

DISCERNING DISCIPLES

A religious education programme
for Catholic primary schools in
the Archdiocese of Birmingham

	God made me. God loves me. God loves everyone. God made the wonderful world.
Know	**God made me.** **God loves me and everyone** God made the world.

Discern	God made me to love and be kind.	Suggested discovery questions 1. .I wonder why God made us? 2. I wonder why God loves me? 3. God gives us hands, ears, eyes etc. What should we (not) use them for?

Respond	Create a representation (e.g. art, role play) to show the various ways you are individually special. Develop curiosity through 'I wonder' questions. Use speaking frames to celebrate why we are special, emphasising what is good. Create a rhyme and actions to help remember – God made me. God loves me and everyone. God made the wonderful world.

Textual references

Key vocabulary

creation	God making the world and everything in it
love	caring for someone or something, and showing kindness
world	everything God made: people, animals, plants, land and sea

Teacher Notes

This lesson introduces very young pupils to the foundational Christian belief that every person is created by God and is loved unconditionally. In Catholic theology, creation is an act of pure love: God freely chooses to bring each person into being, giving them dignity that does not depend on what they can do, but on who they are. At this age, pupils do not need abstract explanations, but they benefit from hearing clearly that they are made 'good' and 'special' because they come from God.

Catholic teaching holds that God creates each person with the capacity to love and to act kindly, reflecting God's own goodness. This links to the idea of being made 'in the image of God', which for early learners is best conveyed through simple examples: helping, sharing, being gentle, and noticing the beauty of the world. Teachers can highlight that the world is a gift and that God asks us to use our bodies, senses, and choices in ways that show love.

It is important to reassure pupils that God's love is constant, regardless of mood or behaviour. The emphasis is on belonging, safety, and the truth that every person is wanted and cherished by God.

Creation and Covenant

Nursery
Week 2
Hear

God made our beautiful world and everything in it. God made me.

Know

God made the world & everything in it.

God made me too!

Discern

God made the world and everything in it. It is good.

Suggested discovery questions

1. What is your favourite thing that God has made?
2. What is something in God's world that makes you happy?
3. Why do you think God makes such beautiful things?

Respond

Use speaking frames to create clauses and sentences about the beauty of the earth e.g. 'I like trees', 'I like leaves'. Extend pupils' answers using 'because...'

Create a 'view finder', explore and record the parts of creation that can be found within the school grounds.

Textual references

An age-appropriate retelling of the Creation account in Genesis 1 (aka 'The Six Days of Creation')

Key vocabulary

good	something that is lovely, helpful or makes us happy

Teacher Notes

This week introduces pupils to the Catholic belief that creation is intentional, ordered, and good. In the Genesis creation account, everything God brings into being reflects divine wisdom and generosity. Catholic theology does not treat this text as a scientific description, but as a revealed truth about the relationship between God, the world, and humanity. For very young pupils, the key message is that the world is not random: it is a gift shaped by God's love.

Emphasising that creation is 'good' helps pupils understand that the natural world has value in itself, not only in how we use it. This supports early formation in stewardship, a core Catholic principle. The beauty pupils notice in nature is an accessible way to express the idea that creation shows something of God's goodness. Teachers can encourage pupils to observe carefully, linking awe and wonder with gratitude.

It is also important to affirm that pupils themselves belong within creation. By stating simply that 'God made me too', children begin to see themselves as part of a wider world that God cares for. This nurtures a sense of belonging, safety, and responsibility.

	The words and actions of the Sign of the Cross: 'In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen'.
Know	**We talk to God through prayer.** The Sign of the Cross starts and ends prayer. When we make the Sign of the Cross, we start with our right hand on our forehead.

Discern	Teachers model 'wondering' about prayer.	Suggested discovery questions 1. I wonder how we can talk to God? 2. I wonder what we want to say to God? 3. I wonder why we can't just phone Him?

Respond	Use the actions of the Sign of the Cross correctly. Create a prayer area in the classroom together. Provide items within continuous provision for children to recreate setting up a prayer area.

Textual references

Key vocabulary

amen	a word that means 'Yes, I believe this'
Cross	a special Christian sign that reminds us of Jesus
prayer	talking and listening to God

Teacher Notes

This week's learning introduces pupils to the Catholic understanding of prayer as a real conversation with God, who is always present and attentive. Prayer is not limited to spoken words; it expresses a relationship. For young pupils, the key message is that we can talk to God at any time because God is close and loving. The Church teaches that prayer begins with God's invitation: God desires connection with each person, and our response is simply to turn our hearts and attention towards Him.

The Sign of the Cross is one of the earliest and most important forms of Catholic prayer. It is both a prayer in itself and a way of preparing to pray. The words name the three Persons of the Trinity, reminding pupils that God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The accompanying actions mark the body with the sign of Christ's love, helping pupils to pray with their whole selves. At this stage, the focus is on gentle familiarity rather than precision of theology.

Teachers can model a calm, unhurried Sign of the Cross, reinforcing that prayer is a peaceful moment of connection with God.

	The words and actions of the Sign of the Cross: 'In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen'.
Know	**The words of the Sign of the Cross prayer are 'In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen'.**

Discern	Speaking to God is different from speaking to each other.	Suggested discovery questions 1. Where do you go if you want to talk to a family member? To God? 2. What voice do you use when you to talk to your friends? To God? 3. What kinds of things do you tell your toys or friends? What do you tell God?

Respond	Use the Sign of the Cross in prayer correctly (i.e. actions and words). Continue to provide opportunities within continuous provision, for children to set up and use a prayer area.

Textual references

Key vocabulary

Father	a name for God who loves and cares for us
Son	Jesus, God's son who shows us God's love
Holy Spirit	God's loving help within us

Teacher Notes

The Sign of the Cross is one of the most ancient and recognisable prayers of the Church, and its words express the central Christian belief in the Trinity. When we say 'In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen', we are praying in the one name of God who is three Persons. The prayer begins 'In the name…' (not names) because the Trinity is perfectly united: one God, not three gods. Even though young pupils cannot understand this doctrine conceptually, speaking the words introduces them to the mystery of who God is.

Each part of the prayer names a Person of the Trinity. 'Father' expresses God as the source of all life and love. 'Son'names Jesus, God-with-us, who shows God's love in a human life. 'Holy Spirit' names God's life within and around us, helping us to love and to choose what is good. The final word, 'Amen', is an affirmation of trust: it means 'This is true'.

For early learners, the aim is not explanation but familiarity. By praying these words calmly and consistently, pupils learn that the Sign of the Cross is a holy way to begin and end time with God.

	Give thanks for God's wonderful world.
Know	**We give thanks to God in prayer.** We thank God for the wonderful world.

Discern	When we want to talk to God, we can make the Sign of the Cross, say 'thank you' to Him for something good, and finish with the Sign of the Cross.	Suggested discovery questions 1. I wonder what special sign we can make when we are ready to talk to God? 2. I wonder what we could say 'thank you' to God for today? 3. I wonder how we could show God we have finished our prayer to Him?

Respond	Saying 'thank you' prayers to God for people and things they care about, starting and ending with the Sign of the Cross.

Textual references

Key vocabulary

thanksgiving	saying 'thank you' to God for good things

Teacher Notes

This week's learning introduces pupils to a simple form of thanksgiving prayer. Giving thanks is one of the most fundamental movements of prayer because it recognises God as the giver of all good things. Thanksgiving mirrors the pattern of many biblical prayers, where people notice blessings and respond with gratitude. For young pupils, this can be grounded in their direct experience: friendship, play, nature, and the people who care for them.

The use of the Sign of the Cross at the beginning and end of a thanksgiving prayer teaches pupils that gratitude is directed to God, not simply an expression of feeling. The Sign of the Cross marks the moment as prayerful and reminds pupils that God receives their thanks with love. The natural world is a strong bridge here: Catholic teaching understands creation as a continual gift, and noticing its beauty helps children form the habit of thanking God spontaneously.

It is helpful to model short, simple thank-you prayers that name something specific. This reinforces that God listens to the real concerns and joys of each person, however small. Over time, pupils learn that prayer is not only asking but acknowledging God's goodness.

I should look after myself.

Know

I should look after myself because God made me.

I am precious.

Discern

We look after precious things carefully.

Suggested discovery questions

1. What things do you have that are very precious to you?
2. How do we look after something so it stays safe and doesn't get broken?
3. If you had something that was precious to someone, how would you take care of it?

Respond

List ways that you look after yourself.

Encourage within-home learning for parents to discuss pupils' growing independence.

Textual references

Key vocabulary	
care	keeping something or someone safe
dignity	the special worth every person has because God made them
precious	something very special that must be looked after

Teacher Notes

This week introduces pupils to the Catholic understanding of human dignity. Catholic theology teaches that every person is created by God, willed by God, and loved by God. Because of this, each human life possesses inherent worth that cannot be lost. For very young pupils, this fundamental truth is best expressed through the idea of being ‘precious’. Saying ‘I am precious because God made me’ gives pupils a simple but accurate way of naming their God-given dignity.

From this dignity flows the responsibility to care for oneself. In Catholic teaching, self-care is not selfishness but an expression of respecting God’s gift. Pupils can understand this by noticing how they treat fragile or important objects, and then transferring that understanding to themselves. This lays the foundation for later learning about the body as a temple of the Holy Spirit and about moral responsibility, but without introducing concepts beyond their age.

Teachers can highlight everyday ways children already care for themselves: washing hands, resting, choosing safe behaviour, and seeking help. These small actions connect to the much larger theological truth that our lives matter to God and should be treated with gentleness and respect.

I should look after God's world.

Know

I should look after God's world because it is amazing.

Discern

God made the world full of amazing things, and I can help keep it beautiful.

Suggested discovery questions

1. What amazing things has God made that you like to see, smell, or hear outside?
2. What can we do to help plants, trees, and animals to live and grow?
3. How can we help keep our playground, park, or garden beautiful for everyone?

Respond

Support pupils in understanding how to care for creation. E.g. tending to an area of school grounds, growing cress.

Textual references

Key vocabulary

Teacher Notes

This week focuses on caring for creation, a core theme within Catholic theology. The Church teaches that creation is not only made by God but continues to express God's goodness and creativity. Even at an early age, pupils can begin to grasp that the world is a gift rather than something humans own. This connects directly to the idea of stewardship: we are trusted by God to look after the earth so that it can flourish.

For children in Nursery,, stewardship is best introduced through concrete, observable actions. Children naturally notice beauty outdoors; linking this wonder to God's creativity helps them understand why the world deserves care. Catholic teaching emphasises that humans have a unique role in this care, not because they are more important than the rest of creation, but because God invites them to work with Him in helping all life thrive.

Simple examples (e.g. watering plants, protecting insects, tidying shared spaces) allow children to experience themselves as capable of contributing to God's ongoing work. The aim is to nurture habits of attentiveness, gratitude, and responsibility, all of which lay the foundations for later Catholic social teaching on ecology and the common good.

The words and actions of the Sign of the Cross: 'In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen'.

Know

We talk to God through prayer, starting and ending with the Sign of the Cross.

The words of the Sign of the Cross are, 'In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit Amen'.

When we make the Sign of the Cross, we start with our right hand on our forehead.

Discern

The Sign of the Cross is a good, formal way of starting and ending a conversation with God.

Suggested discovery questions

1. When we make the Sign of the Cross, who are we showing we are ready to talk to?
2. How does making the Sign of the Cross help us remember this is a special time?
3. Why do you think we make the Sign of the Cross again after talking to God?

Respond

Role play different greetings and decide which are formal and informal.

Invite children to make the Sign of the Cross using actions and words.

Textual references

Key vocabulary

Father	a name for God who loves and cares for us
Son	Jesus, God's son who shows us God's love
Holy Spirit	God's loving help within us
prayer	talking and listening to God

Teacher Notes

A polite conversation always starts and ends with a greeting for example, 'Hello'.... (How do children greet others in their own personal context?)

What body language do we use when greeting someone?
- Formal: Handshake
- Informal: Kiss, hug, high five.

Formal greetings: The King, The Archbishop etc

In Catholic tradition, the Sign of the Cross is both a prayer in itself and a ritual action that prepares us to enter into conversation with God. Reception pupils can begin to understand that it is a formal sign: something special that we do only in prayer or worship. The formality comes from two elements. First, the words name the three Persons of the Trinity, acknowledging God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Second, the gesture marks the body with Christ's Cross, expressing belonging to God and reminding the believer of God's love.

For pupils with no prior learning, this week serves as an introduction to prayer as something different from ordinary talking. For pupils with Nursery experience, this week clarifies why we use this sign and deepens their awareness of its meaning. The gesture is not magical; it is a deliberate way of "getting ready" to pray and "closing" prayer with reverence.

Teachers can also highlight that formal actions help us show respect, just as we use polite greetings with important people. In the same way, the Sign of the Cross shows that we recognise God's presence and are entering a sacred moment..

God created the world and said, 'Indeed it is very good' (Genesis 1:31).

Know

The Creation Story is in the Bible. It is in the book of Genesis

God created the world in six days. After each day, He said, 'Indeed it is very good'

Discern

God created the world. It is good.

