Level: 3
Title: FOR CREATION, PRAISE
Strand: GOD: Trinity of Persons, Creator, Communion of Love
Suggested Duration: 4-6 weeks

Unit Focus
In this unit students will gain a deeper understanding of how we can come to know God through our appreciation of nature and recognise God’s divine presence in the wonder and work of creation. The students will be given insight into their responsibility to care for and to conserve our world.

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

Understand we are created in God’s image and called to membership of a loving community.

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

1. Recognise and appreciate the beauty and wonder of God’s creation.
2. Demonstrate an awareness of the need to care for and take responsibility for God’s creation.
3. Devise ways to share God’s creative plan by being stewards of the earth.
4. Retell a creation story from Genesis and a Dreaming Story

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRAND</th>
<th>DOCTRINAL CONCEPTS</th>
<th>CATECHISM REFERENCE</th>
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<tr>
<td>God</td>
<td>1. We are created in God’s image.</td>
<td>42, 214</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. The Scriptures contain many stories and images that give us some insights into</td>
<td>355, 380</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the mystery of God.</td>
<td>2003</td>
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<td>5. We are gifted and graced, able to share in the transforming life of God.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christian Life</td>
<td>2. We are challenged to reflect on the ways we respond to God’s love for us.</td>
<td>125</td>
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Key Understandings for Students
- We have been created in God’s image to love and be loved.
- God’s love is revealed to us through the goodness and compassion of others and through the beauty of God’s creative power.
- Creation reveals the power, beauty, wisdom and creativity of God.
- God’s creation is good.
- God has given us the responsibility to be stewards of the earth. We must care for each other and the environment and use the earth’s resources wisely. In this way we cooperate in God’s creative plan.
- Indigenous people tell of creation through Dreaming stories.

Curriculum Links - VELS
Victorian Essential Learning Standards
The unit *For Creation Praise* can be used to assess a range of VELS. The table below gives examples of how Level 3 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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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical, Personal and Social Learning</td>
<td>Interpersonal Development</td>
<td>Building Social Relationships</td>
<td>“…demonstrate respect for others and exhibit appropriate behaviour for maintaining friendships with other people. They support each other by sharing ideas and materials, offering assistance, giving appropriate feedback and acknowledging individual differences. They work with others to reduce, avoid and resolve conflict.”</td>
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<td>Working In Teams</td>
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<td>“…cooperate with others in teams for agreed purposes, taking roles and following guidelines established within the task. They describe and evaluate their own contribution and the team’s progress towards the achievement of agreed goals.”</td>
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<td>Civics and Citizenship</td>
<td>Community Engagement</td>
<td></td>
<td>“…contribute to the development and support of class rules and participate in school celebrations and commemorations of important events. They describe some of the roles and purposes of groups in the community. They work with other students to identify a local issue and plan possible actions to achieve a desired outcome. They describe the benefits of action at the local level and the democratic aspects of the process. They participate in activities to protect and care for the natural and built environment.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interdisciplinary Learning</td>
<td>Information and Communications Technology</td>
<td>ICT for Visual Thinking</td>
<td>“…use ICT tools to list ideas, order them into logical sequences, and identify relationships between them. Students retrieve their saved visualising thinking strategies and edit them for use in new, but similar situations. They explain how these strategies can be used for different problems or situations.”</td>
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<td>ICT For Creating</td>
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<td>“…create information products to assist in problem solving in all areas of the curriculum. With minimal assistance, students use ICT tools to capture and save images. They use simple editing functions to manipulate the images for use in their products.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thinking</td>
<td>Reasoning, processing and inquiry</td>
<td></td>
<td>“…collect information from a range of sources to answer their own and others’ questions. They question the validity of sources when appropriate. They apply thinking strategies to organise information and concepts in a variety of contexts, including problem solving activities. They provide reasons for their conclusions.”</td>
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<td>Creativity</td>
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<td>“…apply creative ideas in practical ways and test the possibilities of ideas they generate. They use open-ended questioning and integrate available information to explore ideas.”</td>
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Reflection, evaluation and meta-cognition - “identify strategies they use to organise their ideas, and use appropriate language to explain their thinking. They identify and provide reasons for their point of view, and justify changes in their thinking.”

