

RELIGIOUS
EDUCATION
DIRECTORY

SPIRIT AND LIFE

KEY STAGE 3

BOOK 1

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Religious
Education
Directory

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life (live); as part of the live lens it provides students with the study of a rich mix of philosophical and ethical issues, artistic expression, and lived religion elements in each year of their study; it is reflective of the global nature of Catholicism and is inclusive of the diverse cultural expressions of Catholic faith and life; it presents learning in an age-appropriate sequential way designed to maximise progress.

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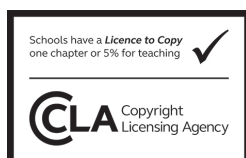
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How to use this book

This book has been designed to cover the new Religious Education Directory (RED) for Catholic schools. To reflect the six branches of the RED, the book is divided into six chapters: Creation and covenant, Prophecy and promise, Galilee to Jerusalem, Desert to garden, To the ends of the earth and Dialogue and encounter.

Each chapter is divided into topics, with every topic on a new double-page spread. Some topics extend across more than one spread to enable you to explore them in a greater depth. In every topic, you will find features to help you discover, understand and build knowledge about Catholic teaching and practice.

Below is a sample double-page spread to show you some of the features you will find throughout the book and how they work.

Key words:
Definitions of the terminology you need to know.

Links: Links between topics are highlighted to help you revisit and recap what you have already covered or to see how different parts of the course connect together.

Images: Illustrations, photos and artwork to bring the topic to life.

1.6 Is there a conflict between religion and science?

Key words

- variations** – differences within a species, such as different shaped beaks
- natural selection** – the theory that the most advantageous characteristics are passed on. Those with the characteristics survive and those without them die out
- survival of the fittest** – the theory that those with the best adapted characteristics for the environment will survive
- evolution** – the theory that creatures adapt and change over time and new species emerge from these changes
- advantageous** – something that brings an advantage or benefit
- Big Bang theory** – a scientific theory that proposed the universe began with a massive explosion

The Big Bang theory

- The Big Bang is a theory about how the universe began. It became widely accepted in the 1960s.
- In 1927 Georges Lemaitre, a Catholic scientist and priest, proposed that galaxies are moving away from each other.
- Others, including Edwin Hubble, built on his theory. They concluded that the universe began from a 'Big Bang', a violent explosion that led to all matter and space expanding from a single point. The universe has been expanding ever since.
- The **Big Bang theory** proposes that the universe began about 13.8 billion years ago.

Challenges to Genesis

The Big Bang theory suggests that the universe was begun by chance, accident or even error, but not in the planned and ordered way that many Christians believe the world was created by God. If the world could come to exist in this way, some people argue there is no need to believe in a God who created everything.

Compatibility of the Catholic religion and science

Many people have a religious faith but also accept scientific theories. Catholic beliefs are neither scientific or creationist. Catholics believe that the creation accounts and scientific accounts of creation are compatible. This is called **Compatibilism**. They each have different things to offer people. Catholics therefore believe:

- The creation stories are the word of God. They teach important truths about God, the world and human beings but they are not a factual explanation of how God created the universe.
- Science teaches them the details about how the world came to be but doesn't deal with the things that Genesis reveals to us. Science doesn't have all the answers.
- They need both the creation stories of Genesis and scientific theories to have a full understanding of the origins of the universe.

What does the Church say on the matter?

The First Vatican Council of 1870 taught that because the same God reveals faith to us and created us with the ability to think and weigh things up (called 'reason') they shouldn't conflict with each other. If they seem to conflict, this is a mistake and Catholics must work hard to understand what their religion teaches them and what reason teaches them.

When addressing the Pontifical Academy of Sciences in 1996, Pope St John Paul II reminded the audience of this:

How do the conclusions reached by the various scientific disciplines coincide with those contained in the message of revelation? And if, at first sight, there are apparent contradictions, in what direction do we look for their solution? We know, in fact, that truth cannot contradict truth. (Pope St John Paul II)

Therefore, science and religion cannot conflict with one another because they both have their origins in God. If they appear to contradict each other, people must try harder to understand how they are, in fact, compatible!

An example of this issue could be the creation stories in Genesis:

- Science (genus) tells me:
 - The world was created by a big bang.
 - All life has evolved.
 - Human life evolved over billions of years.
- Scripture (religion) tells me:
 - The world was made by God out of nothing.
 - The universe was created in six days.
 - Human beings were made by God on the sixth day.

Understand

Imagine you are a journalist. Write a newspaper article to explain how some people believe the Big Bang theory challenges Christian beliefs that God created the universe. Include details about the Big Bang theory and Christian beliefs about creation in your article.

Understand

Demonstrate the range of views described above in a diagram of your choice. Include Creationism, Scientism and Compatibilism – the view of the Catholic Church. Show where they agree and disagree and what they each believe.

Think

These statements appear to contradict each other. At first glance they cannot both be true, but 'truth cannot contradict truth', therefore I do not need to choose between them. So how can I understand them so that they are compatible?

22

23

Tasks: Understand, Discern and Respond tasks help you to remember, interpret and reflect on what you have learnt.

Extracts: Key passages from the Bible and Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) presented clearly.

Think: A question to get you thinking about a topic before diving in.

1

Creation and covenant

In this chapter you will explore:

- the mystery of God and how God reveals himself to human beings
- how Catholics read and understand the Bible
- important beliefs about God, the world and human beings through the study of the two creation accounts in the book of Genesis at the beginning of the Bible
- that the Catholic Church teaches that scientific beliefs about the beginning of the universe are compatible with beliefs from Genesis
- **prayer** as a human response to God
- connections between these beliefs and the lives of Catholics.



Respond

This is one of the most famous pictures of planet Earth. It was given the name the 'blue marble'. It was one of the very earliest full-view, colour images of Earth seen from space.

1 Imagine you were the very first person in human history to view Earth from space. What words would describe what is in your mind and heart?

2 Yuri Gagarin was the first person to have this privilege, in 1961. Among the things he said were:

- 'I see Earth! It is so beautiful.'
- 'The feelings which filled me I can express with one word – joy.'

Do you think viewing Earth in this way would:

- a increase your belief that God had created the world?
- b inspire you to take responsibility for it?

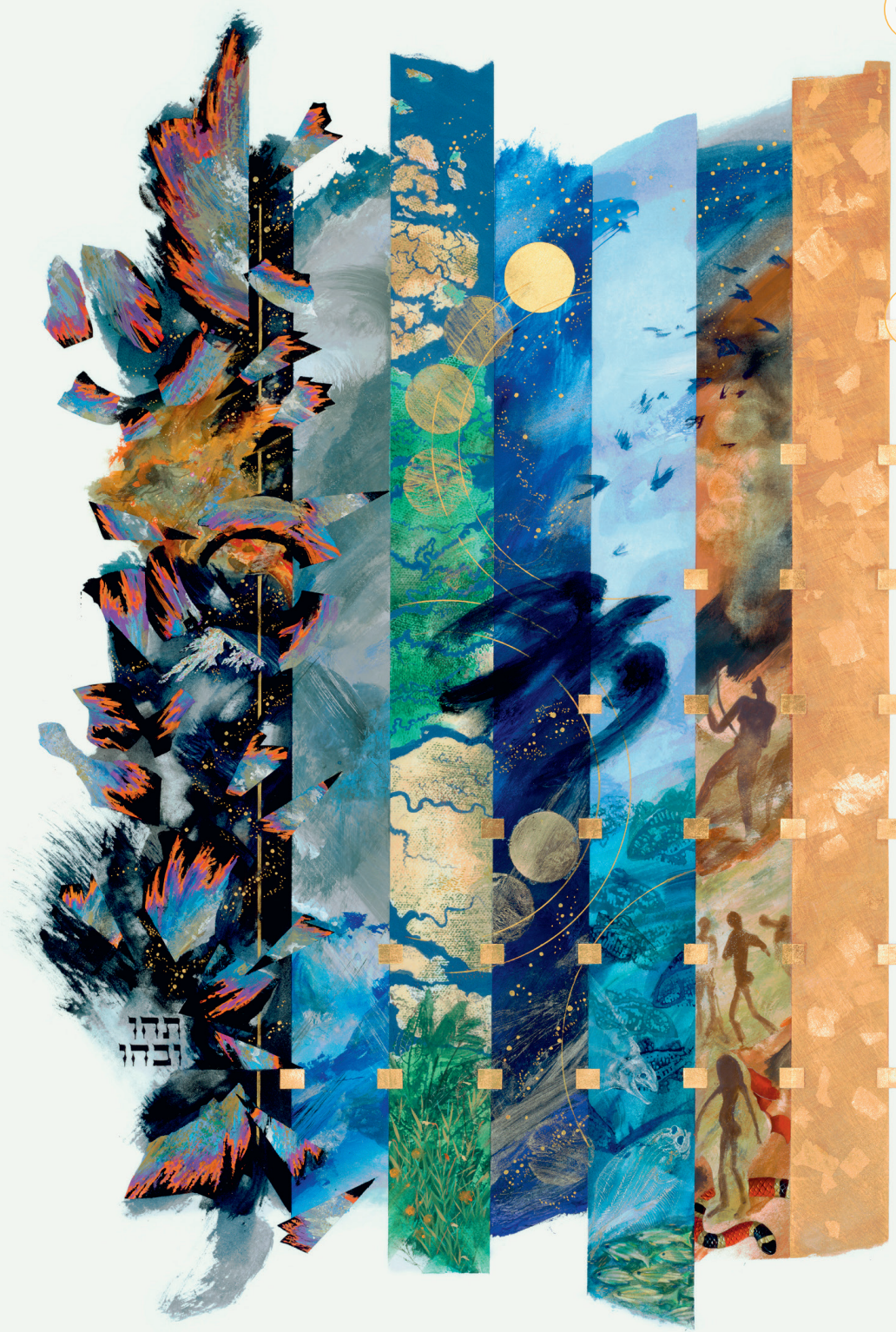
Give reasons for your answers.