Suggested discovery questions

1. Who made the mountains, seas, and all the animals we see?
2. When God created the world, do you think He made it to be bad or to be good?
3. How can we show God we are glad He made a good world?

Respond

Always ensure that the Bible on display in the classroom is treated and displayed respectfully.

Go outside and take care of God's good world.

Textual references

An age-appropriate retelling of the Creation account in Genesis 1 (aka 'The Six Days of Creation')

Key vocabulary

Bible	the holy book that tells us about God
Genesis	the first book of the Bible, where the Creation Story is found
good	exactly as God wants it to be

Teacher Notes

Reiterate that the Bible is a good book, using the words and phrases ‘sacred’, ‘holy’, and ‘from God’.

Reiterate understanding that the Bible is the story of God and His people.

This week's learning links well to Forest School.

This week introduces pupils to the Creation Story as a biblical text and deepens their understanding that creation is intentionally made by God and declared ‘very good’. At this age, pupils do not need to interpret the story scientifically; instead, they should learn that the Bible uses story to teach truth about God’s relationship with the world. The key theological idea is that creation is willed, ordered, and good. Nothing in creation is accidental or unimportant.

Introducing the book of Genesis situates the story within the Bible as a sacred book, helping pupils recognise that Christians look to Scripture to understand God. For children with no prior learning, this is their first structured encounter with the Bible. For those who learned about creation in Nursery, this week expands understanding by emphasising that the goodness of creation comes from God’s intention, not simply from its beauty.

The repeating refrain ‘Indeed it is very good’ can be used to show that God delights in what He has made. This provides a theological foundation for ecological responsibility: if God sees the world as good, then we should treat it with care, gratitude, and respect.

	The whole of Creation shows God's love for us (Laudato Si' 84–88).
Know	**The whole of Creation shows God's love for us.**

Discern	God gave us this world because He loves us.	Suggested discovery questions 1. When someone gives you a gift, how do it make you feel? 2. If the world is God's gift to us, what does that tell us about how He feels about us? 3. What could we say to God to thank Him for giving us this world?

Respond	Go on a Creation Walk and identify your favourite part of Creation. Show appreciation for what God has created. Link this to His love for us. Learn and sing an appropriate creation song.

Textual references

Laudato Si' 84–88

Key vocabulary

Teacher Notes

This week's learning helps pupils understand that creation does not simply exist because God made it, but because God wanted to show His love through it. Catholic theology teaches that the whole created world expresses God's generosity: its beauty, variety, and life point towards a God who delights in giving good things. Pope Francis, in *Laudato Si'*, taught that creation is a gift that reveals the loving intention of the Creator. For Reception pupils, this can be introduced simply as: God gave us the world because He loves us.

For pupils entering Reception without Nursery experience, this introduces the idea that God's love can be seen in the world around them. For those with prior learning, it deepens the concept by focusing on why creation is given: not only because it is good, but because it reflects God's care for every person.

Linking this to the experience of receiving a gift helps children make a clear emotional connection. When a gift brings joy, we understand that the giver cares for us. In the same way, noticing the goodness of creation helps pupils recognise God's kindness and respond with gratitude.

A Creation Walk strengthens this understanding by encouraging attentive, appreciative observation.

	God is love. God made each one of us. God loves each one of us as a unique person. God made a wonderful world and what God creates is good. God loves us and we are part of a family.
Know	God made me and loves me just the way I am. God made a wonderful world, and everything God makes is good. **God gives me people to love and care for in my home family and school family.**

Discern	We have a classroom family; we have a school family. God is at the heart of families.	Suggested discovery questions 1. How do the people who love us show us their love? 2. What can we do each day to make our classroom feel like a happy family? 3. How do you think God wants us to treat the people in all our families?

Respond	How can we look after God's Creation? Discuss classroom and playground rules, emphasising how they require us to look after each other. Identify times when we have seen others looking after the school and everyone in it. God gave us this world because He loves us.

Textual references

Key vocabulary

care	helping someone or treating them well
love	showing kindness and goodness to others

Teacher Notes

This week's learning centres on the Catholic understanding that God creates human beings not only as individuals but also for relationships. In Scripture, God is revealed as love, and love is expressed through community. Families, whether at home or in school, are places where love is learned, practised, and shared. For Reception pupils, it is helpful to frame this simply: God gives us people to belong to, and He wants us to treat one another with kindness because each person is made and loved by Him.

Catholic theology holds that every person has a unique dignity, but this dignity is always lived out in connection with others. Children can begin to explore this by thinking about how their actions affect the people around them. Classroom routines, playground rules, and shared tasks become opportunities to teach that caring for others is part of responding to God's love.

For pupils without Nursery experience, this introduces the foundational idea that God makes and loves each person. For those with prior learning, this week extends that understanding by highlighting God's desire for us to live in loving families and communities, reflecting His love in how we treat one another.

	Care and love for self, family, others, and God's world. God made each of us, so each one of us is very special. We must treat others in a caring way because God made them too. (CST link: The dignity of the human person).
Know	God made each one of us. Each of us is very special. **We must treat others in a caring way because God made them.**

Discern	We are kind of the same and we are all kinds of different and that is good. We are unique.	Suggested discovery questions 1. What are some ways we are the same as our friends? 2. What are some ways God made each of us different? 3. Why do you think God is happy that we are not all exactly the same?

Respond	Revisit classroom and playground rules, focusing on how they promote care and fair treatment of each other. How do we look after and help others in: our families? our class? our school? our parish?

Textual references

Key vocabulary

dignity	the special worth every person has because God made them
unique	only one of its kind; no one else is the same as you

Teacher Notes

This week's learning develops the Catholic principle that every human person has a God-given dignity. Catholic theology teaches that each person is created intentionally by God, possesses unique gifts, and reflects something of God's goodness. Reception pupils can understand this through the idea that we are 'kind of the same and kind of different', and that both similarity and difference are part of God's plan.

Being 'the same' points to our shared humanity: all people are made by God, loved by God, and called to treat one another with care. Being 'different' expresses individuality: God gives each person distinct traits, abilities and ways of being. These differences are not mistakes but signs of God's creativity and generosity. For pupils without Nursery experience, this introduces the foundational idea that God made them special. For pupils with prior learning, this week deepens their understanding by showing that God also gives us others who are special in different ways.

The link to Catholic social teaching (the dignity of the human person) is particularly strong here. Because every person is made by God and is precious, we must act with fairness, gentleness and respect. Classroom and playground rules can be interpreted through this theological lens.

Creation and Covenant

Reception
Week 6
Believe

Celebrate God's beautiful world. God made the earth and sky. God made all the people all over the world. God made all the animals. God made all the plants. God made the air, the ground, and the water. And God tells us we must take good care of them. It is an important job! (CST link: Stewardship)

Know

God made the world and everything in it.

God tells us we must take good care of the world and everything in it. It is precious.

Stewardship means to look after the world; everything and everyone in it.

Discern

God loves us so he made the world and everything in it. It is good.

Suggested discovery questions

1. If God made the sun, the moon, and the stars, what do you think He wants us to do when we see them?
2. How does it feel to know God made the world just for you?
3. If you could tell a friend about how wonderful God's world is, what would you say?

Respond

Retell and explore the Creation story in a variety of ways.

Share something that is very precious to you and say how you look after it (e.g. show and tell format)

Textual references

An age-appropriate retelling of the Creation account in Genesis 1 (aka 'The Six Days of Creation')

Key vocabulary

stewardship	looking after the world because it belongs to God

Teacher Notes

This week strengthens pupils' understanding of stewardship, a key theme in Catholic teaching. Stewardship means recognising that the world belongs to God, not to us, and that God entrusts it to human beings to care for with love. Reception pupils can understand this through the idea that the world is precious because God made it, and therefore we must look after it.

Catholic theology teaches that creation is a gift flowing from God's love. Because everything God makes is good, everything in creation has value: land, water, plants, animals, and people. Stewardship involves gratitude, respect, and responsibility. At this age, pupils can begin to learn that caring actions (such as protecting living things, tidying shared spaces, and using resources carefully) are ways of responding to God's love and honouring the goodness of His world.

For pupils new to Catholic RE, this week introduces the idea that God gives us an important job: looking after the world. For pupils who learned about creation in Nursery, this develops their understanding further by linking God's love to a moral responsibility. Stewardship becomes not just appreciation but action, rooted in the belief that everything God creates matters.



We enter God's family, the Church, through Baptism

Know

God's family is called the Church.

Catholics enter God's family through Baptism.



Discern

When someone new joins our family or class, we are happy and celebrate. In the Church, this is called Baptism, and is when a person becomes part of God's family.

Suggested discovery questions

1. How do you feel when someone new joins your home family or class family?
2. What are some of the ways we can say 'welcome' to a new baby or new friend?
3. Why do you think Baptism is a special way to welcome someone into God's family?



Respond

Reflect on how welcoming our classroom family is to new people joining our school or parish.

Set up an area within continuous provision, where pupils can recreate what happens during a Baptism.

Textual references

Key vocabulary

Baptism	a special celebration where someone joins God's family
Church	God's family of people who follow Him

Teacher Notes

This week's learning introduces pupils to the Catholic understanding of Baptism as the moment when a person becomes part of God's family, the Church. In Catholic theology, Baptism is the first of the Sacraments of Initiation and marks a new beginning: through water and the Holy Spirit, a person is welcomed into the life of the Church. For Reception pupils, the focus is not on sacramental theology itself, but on the idea of joining a loving family where they are known, valued and celebrated.

The concept of 'family' is central. Human families welcome new members with joy, and the Church mirrors this by welcoming people through Baptism. This helps children understand that they belong not only to their home family and class family, but also to a wider family of believers. For children without Nursery experience, this is a first introduction to Baptism. For those with prior experience, this week deepens understanding by linking Baptism to the wider idea of belonging and community.

At this age, the symbols used in Baptism (e.g water, a candle, white clothing, a blessing) can be explained simply as symbols that show God's love and welcome. The emphasis is on joy, celebration, and the belief that God wants everyone to be part of His family.

U1.1.1	Recognise that the story of Creation in Genesis 1:1-4,24-26, is an ancient, prayerful, poetic reflection on God's world and retell this story in any form	
Know	The Creation story is in the Bible in the book of Genesis. **The Creation story tells us God made the world in six days and on the seventh day, He rested.**	
D1.1.1a	Talk about how God's gift of Creation is expressed through the scriptures	Suggested discovery questions
Discern	Everything that God created was good.	1. When we say 'Our Father', who are we talking to? 2. God is our Father, what does that tell us about the world He made for us? 3. Why do you think everything God made is good, just like a loving father makes good things for his children?
R1.1.1a	Reflect on what the words of the Our Father and what these say to them.	
Respond	Give each child one line or phrase from the Our Father written on a strip of card with simple illustrations or symbols. In small groups, they talk about what their line means in their own words. Each child then draws a picture showing how they can live that line in school, home, or the community Choose one phrase and decide on a small action they can take to live it out (e.g. 'Forgive us...' → say sorry to someone; 'Our daily bread' → bring food for a collection). Illustrate it and take it home to share with family.	

Textual references

Genesis 1:1-4, 24-26	The creation of the world (aka the six days of Creation)

Key vocabulary

Creator	someone who makes something; God, who made everything
Sabbath	a holy day of rest that reminds us of God's goodness

Teacher Notes

In Year 1, pupils can begin to engage more consciously with Scripture as a source of truth about God. The Creation account in Genesis 1 is not presented by the Church as a scientific explanation, but as a theological reflection that teaches who God is and how God relates to the world. When pupils hear that 'everything God created was good', they are encountering a key doctrine: creation is an intentional gift flowing from God's goodness.

The Genesis text is structured as a prayerful, poetic rhythm. Its pattern of days expresses order, purpose, and harmony in creation. When pupils learn that God 'rested' on the seventh day, this introduces the idea of Sabbath rest: a holy pause that reveals the goodness of God's completed work. This rest also models the value of rhythm in human life: work, creativity and rest held together.

Linking the Creation story to the Our Father encourages pupils to see God not only as Creator but also as Father. This helps them recognise that the world is made by Someone who knows them and loves them. Exploring phrases from the Our Father allows children to connect scriptural language with their own daily actions, reinforcing that prayer shapes Christian living.

Begin with recognising Our Father as God, then link his identity as Father to His role as Creator.

Encourage pupils to make the connection between love and the goodness of creation.

The words 'Our Father' express the belief that God, the creator, is the father of everyone.

Know	**The Creed tells everyone what Catholics believe.** We say the Creed together sometimes at Mass. **The Creed says God made heaven and earth, and everything we can see and cannot see.**

D1.1.1b	Talk about how God's gift of Creation is expressed through diverse creative and artistic expressions	Suggested discovery questions (in response to engaging with artwork, music, or poetry)
Discern	God created everything: visible and invisible	1. In this image, what things can you see that God made? 2. In this artwork, what do yout think the artist is showing us that we cannot see with our own eyes? 3. Why do you think artists show both the things we can see and those we can't see when they make art about God's creation?