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<th>Curriculum Framework Context</th>
<th>Level 2</th>
<th>Level 3</th>
<th>Level 4</th>
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<td>Creation</td>
<td>For Creation Praise</td>
<td>Harmony in Creation, Our Responsibility</td>
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**Student Context**

Students at this age have a sense of wonder of the world and will generally be very concerned about the state of the global environment. They will be aware of various conservation practices and be able to express their concerns for the preservation of our environment. Students have an awareness of various environmental groups and may express their desire for an ideal world, often without making a connection between their care of the local environment and the bigger picture. Students need to be given experiences to deepen their appreciation of their role in God’s creation. Opportunities need to be made available for the students to reflect on God’s love being revealed to us through all of creation.

In the selection of content and the design of the educational process it is important that students are able to relate selected global, national and local environmental problems to decisions made by themselves, their families and school community. In providing opportunities for students to be actively involved in the conservation and preservation of their immediate environment, we can inspire them with the realisation that individuals and small communities can make a difference.

**Theological Background for Teachers**

- “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen 1:1). The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* says that Creation is the foundation of “all God’s saving plans,” the “beginning of the history of salvation” that culminates in Christ. (CCC, # 280)

- God’s love is revealed to us through the mystery of creation. “God progressively revealed to Israel this mystery. He who chose the patriarchs, who brought Israel out of Egypt, and who by choosing Israel created and formed it, this same God reveals himself as the One to whom belong all the peoples of the earth, and the whole earth itself; he is the One who made heaven and earth.” (CCC, # 287)

- The doctrine of creation is intimately connected with our belief in God. Creation has its origins in God’s creative word, and constantly depends upon God for continual existence. Creation is an act of the outpouring of divine love and goodness that are expressed in the extraordinary diversity of the universe.

- The Bible begins with two accounts of creation. Such stories do not offer scientific explanation of the origin and the nature of the universe. Rather, they deal with the religious questions of purpose and our relationship with the Creator. The two creation narratives, while different in detail, portray the same revelation: there is one God who is the origin of all being, who made man and woman equal in dignity and for the same destiny of living in God’s presence.

- The greater our scientific knowledge, the more aware we become of the marvellous inter-relationship between every element of the created universe. Nothing exists of itself.

- “Creation exists only in dependence on each other, to complete each other, in the service of each other.” (CCC, # 340)

- The Genesis creation stories reveal that humans are free beings who must accept responsibilities for their decisions. Human beings are an integral part of creation and have a role in preserving and furthering it.

**Scripture**

*Teacher Reference (NRSV)*

Sir 43:13-20 - *The Marvels of Nature*

By his command he sends the driving snow and speeds the lightnings of his judgement.
Therefore the storehouses are opened, and the clouds fly out like birds. In his majesty he gives the clouds their strength, and the hailstones are broken in pieces. The voice of his thunder rebukes the earth; when he appears the mountains shake. At his will the south wind blows; so do the storm from the north and the whirlwind. He scatters the snow like birds flying down, and its descent is like locusts alighting. The eye is dazzled by the beauty of its whiteness, and the mind is amazed as it falls. He pours frost over the earth like salt, and icicles form like pointed thorns. The cold north wind blows, the ice freezes on the water; it settles on every pool of water, and the water puts it on like a breastplate.

Student References (NRSV)

Ps 148:1-13
Praise the LORD!
Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise him in the heights!
Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his host!
Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars!
Praise him, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens!
Let them praise the name of the LORD, for he commanded and they were created.
He established them forever and ever; he fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed.
Praise the LORD from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps,
fire and hail, snow and frost, stormy wind fulfilling his command!
Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars!
Wild animals and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds!
Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the earth!
Young men and women alike, old and young together!
Let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is exalted;
His glory is above earth and heaven.

Gen 1:26, 31  Made in God’s image
Then God said, “Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth. God saw everything he had made, and indeed, it was very good.

1 Jn 3:1  Children of God
See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are.

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**Suggested Assessment Tasks**

**Assessment tasks for this unit may include:**

**Outcome 1**  Students recognise and appreciate the beauty and wonder of God’s creation.
- Students write their own psalm of praise and present as a PowerPoint or artwork, based on the example of Psalm 148.