Think

What questions do you have about this topic? Ask your teacher if these might be covered in this chapter.





Discern

- 3 What beliefs about the creation of the world do you think are shown in this picture?



Discern

- 4 Discuss your thoughts. What questions do you have about the picture? Can you begin to answer each other's questions?

Key word

prayer – a way for believers to communicate with God

▲ St John's Bible is a handwritten and beautifully decorated Bible. It was begun in 1998 and involved many scribes, artists and Catholic theologians. It was overseen by St John's University in Minnesota, USA, and mostly created in Wales. This is the frontispiece for the Bible – the illustration of creation. You will be looking at this artwork in detail later in this chapter

The mystery of God

Much of what Catholics understand about God is a mystery. Hearing this word in everyday life might make people think of detectives who are trying to gather clues to find an answer. This not what the Church means by a mystery. Instead, it is something that lies beyond people's finite (limited) understanding. Because God is God and people are human beings, people can understand partly, but not fully.

However, just because something is beyond our understanding doesn't mean it is not true. There are different ways of knowing things to be true. Read through this thought experiment:

It is Christmas, and you see a present for you under the tree. You know *that* you have a present. But what is it?

How do you know what it is?

You make some guesses by looking at the shape of it under the wrapping paper. When you unwrap it on Christmas Day, you know *what* it is.

That mystery is solved! Not all mysteries are that simple though. God is not a mystery in this way.

Some mysteries cannot be completely solved

Read through this second thought experiment:

You are in a new school and feel lonely. Another new student sits near you and smiles. This person wants to be your friend. Over time, you become really good friends. You know *that* you have a friend and *what* good friendship feels like. But there's something more: you know *who* your friend is.

The mystery of 'who' someone is can never be completely solved.

A person, no matter how well you know them, can always be a mystery to you because they can always do something to surprise you. You will say that you know your friend, and you are right, but you never *entirely* know another person. They will always remain a bit of a mystery (even to themselves!).

Catholics believe the same can be said of the friendship they have with God but on a much bigger scale. God is a mystery and getting to know God is a journey of belief.

In the next topic, you will look at how Catholics believe people can come to know God. However, they believe that their knowledge of God will always be partial because they are humans and God is a mystery.



▲ Presents on Christmas Day



Understand

- 1 What is the difference between a mystery in the Church and other types of mystery?



Respond

- 2 Is it difficult to learn that God is a mystery? Give reasons for your answer.

Can we know what God is like?

One of the challenges of knowing what God is like is presented in the **Catechism** of the Catholic Church (CCC):

Our human words always fall short of the mystery of God. (CCC 42)

Some people use an **analogy**, which is when you compare something with something else. For example, some might say God is *like* an artist. Catholics believe that God is the creator of all things, so it makes sense to think of him as an artist.

However, the analogy of God as an artist is quite limited. Human artists use materials (paint, canvas, wood, stone, etc.) whereas Catholics believe God creates **ex nihilo** – from nothing. Another reason God is not like an artist is because when an artist has completed their work, they stop. This is not how Catholics believe God works. St Paul taught that God is the creator and origin of all. He said:

In him we live and move and have our being. (Acts 17:28)

In this short verse we learn lots about what Catholics believe about God. This teaches us he is the creator of all, but more than that, God's power keeps everything in existence. Without it everything would stop existing. This is what it means to call God the **sustainer**.



▲ Some believe that God is like a potter

Key words

Catechism – the book that contains a summary of all the beliefs of the Catholic Church

analogy – comparing one thing to another to explain something

ex nihilo – Latin for 'out of nothing'. Catholics believe God created the world 'out of nothing'

sustainer – someone who maintains something. God is a sustainer

Jerusalem – an important holy city for Jewish people

Discern

3 Read the following two analogies and choose the one you like best.

But now, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. (Isaiah 64:8)

As one whom his mother comforts, so I will comfort you; you shall be comforted in **Jerusalem**. (Isaiah 66:13)

- What do you think of when you think of a mother or a potter?
- What could that tell us about God?
- What are the limitations of describing God in that way?

Understand

4 Explain what it means to speak of God as the creator and origin of all being? Refer to Acts 17:28 in your answer.

1.2

What is revelation? How can people know about God?

Link

In Chapter 2 you will study Catholic beliefs about how God is revealed through special revelation – scripture and tradition (the Church). In Chapter 3 you will also learn that the ultimate revelation is Jesus Christ.



◀ We can know God through his works



◀ We can use our God given reason to come to know God



◀ We can meet God through our conscience

Key words

revelation – how God makes himself known to human beings

general revelation – knowledge of God revealed through human reason, experience and the created world

conscience – the faculty to know right from wrong. It is a guide to moral decision-making. Catholics believe it is God-given

special revelation – knowledge of God revealed through the Bible and the teachings of the Church

scripture – the sacred writings of Christianity written in the Bible

Revelation

When we reveal something, we make something known to others that they didn't know before, like when we 'reveal' a secret or a plan. **Revelation** is the word Christians give to how we know about God, what God is and what God means. It is how God reveals or makes himself known to people.

God is the source or origin of all revelation, but Catholics believe there are two types of revelation.

General revelation

This is knowledge God reveals about himself through natural means, for example:

- Reason – Humans have the ability to think things through and weigh things up; this is called reason. Catholics believe this ability was given by God. By using our reason to weigh up answers to big questions, humans can come to the conclusions that the answers are in God.
- Nature – Human beings use their reason to think deeply about nature. Catholics believe God made the world, so through God's works we can learn about him. For example, someone might say 'When I look at the world, I can conclude that something so complex and wonderful must have had a creator – and that creator is good and powerful and imaginative!'
- Conscience – This is the ability to make decisions about right and wrong. Catholics believe this ability is also God given. They can meet God in their **conscience** when they think deeply about making the right choices.

Special revelation

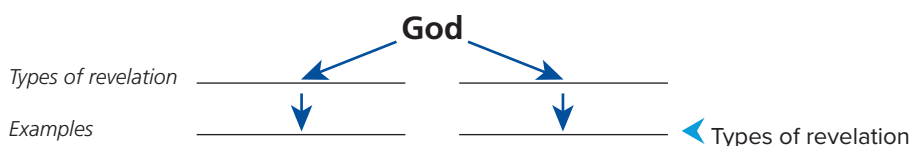
General revelation can only reveal so much about God. Catholics also rely on **special revelation** for God to make himself known. This is knowledge God reveals about himself that people can't come to know through natural means. This is revealed by **scripture** or the Church.

For example, the belief in Jesus Christ as God who has become man is revealed through the Bible and not by using our own reason.



Understand

- 1 Copy and complete this diagram to show what Catholics believe about revelation.



- 2 Copy and complete the table to show the difference between special and general revelation.

Special revelation	General revelation

Revelation through the Bible

An important way that Christians know about God is through revelation in the Bible.

The Bible is a collection of books written at different times and by different authors. The books of the Bible contain writings of different **literary forms**, such as law, prophecy, poetry, history, Gospels and letters. For Catholics, these all have a different purpose. Think of a newspaper that contains news articles, comics and advice columns. These are all meant to be read differently because they have a different purpose. Catholics believe that the different literary forms in the Bible work in a similar way. For instance, a poem in the Bible has a different purpose from a letter or the law.

Catholics believe that understanding the purpose of the different literary forms in the Bible is very important. If a reader misunderstands, they might read something in the Bible in a way that was not intended, like if you read a comic strip as the news!

Symbolic stories

One of the literary forms in the Bible is symbolic story. Symbolic writing is not to be taken literally, but is used to explain something deeper. Catholics do not read these parts of the Bible as fact. Instead, they learn important truths from them about God, human beings and the world – something deeper than what the stories say.

The creation accounts are found at the beginning of the Bible in the book of Genesis. These are examples of **symbolic stories**. You are going to look at these stories more closely and explore the purpose of this literary form in the next section.