R1.1.1b	Reflect on the opening words of the Nicene Creed and what these say to them.
Respond	Hold a time of prayer celebrating all that God has made. (e.g. a litany of thanksgiving for the gift of Creation) Create a collage showing things we can see and things we cannot see in God's wonderful creation. Generate some actions to accompany the first article of the Nicene Creed, so that pupils reflect on the words and connect them to meaning through physical engagement

Textual references

Key vocabulary

creed	a statement of beliefs that Catholics share

Teacher Notes

To challenge pupils whilst helping them to discern through the discovery question, ask: Why can't we see heaven now? How do we know it's there?

This week moves from the Genesis account of creation to the Church's formal profession of faith found in the Nicene Creed. The Creed is not a story but a summary of core Christian beliefs. When pupils encounter the line 'God made heaven and earth, and everything we can see and cannot see', they are engaging with a profound theological truth: creation includes both the visible world (matter, living creatures, the natural environment) and the invisible realities God created (angels, grace, human souls, and spiritual truths).

For Year 1 pupils, the aim is not to explain these invisible realities in detail but to introduce the idea that God's creation is larger than what our eyes can observe. This helps children appreciate that the world has depth and mystery, and that faith allows us to trust in truths beyond physical sight.

By learning that the Creed is prayed at Mass, pupils also recognise that belief is shared: Catholics speak these words together as a sign of unity in faith.

Suggested actions for pupils:

- 'I believe' — Place both hands flat over the heart to show conviction and faith.
- 'in one God' — Raise one finger upwards to symbolise one God.
- 'the Father almighty' — Stretch arms wide open as if embracing, showing God's strength and love.
- 'maker of heaven' — Point upwards or sweep arms slowly towards the sky to represent heaven.
- 'and earth' — Lower hands towards the ground, palms facing down.
- 'of all things visible' — Spread arms wide, looking around, to show the world we can see.
- 'and invisible' — Close eyes gently and place hands over them, showing faith in what we cannot see.

Creation and Covenant

Year 1
Week 3
Believe & Live

	U1	Recognise in an age-appropriate way that the Church teaches that all that is, comes from God, our Father, who made heaven and earth.
Know	Everything comes from God, our Father. God made heaven and earth. **The Church teaches us that God made everything.**	

Discern	God gave us the world and told us to use it wisely.	Suggested discovery questions 1. What is one thing in the world that you think we should look after carefully? Why? 2. If someone wanted to waste or break something in God's world, what would you say to them? Why? 3. What is one good way we can use the world so it helps people, animals, or plants? Why do you think that's a good idea?

	R1.1.4	Talk about how they can care for God's world.
Respond	Think of practical ways we can look after the environment, and construct and sign a 'class charter' poster which is displayed and revisited. Give each pupil a sheet with two boxes on: 'before' and 'after'. Draw a scene showing a part of God's creation is not cared for and then how it could look (transform) once cared for.	

Textual references

Key vocabulary

wisely	making good choices that help, not harm

Teacher Notes

This week focuses on the Catholic belief that creation is a gift entrusted to humanity, and that God calls us to use this gift wisely. In Scripture, God gives human beings a unique responsibility: to 'till and keep' the earth. This means caring for creation in a way that honours its goodness and reflects God's intention. Year 1 pupils can understand this through the idea that God wants us to look after the world because it belongs to Him and because everything He makes has value.

Catholic teaching emphasises that creation is not ours to exploit but ours to steward. Stewardship involves making choices that protect, preserve and respect the natural world. At this age, pupils can begin to think about consequences: what happens if we waste, break or pollute something that God made? Conversely, how can good choices help people, animals and plants to flourish?

Connecting this learning to 'God our Father' reinforces that the world comes from Someone who loves us. If everything comes from God, then everything deserves thoughtful, responsible handling. Activities such as class charters and before-and-after drawings help pupils recognise that their actions have real impact and that caring for creation is part of living out their faith.

Practical ways we can look after the environment might include: recycling, litter picking, walking, using public transport, caring for one another, praying for other people etc.

U1.1.3	Recognise that though people cannot see God, they can sense his presence through the awe and wonder experienced in the beauty and order of Creation.	
Know	**We cannot see God, but we can sense him in the world around us.** **We experience awe and wonder in Creation.**	
D1.1.2	Talk about why caring for God's world matters for them and their local community.	
Discern	We can see God in the beauty of creation.	Suggested discovery questions 1. What if all the colours (or beautiful things) in the world disappeared? How would it feel and what would you miss most? 2. I wonder what God was thinking when He made mountains, oceans, and flowers... how can we take care of them so everyone in our community can enjoy them? 3. When you look at a rainbow, a flower, or a sunset, what do you think God is showing us about Himself? Why is it important to keep these safe for our community?
Respond	Consider awe and wonder questions about Creation and everything in it. Spend some time in prayer celebrating God's Creation; this could be outside in your school prayer garden.	

Textual references

Key vocabulary

awe	a feeling of amazement when something is really wonderful
wonder	the feeling you get when you notice something surprising or special

Teacher Notes

This week introduces pupils to a foundational aspect of Christian spirituality: encountering God through creation. Catholic theology teaches that although God cannot be seen with human eyes, His presence can be perceived through the beauty, order and harmony of the created world. This insight is rooted in Scripture, especially in texts such as the Psalms and St Paul's teaching that God's invisible qualities can be understood from what He has made.

For 5–6 year olds, the key idea is that experiences of awe and wonder, the 'wow' moments when we encounter something beautiful or surprising, can help us sense God's closeness. These experiences are not proofs of God but invitations to recognise that creation reflects something of its Creator.

This learning also strengthens pupils' understanding of why caring for creation matters. If creation reveals God's goodness, then protecting it ensures that both we and our communities continue to encounter that beauty. Linking this to local examples (gardens, parks, skies, weather, animals) helps pupils see that wonder is not limited to extraordinary places.

Time in outdoor prayer or reflection supports children in slowing down, noticing, and responding with gratitude; an essential early step in developing a contemplative Christian worldview.

Awe and wonder questions to reflect on might include, I wonder why we have...

- night and day?
- sea and land?
- trees and plants?
- all different kinds of animals?

	U1.1.4	Recognise that the Church teaches that God gave human beings the responsibility for taking care of the world and its people and in doing this, we show love for God and each other.
Know	**God gave humans the responsibility for taking care of the world and everyone in it.** This is called being a steward of God's Creation. **We show love for God and each other by being stewards of His Creation.**	

	D1.1.2	Talk about why caring for God's world matters for them and their local community.	
Discern	Stewards of God's Creation are doing His work.	Suggested discovery questions	1. If you could choose one thing in nature to take care of every day, what would it be and why? 2. Which do you think is more important to help first: plants, animals, or people? Why do you think that? 3. If you were God's helper for one day, what would you do to take care of the world or the people around you, and why would you pick that?

Respond	Make simple 'thank you' cards for local people who care for the environment or others (e.g. priests, park keepers, nurses, fire officers, food banks etc.) Go on a stewardship walk around the school site or local area to notice what's being looked after well and what could be improved. Back in class, share one thing you saw and idea for how you could help.

Textual references

Key vocabulary

Teacher Notes

The Church teaches that God entrusts human beings with the responsibility of caring for creation and for one another. This does not mean ownership; rather, it reflects a relationship of trust. God remains the Creator, and humans act as caretakers who use their gifts wisely for the good of all.

For 5–6 year olds, the essential idea is that being a steward is an active expression of love for God. When we protect the environment, help others, or make choices that show kindness, we are participating in God's work of caring for the world. This understanding builds on their developing sense of responsibility and fairness. Pupils should grasp that stewardship includes practical actions: protecting nature, looking after shared spaces, and responding to the needs of others in their community.

This week also encourages pupils to make connections between everyday helpers (park keepers, carers, cleaners, community volunteers) and the wider Christian vocation to care. Highlighting real examples helps children see stewardship as both achievable and meaningful.

The language of stewardship supports early ethical formation, helping pupils understand that love for God is shown through concrete, loving choices.

	U1.1.5	Know that Pope Francis wrote a letter, called Laudato Si', about the gift of Creation and the importance of taking care of the world as it is everyone's home.
Know	**Pope Francis wrote a letter called Laudato Si' which means 'Praise be to you'** **We must take care of the earth; it is everyone's home.**	

	D1.1.2	Talk about why caring for God's world matters for them and their local community.
Discern	In *Laudato Si'* Pope Francis speaks about 'everyone's home'.	Suggested discovery questions 1. Pope Francis says the Earth is everyone's home, which part of it do you love the most, and why? 2. Laudato Si' tells us to look after water, air, and animals. Which one do you think needs the most help, and why? 3. If the Pope asked you to do one thing to make everyone's home better, what would you do and why?

	R1.1.3	Listening to stories from different communities and their experiences about how they care for the world.
Respond	'Global stewardship story circle': read or tell short, simple stories from children in different parts of the world about how they care for their environment. After each story, pause and ask pupils to share whether they do anything similar or would like to try. Use puppets as simple props to retell a story about a child taking care of their local environment. Pupils take it in turns acting out parts, then discuss what they would do in a similar situation and how it would make them or others feel. Each pupil draws a picture of something they do, or could do, to care for God's world at home or school. Add speech bubbles for them to write or dictate how it makes them feel. Combine these into a large wall display to generate a 'community of caring hands'.	

Textual references

Laudato Si' 13	Present a brief introduction to the ideas Pope Francis writes about here.

Key vocabulary

home	a place where people live and feel safe; Pope Francis used this word to describe the whole earth
Laudato Si'	a letter written by Pope Francis teaching us to care for God's world

Teacher Notes

The 'respond' section of this week's learning is an opportunity for schools to use examples from their local contexts, as well as more global experiences from Cafod and/or Missio. Teachers may wish to link these to the upcoming Harvest celebrations and consider how we can help on local and global scales.

This week deepens pupils' understanding of Laudato Si', the letter in which Pope Francis taught that the earth is 'everyone's home'. His central message was that all creation is interconnected, and therefore the way humans treat the world has real consequences for every person, especially the most vulnerable. For Year 1 pupils, the key idea is that caring for the world is not just a good habit, but something God asks of us because the earth is a shared gift.

You can explain that Pope Francis wrote this letter to help people see that the world is like a family home: it needs looking after so everyone can live happily and safely. This includes caring for water, air, land, plants, animals, and for one another. At this age, pupils are beginning to grasp fairness and empathy; linking stewardship to the idea that our actions help or harm others supports early moral development.

The global stories in the week's activities also highlight that Christians everywhere share the same responsibility, even if they live in very different places. This helps children recognise that caring for creation is a universal Christian vocation, not just something individuals do alone.

U1.1.6	Recognise that prayer is a way of drawing closer to God.	
Know	Jesus taught us how to pray by giving us the Our Father. In the Our Father we say, 'thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven'. This means that we must love the earth and each other as God loves us. **We grow closer to God in prayer.**	
Discern	The Our Father is a wonderful prayer from God, given by Jesus, that guides Christians in their lives.	Suggested discovery questions 1. Who gave us the Our Father prayer, and why do you think it was shared with us? 2. What words in the prayer help us to know how to live or be kind to others? 3. Why do you think this prayer is special for Christians?
R1.1.2	Reflect on different ways to pray.	
Respond	Regular repeated opportunities for communally praying the Our Father, starting and ending with the Sign of the Cross. After saying the Our Father, give children paper to draw or doodle what the prayer makes them think or feel. They can share their pictures with a partner or small group.. Create an environment that is conducive to prayer.	

Textual references

Key vocabulary

Our Father	the prayer Jesus taught to help us talk to God
prayer	talking and listening to God
thy will	what God wants us to do, especially loving others

Teacher Notes

This week centres on the Our Father as the prayer Jesus gave to His disciples, and therefore to the whole Church. It is both a model of how to pray and a summary of Christian living. For Year 1 pupils, the key idea is that prayer helps us grow closer to God because it is a conversation that expresses trust, love, and hope.

The opening words, 'Our Father', teach that God relates to us as a loving parent and that we are part of a worldwide family of believers. This prayer also shapes how Christians live. Phrases such as 'thy will be done' remind us that we are called to act with love, kindness, and fairness, reflecting God's care for the earth and for each other. Pupils can begin to understand that praying these words is not just speaking them but trying to live them.

Children at this age benefit from repetition, rhythm, and routine. Regular communal praying of the Our Father helps them develop familiarity, confidence, and reverence. Encouraging them to reflect creatively (e.g. through drawing, small-group talk, or simple discussion) helps them express what the prayer means to them personally.

Creating a calm, respectful environment reinforces that prayer is a special time to be close to God.

U2.1.5	Know that the Christian Bible is split into two parts, the Old Testament and the New Testament.	
Know	**The Bible is split into two parts, the Old Testament and the New Testament.** The Old Testament tells us about God's people long ago. The New Testament tells us about Jesus and the new life He brings.	
Discern	Unlike other written accounts of God's holy people, the Bible is sacred.	Suggested discovery questions 1. Which story from the Bible do you like most, and why do you think it is important? 2. If someone asked you why we treat the Bible carefully, what would you say and why? 3. Why do you think the Bible is special compared to other books about people or stories?
Respond	Sit in a circle and read a short passage from the Bible. Invite pupils to say one word or sentence about what they wonder about, what it reminds them of, or how it makes them feel. Encourage attentive listening and respectful responses to each other (suggested foci: themes of Creation and prophecy) Pupils choose a verse or sentence from a Bible story and decorate a small poster with drawings and simple words explaining why it is meaningful to them. They then present their poster to a partner or small group.	

