Level: 1
Title: I CARE FOR GOD’S WORLD

**SACRAMENTS:** Effective Signs of Christ’s saving presence, Communal celebrations of Christian identity

Suggested Duration: 4-5 weeks

**Unit Focus**
In this unit students will begin to appreciate and express wonder at God’s creation. They will be introduced to the fact that they have certain responsibilities to live in harmony with creation.

**Level Outcome**
By the end of Level Two students should be able to:

*Understand that the Sacraments are ways by which we are welcomed into the Church community, reconciled and invited to share the special presence of Jesus.*

**Unit Outcomes**
By the end of this unit students should be able to:

1. **List and describe objects, actions or scenes that are beautiful and wondrous.**
2. **Express appreciation for God’s gifts through celebrations of song and prayer.**
3. **Identify ways in which they can care for God’s world**

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<tr>
<th>STRAND</th>
<th>DOCTRINAL CONCEPTS</th>
<th>CATECHISM REFERENCE</th>
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<td>God</td>
<td>1. God is loving Creator and continues to give life</td>
<td>239, 337, 338</td>
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<td>Sacraments</td>
<td>1. We celebrate the wonder and beauty of God’s presence in people and the world around us.</td>
<td>337, 341</td>
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<td>Scripture</td>
<td>1. The Scriptures tell us about God’s love for us and we learn from and pray with them.</td>
<td>104, 125</td>
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<td>Christian Life</td>
<td>3. My choices and actions affect myself and others.</td>
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<td>Prayer</td>
<td>4. Prayer is a way of thanking and praising God for life and creation.</td>
<td>2637, 2638</td>
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**Key Understandings for Students**
- Creation is wonderful and worthy of celebration.
- Our world is full of beauty.
- We are called to care for creation.
- There are many ways that we can care for creation.
- We can experience God in creation.
- God is revealed through creation.
- Creation is God’s loving gift to us.

**Curriculum Links - VELS**
**Victorian Essential Learning Standards**
The unit I Care For God’s World can be used to assess aspects of VELS. The table below gives an example of how Level 1 standards could be assessed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strand</th>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Key elements of Standards Students…</th>
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<tr>
<td>Physical, Personal and Social Learning</td>
<td>Interpersonal Development</td>
<td>Building Social Relationships</td>
<td>“They contribute to the development of positive social relationships in a range of contexts. They use appropriate language and actions when dealing with conflict. Students describe basic skills required to work cooperatively in groups.”</td>
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Student Context

When children start school they come from many different backgrounds and experiences. Their knowledge of the created world will vary. Their natural curiosity will make them willing to explore their new environment at school.

Level One students love story, and are beginning to separate fact from fiction. The use of story in this context can be a powerful medium. Students at this level are very open to cultivating a sense of wonder and appreciation of a world that reflects the presence and goodness of God.

Theological Background for Teachers

- The Catholic community’s doctrine on creation teaches that God is good, that the one God is the source of all that has being and that this Creator has created the universe. Catholic tradition likewise teaches that through creation, God has freely chosen to reveal his great glory and love for all creation. We are called to trust that God is good and that all things God has created are good.

- The Catholic community holds that the human community- and the Christian community in particular- should recognize its serious responsibility to care for God’s creation and to develop responsible stewardship practices that help all people and cultures share in the abundance of God’s great world. Current teaching strongly acknowledges the worth and dignity of human work and all other creative human activity as a reflection of God’s own creative powers. Using the gifts one has received from God, every human being can participate in God’s creation meaningfully and can be free and responsible co-creators with the one, true Creator God. (Ekstrom, R. (1994). The new concise Catholic dictionary. Mystic, CT: Twenty-Third Publications.).

Scripture

Teacher Reference (NRSV)

Rom 1:20
Ever since God created the world his everlasting power and deity—however invisible—have been there for the mind to see in the things God has made.

Song 2:11-13
For now the winter is past, the rain is over and gone.
The flowers appear on the earth; the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land.

Student Reference (CEV)

Ps 150: 3-6
Praise God with trumpets and all kinds of harps. Praise him with tambourines and dancing, with stringed instruments and woodwinds. Praise God with cymbals, with clashing cymbals. Let every living creature praise the Lord. Shout praises to the Lord!

Ps 148: 3, 7-8
Sun and moon, and all of you bright stars, come and offer praise. All creatures on earth, you obey his commands, so come praise the Lord! Sea monsters and the deep sea, fire and hail, snow and frost, and every stormy wind, come praise the Lord!