Understand

- 3 Why would a Catholic say it is important to know whether the passage you are reading in the Bible is a symbolic story? Support your answer with examples.
- 4 Define the following in relation to reading the Bible:
 - literally
 - using the literal sense.



Think

What is a symbol? What might symbolic writing be?



Link

In Chapter 2 you will investigate the different literary forms in the Bible in more detail.



Understand

- 5 Write a brief blurb to go on the back of the Bible to describe what types of literary forms readers will find inside.

The literal sense of scripture

Some Christians have a literalist approach to the Bible. They are called **Fundamentalists**. They read it like a factual book that records events exactly as they happened. They believe that it is all literally true.

This is not how Catholics read the Bible. Catholics do not take the Bible literally. They do, however, read the Bible using the **literal sense**. This means asking 'What is the intended meaning of this passage?' when you read it. When Catholics read scripture, they must think about:

- What is the literary form? What is the purpose of that form?
- What was happening at the time that the author wrote this?
- What was the original inspired human author intending to tell the reader?

Sometimes this means that Catholics do read a part of the Bible literally, but only after careful study and consideration! The Church gives guidance on how different parts of the Bible should be read.

Key words

literary forms – different types of writing, for example poetry and letters

symbolic stories – stories that are not meant to be taken literally but are important because of what they teach us

Fundamentalists – a group of Christians who take the Bible literally

literal sense – the meaning, taking in to account the author, the time it was written and the literary form



Think

What do you already know about what the Bible says about how the world was created?

Key words

biblical scholars – people who study the Bible and try to understand it in its original context

source – the person, place, thing or book from which something comes or is obtained

priest – a person who ministers sacred rites to a community

shrines – sacred or holy spaces dedicated to God or someone holy such as a saint

rituals – a ceremony (often religious) with a fixed set of actions in a particular order

orally – passed on by word of mouth

transcendent – above and independent from his creation

anthropomorphic – projecting human qualities onto a being which is not human (for example, onto God)

immanent – present and active in the world



Think

What do you notice about the way that this first account of creation is written?

At the beginning of the Bible in the book of Genesis there are two creation stories that differ in style and content. Most **biblical scholars** accept that they were written by two different authors or groups of authors.

These two accounts are sometimes seen as parts of the same story that work together. The first account gives a bigger picture of creation, while the second account fills in some details. Others see them as separate attempts to address the same big questions about creation.



▲ The first creation account in the Bible ends: 'And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good' (Genesis 1:31)



Understand

- 1 Find Genesis 1–2:4 in your Bible. Read it through twice. The first time, just read the passage. The second time you read it, make a note of the order of events in this account.

Who wrote this first account of creation?

Remember that one of the important things for Catholics to consider when reading scripture in the literal sense is the human author. Each human author of scripture will bring something of themselves to the writing. They will have been influenced by things such as their situation, experiences and culture.

The different styles of writing in the first five books of the Bible (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy) have led scholars to believe there are several **sources** of writing which have been pulled together. One of the sources is called the Priestly source or 'P'. This is because it focuses on the role of **priests** and priestly matters such as religious laws, **shrines** and **rituals**. The first creation account in Genesis is thought to come from P.

What is P's approach?

This is a very organised piece of writing. This has led many scholars to believe that it was first written as a poem or a hymn and that, before it was a written part of scripture, it had been passed on **orally**. At the start of this account, nothing exists. Then phrases and a pattern of writing repeats, describing how the entire universe is created in six days until God rests on the sabbath.

The author of this account uses the word 'Elohim', meaning 'God'. The first creation account is written from a cosmic perspective – God is in the heavens looking down on the earth he is creating. God is shown to be **transcendent**. In this context this means he is above, and independent from, the universe and not under its limitations like the rest of creation. Think of all the laws of the universe that apply to humans – they don't apply to God! For example, unlike a person, God does not need ingredients or materials to create something.



Understand

- 2 In your Bible, read Genesis 2:5–25 twice through. The first time, make notes on the order of events. The second time, compare it with the first creation account by making notes in a table under these headings:

	Similarities with Genesis 1–2:4	Differences from Genesis 1–2:4
Creation		
Humans		
God		

Source of the second creation account

The second creation account is found in Genesis 2:5–25. The source for this account is called 'J' because the writer uses the word 'Yahweh' for God ('Jahweh' in German). This account is in a different style from Genesis 1 – it is a narrative story. In this account, the earth already exists as a barren place. The story is then a vivid and imaginative story of how the rest of creation comes to be. It also contains examples of tensions such as 'it is not good that the man should be alone' (Genesis 2:18) and resolutions to these such as the creation of Eve (Genesis 1:20–22).

What is J's approach?

In this story, God displays different characteristics to those in the first account. Catholics believe that this shows different aspects of what God is like. It shows an **anthropomorphic** image of God. This means that God is shown with human characteristics: God uses his 'hands' and 'walks' and 'talks' with Adam. This reveals that God has a personal relationship with human beings.

In the first creation account, the quality used to describe God is 'transcendence'. This second account doesn't show God's transcendence; the quality given to God in this account is 'immanence'. **Immanent** means he is present in the physical world and close to humans in many ways.



Understand

- 3 Contrast the two authors of the creation accounts in Genesis. Highlight the statements below in two different colours or create a table to show which apply to P and which apply to J.

Poem or hymn	Human perspective	Uses Elohim for God
Cosmic/heavenly perspective of creation	Anthropomorphic image of God	Emphasis on God as divine
Uses Yahweh for God	Written as a story	God is immanent
God is transcendent	Sacred author is known as P or Priestly source	Sacred author is known as J or Yahwist source



Respond

- 4 Having read both creation stories, which do you prefer? Give reasons for your answer.

What do the creation accounts teach Catholics about God?

?

Think

What do you think the author of the first creation account (P) wants to tell readers about God?



Understand

1 Define the following terms:

- omnipotent
- *ex nihilo*
- transcendent
- eternal
- 'bara'

Key words

eternal – everlasting

omnipotent – all-powerful

monotheism – the belief that there is only one God

Remember, when Catholics read the creation accounts, they do not read them literally. Instead, they read them as a symbolic story that tells them important things about God, creation and human beings.

God the creator

The first creation account in Genesis reveals some important beliefs about God. Some of these are found in just the first sentence.

God gave a beginning to all that exists outside himself.

All that exists depends on the God who created it.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. (Genesis 1:1)

The Hebrew word for create is 'Bara', which is closer to 'put into order' than 'to build'. He uses his power to bring order to the universe. 'Bara' is only ever used when it is God who is creating.

On page 9, you saw how one of the things Catholics believe about God is that nothing existed before he created the universe, only God. He created the universe *ex nihilo* – 'out of nothing'. God doesn't require materials to create like humans do. Nothing exists that was not called into being by God. This is linked to another of God's qualities, that he has no end and he had no beginning – he is **eternal**. When people ask the question 'so, who made God?' when thinking about creation, they haven't understood that no one made God as there was never a time when God didn't exist.

The reader is told that God commanded the universe to come into existence. He repeatedly uses the words 'let there be'. At his command, things come to exist! This shows that God is **omnipotent** – 'all-powerful'. In this account, creation is not hard work for God.

Differences from other creation myths

Unlike other creation myths at the time, the Genesis creation accounts showed that there was only one God (not the Sun god or planetary gods, for example). This is called **monotheism**.

Genesis also emphasises the goodness of God's creation. In the other myths there was destruction and chaos that led to creation. The Genesis account is in opposition to this. What God creates is wholly good: 'And God saw that it was good' (Genesis 1:10). The universe God created is originally in harmony.



Understand

2 Read through the first creation account and find extracts that support the following Catholic beliefs about God:

- brings order to creation
- is omnipotent
- created the world *ex nihilo*
- is transcendent
- is eternal
- created a good world.

Highlight them in different colours if you can, and create a key.

(Note: They might overlap!)

3 Explain what Catholics can learn about God from the first creation account. Use the key words you have learnt in your answer and support it with evidence from the CCC and Genesis 1:1–27.

God the sustainer

Remember, Catholics do not believe that God created the world and then stepped back. They believe that he is a sustainer. If something is sustained or sustainable, it means it can carry on. God continues to keep the universe in existence.

Everything that exists depends on God and continues in being only because God wills it to be. (Youth Catechism (YouCat) 44)

Human beings – created in the image of God

A very important Catholic belief is that human beings are made in God's image.

How is the creation of human beings described in the Bible?

In the first creation account it says:

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. (Genesis 1:27)

This passage tells us clearly that all human beings are made *imago Dei* – 'in the image of God'.

In the second creation account, it says that God creates all the animals on the earth and gives them life, but human beings are distinct from the rest of creation because they are brought to life when God breathes life into them.

... then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature. (Genesis 2:7)

Catholics believe from this that God has created and given to each person a unique and immortal soul – the spiritual part of human beings that lives on after we die.



Discern

4 'God made the world and then stepped back, leaving us to it.' Do you agree? How would a Catholic respond?



Think

What do you remember about the way that human beings are created in the Genesis accounts compared to the rest of creation in the Genesis accounts?