Textual references

Key vocabulary

New Testament	the books that teach about Jesus and the Early Church
Old Testament	the books about God's people before Jesus
sacred	holy; belonging to God
Scripture	God's holy writings collected in the Bible

Teacher Notes

In Year 2, pupils can begin to appreciate more deeply why the Bible holds a unique place in the life of the Church. They already know that it contains stories about God and His people; now they can be introduced to the idea that Scripture is sacred because it is inspired. This means that God guided human authors so that what they wrote truly communicates His love, His truth, and His plan for salvation. This is why the Bible is treated with reverence: it is not simply important, it is holy. The Church listens to Scripture in prayer, proclaims it carefully at Mass, and uses it as a living guide for Christian life.

Understanding that the Bible is divided into two major parts helps pupils recognise the overarching unity of God's story. The Old Testament spans many centuries and introduces creation, covenant, law, prophecy, and the lives of God's people. These books show how God remained faithful even when people struggled, and they reveal growing hope for a Saviour. The New Testament presents the fulfilment of these hopes: Jesus' life, teachings, death, and resurrection, and the beginnings of the Church. Pupils can begin to understand that Jesus does not replace the Old Testament; rather, He completes and transforms it.

Pupils are also developmentally ready to notice that the Bible contains different types of writing: stories, songs, prayers, teachings, which all help believers encounter God in different ways. This supports their growing understanding of Scripture as a library of sacred texts rather than a single narrative.

By exploring short passages, wondering about what they notice, and responding creatively, pupils learn that the Bible continues to speak to believers today. Scripture is not just read; it is lived, helping Christians make loving choices and grow in relationship with God.

Creation and Covenant

U2.1.1	Retell in any form the Noah story (Genesis 6:9-9:17), focusing on Noah and God's promise to all living creatures in the sign of the rainbow (Gen 9:8-17).
Know	Noah obeyed God and built an ark to save his family and all the animals from the flood. **God promised Noah that He would never flood the whole earth again.** **The rainbow is a sign to remember God's special promise, called a 'covenant'.**

D2.1.1	Respond to the way God's gift of Creation is expressed in a variety of creative and artistic ways, e.g., art, music, or poetry and talk about the reason for their response.	
Discern	When we sin, we have turned away from God.	Suggested discovery questions based on a study of creative and artistic works 1. Look at this picture of Noah and the ark. How do you think Noah felt when people were not listening to God, and why? 2. Listen to this song about God's promises or about rainbows. How does it make you feel, and what does it tell you about turning back to God? 3. If you were in the story of Noah, what would you do to show you are following God, and why?

R2.1.2	Reflect on how actions can help or harm themselves and others and what this could mean for their friendship with God.
Respond	How does saying 'sorry' make us feel at the time we say it? And after some time has passed? How does it feel if we don't say 'sorry' when we should? Does receiving a meaningful 'sorry' change our friendships with each other?

Textual references

Genesis 6:9-9:17	God's covenant with Noah

Key vocabulary	
covenant	a very special promise that God will never break
mercy	God's kindness and forgiveness, even when people make mistakes
symbol	something we can see that helps us remember an important meaning

Teacher Notes

In Year 2, pupils begin encountering the idea of covenant more explicitly. A covenant, in Scripture, is not simply a promise but a solemn, faithful commitment initiated by God for the sake of restoring relationship. The story of Noah (Genesis 6:9–9:17) is one of the earliest covenant narratives in the Bible. While pupils have previously explored God as Creator and our responsibility to care for Creation, they now extend this by recognising how human sin disrupts harmony with God, each other, and the world. In the Noah story, sin is presented not as isolated wrongdoing but as a collective turning away from God, resulting in real consequences.

Noah's obedience represents the human response God desires: listening, trusting, and acting faithfully even when others do not. The ark becomes a sign of God's protection, not only for Noah's family but for all living creatures, emphasising that God's loving concern extends beyond humanity. When God sets the rainbow in the sky, it marks a new stage in the relationship between God and the world. The rainbow is not a magical object but a symbol; a visible reminder that God remains faithful even when human beings fail.

This covenant also reveals something important about God's character: although people had turned away, God chose mercy over destruction. The rainbow symbolises hope, reconciliation, and a fresh start.

Pupils at this age can also begin reflecting on moral and relational consequences. Saying 'sorry' restores friendships; similarly, turning back to God restores spiritual relationship. This offers a simple but developmentally appropriate bridge between the biblical covenant and pupils' own lived experience.

Visual art:

- Noah's Ark by Edward Hicks
- Noah's Ark by Alexis Ngom (1986, Senegal)
- Noah's Ark by Miskin (Late 1500s, India)
- Wade in the Water II by Antonio Obá (2020, Brazil)
- Bless You Magic Flying Woman Retablo by Guadalupe Maravilla (2022, El Salvador/USA)

Music:

- Arky, Arky (Rise and Shine)
- The Rainbow Song

U2.1.1	Retell in any form the Noah story (Genesis 6:9-9:17), focusing on Noah and God's promise to all living creatures in the sign of the rainbow (Gen 9:8-17).	
Know	*N.B. Pupils should consolidate their knowledge of the account of God's covenant with Noah from Week 2 throughout this week.*	

D2.1.2	Express a point of view, with a relevant reason, about why we care for God's world, making simple connections with God's promise to all living creatures with Noah.	
Discern	We must always say sorry after we have sinned and hurt other people.	Suggested discovery questions 1. In the story of Noah, people did not listen to God and made bad choices. How do you think saying sorry could have helped them? 2. Noah and his family followed God and were safe. How do you feel when someone says sorry to you, and why is it important? 3. If you made a mistake like the people before the flood, what could you do to turn back to God and others, and why would you do that?

R2.1.1	Consider what they could do to care for God's world in their own lives and in the life of their local community.	
Respond	Think of practical ways you can look after creation in your own life. Express this in the form of a promise. Think of practical ways you can look after one another. Express this in the form of a promise. Draw or print a big map of the school's local area. Place stickers or drawings showing where and how you could help care for God's world. Give a reason why your action is important for God's world and the people around you.	

Textual references

Genesis 6:9-9:17	God's covenant with Noah

Key vocabulary

promise	a choice we decide to keep because it is important
repent	to admit we have done wrong and try to make things right again

Teacher Notes

This week builds directly upon pupils' understanding of covenant from Week 2 by exploring the moral and relational implications of human choices. In Catholic theology, sin is not only the breaking of a rule but a rupture in relationship: with God, with other people, and with Creation. Pupils at this developmental stage begin to grasp that actions have consequences and that wrongdoing harms more than just the immediate situation. The Noah narrative offers a concrete scriptural example of this principle: the people's refusal to listen to God is portrayed as widespread moral disorder, creating harm that extends across the whole community and even the natural world.

The learning now shifts from 'what the covenant is' to 'how we respond to God's faithful love'. The idea of saying 'sorry' is used as an accessible bridge into the Christian practice of repentance. Repentance involves honest recognition of wrongdoing, a desire to repair the relationship, and purposeful change in behaviour. Children naturally understand the emotional dynamics of apology: how it feels to receive one, how relationships improve when we give one, and how withholding an apology prolongs hurt. These relational experiences make it possible to introduce the spiritual idea of turning back to God.

This week also extends pupils' understanding of stewardship. Because God remains faithful, humans are called to respond with faithfulness in daily choices that protect Creation and care for others. Simple, practical commitments allow pupils to connect covenant theology with real-world moral action. Linking promises to specific reasons strengthens reasoning skills and supports the curriculum's progression from recognising facts to expressing considered viewpoints.

God made a covenant never to destroy the world again. In return, we make a covenant to look after what He has created.

	U2.1.3	Understand the term 'stewardship' and what it means for caring for God's world.
Know	**Stewardship means looking after God's world and everything in it.** **Being a good steward means caring for plants, animals, and people around us.** God wants us to use His creation wisely and help it stay safe and healthy.	

	D2.1.2	Express a point of view, with a relevant reason, about why we care for God's world, making simple connections with God's promise to all living creatures with Noah.
Discern	When we make wrong choices and turn away from God, saying sorry helps us turn back to Him and care for others, just as Noah listened to God and followed His ways.	Suggested discovery questions 1. Imagine you made a wrong choice like the people in Noah's time. How could saying sorry help you turn back to God and be a good steward of the people and world around you? 2. If you saw someone else make a wrong choice, what could they do to turn back to God and care for others and God's creation, and how would it make you feel? 3. What do you wonder about how saying sorry helps people feel better, and how could you try it in your own life?

	R2.1.2	Reflect on how actions can help or harm themselves and others and what this could mean for their friendship with God.
Respond	Pupils identify good stewardship actions that help you grow closer to God and help others. Pupils identify poor stewardsip choices that separate you from God (sin).	

Textual references

Key vocabulary

choice	something we decide to do
responsibility	looking after something because it matters
steward	a person who takes good care of God's world

Teacher Notes

This week extends pupils' understanding of stewardship by linking it explicitly with moral choice. In Week 3, pupils explored repentance as repairing relationships; this learning now broadens to include the idea that stewardship itself is a moral and relational act. Catholic teaching holds that all creation is a gift entrusted to humanity. Stewardship, therefore, is more than tidying or caring for the environment: it is a vocation rooted in love for God and neighbour. When pupils recognise that plants, animals, people, and places require thoughtful care, they are beginning to grasp that creation is interconnected and that harm to one part affects the whole.

The theme of turning back to God continues here, but with a new focus: how good stewardship helps restore right relationships. Sin is presented not simply as wrongdoing but as choosing a way that disrupts harmony with God's intention for creation. Helping pupils identify both good and poor stewardship choices enables them to understand that sin has consequences beyond themselves. For example, wasting resources or treating others unkindly damages the flourishing of God's world.

The Noah narrative remains an anchor, but the emphasis now falls on Noah's response rather than the flood itself. Noah's obedience becomes a model for pupils: to follow God's ways involves deliberate choices that promote life, safety, and care. This provides a theological basis for encouraging pupils to take greater responsibility for the choices they make in school, at home, and within their wider community. By articulating reasons for their stewardship actions, pupils begin to connect belief, motivation, and behaviour, deepening their moral reasoning.

Good stewardship actions:

- sharing God's love with others;
- caring for His Creation;
- enacting the *Catholic Schools Pupil Profile;*
- praying

Poor stewardship choices:

- not telling the truth;
- using unkind words;
- hurting other people;
- polluting God's Creation

	U2.1.4	Correctly use religious words and phrases to talk about the Sacrament of Baptism, as a sign of Jesus' love for all people and a welcome into the Christian family
Know	**Baptism is a sign of Jesus' love for all people.** **People are welcomed into the Christian family at Baptism.** Baptism is the first sacrament.	

Discern	Good stewards say 'yes' to God's call. Saying 'yes' to God is good.	Suggested discovery questions 1. When someone is welcomed into God's family through Baptism, how do you think saying 'yes' to God helps them care for the people and world around them? 2. If you wanted to show God that you say 'yes' to Him, what could you do in your everyday life to help others? 3. Why do you think saying 'yes' to God is a good choice for someone joining the Christian family?

	R2.1.2	Reflect on how actions can help or harm themselves and others and what this could mean for their friendship with God.
Respond	Prepare cards with different scenarios (e.g. sharing a toy, saying something unkind, helping a friend, ignoring someone who is sad). Sort the cards into 'helps friendship with God' and 'hurts friendship with God'. Pupils discuss their reasoning. Invite your parish priest or deacon into class to discuss how pupils can respond to God's call to be transformational. Draw actions you can undertake to say 'yes' to God (e.g. hepling a friend, caring for animals, helping with housework). Explain reasons for your choice and what you might need to ask God for in order to do them (e.g. courage, patience, faith)	

Textual references

Key vocabulary

Baptism	'...our birth as children of the Holy Mother Church' (Pope Francis)
sacrament	a meeting point with God where He waits for you, blesses you, and leads you more deeply into the community of the Church

Teacher Notes

This week introduces pupils to a deeper understanding of Baptism as both a personal welcome into the Christian family and a lifelong response to God's call. In Catholic theology, Baptism is not only a ritual moment but the beginning of a vocation: a life shaped by saying 'yes' to God. This 'yes' is a free and loving response to the grace offered in the sacrament. For young pupils, this can be framed as choosing to act in ways that reflect Jesus' love; e.g. being kind, truthful, courageous, and willing to help others.

Baptism communicates two key theological ideas: belonging and mission. First, belonging: in Baptism a person becomes part of the Body of Christ, the worldwide community of believers. This identity is rooted in Jesus' own mission to reveal the Father's love. Second, mission: those who are baptised share in Christ's work of building up God's kingdom on earth. For children, this mission is expressed through practical, everyday choices that protect, nurture, and encourage others.

