cultural, political, infrastructure, social) e.g. care of the aged, homelessness, equality issues, poverty, consumerism and the environment.</li> </ul>





## Monday: Living in Harmony with God

27 January 2020

*It is through the Sacrament of Penance that the baptised can be reconciled with God and with the Church.*

(CCC 980)



### Consider

Each one of us is called to be in a personal relationship with God. This relationship is not something abstract or difficult to obtain. True harmony comes from acceptance, understanding and the courage to forgive and love freely. Through the sacraments God shows us that he is always with us. The sacraments are a sign of God's love for us. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is a sacrament of healing and strength.



The primary purpose of the Sacrament of Reconciliation is to restore a state of peace and friendship in our relationship with God and the Church. It is a way to become reconciled with God and the community when our poor choices have led us to be alienated from both.

God's mercy is stronger than any sin or any temptation to sin. When we are truly sorry for our sins, God is always ready to forgive us. We celebrate God's forgiveness in the Sacraments of Penance and Reconciliation. This means that through the Sacrament of Penance we can come to know God and his love for us.

### Explore

Through the Sacrament of Penance, God our Father embraces us with love, compassion and forgiveness just as the father embraced his son in the parable of the prodigal son.

Bible Search: The Parable of the Prodigal Son (Lk 15:11-32)

Divide the class into four groups.  
Assign the groups the following sections of the parable to read:

Group 1 – Luke 15:11-13

Group 2 – Luke 15:14-19

Group 3 – Luke 15:20-24

Group 4 – Luke 15:25-32

Each group reports the main ideas from the part of the story they have read.

When each group has finished their report the class can answer the questions set out on the activity page provided.





**Now you have heard the story of the Prodigal Son, use what you have heard to answer the following questions:**



1. What do you think the prodigal son thought about while feeding the swine?
2. What did he decide to do?
3. When he returns, how does his father greet him?
  - a. With angry words?
  - b. With "I told you this would happen"?
  - c. With love?
4. What does the father do to make the son feel at home?
5. What do you think of the father's handling of things?
6. Describe the qualities the father has that makes him a good father.
7. Are these the same qualities you find in God as Father?



## Tuesday: Living in Harmony with our Neighbours

28 January 2020

*The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these.*

(Mk 12:31)



### Consider

During Jesus' earthly ministry he frequently spoke of love and taught how to love one another. He spoke of forgiveness and how we should not hate one another. Our love for one another is best displayed in our actions toward them. We reflect on how we treat others. Do we follow the Golden Rule: 'Do to others as you would have them do to you' (Lk 6:31)?

### Explore

What is a neighbour?  
Who are my neighbours?  
How does God want us to treat our neighbours?

Bible Search: Let's look in our Bibles and read about what God says about how we should treat our neighbours.

Mark 12:28-34  
Matthew 7:12  
Matthew 19:19  
Matthew 22:36-40  
Romans 13:8-10  
Galatians 5:14

There are a lot of verses about loving our neighbour. With so many verses in the Bible about this, we know loving our neighbours is important to God. How does he say we should love them?

God wants us to love our neighbours like we love our self. What do you think God means by that?

Brainstorm ways in which we can show our love for our neighbour. These suggestions may form the basis for the class Golden Rules Poster.

### Activity

Our Golden Rules Poster.

Record the class suggestions on the sheet provided which can be displayed in the prayer space in the class room.



# GOLDEN RULES





## Thursday: Living in Harmony with the Earth

30 January 2020

*Nature cannot be regarded as something separate from ourselves or as a mere setting in which we live. We are part of nature, included in it and thus in constant interaction with it.*

(*Laudato Si'*, 139)



### Consider

The children may already be involved in projects which focus on caring for the environment such as Green Schools or Pride of Place. The purpose of this lesson is to relate this work to a deeper understanding to God's Creation and each child's role in caring for the earth.



### Explore

Today we are going to talk to the children about St Francis of Assisi as according to Pope John Paul II, 'Saint Francis offers Christians an example of genuine and deep respect for the integrity of creation.' Saint Francis of Assisi is honoured by the Catholic Church as the patron saint of ecology and animals. He lived a life of simplicity, poverty and humility with a strong commitment to the poor.