Key word

imago Dei – Latin for 'in the image of God'



▲ Catholics believe all human beings are made in God's image. All are equal and precious

What does it mean to be made in God's image?

Being made in God's image does not mean that people look like God or that people are mini-gods. It means that humans share some qualities with God that the rest of creation doesn't have. Human beings are the only part of God's creation that were 'willed for its own sake' and 'able to know and love his creator' (CCC 356). Unlike the rest of creation, human beings are a *someone* rather than a *something*.

Catholics believe that human beings are very different from other creatures in God's creation. People:

- can be creative
- can use their abilities of reason to make choices
- can make promises freely and keep them
- are self-aware.

What does this mean for Catholics?

This belief in *imago Dei* is so important to Catholics in several ways:

- From the very beginning, human beings were made to be distinct from the rest of creation. Human beings are special.
- Because God has given humans some of his characteristics, people can have a close relationship with God.
- All human beings are equal and people should treat each other with love and respect because everyone is created *imago Dei*.
- Human beings have a God-given role of looking after creation.

The belief that humans are *imago Dei* also links to the Catholic belief that humans were created to eventually be with God in heaven.



Understand

- 5 Create an exciting 'Product description' of a human being.
 - Compare and contrast them with other creatures.
 - Emphasise their unique qualities and capabilities.
 - Be sure to emphasise they are made in God's image and what that means.
 - Describe the equality between all the different 'models' of the versions of the human being!
 - Describe the purpose of human beings.



Think

Reread the first Creation account. Find the only creature God addresses as 'you'. What do you think is the significance of this?

**Think**

What do you think of when you hear the word 'prayer'?

Can people communicate with God?

The findings from the survey on prayer show us that many different people are drawn to praying and for different reasons. Many people from all different faiths, and sometimes no faith at all, pray.

Catholics believe that we are drawn to praying because we are responding to God who speaks to us first, through his creation and through our reason and conscience.

Catholics also believe that one thing unique to human beings is that because they are made in his image they can have a close and personal relationship with God. Just like any of our relationships, to keep it going we need to communicate and keep in touch – praying is the way that we can do that with God.

Prayer is the 'raising of heart and mind to God' (CCC 2569). This means we make our selves fully present to God and relate to him fully. By doing this we can grow closer to him and 'walk with God' in our lives.

**Respond**

- 6 Can you think of a time when you found it easy to pray, and a time you found it difficult?

**Understand**

- 7 What do Catholics believe about:
- what prayer is?
 - why we pray?
 - what can happen when we pray?

Link

Learning about prayer is an important part of this course!

- In Chapter 2 you will learn about how scripture is used in prayer.
- In Chapter 4 you will learn more about how prayer is part of Christian life and about the different forms of prayer.

**Think**

Look at the following findings from a survey of people in the UK about prayer. Is there anything you find surprising?

In a recent survey, British people (of all faiths and none) were asked 'How often do you pray?'

- 51% said they pray – this might be often or rarely
- More than half said they pray in times of crisis
- A fifth said they pray whilst at home, doing ordinary household activities
- A fifth said that they were not religious.

When asked 'What kinds of things do you pray about?'

- Most said they pray for family
 - Two fifths said they praise and worship God in their prayer
 - About two fifths said they pray for guidance
 - A fifth said they confess their **sins** and ask forgiveness in their prayer
- Personal crisis or tragedy were the most common reasons for prayer in those people who said they were not religious. Some of these people also said prayer makes them feel less lonely. One man said he prayed regularly and couldn't really give clear reasons why.*

Key word

sin – an offence against God

Many artworks have been inspired by the creation accounts in Genesis. There is a bigger version of the image on this page at the start of this chapter (see page 7).

?

Think

What do you notice about this piece of art?
What questions do you have about it?
What do you like or dislike about it?

1 There are seven columns that represent the seven days of creation.

2 The Hebrew letters on day one say 'tohu wabohu', which means 'chaos'. It shows fragmented shapes exploding out of nothing.

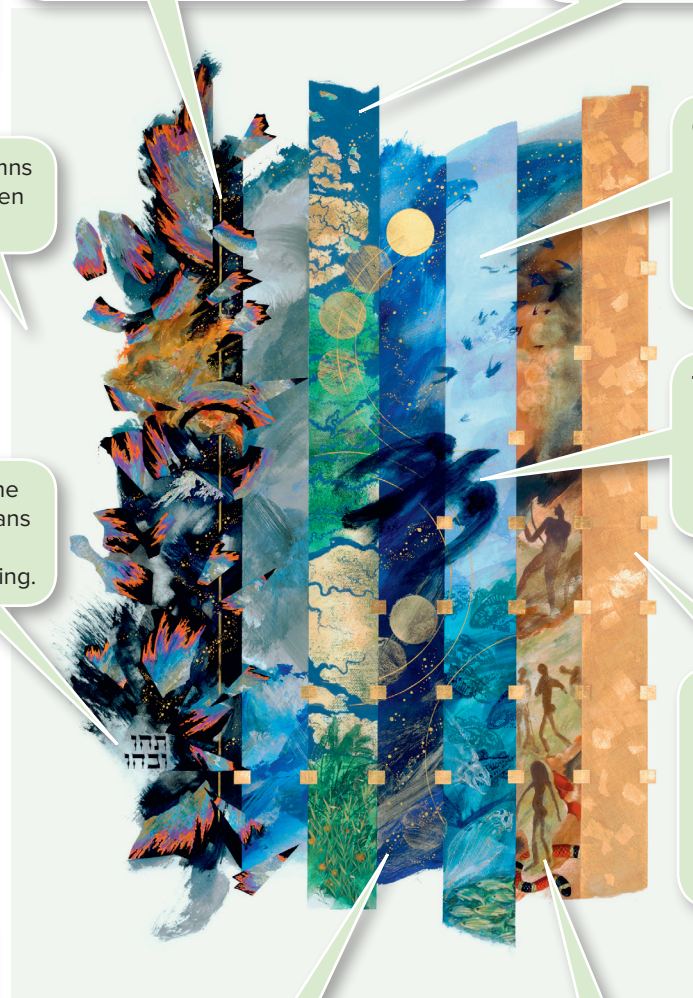
3 The vertical gold line represents the moment that God commanded 'let there be light'. The golden squares expand and increase in number from the first day to the seventh day, representing God bringing order to creation.

4 The third column represents day three and uses satellite images of the Nile delta to show the day that water and land were separated.

6 The fifth column demonstrates the teeming mass of life within the oceans and the birds in the sky.

7 The raven flying across is the traditional carrier of God's message to St Benedict.

9 The seventh day is completely gold, showing the simplicity of the sabbath, a day totally given over to God, the creator.



5 The fourth column shows the heavens filled with stars and planets with lines to imply movement, which shows how days and seasons are marked.

8 The sixth column uses Aboriginal rock paintings from Australia and Africa to show the creation of human beings. Did you notice the snake included here as a symbol of what is to come? The hunter with the bow is the woman. The volcano in the background demonstrates the unpredictable and sometimes dangerous nature of human existence.



Understand

1 Which Catholic beliefs about creation do you see represented in this artwork? Use the specialist language that you have learnt in this chapter in your answer. For example:
In the first column, the artist shows God creating ex nihilo by ...

▲ Creation frontispiece for St John's Bible by Donald Jackson



Respond

- 2 Look at the image of creation on page 18. Were all your questions answered about this piece of art from the beginning of the unit? If not, try to answer them yourself.
- 3 Think about what this piece of art tells us about God and his creation. How might it inspire you to think or act differently towards creation? Give examples in your answer and explain why.



◀ *The Story of Creation*, stained glass window by Sieger Köder



Discern

- 4 Explain what you think Sieger Köder wanted to communicate about creation in this window.
- 5 Compare and contrast how the two pieces of artwork on these pages convey Catholic beliefs by answering the following questions:
 - a What Catholic beliefs are shown in one that aren't in the other?
 - b Which piece of art expresses Catholic beliefs about creation the best? Give reasons for your answer.



Respond

- 6 Create your own piece of art that expresses what Catholics believe about creation.



Think

Why do you think some people feel they need to choose between religion and science?