Linking stewardship to Baptism helps pupils understand that caring for creation and caring for people are not optional extras but part of Christian discipleship. Saying 'yes' to God means recognising that all people are loved by Jesus and therefore deserving of respect, fairness, and compassion. This is also an opportunity to help pupils appreciate that Baptism is the first sacrament because it opens the way to the whole life of faith; it marks a new beginning grounded in God's promise and our ongoing response.

	**U2.1.4**	Correctly use religious words and phrases to talk about the Sacrament of Baptism, as a sign of Jesus' love for all people and a welcome into the Christian family.
Know	Baptism is the special sacrament that welcomes someone into God's family. **Baptism shows Jesus' love for all people.** **In Baptism, we use words and symbols like water, oil, a white garment, and a candle to show God's love and care.**	

	**D2.1.3**	Explore the meaning of symbols used in an infant's baptism in the Catholic Church.
Discern	In Baptism, God washes away our sins, gives us strength, surrounds us with His love, and helps us carry the light of Jesus in our lives.	Suggested discovery questions 1. The water in Baptism washes away sin. How might being washed clean help someone be kind and loving to others? 2. The white garment shows God's love surrounding us. How do you think it would feel to be wrapped in God's love, and how could that help you in your life? 3. The candle shows carrying the light of Jesus. What are some ways you could share Jesus' light with other people? 4. The oils used in Baptism give us strength and courage. When have you needed God's strength in your life? How might these oils remind you that God is always with you?

	**R2.1.2**	Reflect on how actions can help or harm themselves or others and what this could mean for their friendship with God.
Respond	Give each pupil a small flashlight or pretend "candle." Pupils act out scenarios where they can shine the light of Jesus by helping others or being kind. After each scenario, discuss how their 'light' could help or harm their friendship with God. How can a Catholic show they are in a friendship with God? Explore how this influences their relationships with other people.	

Textual references

Key vocabulary

candle	a light that reminds us of Jesus' light in our lives
Chrism	a holy oil that shows someone is chosen and special to God
oil	a sign of strength and God's help

Teacher Notes

In baptism, water represents washing away sin.

In baptism, the oil of chrism represents being anointed with the mark of Christ, just as people with a special job from God were anointed in the Old Testament.

In baptism, the oil of catechumens is a sign of strength (from God) and healing (from sin)

In baptism, a white garment represents being enrobed by Christ (surrounded by God’s love)

The baptismal candle represents a person carrying the light of Christ in their life.

U2.1.2	Know that psalms are prayed/sung to praise God and recognise that they are a different literary form in scripture.	
Know	Psalms are prayers or songs that praise God. **Psalms are written differently from Bible stories; they are poems, songs that help us talk to God.** **We can pray or sing psalms to thank God for His creation and love.**	
Discern	Psalms are special prayers and songs that praise God and help us see His love in the world, in a different way from stories in the Bible.	Suggested discovery questions 1. Psalms are like songs or poems that praise God. How is praising God in a psalm different from telling a story like Noah's ark? 2. When we read Psalms 104 and 148, we see God's love in creation and all living things. How do these psalms help us feel close to God in a way stories cannot? 3. Why do you think God wanted some of His words to be written as psalms instead of just stories? How could singing or reading a psalm help you think about your own life?
R2.1.1	Reflect on the gift of Creation (awe and wonder).	
Respond	St Augustine says that when you sing a hymn or a psalm it is like you are praying twice over. What do you think he meant by this? How do you feel when you sing a hymn in a celebration of the word or at Mass? Provide magazines, natural materials, or printed images of animals, plants, and landscapes. Pupils create a collage showing things in creation that make them feel awe and wonder, inspired by Psalms 104 and 148. Share why each element makes them thankful to God.	

Textual references

Psalm 104	O Lord My God, You Are Very Great
Psalm 148	Praise the Name of the Lord

Key vocabulary	
hymn	a song that praises God
psalm	a prayer or song in the Bible that praises or talks to God
praise	telling God how good and wonderful He is

Teacher Notes

In this week of learning, pupils are introduced to the psalms as a distinct form of Scripture. Unlike narrative accounts, psalms are poetic song-prayers that express praise, thanksgiving, trust, and sometimes lament. They are part of the Church's earliest prayer tradition and continue to shape Christian worship today. Psalms 104 and 148 invite believers to look at creation with awe and to praise God for His goodness seen in all living things. These psalms help pupils recognise that prayer is not only about asking God for help, it is also about recognising and celebrating His presence in the world.

Theologically, psalms show that prayer involves the whole person. St Augustine taught that singing a hymn or psalm is like praying twice. This is because singing is a more complete expression of prayer. When someone sings, they speak the words of the prayer and they also use their voice, breath, and emotion to offer praise from the heart. For pupils, this insight helps them understand why the Church sings psalms at Mass and why music is an important part of worship. A sung psalm can lift the mind to God in a way that spoken words cannot, because melody engages memory, imagination, and feeling.

When teaching this content, highlight that psalms reveal a relationship with God. They encourage pupils to notice beauty in creation, to feel wonder, and to respond with gratitude. Pupils should come to see that the psalms help Christians talk to God honestly and joyfully..

	U3.1.1	Revisit and remember the first Creation story from Genesis, recognising the author's use of poetic language to describe how the world was formed.
Know		**The first Creation story in Genesis tells how God creates everything out of nothing through His Word and Spirit.** **The story is written with a pattern, like a poem, to help us remember and understand that all God made is good.** God rested on the seventh day and made it holy; it is different from the other days.

	D3.1.3	Suggest meanings for an artistic expression of the goodness of Creation, considering the maker's intention.
Discern	The patterns and repetition in Genesis help us understand that God made Creation 'good'.	Suggested discovery questions, asked whilst looking at pieces of art showing Creation's goodness 1. When you hear the words 'And God saw that it was good' again and again, what do you think God wants us to remember? 2. Why do you think the story of Creation is told using the same pattern for each day instead of using different types of sentences? 3. If the story was told only once without repeating those words, how might it change the way we feel about Creation?

	R3.1.2	Spend time wondering about the blessings of Creation in their own lives.
Respond		Reflect on your blessings in prayer. Creatively challenge everyone to imagine a better world and what we need to do to enable it (e.g. ways to eradicate food poverty, climate change) as God's stewards. How close is this better world to God's original design?

Textual references

Genesis 1:1-31	The creation of the world (aka the six days of Creation)

Key vocabulary

Teacher Notes

In Year 3, pupils consolidate their appreciation that the Creation account in Genesis is not written as a scientific explanation but as a poetic and theological text that reveals truths about God and the world. Catholic tradition understands Genesis 1 as a carefully crafted piece of religious writing that uses poetic devices to teach that everything God creates is good, ordered, and purposeful.

In Genesis, especially in the Creation accounts, poetic devices like patterns and repetition work a bit like a drumbeat or chorus in a song, helping key ideas stick in our minds and hearts.

- **Patterns:** each day of Creation follows a similar structure: God said… there was… and it was good… and there was evening and morning. This rhythm builds a sense of order and purpose.
- **Repetition:** phrases like 'And God saw that it was good' are repeated, almost like a refrain, emphasising repeatedly that every part of Creation is good in God's eyes.
- **Structured sequence:** the careful day-by-day build-up shows Creation as an intentional, planned act, not random, which makes the 'goodness' feel deliberate and complete. The structure communicates that Creation forms a complete whole that reflects God's wisdom

This poetic form matters theologically. It teaches that creation comes from God's Word and Spirit, not by accident. It also connects Creation with worship, because patterned language is meant to be heard, remembered, and pondered. For children, the rhythm works like a song lyric. Hearing the same pattern again and again helps them internalise the message that Creation is good and that God's world reveals His love and glory.

Teachers can help pupils notice these literary features so they grow in confidence when engaging with Scripture as a rich, varied library of texts that communicate truth through many styles of writing.

	**U3.1.2**	Encounter the belief that human beings are made 'in the image of God' (Genesis 1:27) and talk about what this might mean.
Know	**God creates humans 'in the image and likeness of God'.** **Made 'in the image and likeness' means that we are called to reflect God's love and goodness.** We should care for ourselves and each other.	

	**D3.1.2**	Think about how all people should be treated equally and giving reasons that relate to the first Creation story (focusing on Genesis 1:26-31).
Discern	We are all equal in God's eyes and so need to respect each other's dignity.	Suggested discovery questions 1. What if everyone in the world looked, spoke, or dressed the same, how might that change the way we treat each other? 2. I wonder how someone might feel if they were always left out because they were different. What could we do to help them feel valued? 3. What if you saw someone being treated unfairly, how could you show them that they are important to God?

	**R3.1.1**	Make connections between experiences where people have not been treated equally and how this felt.
Respond	Read or watch short stories about people experiencing unfair treatment (e.g. simple age-appropriate historical or contemporary examples). Reflect on how it made the person feel and what could have been done differently. Pupils draw or write about a time they or someone they know was treated unfairly, and then imagine one action that could have made it fair. How would that action show respect for God's view of everyone?	

Textual references

Genesis 1:26-31	The creation of human beings (within the six days of Creation)

Key vocabulary	
dignity	the worth every person has because they are loved by God
equality	the idea that everyone is valued the same by God
image and likeness	the special way humans reflect God through love, goodness, and free choice

Teacher Notes

N.B. If pupils are completing the second Respond activity, stress the importance of identifying people; for example, by using their names

Equality does not always mean things are the same for everyone; sometimes people are treated differently so they can take part, and therefore are equal to others (e.g. the Paralympics, vegetarian meals)

Sometimes people are not treated fairly and therefore cannot take part equally (e.g. global access to education, healthcare, housing)

Here, pupils deepen their understanding of human dignity by looking closely at Genesis 1 and what it means for human beings to be created in the image and likeness of God. Catholic theology teaches that every person has an inherent, God-given dignity that cannot be earned or lost. This dignity comes from our creation by God and from our calling to reflect His love, goodness, and creativity in the world.

The phrase 'image and likeness of God' refers to qualities that make us capable of knowing God, loving Him, making free choices, forming relationships, and acting with goodness. It does not mean that humans physically resemble God. Instead, it expresses that human life has a unique purpose and value within Creation. This belief is foundational for Catholic Social Teaching because it grounds the conviction that everyone deserves respect, fairness, and care.

The Creation text also highlights human equality. Although individuals have different gifts, personalities, and appearances, Scripture teaches that all are equally valued by God. The diversity within humanity is part of God's design and is meant to enrich communities. Helping pupils appreciate this allows them to recognise that unfair treatment harms both the person who suffers and the wider community.

For children, linking dignity to real experiences helps them see that their choices matter. Simple actions such as including someone who is left out, speaking kindly, or challenging unfairness are ways of reflecting God's likeness. It is important to model language that reinforces dignity, for example: every person is important to God, every person should be treated fairly, and every person can show God's goodness by how they act.

	U3.1.2	Encounter the belief that human beings are made 'in the image of God' (Genesis 1:27) and talk about what this might mean.
Know	**God makes every person in His image, which means everyone has dignity and is important.** **Because we have dignity, we should treat every person with respect and kindness.** Our dignity comes from God, and our differences show His love and creativity.	

	D3.1.2	Think about how all people should be treated equally and giving reasons that relate to the first Creation story (focusing on Genesis 1:26-31).
Discern	We are all equal in God's eyes and so need to respect each other's dignity.	Suggested discovery questions 1. In what ways can we be 'in the same image and likeness' when we are all unique? 2. In our class family, how are we the same in image and likeness? How are we different? 3. In our class family, how are we the same in image and likeness?

	R3.1.1	Make connections between experiences where people have not been treated equally and how this felt.
Respond	Give pupils simple fact sheets, images, or short videos about Fairtrade products and producers. Ask them to identify why Fairtrade exists and write or draw two or three reasons. Pupils act out scenarios imagining life for a farmer who does not receive fair payment versus one who benefits from Fairtrade. How would it feel to be treated unfairly? How does being treated fairly show respect for dignity?	

Textual references

Genesis 1:26-31	The creation of human beings (within the six days of Creation)

Key vocabulary

advocacy	speaking or acting to support someone who is treated unfairly
dignity	the worth every person has because they are loved by God
equality	the idea that everyone is valued the same by God

Teacher Notes

This week's learning builds on pupils' understanding that every person is created in the image and likeness of God, yet moves further by exploring the ethical consequences of this belief. Rather than simply recognising dignity, pupils consider how dignity shapes the way human beings should treat one another in real and often complex situations, including economic fairness and global justice.

Scripture presents dignity as something shared equally by all people. However, Catholic teaching also stresses that dignity must be protected and promoted. Dignity is not only a gift; it carries responsibility. When pupils examine fairness, they are beginning to encounter Catholic social teaching, which asks how human choices affect the wellbeing of others, especially those who are vulnerable or disadvantaged.

Introducing examples such as Fairtrade, and the Fairtrade Fornight campaign, helps pupils understand that dignity is not only harmed through unkind actions but also through systems where people's work is undervalued or exploited. This shifts their learning from personal kindness to a broader view of justice. Pupils begin to see that respecting dignity sometimes requires standing up for people who are treated unfairly, even if we do not know them personally.