Gen 6:9-9:1, 9:8-17  Noah and the Ark

and this is the story about him. Noah was the only person who lived right and obeyed God. He had three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. God knew that everyone was terribly cruel and violent. So he told Noah: Cruelty and violence have spread everywhere. Now I’m going to destroy the whole earth and all its people. Get some good lumber and build a boat. Put rooms in it and cover it with tar inside and
out. Make it four hundred fifty feet long, seventy-five feet wide, and forty-five feet high. Build a roof on the boat and leave a space of about eighteen inches between the roof and the sides. Make the boat three stories high and put a door on one side. I'm going to send a flood that will destroy everything that breathes! Nothing will be left alive. But I solemnly promise that you, your wife, your sons, and your daughters-in-law will be kept safe in the boat. Bring into the boat with you a male and a female of every kind of animal and bird, as well as a male and a female of every reptile. I don't want them to be destroyed. Store up enough food both for yourself and for them. Noah did everything the LORD told him to do.

**Gen 7 The Flood**

The LORD told Noah:

Take your whole family with you into the boat, because you are the only one on this earth who pleases me. Take seven pairs of every kind of animal that can be used for sacrifice and one pair of all others. Also take seven pairs of every kind of bird with you. Do this so there will always be animals and birds on the earth. Seven days from now I will send rain that will last for forty days and nights, and I will destroy all other living creatures I have made. Noah was six hundred years old when he went into the boat to escape the flood, and he did everything the LORD had told him to do. His wife, his sons, and his daughters-in-law all went inside with him. He obeyed God and took a male and a female of each kind of animal and bird into the boat with him. Seven days later a flood began to cover the earth.

Noah was six hundred years old when the water under the earth started gushing out everywhere. The sky opened like windows, and rain poured down for forty days and nights. All this began on the seventeenth day of the second month of the year. On that day Noah and his wife went into the boat with their three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and their wives. They took along every kind of animal, tame and wild, including the birds. Noah took a male and a female of every living creature with him, just as God had told him to do. And when they were all in the boat, God closed the door.

For forty days the rain poured down without stopping. And the water became deeper and deeper, until the boat started floating high above the ground. Finally, the mighty flood was so deep that even the highest mountain peaks were almost twenty-five feet below the surface of the water. Not a bird, animal, reptile, or human was left alive anywhere on earth. The LORD destroyed everything that breathed. Nothing was left alive except Noah and the others in the boat. A hundred fifty days later, the water started going down.

**Gen 8 The Water Goes Down**

God did not forget about Noah and the animals with him in the boat. So God made a wind blow, and the water started going down. God stopped up the places where the water had been gushing out from under the earth. He also closed up the sky, and the rain stopped. For one hundred fifty days the water slowly went down. Then on the seventeenth day of the seventh month of the year, the boat came to rest somewhere in the Ararat mountains. The water kept going down, and the mountain tops could be seen on the first day of the tenth month.

Forty days later Noah opened a window to send out a raven, but it kept flying around until the water had dried up. Noah wanted to find out if the water had gone down, and he sent out a dove. Deep water was still everywhere, and the dove could not find a place to land. So it flew back to the boat. Noah held out his hand and helped it back in.

Seven days later Noah sent the dove out again. It returned in the evening, holding in its beak a green leaf from an olive tree. Noah knew that the water was finally going down. He waited seven more days before sending the dove out again, and this time it did not return. Noah was now six hundred years old. And by the first day of that year, almost all the water had gone away. Noah made an opening in the roof of the boat † and saw that the ground was getting dry. By the twenty-seventh day of the second month, the earth was completely dry. God said to Noah, “You, your wife, your sons, and your daughters-in-law may now leave the boat. Let out the birds, animals, and reptiles, so they can mate and live all over the earth.” After Noah and his family had gone out of the boat, the living creatures left in groups of their own kind.

**The LORD's Promise for the Earth**

Noah built an altar where he could offer sacrifices to the LORD. Then he offered on the altar one of each kind of animal and bird that could be used for a sacrifice. ‡ The smell of the burning offering pleased God, and he said: Never again will I punish the earth for the sinful things its people do. All of them have evil thoughts from the time they are young, but I will never destroy everything that breathes, as I did this time.

As long as the earth remains, there will be planting and harvest, cold and heat; winter and summer, day and night.
Gen 9  *God’s Promise to Noah*

God said to Noah and his sons:
I am giving you my blessing. Have a lot of children and grandchildren, so people will live everywhere on this earth.