Key words

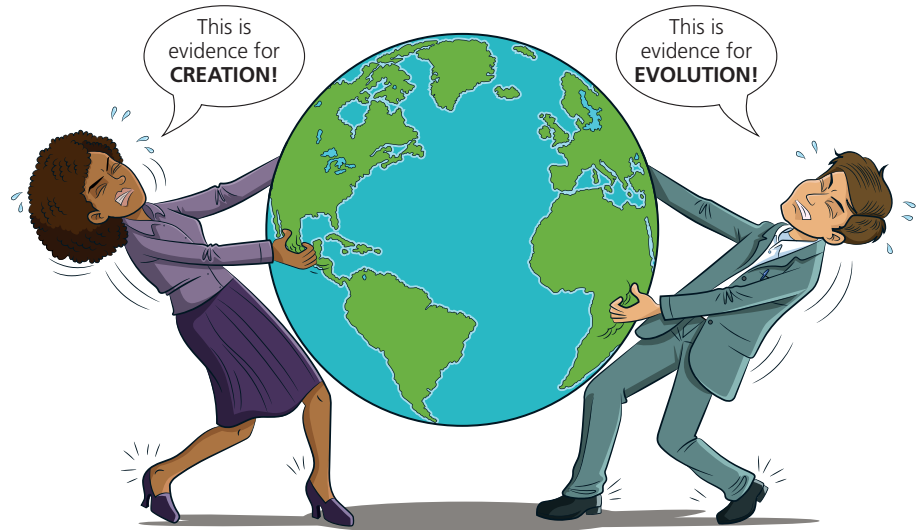
Scientism – the belief that science has all the answers

Creationism – the belief that the world was created exactly as it says in Genesis

Compatibilism – the belief that creation accounts and scientific accounts can both be accepted because they are compatible

Creationist versus scientific world views

Some people think that they need to choose to accept either the scientific theories for how the universe began or the accounts in Genesis and reject the other.



▲ Some people think there is a conflict between science and religion when it comes to ideas about how the universe began

- **Scientism** says there is no need for religious explanations at all, and that science has all the answers. Real knowledge is that which the sciences offer and there is no area to which science cannot be applied.
- **Creationism** claims that scientific explanations for creation are false. They believe that because the creation stories are the word of God, they are the only explanation needed. They read the Genesis stories *literally* as a factual text. This view is held by fundamentalist Christians.

There is a clear conflict between these two beliefs. Both state that the other has nothing to offer when trying to understand creation and the origins of the universe. It is therefore easy to say that science and Christianity are opposed to each other on this issue. But it is not that simple.



Understand

- 1 Define Scientism and Creationism.
- 2 Looking at the definitions of Scientism and Creationism, how do you think they would answer the following questions? (If you are stuck, the answers for Creationism can be found in Genesis and the answers for Scientism can be found on pages 21–22 of this book.)

	Scientism	Creationism
Who created the world?		
How did the universe begin?		
How were humans made?		
How were all different creatures made?		
What is unique about human beings?		
How long did it take the world as we know it to exist?		

Evolution

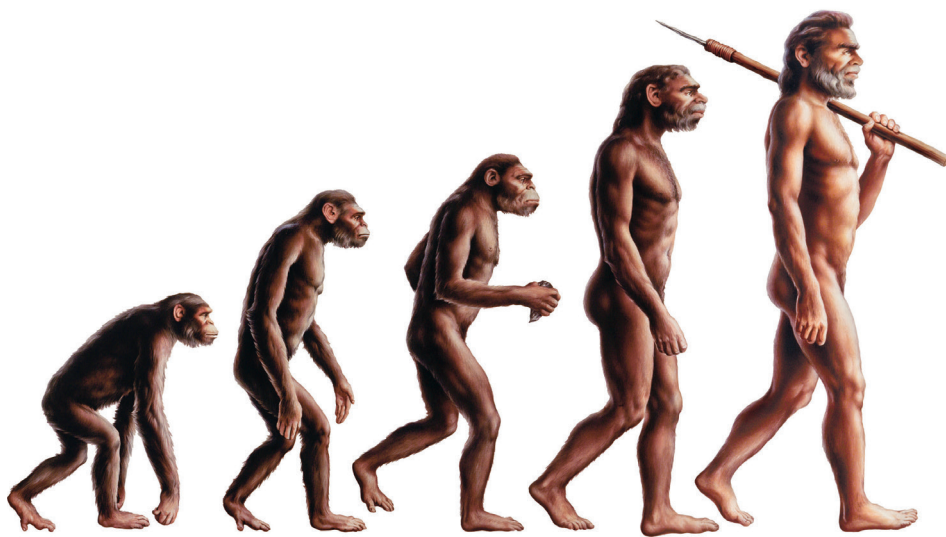
In 1859, English scientist Charles Darwin published his book called *Origins of the Species by Means of Natural Selection*. He had discovered that some animals had different characteristics that put them at an advantage to others, such as the shape of their beak. These **variations** had happened by accident, but benefited them. They passed this on to their offspring. In time, more and more of the species would have that characteristic because those with it were more likely to survive! This is called **natural selection** or **survival of the fittest**.

Darwin said this was how we came to have new species. The process of natural selection has happened again and again, over millions of years, leading to differences within a species. When this happens, a new species emerges. This is called **evolution**. Much of the evidence to support this scientific theory comes from fossils and DNA.

Challenges to Genesis

For many people at the time, the theory of natural selection challenged the belief that God had created the world and all the different creatures in it. If species had evolved over time, then it meant that God didn't create them exactly as they are today. This challenged the beliefs people had from Genesis about God creating the individual species and Adam naming them. It also challenged people's beliefs because it means that human beings also evolved over time. This means that humans were not created by God as we are now. Human beings have evolved from ape-like creatures.

Some people think that if human beings evolved, then our species is a result of an **advantageous** variation at first and then a result of natural selection; therefore, we are not the most special part of creation.

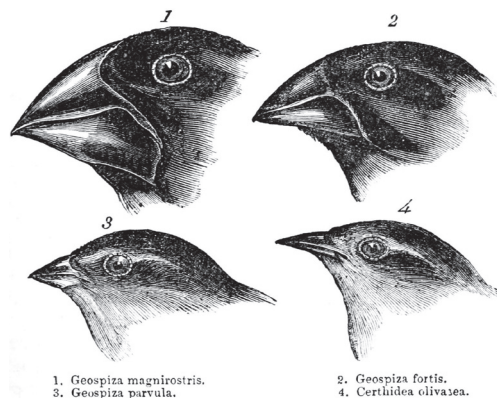


▲ Human beings have evolved from ape-like creatures

?

Think

What do you already know about scientific explanations for the creation of the universe?



▲ Finches' beaks adapted differently depending on what food source they gathered where they lived



Discern

- 3 Imagine you are a Christian at the time of Darwin's discoveries. Explain how your beliefs would have been challenged by what he found. Include details of your beliefs and his discoveries in your answer.

Extension

- 4 Consider the view that human beings are simply very advanced animals and construct a Catholic response to this. Include the following in your answer:
- Who might say this and why? Why would a Catholic disagree? Support your points with evidence.

Key words

variations – differences within a species, such as different shaped beaks

natural selection – the theory that the most advantageous characteristics are passed on. Those with the characteristics survive and those without them die out

survival of the fittest – the theory that those with the best adapted characteristics for the environment will survive

evolution – the theory that creatures adapt and change over time and new species emerge from these changes

advantageous – something that brings an advantage or benefit

Big Bang theory – a scientific theory that proposed the universe began with a massive explosion

The Big Bang theory

- The Big Bang is a theory about how the universe began. It became widely accepted in the 1960s.
- In 1927 Georges Lemaître, a Catholic scientist and priest, proposed that galaxies are moving away from each other.
- Others, including Edwin Hubble, built on his theory. They concluded that the universe began from a 'Big Bang', a violent explosion that led to all matter and space expanding from a single point. The universe has been expanding ever since.
- The **Big Bang theory** proposes that the universe began about 13.8 billion years ago.

Challenges to Genesis

The Big Bang theory suggests that the universe was begun by chance, accident or even error, but not in the planned and ordered way that many Christians believe the world was created by God. If the world could come to exist in this way, some people argue there is no need to believe in a God who created everything.



▲ Some see 'the big bang' as a challenge to beliefs about creation



Understand

- 5 Imagine you are a journalist. Write a newspaper article to explain how some people believe the Big Bang theory challenges Christian beliefs that God created the universe. Include details about the Big Bang theory and Christian beliefs about creation in your article.

Compatibility of the Catholic religion and science

Many people have a religious faith but also accept scientific theories. Catholic beliefs are neither scientific or creationist. Catholics believe that the creation accounts and scientific accounts of creation are compatible. This is called Compatibilism. They each have different things to offer people. Catholics therefore believe:

- The creation stories are the word of God. They teach important truths about God, the world and human beings but they are not a factual explanation of how God created the universe.
- Science teaches them the details about how the world came to be but doesn't deal with the things that Genesis reveals to us. Science doesn't have all the answers.
- They need both the creation stories of Genesis and scientific theories to have a full understanding of the origins of the universe.

What does the Church say on the matter?

The First Vatican Council of 1870 taught that because the same God reveals faith to us and created us with the ability to think and weigh things up (called 'reason') they shouldn't conflict with each other. If they seem to conflict, this is a mistake and Catholics must work hard to understand what their religion teaches them and what reason teaches them.

When addressing the Pontifical Academy of Sciences in 1996, Pope St John Paul II reminded the audience of this.

How do the conclusions reached by the various scientific disciplines coincide with those contained in the message of revelation? And if, at first sight, there are apparent contradictions, in what direction do we look for their solution? We know, in fact, that truth cannot contradict truth. (Pope St John Paul II)

Therefore, science and religion cannot conflict with one another because they both have their origins in God. If they appear to contradict each other, people must try harder to understand how they are, in fact, compatible!