Another area of progression is the idea that differences between people do not cancel out equality. While last week explored uniqueness as part of God's creativity, this week considers how visible differences, varied circumstances, or unequal treatment can influence a person's experience of dignity. Pupils learn that Christians are called to respond to unfairness through compassion and advocacy as well as respect.

By connecting Scripture with global issues and fairness in daily life, pupils develop a deeper sense of moral responsibility. They begin to see that honouring God's image in others means actively choosing actions that uphold justice.

The Respond phase of this week's learning is an excellent opportunity to revise the concept of 'stewardship' from Year 2 and to make links with the dignity of the human person.

	**U3.1.3**	Make simple links between the first Creation story, the belief that all human beings are created equal, and an expression of the principle of Catholic social teaching about human dignity.
Know	In Genesis 1:27 we read 'God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them' **Catholic social teaching tells us how the Catholic faith guides human actions.** **The Church teaches that all people are created with equal dignity.**	

	**D3.1.3**	Suggest meanings for an artistic expression of the goodness of Creation, considering the maker's intention
Discern	St Francis' Canticle of Creation helps us see that God made the world good, and we can explore this goodness through our own thoughts and through art.	Suggested discovery questions 1. What do you notice about the way St Francis talks about the sun, moon, animals, and earth? How does this show God's goodness? 2. How do the pictures or artworks you've seen show the same ideas as the Canticle? Do you think the artist felt the world was good too? 3. Which part of the Canticle or the artwork do you like best, and why? How does it make you feel about God and creation?

	**R3.1.3**	Reflect on the prayerful words studied that give thanks for Creation.
Respond	Create your own Canticle of Creation inspired by the words of St Francis to be used in a time of prayer.	

Textual references	
Genesis 1:27	The creation of human beings (within the six days of Creation)

Key vocabulary

canticle	a special prayer-song of praise to God

Teacher Notes

This week's learning explores St Francis' *Canticle of Creation* as an artistic and prayerful response to the goodness of Creation. This text is not a scientific account. It is a poetic hymn of praise that helps pupils recognise Creation as a gift that reveals God's love. St Francis addresses elements of nature as if they were family members, for example Brother Sun or Sister Moon, which shows a spirit of kinship with all created things. This reflects a deeply Catholic understanding that Creation is not simply useful but is inherently good because it comes from God.

The Canticle expresses joy, gratitude, and humility before God. It models a way of seeing the world sacramentally, meaning that Creation can act as a sign that points beyond itself to the goodness of the Creator. This prepares pupils to understand later Catholic teaching about stewardship, ecology, and dignity, including themes found in Laudato Si', but at this stage the focus remains on perceiving Creation as a source of praise.

Linking the Canticle back to Genesis 1.27 helps pupils deepen their understanding of human dignity. If every person is created in the image and likeness of God, then every person possesses equal worth. Catholic social teaching builds on this belief, guiding how Catholics act in the world. Even at this age, pupils can begin to see that recognising the dignity of every person shapes how they speak, behave, and care for others.

Creatively responding to the Canticle allows pupils to express praise through language and imagination. Poetry and art help them reflect on how Creation reveals God's goodness and invite them to take part in prayer through artistic expression.

The text of the canticle can be found here.

Suggested artworks:

- Brother Sun and Sister Moon by John Poole (1926, UK);
- Illustrations found in *The Canticle of the Creatures for St Francis of Assisi* by Luigi Santucci (Paraclete Press, 2017);
- Illustrations found in *Brother Sun, Sister Moon: Saint Francis of Assis's Canticle of the Creatures* by Katherine Paterson (Chronicle Books, 2023);

U3.1.4 Describe stewardship by making simple links between Genesis 1:26-31 and people's actions today (*Laudato Si'* '88 on 'ecological virtues').

Know

God created humans as the most important feature of His Creation and tasked them to be stewards.

We show love for God and each other by being stewards of his creation.

Pope Francis called caring for creation 'ecological virtues,' which help people live in ways that respect God's world.

D3.1.4 Wonder why the author of the first story of Creation suggests a holy day.

Discern

God asked us to care for His world, and taking time to rest and celebrate creation helps us remember to be good stewards of the earth.

Suggested discovery questions

1. On the seventh day, God rested. Why do you think God chose to take a break after creating everything?
2. How could resting and celebrating the seventh day help people remember to take care of the world?
3. If we took time to rest and notice God's creation each week, what difference could it make to how we treat the earth and each other?

Respond

Consider ways in which people can improve stewardship. Give your reasons for what you say.

Keep a simple diary for the week, noting ways you help care for God's creation (e.g. recycling, saving water, feeding birds). Reflect on how these actions show stewardship.

Go on a guided walk around the school or local area, observing the beauty of God's creation. Collect natural items (leaves, stones, twigs) to make a 'Stewardship Memory Tray,' then discuss which actions could help protect these things and why you should undertake them.

Textual references

Genesis 1:26-31	The creation of human beings (within the six days of Creation)
Genesis 2:1-3	The seventh day, God rests

Key vocabulary	
ecological virtues	good habits that help people care for the earth and live in a way that respects God's creation
holy day	a special day set apart to focus on God through rest, worship and gratitude
virtue	a good habit that helps a person choose what is right

Teacher Notes

This week's learning deepens understanding of stewardship by drawing attention to the seventh day of Creation, when God rests. In Genesis, this moment is not about God needing rest. Instead, it reveals something about the rhythm God builds into Creation. The holy day acts as a pause that allows people to notice, enjoy, and give thanks for the goodness of the world. Rest is not inactivity. It is a deliberate practice of attention, praise, and renewal. When pupils learn that God rests, they are being invited to consider the importance of slowing down and recognising Creation as a gift entrusted to humanity.

Stewardship is rooted in the belief that God creates human beings in His image and likeness and tasks them with caring for the world. Stewardship is not ownership. It is responsibility. Humanity does not create the earth, but receives it. For this reason, caring for Creation is an expression of love for God and neighbour. When Catholics speak of ecological virtues, as Pope Francis did, they mean habits such as gratitude, simplicity, restraint, and care for vulnerable people and ecosystems. These virtues help people live in ways that reflect God's intention for Creation.

The call to stewardship shapes everyday actions. Even small acts, such as reducing waste or appreciating the beauty of nature, form part of a wider moral responsibility. The seventh day teaches that noticing Creation helps people choose more wisely how to treat it. Pupils begin to see that rest, reflection, and stewardship are intertwined because each helps them respond to the world with reverence.

	U3.1.6	Recognise that in Laudato Si', Pope Francis teaches that human beings are called to have a loving relationship with God, with each other, and with the God's Creation (see LS 66).
Know	Pope Francis wrote a letter called Laudato Si' which means 'Praise be to you' **In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis teaches that we should love God, each other, and God's Creation.**	

	D3.1.1	Imagine how caring for the world could change the world for the better.	
Discern	When we care for God's world, even in small ways, we help others and protect creation, following God's plan for everyone.	Suggested discovery questions	1. *Laudato Si'* says that small actions can help protect the world for everyone. What are some little things you could do at home or school to care for creation? 2. How might your actions to care for God's world help other people and creatures, just like Laudato Si' 66 says? 3. If everyone tried to care for creation in small ways, how could the world be different? How does this help us follow God's plan?

Respond	Reflect on your relationships with God, His Creation, and other people. You may do this using an Examen. Draw a simple 'Ripple Effect Diagram' to show how one small action (such as picking up litter, planting a tree, or saving water) can affect animals, plants, people, and their community. Discuss how this links to God's plan for Creation and *Laudato Si' 66's idea of small actions making a big difference.*

Textual references

Laudato Si' 66	Humanity's call to responsible stewardship

Key vocabulary	
communion	a close and loving connection shared between people, God and all created things
common good	what is best for everyone in a community, not just for one person
Examen	a short prayer that helps people reflect on their day and notice God's presence

Teacher Notes

This week's learning focuses on *Laudato Si'* 66, where Pope Francis teaches that every person is part of a network of relationships that includes God, other people, and all of Creation. This view is grounded in the belief that God creates the world out of love and invites humanity to share in caring for it. Caring for Creation is never only about the environment. It is about strengthening the bonds that hold communities and ecosystems together. When pupils begin to recognise the impact of small actions, they are entering into the Catholic understanding of moral responsibility, which sees each person as capable of contributing to the common good.

A key idea in *Laudato Si'* is that Creation is not a collection of separate objects but a communion of creatures. Everything is connected. Because of this, even small acts of stewardship help protect the dignity of people and the wellbeing of animals and habitats. This relational view reflects a sacramental understanding of the world. Creation reveals God's goodness and invites people to respond with gratitude and care. When pupils consider practical actions such as reducing waste or conserving water, they are learning that moral choices are not private but ripple outward, shaping the world for others.

Pope Francis stressed that responsible stewardship begins with simple daily habits. Large environmental changes often start with small, consistent decisions that reflect love of neighbour and respect for God's gift. Helping pupils understand this empowers them. They discover that their behaviour can help restore damaged relationships and contribute to hope-filled communities. This links strongly with the Catholic belief that God calls each person to participate in healing Creation, not through grand gestures but through faithful, everyday love.

U3.1.5	Using some religious vocabulary, describe how either a psalm or a prayer they have studied praises creation.	
Know	Psalms are songs and prayers to praise God. **Psalm 8 is a hymn of praise that celebrates creation and the dignity of humankind.**	
Discern	Psalm 8 is a song that praises God and shows how amazing His creation is, using poetry instead of a story or law.	Suggested discovery questions 1. When you read Psalm 8, what words or images make you feel amazed at God and His creation? 2. How is Psalm 8 different from the stories we read in the Old Testament? Why do you think the writer used poetry instead of just telling a story? 3. Why do you think singing or writing a poem about God and creation helps people show their praise and wonder?
Respond	Read and appreciate Psalm 8 as a hymn of praise that celebrates creation and the dignity of humankind. Choose your favourite line or image; create an illustration or mini-poster showing what that line tells you about God, creation, or human dignity. Write your own short hymn or poem, inspired by Psalm 8, celebrating something in Creation that matters to you.	

Textual references

Psalm 8	How Majestic Is Your Name

Key vocabulary

glory	God's greatness and goodness, show in Creation and His love for people
psalm	a prayer-song from the Bible that prasies, thanks, or calls out to God

Teacher Notes

This week's learning focuses on Psalm 8 as a hymn of praise that reveals both the greatness of God and the dignity of humankind. Unlike narrative passages in Genesis, psalms communicate through poetic language. Poetry allows the writer to express awe, emotion, and wonder in ways that factual storytelling cannot. This makes psalms a powerful form of prayer, because they engage both thought and feeling. Psalm 8 invites pupils to reflect on Creation not simply as something God made, but as something that inspires praise.

Psalm 8 also holds an important place in Christian theology because it links creation and dignity. The psalmist marvels that the God who created the stars and the heavens also cares deeply for humanity. The phrase that humans are crowned with glory and honour reinforces the belief that human dignity is rooted in God's love, not in human achievement. This helps pupils see the connection between Creation theology and Catholic social teaching: if God gives every person dignity, then people are called to treat one another with respect and kindness.

The poetic images in Psalm 8 help pupils develop a sense of wonder. Wonder is a key part of the Catholic spiritual tradition, because it opens the heart to prayer. Singing or writing psalms is seen as a fuller form of prayer because it combines meaning, emotion, and expression. When pupils create their own hymns or poems, they are practising a long tradition of praising God through creative language, joining generations of believers who used poetry to express faith.

Psalm 8 occupies a distinctive place in biblical theology because it holds together two seemingly opposite truths: the smallness of humanity within the vast cosmos and the extraordinary vocation that God gives to human beings. Scholars note that the psalm sits within the wider tradition of ancient Near Eastern hymns that praise a deity through contemplation of the natural world, yet it differs significantly in its view of human worth. Whereas surrounding cultures often saw humans as servants created for divine labour, Psalm 8 presents them as honoured partners within God's creative purpose.

The psalm's structure strengthens this message. It is framed by the repeated line about the majesty of God's name, placing all human reflection inside the context of divine glory. Within this frame, the psalmist explores humanity's role using royal language: God grants dominion, not as domination, but as entrusted responsibility. This links closely with the vocation described in Genesis, yet Psalm 8 expresses it through worship rather than narrative, suggesting that stewardship is fundamentally an act of praise.

Another significant theological feature is the psalm's movement from cosmic reflection to personal astonishment. The psalmist's question, 'What are human beings that you are mindful of them,' has been described by theologians as the hinge of biblical anthropology, because it reveals that dignity is rooted not in power but in God's attentive love. This insight has shaped Christian understandings of vocation, equality, and moral responsibility across centuries.

U4.1.1a	Show some understanding of the historical context of Abraham (Abram) and the cultural and religious context out of which he was called.
Know	Abram lived about 4000 years ago, at a time when only a few people had faith in God the Father. **Abram is faithful to God when He asks Abram to leave his home and travel to a new land. In return, God makes a covenant to bless Abram and his family** Abram is an important person to Jews, Christians and Muslims as they trace their belief in one God back to him.