Saint Francis prayed in nature and discovered more about God and himself through his practice of prayer in nature. Today, modern life, with all our comforts and conveniences, causes us to feel alienated from the earth and from ourselves. Saint Francis spent up to half of each year praying in different places amongst nature and the wilderness. He always sought out a quiet place in nature to pray and think. His love and respect for creation was deep as it always led him to God the Creator.



Explore ways we are becoming more aware of our responsibility to care for the earth. The topic of climate change is constantly in the news. We are constantly being reminded of our responsibility to care for the earth.



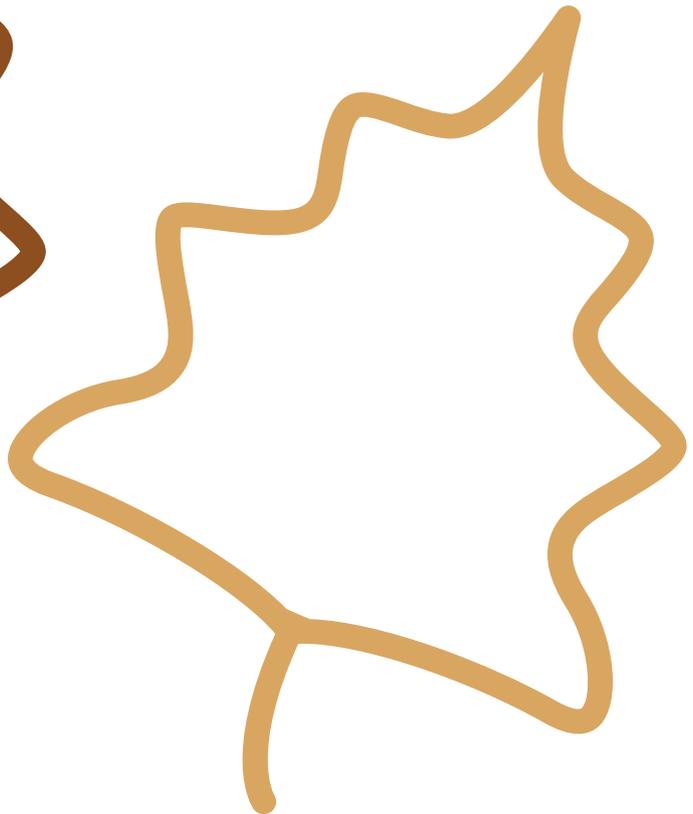
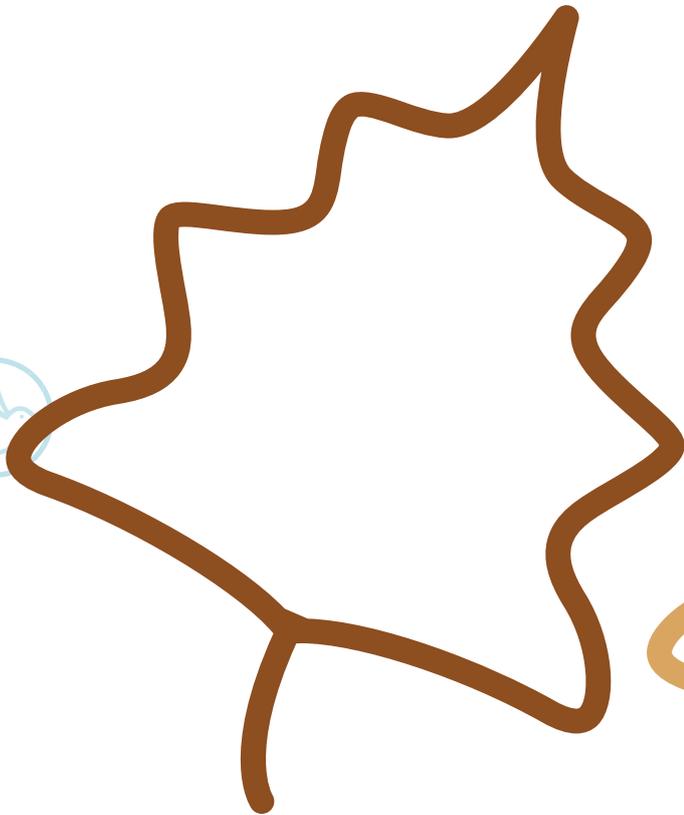
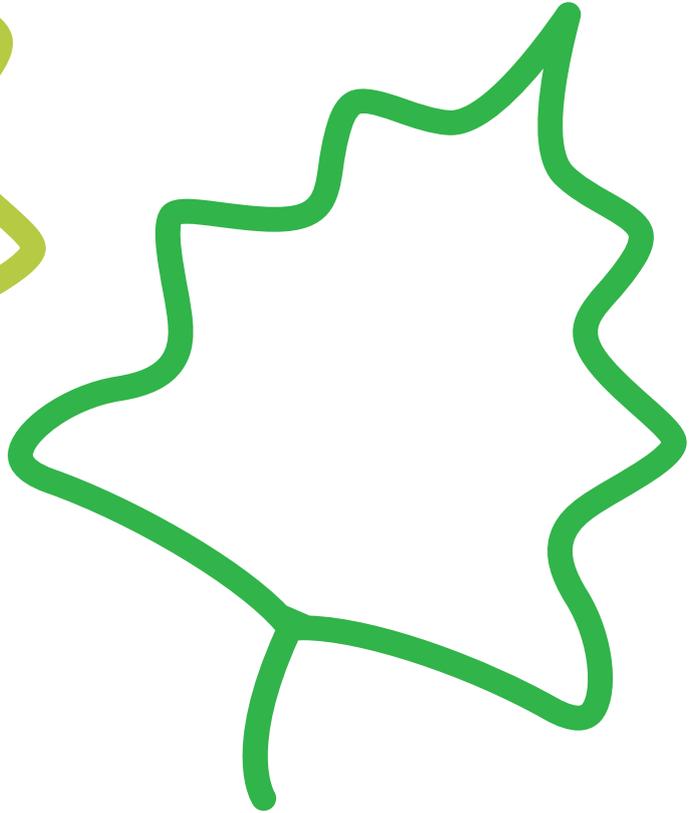
Brainstorm with the class simple ways we can care for the earth in our everyday lives. You may wish to record the class list of suggestions on the board or a chart.