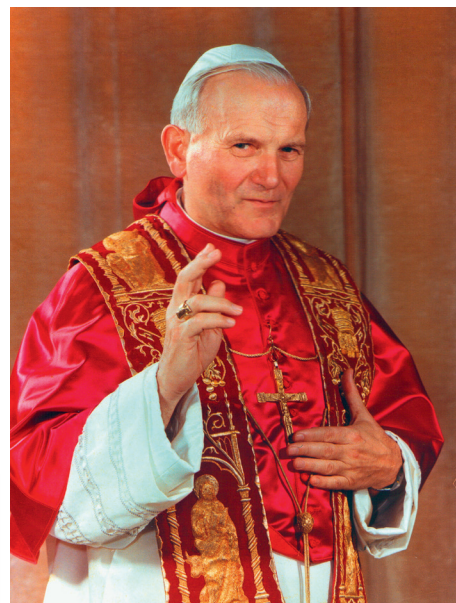
An example of this issue could be the creation stories in Genesis:

- 1 Science (reason) tells me:
 - The world was created by a big bang.
 - All life has evolved.
 - Human life evolved over billions of years.
- 2 Scripture (religion) tells me:
 - The world was made by God out of nothing.
 - The universe was created in six days.
 - Human beings were made by God on the sixth day.



Understand

- 6 Demonstrate the range of views described above in a diagram of your choice. Include Creationism, Scientism and Compatibilism – the view of the Catholic Church. Show where they agree and disagree and what they each believe.



▲ 'Truth cannot contradict truth' (Pope St John Paul II, in 1996)



Think

These statements appear to contradict each other. At first glance they cannot both be true. But 'truth cannot contradict truth', therefore I do not need to choose between them. So how can I understand them so that they are compatible?

Key word

homily – explanation given by the priest during Mass, following the Liturgy of the Word

What do Catholics believe about the Big Bang?

The Church has repeatedly taught that science and religion have the same source and so are compatible. The Church does not therefore question what scientists propose about the Big Bang.

For Catholics, the creation stories in Genesis are not factual accounts. They tell them important things about who created the world and why. They are not intended to tell people literally how the world was made. It is possible to believe both that God is the creator and that the Big Bang occurred.

What do Catholics believe about evolution?

Remember that Catholics do not read the Bible literally, so all the beliefs they have about humans and creation remain even if they accept that human beings have evolved. Therefore, it is still possible to believe that human beings are made in God's image and the world was made by God and is part of his loving plan *and* that life evolved. The Church does not teach that humans were made on exactly the sixth day of creation out of soil and ribs. Catholics can accept that evolution is how God created humans and other creatures.

Catholics, however, do not accept that humans and the world have evolved by chance. They believe that each person has been given a soul by God and is called into a relationship with him.

We are not some casual and meaningless product of evolution. Each of us is the result of a thought of God. Each of us is willed, each of us is loved, each of us is necessary. (Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI; **Homily**, St Peter's Square, 24 April 2005)

▼ Each of us is willed, each of us is loved, each of us is necessary





Understand

- 7 Read the statements below. These beliefs can all come from reading Genesis.
Mark those statements that would be held by a creationist with a cross (✗), those which would be held by a compatibilist with a tick (✓), and those that might be held by both with both a cross (✗) and a tick (✓).

	Statement	✓ or ✗
1	God made the world.	
2	We have a responsibility to take care of God's world.	
3	Human beings are distinct from the rest of creation.	
4	The universe was created approximately 6000 years ago.	
5	God made human beings in his image.	
6	God continues to sustain the world.	
7	God made man out of soil and woman from a rib.	
8	God has always existed because he is eternal.	
9	God made the world in six days.	
10	The universe was created <i>ex nihilo</i> .	
11	God is omnipotent.	
12	Adam named all the species of animals.	

- 8 Using the information on these pages and the work you have done in the question above, explain how Catholics are compatibilists. For example:

A Catholic can believe in evolution/the Big Bang and compatibilist belief with a tick above because ...

Extension

- 9 What did Pope St John Paul II mean when he said, 'Truth cannot contradict truth'?



Discern

- 10 Consider the view that 'the Genesis accounts of creation are incompatible with scientific explanations for the origins of human beings' and construct a Catholic response to this.
- Who would hold this view? Why?
 - Do all people who believe this agree with each other? How do their views differ?
 - What would a Catholic say in response to this view? How could they support their points with evidence?

Key words

encyclical – letters written by the Pope to teach on a particular topic

dominion – to rule over something

?

Think

How have we damaged God's creation by treating it as though it is ours to exploit without limit?



▲ We have damaged the earth by treating it as though it is ours to exploit without limit

How should people treat the earth?

In 2011, Pope Francis wrote an **encyclical** (letter) to the whole world called *Laudato Si'*. In it he called for people to protect the earth, which he calls 'our common home'. He says that the world is God's gift to everyone and warned that unless we take action now, we will continue to harm the earth and we will all suffer as a result.

In the creation accounts in Genesis, it says:

... have **dominion** over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. (Genesis 1:26)

Laudato Si'

Some people have read these parts of Genesis and think it means that the world is ours to do as we want with. In some ways we have behaved like that! In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis warns that we must not interpret Genesis in that way. Instead we need to take care of our common home.

... recognising that they tell us to 'till and keep' the garden of the world (Genesis 2:15). 'Tilling' refers to cultivating, ploughing or working, while 'keeping' means caring, protecting, overseeing and preserving. (*Laudato Si'* 67)

What is stewardship?

You learnt when exploring the second Genesis story that Catholics believe human beings were created with the ability to be responsible for the world. Human beings must therefore look after our common home and treat it like the gift it is. This is called being stewards of the earth that God created. Catholics believe it means that people must be caretakers on behalf of God.

Pope Francis emphasised that our treatment of our common home affects all of our relationships – with the earth, with each other and with God. He said we can learn this in the Genesis creation accounts.

They suggest that human life is grounded in three fundamental and closely intertwined relationships: with God, with our neighbour and with the earth itself. (*Laudato Si'* 66)

Understand

- 1 Give examples of times when we have treated the world as though it is ours to do what we like with.

Disregard for the duty to cultivate and maintain a proper relationship with my neighbour, for whose care and custody I am responsible, ruins my relationship with my own self, with others, with God and with the earth. (*Laudato Si'* 70)

Today, however, we have to realise that a true ecological approach *always* becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor. (*Laudato Si'* 49)

Laudato Si' demands that humans are all stewards of the earth but also of other humans – our ‘neighbour’. The two things are linked together since all of creation is interconnected! We cannot separate how we treat the earth and how we treat those living in it. Environmental damage has an impact on everyone. However, the poorest parts of the world are the most affected and yet have done the least to cause it.



Understand

- 2 What is the difference between stewardship and **domination**?
Separate the statements below to complete the following table:

Stewardship involves	Domination involves

- being the only creatures God created who are capable of taking care of creation
- making changes to the world for our benefit, even if they negatively affect the poorest people the most
- having the ability to take from the earth and use it as we choose
- ensuring that we act sustainably so that the earth and its resources are there in the future
- exploiting resources such as seas and forests to benefit us now
- remembering that the earth is for all God’s creation, including all human beings.



Discern

- 3 ‘To be a good a steward, we must hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor’. Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer.

Catholic Social Teaching (CST) is a collection of teachings that the Catholic Church has given on how things should be in society. These teachings are proclaimed to the Church and the world through writings by the Pope, such as encyclicals (letters).

Key words

just – fair

common good – the aim of working together to improve society for all people

dignity – the belief that every person is precious because they are made in God's image

Who is Catholic Social Teaching (CST) for?

One interesting thing about CST is that you do not have to be a Catholic or even believe in God to accept its teachings. It is intended for all 'people of good will' so that people can work together to make the world as fair as possible. Although it doesn't require a person to believe in God, all the things that are taught in CST are backed up by what is taught in scripture (a person doesn't need to believe in the scripture to accept the teaching!). This is because CST is revealed through general revelation.

What is Catholic Social Teaching (CST)?

There are many complicated issues in the world! People find it hard to see the best way to act sometimes. The Catholic Church believes that the four principles of CST will help people in every case to know what is truly **just** and what will help society.

The four core principles of CST

There are four core principles of CST; all other principles come from these.



Think

How can the principle of the 'common good' link to being a good steward?

Common good

This means creating conditions in society where everybody can reach their full potential as individuals and in communities.

There are three essential aspects to the **common good**:

- respect for the basic rights and **dignity** of every person
- the social well-being and development of the community
- peace and security within society.



Examples of things that help society and individuals reach their potential include good education, health care, good housing and fair wages. CST says that people should support those working towards the common good but also make decisions to bring about common good themselves, such as choosing where we spend our money and how we treat the environment.