D4.1.2	Explain why they think Abraham is seen as a model of prayer.	Suggested discovery questions
Discern	Following God has costs and benefits.	1. Abraham often spoke and listened to God in prayer before making big choices. How do you think prayer helped him when he had to leave his home and everything familiar? 2. In Abraham's story, prayer was a way of staying close to God. How could talking and listening to God help you keep going when following Him feels difficult? 3. Abraham prayed for others, not just for himself. How could praying for other people be part of the benefits of following God?

R4.1.1	Consider how their own lives and the lives of their communities could be transformed by the virtues of faith, hope, and love
Respond	Research the work of St Chad's Sanctuary in Birmingham, or another Catholic aid organisation, focusing on how they enact the virtues of faith, hope, and love. How could children enact these virtues in their lives?

Textual references

Genesis 15:1-6	God's covenant with Abraham, including praying before a big decision
Genesis 18:16-33 & 20:17	Abraham praying for others

Key vocabulary

covenant	a special and lasting agreement where God forms a relationship with people and promises to be faithful to them
faithful	choosing to trust and follow God, even when things are uncertain

Teacher Notes

This week's learning introduces pupils to Abram, later called Abraham, as a foundational figure in salvation history. Abram lived about 4000 years ago in a context where belief in one God was extremely rare. Most surrounding cultures worshipped many gods connected to nature, kingship, or tribal protection. Against this background, Abram's response to the call of the one true God is extraordinary. Scripture presents him as someone who is willing to trust God fully even when he does not know what will happen next.

God asked Abram to leave his homeland, extended family network, and everything familiar. In the ancient world, such a move would be risky because land, community, and ancestry were the primary sources of security. Abram listened to God and responded in faith, which shows his deep openness to God's voice. This trust becomes a model of prayerful listening for believers today. Abram did not act blindly. He acted because he believed God was faithful and would guide him.

God made a covenant with Abram. A covenant is not merely a promise but a binding relationship initiated by God, who guarantees His faithfulness. God said He would bless Abram with many descendants who would form a great nation, meaning that Abram's life and obedience would influence future generations. This idea helps pupils see how faith is both personal and communal.

Abram's importance spans Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, which all regard him as a foundational figure. For Christians, Abraham shows what it means to trust God even when the path is unclear. His prayer, listening, and intercession for others reveal that following God involves both costs and blessings.

U4.1.2	Retell the story of Abraham, ensuring it is accurate in sequence and detail and shows an understanding of the term 'covenant'..	
Know	God sends three visitors to Abraham to give him a message and show that He watches over His people. **The visitors promise that Sarah will have a child, even though she is very old, and Abraham trusts God's word.** **This account shows that God keeps His promises and that trusting Him is part of being in a covenant relationship.**	

D4.1.2	Explain why they think Abraham is seen as a model of prayer.	
Discern	Covenants depend on faith and commitment.	Suggested discovery questions 1. Abraham welcomes the visitors even though he does not know who they are. Why is showing trust and faith in God important when we make a promise or covenant? 2. God promises Abraham that Sarah will have a child. How does Abraham's prayer and trust in God help him respond to this promise? 3. What helps people to stay faithful and committed to God? Why does that matter?

Respond	Write or draw about a time you trusted God or waited for something important, linking it to Abraham's trust in God's promise. Reflect on times when you have prayed as a school community for something specific. How did God respond? Reflect on whether God still calls us in the way Abraham was called.

Textual references

Genesis 18:1-15	Abraham and Sarah

See Teacher Notes for further examples of Abraham's prayers to God.

Key vocabulary

covenant	a special and lasting agreement where God forms a relationship with people and promises to be faithful to them

Teacher Notes

Abraham and his wife Sarai were very old and had no children. The Lord told Abraham, 'I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you'. This was the start of God's covenant with Abraham.

This week's learning focuses on Abraham's encounter with the three visitors in Genesis 18, a passage traditionally interpreted by the Church as both a test of Abraham's faith and a revelation of God's faithfulness. The narrative sits at a crucial moment in Abraham's covenant journey. After being promised descendants, Abraham must now trust God despite Sarah's advanced age and the apparent impossibility of the promise.

In the ancient world, hospitality was considered a sacred duty. Welcoming strangers was more than politeness. It was seen as an expression of righteousness and justice. Abraham's immediate welcome of the three visitors shows his openness to God's presence, even when it arrives in unexpected forms. His behaviour is an example of covenant faithfulness in action rather than words.

The announcement that Sarah will bear a son highlights a key biblical theme that God's promises unfold in God's time, not ours. The promise challenges human logic, inviting pupils to understand that faith involves trusting beyond what seems possible. Sarah's laughter is important too. Her reaction reveals human doubt and limitation, yet God responds with patience and reassurance rather than anger, showing that God's covenantal love accommodates human weakness.

This passage also teaches that God remains actively involved in human history. The visitors are not passive messengers. They reveal that God sees, listens, and intervenes. Covenant is therefore shown to be a living relationship rather than a static agreement.

Pupils can be helped to notice how Abraham's trust grows over time. Faith is not a single moment but a lifelong response to God's call. The story prepares the way for a deeper understanding that covenant commitments require patience, perseverance, and openness to God's surprising actions.

Abraham had a good relationship with God. Notice how he prayed to God many times, including:

- **Genesis 12:7-8**
  Context: God had just promised Abraham the land of Canaan.
  Prayer: Abraham built an altar to God and used His name to worship Him in thanksgiving.

- **Genesis 15:1-6**
  Context: Abraham is concerned that he has no children and speaks to God about it.
  Prayer: He asks God about how he can fulfil God's covenant to lead a great nation when he has no children.
  God's response: God tells Abraham that he will have as many descendants as there are stars in the sky.

- **Genesis 17:15-19**
  Context: God tells Abraham that he and Sarah will have a child. Abraham finds it difficult to believe this because they are old. He laughs in surprise when God says this.
  Prayer: Abraham asked if his first child, Ishmael (who was not Sarah's child) would be blessed as part of the new great nation because he thought Sarah was too old to have a baby.
  God's response: God said that Ishmael was blessed, but that Sarah would have a baby. This baby was Isaac.

U4.1.3	Show an understanding of the story of Abraham and Isaac, recognising the importance of historical context in explaining the meaning of this story then and now.	
Know	God tests Abraham by asking him to offer Isaac, showing that Abraham trusts and obeys God completely. **God provides a ram as a substitute for Isaac, showing that He is merciful and keeps His promises.** **Abraham's story shows that faith and obedience to God are central to the covenant and inspire people to trust God today.**	

D4.1.2	Explain why they think Abraham is seen as a model of prayer.	
Discern	Abraham shows us that talking and listening to God in prayer helps us trust Him, make good choices, and stay faithful even when things are very hard.	Suggested discovery questions 1. Abraham prayed and trusted God even when He asked for something very hard. How do you think talking to God can help you when you face a really difficult choice? 2. God stopped Abraham from doing something that would have been wrong. How can listening to God in prayer help us make good choices? 3. Abraham believed God would keep His promises. How might prayer help you feel more confident to follow God, even when you don't know what will happen next?

Respond	Revisit your school and classroom rules. Do you find it easy to obey them? What are the consequences for those who do not obey them? What opportunities do you have to show love in school? Is it always easy to do this? Draw symbols from the story (e.g., ram, altar, Abraham, Isaac) and write short sentences about what each symbol teaches about faith, obedience, and God's promises. Reflect on how these lessons could guide your own decisions and relationships with others.

Textual references

Genesis 22:1-18	Abraham and Isaac

Key vocabulary

obedience	choosing to follow God's guidance because His wisdom and goodness can be trusted
sacrifice	giving something precious to God as a sign of love or commitment, often linked to worship

Teacher Notes

This week's learning explores one of the most theologically significant passages in Genesis. In the Old Testament God tests Abraham by asking him to sacrifice his only son Isaac. At first glance the account appears stark, but its purpose is to reveal the depth of Abraham's trust in God and the nature of God's covenant faithfulness.

Abraham listens to God and prepares to offer Isaac, believing that God can still keep His promises. Just as Abraham raises the knife, the Angel of the Lord calls out and stops him. This intervention makes clear that God does not desire the death of Isaac. The command was a test of Abraham's faith and obedience, not a request that God intended to be fulfilled. Abraham then sees a ram caught in a bush and sacrifices the ram instead. He names the place The Lord will provide, acknowledging that God Himself supplies what is needed for His purposes to unfold.

This story establishes that God rejects human sacrifice and affirms the value of life. It also shows God as the one who provides, protects, and remains faithful. Scholars often describe the passage as a moment in which Abraham's developing faith is refined and strengthened.

Christians later link the near sacrifice of Isaac with the New Testament understanding of Jesus as the Lamb of God. Just as Abraham offers what is most precious to him in obedience, God offers His Son out of love for the world. Jesus' sacrifice brings redemption from sin and fulfils what earlier stories only foreshadow.

Pupils can be helped to understand that the story ultimately teaches that obedience must rest on trust in God's goodness, and that God always acts with mercy and purpose.

U4.1.4	Recognise that God's covenant with Abraham is the foundation of the faith of the people of the Old and New Testaments: Judaism and Christianity.	
Know	**Abraham was the first person to teach others there is One God.** The blessings which God gave to Abraham are passed down from one generation of Jewish people to the next. **Christians call Abraham 'the father of many nations' because he had many descendants.**	

D4.1.2	Explain why they think Abraham is seen as a model of prayer.	
Discern	Jesus was a descendant of Abraham and fulfils the covenant, linking the Old and New Testaments.	Suggested discovery questions 1. Jesus comes from Abraham's family. How do you think knowing about Abraham helps people understand who Jesus is and what He teaches? 2. Abraham is a model of prayer and faith. How do you think Jesus shows the same kind of trust and obedience to God? 3. The covenant begins with Abraham and is fulfilled in Jesus. How does this link the stories of the Old and New Testaments, and why might this matter to people's beliefs today?

Respond	'I wonder... If I am obedient to God, how can I impact the world for the better today?' 'I wonder...How different the world could be in the future if everybody was obedient to God?' Create a double-layered illustrated timeline: the top layer shows key events in Abraham's life (call, covenant, Isaac, etc.); the bottom layer shows moments in Jesus' life that connect to and fulfil these events.

Textual references

Abraham:			Jesus:		
Call and covenant	Genesis 12:1-3	God promises to make Abram a great nation	Birth in Abraham's lineage	Matthew 1:1	
Promise of descendants	Genesis 15:1-6	Abram trusts God's promise	Obedience to God	Luke 22:39-46	Jesus prays in Gethsemane
Faith and obedience	Genesis 22:1-18	Abram trusts in God's instruction to sacrifice Isaac	Blessing all nations	Matthew 28:18-20	The Great Commission
Blessing others	Genesis 18:16-33	Abraham prays for Sodom, showing care for others	Model of prayer and faith	John 17:1-26	Jesus prays for His disciples

Key vocabulary

Teacher Notes

Abraham is the 'father of the Jewish people' because he is the one from whom they have all descended. The blessings which God gave to Abraham are passed down from one generation of Jewish people to the next.

Christians call Abraham 'the father of many nations' because he had many descendants. Hundreds of years later, one of them was Jesus. Jesus fulfilled the covenant God made with Abraham.

Christians learn to have faith in God and obey Him, just like Abraham did.

Abraham is the patriarch of God's covenant people. Jesus is a descendant of Abraham (Matthew 1:1), fulfilling the promise that Abraham's descendants would bless all nations. Understanding Abraham's faith and obedience provides context for Jesus' mission and shows continuity between God's promises in the Old Testament and their fulfilment in the New Testament.

The Abrahamic covenant (Genesis 12:1-3, 22:16-18) establishes God's promise to bless all nations. Jesus, as a descendant of Abraham, fulfils these promises, linking the Old Testament covenant with the New Testament message of salvation. Understanding this continuity helps pupils see the coherence of Scripture and the theological foundation of both Judaism and Christianity.

The Abrahamic covenant (Genesis 12:1-3; 15:1-21; 22:16-18) is God's promise to make Abraham's descendants into a great nation, to bless them, and through them to bless all nations. Central to this covenant are land, descendants, and a special relationship with God, requiring faith and obedience.
Jesus fulfils this covenant in several ways. First, He is a direct descendant of Abraham (Matthew 1:1), inheriting the promises made to him. Second, Jesus is the means by which "all nations" are blessed; through His life, death, and resurrection, salvation is offered to all people, Jew and Gentile alike (Galatians 3:14). Third, in Jesus, the covenant moves from a national focus (Israel) to a universal scope, bringing the relationship with God to its intended fullness.

The faith and obedience Abraham showed prefigure Jesus' perfect obedience to God's will, even to death on the cross (Philippians 2:8). In Christian belief, Jesus' role as Messiah is the ultimate expression of God's faithfulness to His covenant promises, showing continuity between the Old and New Testaments and uniting God's people across both.