**Outcome 2**  Students demonstrate an awareness of the need to care for and take responsibility for God’s creation.
- Students examine an environmental issue, identify the root cause of the problem and develop an action plan to help solve the problem, for example planting trees in local area. Write a report on the process.

**Outcome 3**  Students devise ways to share God’s creative plan by being stewards of the earth.
- Students prepare their own Stewardship Agreements, stating the ways that they intend to be co-creators of God’s creation.

**Outcome 4**  Students retell a creation story from Genesis and a Dreaming Story
- Students retell a creation story from Genesis and a Dreaming story using both text & illustrations.

**N.B**  Outcomes 2, 3 & 4 lend themselves to reporting in the dimension of Knowledge and Understanding.

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**Suggested Teaching & Learning Experiences**
Focusing Activity

Read the story “Where the Forest Meets the Sea” by Jeannie Baker and share their experiences of being somewhere where they have been in awe of creation.

- Read Andrew Chin’s picture story book ‘In the Beginning’, play song. Learn song, with actions, for Liturgy of the Word at the completion of unit. To which of the creation stories does this relate?
- After reading 'Where the Forest meets the Sea' students make a collage of their favourite creation images and find music to match it, present to class.
- Examine various Dreaming stories. Students explore the meaning of the story through music, painting, movement or writing.
- Using digital camera images create a slideshow of the beauty and wonder of God's creation.
- Read the book, All I Wanted to Know All about God by Virginia L. Kroll and name the ways in which God has been revealed to the characters in the story. Use the format of the story to create a class big book and have different groups work on the illustrations for each page.
- After reading Grandad’s Prayers of the Earth invite students to create a collage or painting of their interpretation of their own prayer of the earth.
- Read Psalm 148. Examine St Francis of Assisi’s Canticle of Creation and note the influence of Psalm 148 on St Francis’ Canticle of Creation. Students write their own psalm of praise for the gift of God’s love in creation.
- In response to reading 'Born with a Bang', The Universe Tells our Cosmic Story by J Morgan, investigate some scientific data about understandings of how the universe has developed. Decide on some particular dates and make a human timeline.
- Watch the video The Garden Planet-The Call To Ecological Conversion by Catholic Earthcare Australia and write a factual report. Reflect on the following questions: What is ecological conversion? Why do we need to think about ecological conversion? What can we do to work toward ecological conversion?
- Identify a local environmental issue and devise class action plan. Record action plan progress.
- Participate in some class Guided Meditation experiences using material from Michael Mangan’s Be Still: Creation Meditations. Incorporate these into a class prayer celebration.
- Students explore website http://kids4truth.com/eng_creation.htm This site shows the first (seven days) creation story in Genesis.
- Examine the structure of a prayer of praise see M.Ryan Expressions 1 p 44-46.
- Students write their own psalms of praise and present as a PowerPoint presentation.

Ps 148:1-13 To PREPARE TO HEAR the Word – The psalms are essentially prayer and are a response to the presence of God in their everyday lives. The three key themes of the psalms – God who rules over Creation – prayer, petition and lament – hymns for liturgy, especially involving kings. The 150 psalms that are in the Bible were written over a long period of time by many psalmists.

Ps 148:1-13 To ENCOUNTER the Word after reading the text from the bible, students illustrate the ‘for’ parts in the Psalm.
- Ps 148:1-13 To RESPOND to the Word – explain that Psalms have a specific structure – Begins with an invitation to Praise then proclaims the wonders that God has performed and concludes with a blessing. Students write their own Psalm (Assessment task 1)

- Ps 148:1-13 To RESPOND to the Word – students write their own ‘stewardship agreement’ stating their role in creation

- Ps 148:1-13 To RESPOND to the Word – students prepare a liturgical movement in response to Michael Mangan’s ‘Song of Cosmic Praise’.

- Read 'The Rainbow Serpent' and list the things created by the serpent.

- Read the Creation Story from the Bible and list the things created.

- As a class create a word web/mind map of all the different environments they encounter eg. coastal, bush, town, country. Reflect on how these environments contribute to their quality of life eg. when do you experience them, how do they make you feel, how do we look after them

- Students gather various items and sort them into those that are human made or found in nature.

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**Resources**

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