◀ Helping to create a society where all can reach their potential

Dignity of the human person

Catholics believe that every human being has been created by God and is made in his image. Therefore, Catholics believe that everyone is precious and deserves dignity, so people must treat each other with dignity. This applies to all people, those we know and love, and those we have never and will never meet. Dignity is not something that has to be earned and it cannot be lost. When making decisions about the environment, for example, Catholics believe we must ensure that the people involved are treated with dignity.



Solidarity

The word **solidarity** comes from the Latin *solidus*, meaning firm and strong. The aim of solidarity in CST is to strengthen community. No human being lives entirely alone; everyone depends on others. Catholics believe that people should stand alongside those who are being treated poorly. To do that it is important to understand the world and where these **injustices** occur. People must then do what they can to be alongside, supporting people who are in these situations; for example, through volunteer work, protest, supporting charities and prayer. When considering the environment this could mean standing in solidarity with people who are affected in a way you are not, for example those affected by floods or drought.



▲ 'Solidarity' means standing alongside those who are treated poorly so that people are not alone in whatever they are struggling against

?

Think

How can the principle of the 'dignity of the human person' link to being a good steward?

◀ All human life is created in God's image and must be treated with dignity

?

Think

How can the principle of solidarity link to being a good steward?

Key words

solidarity – unity of feeling or action between people

injustices – things that happen that are unfair

subsidiarity – whereby decisions should not be taken at the highest levels, but by the people who are most affected



Think

How can the principle of subsidiarity link to being a good steward?



Understand

- 1 Create an artistic representation, such as a shield, that shows you know and understand the four core principles of CST.
- 2 How could these help us to be good stewards to the environment? For example: Dignity means This would lead to being good stewards because Working for the common good



Respond

- 3 How can you respond to these principles?
Consider how you can:
 - work for the common good
 - be in solidarity with others
 - treat people with dignity
 - promote subsidiarity.

Subsidiarity

According to CST, it is everyone's responsibility to work for the common good, not just those in charge. As far as possible, decisions should not be taken at the highest levels, but by the people who are most affected. This is **subsidiarity**. It includes making sure that nothing is done at a higher level by bigger, more powerful organisations that can be done well at a lower level by smaller, more local organisations (such as local government, community groups and families). Higher authorities should not interfere or take over where individuals and local communities are working well towards the common good. Problems should be solved by those closest to the issue and then, if that doesn't work, the person or organisation can go to someone else who might be able to help. By not interfering where it is not necessary, the dignity of communities and individuals is protected. They should take responsibility for and manage what they can in their lives, otherwise there is a danger of an overbearing 'help' on the basis of 'we know best'.



▲ 'Subsidiarity' means that, as far as possible, decisions should not be taken at the highest levels, but by the people who are most affected



Understand

- 4 Read the case study on the next page. How are the four principles of CST lived out in this project? Use the bold text in the case study to support your answers.

Case study

In southern Bangladesh, CAFOD is working with the Bangladesh Association for Sustainable Development (BASD) to establish 'eco-villages', where all villagers commit to sustainable farming.

Climate crisis

In this area, the climate crisis is causing more and stronger tropical storms that flood the land with sea water. The salty soil kills many plants and makes it hard to grow food.

Eco-villages

Some of the people in 10-year-old Toma's community received training from BASD on ways to grow food even where the land is salty.

Everyone shared what they had learned and **BASD supported the community** to become an eco-village.

Permaculture

BASD train people on how to grow food and live sustainably, without wasting anything. They save seeds from their crops to plant the next year. This is free as well as sustainable and allows people to swap and share seeds. Food scraps are used to make compost and no chemical fertilisers are used.

Toma said: "We make our own fertilisers at home—so it helps plants to grow... The stuff we grow is much tastier, and I've been told it's healthier too!"

Children's club

At a children's club set up by BASD, Toma and her friends learnt about the importance of planting trees and how to plant them using organic fertiliser. They planted trees together at the school. Toma says: "It wasn't something our teachers told us to do, **we decided to do it ourselves**. We planted lots of trees in our school, and flowers and vegetables too. Our teachers then helped us to sell them at the market, and we donated the money to our school."

Everyone has something to teach

In another of the eco-villages, 12-year-old Dristy describes her village as a green and quiet place with clean air where lots of fruit and vegetables grow. She has taught her friends how to plant trees organically.

"I would like to tell people my age in other countries that they too should plant trees in their gardens, and they should use organic fertiliser instead of chemicals, which are bad for the soil and the environment. **I think we can learn from each other.**"

What is environmental ethics?

Key word

environmental ethics – the study of the right and wrong way to behave towards the environment



Respond

- 1 What do you think is the right way to behave towards the environment? Why?

Ethics is the study of what is right and wrong. **Environmental ethics** is the study of the right and wrong way to behave towards the environment.

There are many things causing harm to our environment. The beautiful world that God created and that Pope Francis calls 'our common home' is being damaged. In his encyclical *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis said:

The earth, our home, is beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth. (*Laudato Si'* 21)

What is causing this damage? Let's look at some of the issues in environmental ethics.

Pollution

Pollution is when the natural world is contaminated or dirtied by harmful substances. Air, land and water can become polluted.

Air pollution



▲ Burning fossil fuels causes air pollution as well as climate change

The biggest cause of air pollution is the burning of fossil fuels, such as coal, oil and gas, in order to create electricity to power things like factories and cars. Burning fossil fuels releases some chemicals and gases into the air. As well as climate change (see opposite), air pollution can cause:

- breathing difficulties, such as asthma, as well as cancer in people and animals
- a type of poisonous rain called acid rain that harms living creatures and natural things like rocks
- damage to the ozone layer which protects Earth from the harmful rays of the Sun.

Water pollution



▲ Wildlife can get caught in plastic or mistake it for food

Sadly, we can see some of the most obvious causes of water pollution, like litter and sewage or oil spills, in rivers and oceans. In 2020, scientists estimated that between 8 and 14 million tonnes of plastic end up in our oceans each year. This pollutes the seas and harms animals who can mistake the plastic for food. Other types of water pollution are less obvious, like chemicals and pesticides that are used in farming running into the rivers and streams, causing harm to plants and wildlife.

Land pollution

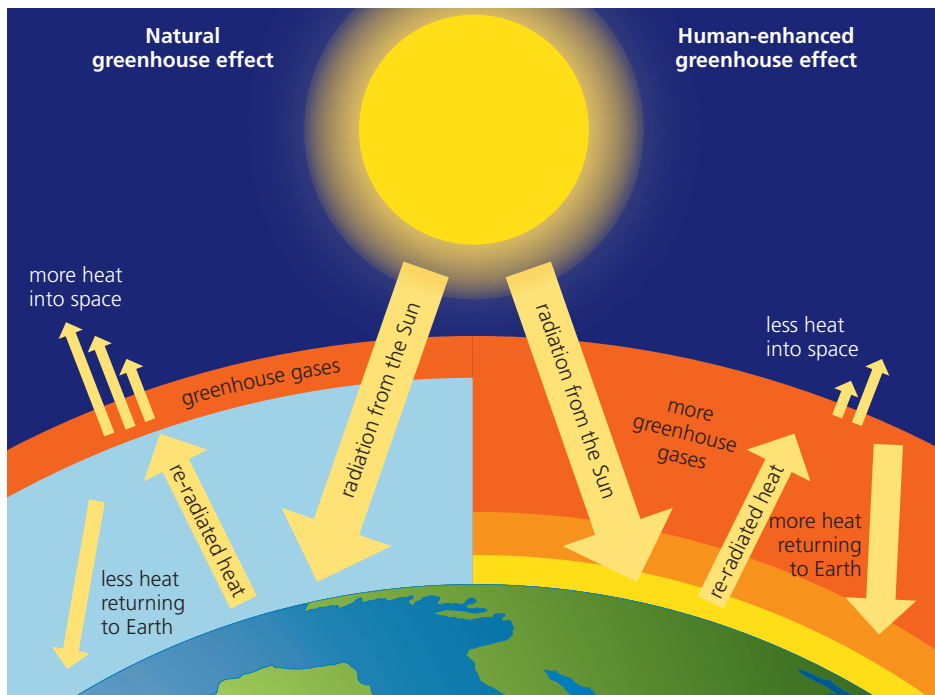
People cause land pollution when they drop litter. It is ugly and ruins beautiful natural areas, but also causes harm to wildlife and their habitats. People produce a huge amount of rubbish that, if not recycled, ends up in landfill. Some rubbish, like some types of plastics, will never decompose so they are on Earth forever! Land pollution can also be caused when chemicals from factories or farms pollute the soil.



▲ Unrecycled rubbish goes to landfill. Some decomposes and releases pollution into the land and air. Some items never decompose

Climate change

The vast majority of scientists agree that air pollution causes global warming because burning fossil fuels contributes to the greenhouse effect. An increase in greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide, means less of the Sun's heat can leave the Earth's atmosphere. Greenhouse gases trap more thermal (heat) energy, causing an increase in the planet's temperature, like a greenhouse. This is called global warming. The world's climates are changing because of global warming.