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**Suggested Assessment Tasks**

Assessment tasks for this unit may include:

**Outcome 1**  List and describe objects, actions or scenes that are beautiful and wondrous.

- Create a collage depicting beautiful and wondrous scenes etc. Children could individually complete this task or work in small groups using a variety of media.
- Make small or large picture books using paintings, photographs, magazine pictures, or other images of objects actions and scenes. Children could write a sentence about the pages.

**Outcome 2**  Students express appreciation for God's gifts through celebrations of song and prayer.


**Outcome 3**  Students identify ways in which they can care for God's world.

- Contribute to a class list of actions on how to care for God’s world.
- Children could draw up a plan for caring for part of the school playground. They could take it in turns to put the plan into action and assess what they have achieved.
- Make posters to encourage other students to care for a section of the school playground etc.

N.B Outcomes 1 and 3 lend themselves to reporting in the dimension of Knowledge and Understanding.

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**Suggested Teaching & Learning Experiences**

**Focusing activity:**

Go for a nature walk, or an excursion. Identify many of the wonderful things in our world. As a class draw up a list of ‘wonderful things’ and then a list of things that ‘weren’t wonderful’ – not being cared for.

- Brainstorm a list of ways they could care for God’s world at home.
- Ps 148: 3, 7-8 To PREPARE TO HEAR the book of Psalms in the Bible and explain that they are prayers of praise and thanks prayed a very long time ago by the people of God. God is in all of creation therefore God is revealed in creation.
- Ps 148: 3, 7-8 To ENCOUNTER the Word, after reading the text, students illustrate and pray the Psalm
- Ps 148: 3, 7-8 To ENCOUNTER the Word after reading the text students identify words in the text that are ‘creation words’
- Ps 148: 3, 7-8 To RESPOND to the Word. Construct a psalm of praise with the class.
  We look up at your heavens, made by your fingers,  
  the__________, the__________,  
  the__________, the__________,  
  the__________, the__________.  
- Ps 148: 3, 7-8 To RESPOND to the Word. Create a mural based on *Psalm 148* using a variety of media i.e. Paint, crayon, leaves etc.
- Display a range of posters and/or paintings that depict the natural world.
• Listen to songs appropriate to the topic, stage of development and interest of students.

• Share literature and Scripture from the student resource list.

• Create a movement activity to break open Psalm 150 musical instruments could be used

• Discuss favourite colours. What messages do colours give us? Why is colour so important?

• Brainstorm the concept of creating something.

• Make an individual or class “Thank you God Prayer” thanking God for all of Creation and celebrating the goodness of God’s creation.

• Classify and sort pictures of things found in nature and those made by people. Take the class outside to a quiet place in the playground or to a park. Use a camera to record the experience for later use. Ask children to sit or lie quietly with their eyes closed, to become aware of the sounds. After a few moments ask then to share what they heard. Repeat the activity for what they can feel and smell. Differentiate between God’s creation and man-made objects

• Class plants a variety of seedlings and cares for them over a period of time. These seedlings are given to others in the community eg. another class.

• Teach the students the song “The Creation Echo” by Mark Bainbridge. Make hand actions to go with the song

• Plan a prayer service.

• Read “Prayer for the Animals” (Wilson, Mark) and then make a class book modelled on this one.

• Set up a nature table.

• Read books that explore the impact that people have had on the world.

• For show and tell invite the children to bring in photos/posters or talk about the beautiful places that they have visited. Invite students to write about what they brought in or talked about.

• Gallery Tour (refer to icon in Planning Tool) of photos or pieces of writing that children have brought to school or discussed during show and tell time.

• Using enlarged copies of Scripture Texts (Psalm 150) and songs for shared reading

• Learn and sing songs of thanks and praise.

• Invite students to participate in a guided meditation.

• Make ‘colourful’ butterflies using 4 colours of paint drops and folding. When dry trace around butterfly shape with black texta, cut out and display.

• Spend some time lying on the grass looking at the clouds in the sky. Discuss shapes of clouds. Draw ‘clouds’ with white pastel then blue food dye over to create a cloud scene.

• Gen 1:1-31 “God created……” Draw boxes of all the things God created.

• Set up a creation display area and sacred space, set aside for prayerful reflections and rituals where children can bring along evidence of God’s creation. Eg. shells, sand, flowers. Use the words, “You give new life to the Earth” Psalm 104.
Students create a Creation Quilt. (picture mind map) (Ryan, Maurice. *Expressions: Book 1*, p.13)

**Resources**

For resources to support this unit, refer to the online planning tool. For additional resources, refer to the Resource Centre Catalogue: [http://www.ceoballarat.catholic.edu.au](http://www.ceoballarat.catholic.edu.au) and follow links to Resource Centre.