Saint Francis turned to nature and the environment to grow closer to God. The children could be invited to bring in budding twigs, leaves or other examples of nature for the prayer space to remind us of the beauty of nature and God's love for us.

### Activity

The class can be divided into groups with no more than four children. Each group takes the activity sheet with four leaves. Invite the children to write or draw onto their leaves ways we care for the environment. The leaves can be decorated and cut out. A hole punch can be used to make a hole in the leaf. Using thread or string the leaves can be hung on a twig in the prayer space in the classroom.







## Friday: Living in Harmony in our Catholic Schools

31 January 2020

*And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.*

(Eph 6:18)



### Consider

While every school has its own ethos or characteristic spirit, every Catholic school gives expression to their characteristic spirit through the lens of Catholic faith.

Our Catholic schools are caring and inclusive places because they are Catholic.

The values and traditions that are lived out and nurtured on a daily basis are rooted in the life of Jesus and the belief that every person is made in the image and likeness of God.

Prayer is a very important part of our tradition and daily ritual that brings us together on a daily basis.

### Explore

Prayer may take many forms but prayer is simply talking to God. Children need to know they can tell God anything at all because he loves them no matter what. They need to realise they can talk to God like they would talk to their very best friend.

Discuss with the class the times that we pray in the school day. Example: At the start of the school day we ask God to bless our work. At the end of the school day we thank God for watching over us. We pray together at the start of school year Mass or at other occasions during the school year.

Explore with the class the different times and different ways we pray.

### Activity

Remind the class that earlier this week we learned about St Francis and how he liked to pray surrounded by nature. Play some gentle music. Invite the children to close their eyes and imagine what it might have been like for St Francis praying while surrounded by God's creation. Encourage the children to consider what they might want or need to say to God. The following prayer starters could be displayed in the classroom to help the children with this:

Lord, help me with...  
God, forgive me for...  
Please help me do better when I...  
Please help my friends and family, especially...  
Please bless...  
For those I said I would pray for...  
God, thank you for...  
Jesus, I ask that you...  
Holy Spirit, guide my life so that I...  
Lord Jesus Christ, I pray for...  
God, sometimes I feel...  
Jesus, help me to be like you in...  
Father, help me to know that you...

Using the Activity Sheet, the class can write their prayers. As the prayers may be very personal the children should be allowed to take them home to share and not compelled to share or display in class.





## Friday: Living in Harmony in our Catholic Schools