▲ Fossil fuels increase the greenhouse effect, leading to global warming



Respond

- 2 What can you do to make sure you limit your contribution to air, land and water pollution?

How does climate change affect the Earth?

Climate change is having a serious impact on our planet, causing or contributing to:

- drought
- flooding
- rising sea levels
- more extreme weather events, such as hurricanes
- loss of habitats and species.

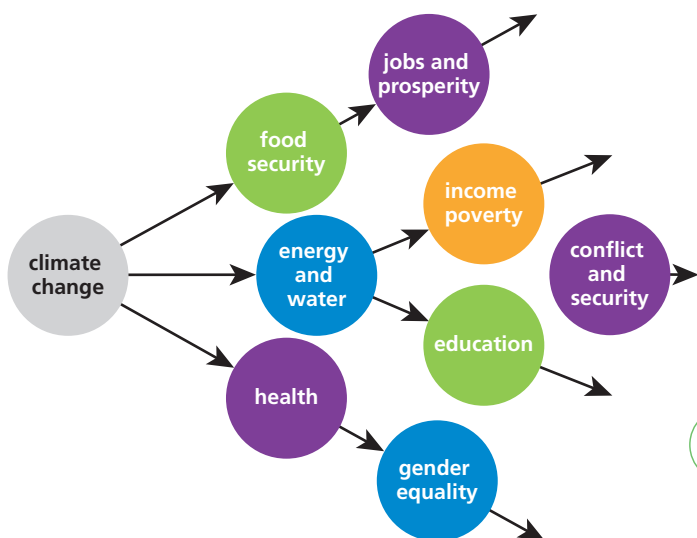
How does climate change affect people?

The countries that are the worst affected by the climate crisis are not the ones who are producing most of the pollution that is causing it. Most of those affected badly are less economically developed countries (LEDs) and the climate crisis is making it harder for people in those countries to lift themselves out of poverty.

Changing and unpredictable weather patterns make it harder to earn a living from the land. For example, some farmers are trying to produce crops while suffering soil moisture loss, drought, flood, unpredictable rain patterns and fluctuating seasons.

When there are extreme weather events, like hurricanes or floods, poorer countries do not have the resources (like emergency workers, access to water or enough hospitals) to help people after the disasters. Some countries are also more vulnerable to climate change because, for example, their land is not far above sea level so is at higher risk of flooding. Being a poor country makes natural vulnerability worse because you can't prepare against flooding or recover as easily as richer countries.

Most places are experiencing a gradual but long-term change in their climate rather than extreme events. However, a poorer country is less capable of adapting to and coping with these changes.



▲ Climate change makes other drivers of poverty worse

Climate change as a threat multiplier

There are other drivers of poverty, such as poor health and lack of education, but climate change is what we call a threat multiplier. This means that the impacts of climate change make other drivers of poverty worse.

For example, climate change directly impacts on food security, health, energy and water because of its effect on temperature and rainfall. These in turn affect areas such as education and income, and so it goes on.



Respond

- 3 What can you do to help reduce the effect of climate change on the poorest communities?

How do Catholics respond?

You have reflected on what individuals can do to take better care of our common home. Catholics believe that those things are important and they should all try to be the best stewards that they can be. However, some of the things that need to change can only be done by larger companies and governments. Many Catholics take steps to pressure companies and governments to make changes. One organisation that is campaigning to tackle climate change is the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD).

Key word

advocate – someone who supports a cause



Understand

- 4 Complete this table to make links between beliefs about creation and the issue of environmental ethics. In the final column, make links to Pope Francis' quote that we must hear 'the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor'.

	What does it mean?	How does it apply to environmental ethics?	Cry of the poor and the earth
Catholic beliefs about creation	God made the world; his creation is good and beautiful.	By polluting the world we are damaging God's creation and causing it harm. Instead we should ...	For those living in poverty ... For the earth ...
Stewardship			
Dignity			
Solidarity			
Common good			
Subsidiarity			

CAFOD

CAFOD's research and experience mean they understand how the world's poor are being the most affected by climate change. They **advocate** on behalf of these communities and campaign for change.

[Global] warming and associated extreme weather will reach unprecedented levels in our children's lifetimes and 40 per cent of the world's poor, who have a minimal role in generating global pollution, are likely to suffer the most. (Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences)

Their campaigns change regularly depending on the current needs of those communities. For example, if there is an important meeting of world leaders coming up, their campaign will include bringing these matters to their attention and making demands that will help to tackle the climate crisis. Their campaigns have included calling on the most developed countries, including the UK, to:

- reduce carbon emissions that are leading to global warming, including reducing the use of fossil fuels
- give financial aid to help countries build resilience to extreme weather events
- be ambitious in setting low targets and shorter timescales for greenhouse gas emissions.

Supporting the work of CAFOD

There are several ways that individual Catholics and their local communities can support the work of CAFOD. For example:

- Pray for the work of CAFOD and the people and communities it serves.
- Sign petitions that are part of a campaign for change.
- Join CAFOD on organised protests.
- Become a campaign volunteer, who informs and inspires their local communities to join CAFOD.



Understand

- 5 Imagine you work for the CAFOD social-media team. Create a series of posts to show:
- why tackling climate change is important
 - the work CAFOD does in tackling climate change
 - what individuals can do to support the work of CAFOD.



Discern

- 6 Consider the view that the damage we are doing to the Earth is an inevitable effect of human beings living on this planet and construct a Catholic response with reference to *Laudato Si'* and other relevant teachings. Why might some people think this? What would a Catholic believe instead? Support your answer with examples.

There are lots of people who have lived inspirational lives who are good role models for Catholics when it comes to caring for our common home.

Who was Sister Dorothy Stang?

Sr Dorothy Stang lived out her Catholic religion as a steward who worked with the poor and with the earth. She joined the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur and worked as a school teacher in Ohio until she went to the Amazon rainforest, in Brazil, in 1966. She lived and worked in the Anapu region for almost 40 years.

- She worked with local people who ran small farms to help them to farm and live sustainably. This helped to protect the rainforest and provide for the people who lived there.
- She helped to set up 39 schools and train teachers in the area, ensuring many children learnt to read and write.
- She also worked to help protect the people living in the rainforest from large industries that wanted to use its natural resources. She helped the local people defend their land from logging and mining companies. These companies wanted to take the land, even though they had no right to it. Their intention was to clear the rainforest to take the precious wood, such as mahogany, mine for metals or use the land to graze cattle.
- She understood how precious the rainforest is to the rest of the earth and grew increasingly frustrated at how it was being mistreated, along with those who lived in it. Her aim was to help people improve their lives while protecting and respecting the rainforest.



▲ Sr Dorothy Stang worked in the Amazon for almost 40 years before her murder

Advocating for the rights of people in the rainforest is a dangerous role. Many who try to defend the people and the rainforest are killed. The aim of the killers is to get rid of opposition to their plans, intimidate people and stop those who are educating local people on their rights. Sr Dorothy was doing all of these things. In 2005, she was targeted by gunmen while walking in the rainforest. She took out her Bible and read the **Beatitudes** as they killed her.



Understand

- 1 Complete the following table to show how the work of Dorothy Stang was a response to 'the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor'.

'Cry of the earth' – stewardship	'Cry of the poor' – human dignity
She heard/responded to the cry of the earth by ...	She heard/responded to the cry of the poor by ...

The influence of Sr Dorothy

Dorothy Stang's life and work continues to influence others. Many people have been inspired by her work, bravery and **sacrifice**. Her work continues in her community, who are inspired by her example and the mission of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur to help and educate the poor. Others all over the world are also inspired by her story and she influences their lives and work on **conservation**.

Following her death, the Brazilian president put nearly 20,000 square miles of the Amazon rainforest in the Anapu region under government environmental protection. This means that it cannot be destroyed. This gave hope to the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur and others who are continuing the work of Sr Dorothy to protect the rainforest and give struggling farmers a safe place to live.

In 2021, a new species of screech owl was discovered in the Amazon. It was given the scientific name of *Megascops stangiae* in honour of Dorothy Stang. The tribute is a reminder of how hard she fought to preserve the rainforest and the species that live there. Naming the *Megascops stangiae* after Dorothy serves as a reminder to keep up her important work, and it draws attention to the corruption and destruction of the Amazon rainforest, which continues to this day.

Key words

Beatitudes – passage of scripture (Matthew 5:1–12 and Luke 6:20–6) that focuses on the meaning of true happiness

sacrifice – giving up something of value for the sake of others

conservation – protecting the Earth's resources for current and future generations



Respond

- 2 Reflect on Sr Dorothy Stang's life and how it can inspire you. Write about:
- her belief and how she put it into action
 - her work with the poor
 - her work to protect creation
 - her bravery when she faced opposition
 - anything else that struck you.



Discern

- 3 Consider the view that an individual cannot make a difference to the environmental crises we face and construct a Catholic response to this. Refer to the life of Sr Dorothy Stang and other relevant teaching in your answer.
- Why might some people think this?
- What would a Catholic believe instead? Support your answer with examples.