	U4.1.1b	Show some understanding of the historical context of Joseph and the cultural and religious context out of which he was called.
Know	**Joseph's brothers become jealous when their father Jacob gives him a special coat and he tells them dreams where he is greater than them, so they sell him to traders and make Jacob think he is dead.** In Egypt, Joseph explains Pharaoh's dreams about seven good years and seven bad years, and Pharaoh makes Joseph the ruler over all Egypt to prepare for the famine. When his brothers come to Egypt for food, Joseph tests them to see if they have changed, then forgives them and says God used their actions to save many people's lives.	

Discern	People sometimes retell Bible stories through music or art to help others understand and enjoy them. The way a story is told can change how we feel about its meaning.	Suggested discovery questions 1. How does the song 'Song of the King' from the musical *Joseph and his Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat* make the story of Pharaoh's dreams feel different from the Bible version? 2. Why do you think the writers chose a fun, upbeat style instead of a serious one? 3. If you were telling this Bible account in music, what style would you choose and why?

Respond	Reflect on the theme of jealousy. How does this damage people's relationship with God and with others? Joseph rose to prominence for his accurate interpretation of dreams. This is a gift that God gave him. What are your gifts and how could you use them to serve God and others? If you were to dream about the future tonight, what would you like to dream about that might help you make the world a better place?

Textual references

An age-appropriate summary of Joseph's life should be studied, taken from the following key texts:

Genesis 37:2-25	Joseph's Dreams and Joseph being sold by his brothers
Genesis 41:1-42	Joseph interprets Pharaoh's dreams
Genesis 44:1-17	Joseph tests his brothers
Genesis 45:1-5, 16-20	Joseph provides for his brothers and family

N.B. time will not allow for an in-depth study of Joseph's story

Key vocabulary

Teacher Notes

Abraham's second son, Isaac, married a woman named Rebecca. They had a son called Jacob. Jacob grew up to have 12 sons; Joseph was his favourite.

Joseph's brothers were jealous of him and so they sold him into slavery. He was taken to Egypt, away from the rest of Abraham's descendants. Joseph was the slave of a man called Potiphar, who worked for the Egyptian Pharaoh.

Joseph became known for interpreting dreams. He interpreted Pharaoh's dreams and became very popular in Egypt, despite being an outsider.

Joseph helped his brothers (who betrayed him) by saving them from a famine. Joseph did not take revenge on them.

Pharaoh invited Joseph's family to live in Egypt. This was important as Egypt was the place where the Jews moved to and stayed until the story of Moses.Genesis 41 describes Pharaoh's dreams of seven fat cows eaten by seven thin cows and seven healthy ears of grain eaten by seven withered ones. The biblical text is narrative and matter-of-fact, focusing on God revealing future famine. The song may exaggerate or dramatise characters and events for entertainment, rhythm, or emphasis. Pupils should notice differences in tone, mood, and detail.

The musical uses humour and energy to engage the audience and make a complex story accessible. Teachers can highlight that artistic choices (tempo, lyrics, style) reflect the creators' intention to communicate the story in an enjoyable way, rather than replicate the Bible word-for-word. The benefit of this is that people remember the story because they enjoy it; however, there is a danger that people mistake an embellished version designed for entertainment for the actual version recorded in the Bible.

	U4.1.5	Show some understanding of how the decisions of Abraham and Joseph were informed by their faith, hope, and love in God.
Know	**Abraham shows faith, hope, and love in God by leaving his home, trusting God's promise of a son, and being willing to give up Isaac.** **Joseph shows faith and hope in God by trusting God's plan, even in prison, and believing God will bring his people to the Promised Land.** **Joseph shows love like God's love by forgiving his brothers and making peace with them.**	

Discern	People who have faith, hope and love in God make incredible decisions.	Suggested discovery questions 1. Abraham shows faith and love in God when he is ready to follow God's command (Genesis 22). Joseph shows hope and love in God when he forgives his brothers (Genesis 45). How do you think their faith, hope, and love in God helped them make these choices? 2. Some people today might see Abraham's faith or Joseph's hope and love in God as inspiring, while others might think differently. Why might people have such different opinions about the same actions? 3. If you were in Abraham's or Joseph's place, how would your own faith, hope, and love in God help you decide what to do, and why?

	R4.1.3	Reflect on the challenges and blessings Abraham and Joseph experienced and how their faith played a part in how they reacted.
Respond	Consider the challenges that Abraham and Joseph faced. How can we be inspired by their examples of faith? Consider the challenges people encounter today when showing faith, hope, and love in God. How does faith in God provide reassurance for them. Compile a timeline of the key events in the lives of Abraham and Joseph (include both blessings and challenges for each). For each event, write a short sentence explaining how the character's faith in God helped them respond and offer an opinion as to whether you think it would be easy or hard to react in the same way, and say why.	

Textual references

Knowledge of the texts studied in this branch to date should be consolidated this week. No further textual studied is required.

Key vocabulary

faith	a trusting response to God that shapes decisions and actions because His promises are reliable
hope	confident expectation that God will continue to guide, help, and bring good - even in difficult situations
providence	God's loving care shown in the way He guides events and supports people throughout their lives

Teacher Notes

This week's learning explores how Abraham and Joseph make life-changing decisions shaped by faith, hope, and love. These virtues are presented in Scripture as gifts from God that enable people to trust His guidance even when circumstances are uncertain or difficult.

In Genesis, Abraham's faith is shown in his willingness to leave his homeland without knowing the destination, and later in his readiness to offer Isaac, trusting that God would remain faithful to His promises. Abraham's decisions are not impulsive. They arise from a deep conviction that God is trustworthy and that obedience, even when costly, leads to blessing. This helps pupils see that faith is not simply believing ideas about God. It is entrusting one's life to God's care and responding generously to His call.

Joseph, in contrast, shows how hope and love transform suffering into something fruitful. Betrayed by his brothers, sold into slavery, and imprisoned despite his innocence, Joseph continues to trust that God is working for good. Hope in Scripture is more than positive thinking. It is confidence in God's ongoing presence and future action. Joseph's forgiveness of his brothers reveals how love, grounded in God's mercy, restores relationships and brings healing. His response mirrors God's own compassion.

Together the two stories show pupils that difficult decisions can become opportunities for growth when approached with faith in God's promises, hope in His providence, and love for others. These virtues help Christians today face challenges with courage and act for the good of both family and community.

U4.1.6	Make links between prayers that show trust in God and the virtues of faith, hope, and love.	
Know	Faith, hope, and love are gifts received through the Holy Spirit at the Sacrament of Baptism. **The prayer from St Thérèse of Lisieux states: 'May today there be peace within' links to faith, hope and love.'** **In his prayer 'The Mission of My Life,' St John Henry Newman shows faith, hope, and love by trusting God, believing in His promises, and wanting to live his life to serve God and others.**	
D4.1.1	Describe and explain the virtues: faith, hope, and love making links between these virtues and the life of a person who was an example of faith made active in love.	Suggested discovery questions
Discern	St Thérèse of Lisieux shows faith by trusting God with her whole life. She shows hope by believing she will be with God in heaven. She shows love by being kind and gentle to everyone, even when it is hard.	1. How did St Thérèse's trust in God help her when things are difficult? 2. Why do you think St Thérèse kept believing she would be with God in heaven? 3. How did she show love to everyone?
R4.1.2	Reflect on how the virtues of faith, hope and love help them to be a good neighbour.	
Respond	How have we been inspired by these virtues to be a good neighbour to others? How has our school/parish community lived out these virtues through charitable outreach? During a class Mass or Celebration of the Word , ask pupils to observe ways faith, hope, and love are shown (e.g. in prayers, the Sign of the Cross, singing, receiving the Eucharist, or praying for others). Afterward, pupils reflect and discuss how these virtues guide their own actions toward being a good neighbour. Some pupils might create a 'Virtue Prayer' inspired by this experience, asking God to help them show faith, hope, and love in their daily lives	

Textual references

Key vocabulary

Teacher Notes

Faith, hope and love are the three 'theological virtues'.

Background to St Thérèse of Lisieux
St Thérèse of Lisieux (1873–1897), also called “The Little Flower,” was a French Carmelite nun who lived a short but deeply spiritual life. She entered the Carmelite convent at just 15 years old and lived a hidden, humble life until her death at age 24 from tuberculosis. Though she never travelled for mission work, she is a Doctor of the Church and one of the patron saints of missions, because of her powerful prayer and writings.

The ‘Little Way’
Thérèse is best known for her ‘Little Way’ - the belief that holiness is found not in great deeds, but in doing small, ordinary acts with great love for God. She taught that everyday kindness, patience, and trust could be a path to heaven. This approach makes her life accessible for children, as it focuses on love and faith in simple, daily choices.

Faith
Thérèse trusted completely in God’s goodness. Even when she faced illness, doubts, and the death of her mother at a young age, she kept believing that God had a plan for her. Her faith was shown in her prayers, her trust in Jesus, and her confidence in God’s mercy.

Hope
Thérèse hoped in God’s promise of eternal life. She often spoke about longing to be in heaven with God, and she lived with joy even in suffering because she believed it would bring her closer to Him. She encouraged others to have hope, no matter how small or weak their efforts seemed, because God looks at the heart.

Love
Her love for God and others was shown in gentle, consistent acts: helping sisters in the convent who were difficult, praying for missionaries she would never meet, and forgiving those who hurt her. She wanted to love as Jesus loves: humbly, patiently, and without expecting reward.

St John Henry Newman demonstrates these same virtues in a different context. His prayer The Mission of My Life reflects his belief that God has a unique purpose for every person. His faith involves listening for God’s direction and asking for strength to follow it. His hope is expressed in his trust that God guides him step by step, even when the path is unclear. His love is seen in his commitment to serve others through teaching, writing, and pastoral care.

Both saints teach that faith, hope, and love grow through prayer, reflection, and choosing actions that respond to God’s presence throughout the day.

U5.1.1a	Retell the Moses story, focusing on the Burning Bush and the Sinai Covenant	
Know	**Moses is curious about a burning bush that does not burn up, and God calls him from it to lead the Israelites out of Egypt.** God reveals His name to Moses as 'I AM' and promises to be with him in his mission At Mount Sinai, God tells Moses that if the Israelites obey Him fully, they will be His treasured possession and a holy nation.	
D5.1.2	Express a point of view about what are positive habits (virtues) and negative habits and how virtues might help them grow in goodness.	
Discern	Being curious about God has the potential to help you grow in goodness.	Suggested discovery questions 1. When you ask questions about God, how might that help you learn what is good and right to do? 2. Can you think of a time when learning more about God helped you to choose kindness, honesty, or another good habit? 3. Does curiosity always help us to grow to become better people?
R5.1.1	Reflect on the words and images used to describe Moses' encounter with God	
Respond	I wonder why God appeared in the form of a burning bush? Reflect on God's words, 'I am who I am.' What does this mean to you? Think about the sounds Moses heard at thes events (Burning Bush: quiet desert wind, crackle of the fire, Moses' sandles on rocky ground. Sinai Covenant: gentle mountain breeze, echoing of God's voice speaking to Moses, distant murmur of people waiting below). Use classroom objects or percussion instruments to create a soundscape for one of these events and write a short reflection imagining themselves as Moses, reflecting on his feelings as these events were happening. Share with the class how you would feel and act after such an encounter.	

Textual references

Exodus 3:1-15	Moses at the burning bush
Exodus 19:3-8	The Sinai Covenant with Moses

Key vocabulary

covenant	a sacred agreement in which God forms a relationship with His people and invites them to respond with faith and obedience.
prophet	a person called by God to speak His truth, guide His people, and reveal His will
revelation	the way God makes Himself known, often through words, signs, or encounters such as the burning bush

Teacher Notes

This week's learning introduces pupils to one of the most significant figures in the Old Testament: Moses, a Hebrew prophet, teacher, and leader who plays a central role in God's plan to save His people. The story of the burning bush marks the beginning of Moses' vocation and reveals key truths about how God calls, speaks, and forms His people.

Moses encounters God in an unexpected way. A bush is on fire but not consumed, which draws Moses' curiosity. This detail is theologically important because the biblical text often uses extraordinary natural signs when God is about to reveal something essential. Moses chooses to approach rather than ignore it, and this decision allows him to hear God's call. This emphasises that curiosity about God and a willingness to pause and notice signs can open a person to deeper understanding.

In this encounter, God reveals His name to Moses. The English translation is 'I am', but the original Hebrew conveys a much broader meaning. Hebrew contains a verbal tense that blends past, present, and future into a single idea. When God speaks His name, He is not only saying 'I am', but also 'I always was, I am now, and I always will be'. This expresses God's transcendence, eternity, and absolute existence. For ancient listeners, this was a powerful declaration of divine identity, and Moses would have recognised instantly that he was standing before the living God.

The burning bush event also introduces the Sinai Covenant. God calls Moses to lead the Israelites out of Egypt and later promises that if they remain faithful, they will be His treasured possession. Moses' mission emerges from a direct encounter with God, showing pupils that vocation often grows from listening, responding, and trusting God's guidance.

U5.1.1b	Retell the Moses story, focusing on the Ten Commandments
Know	**God gives the Ten Commandments to the Israelites as part of His covenant, teaching them how to live as His holy people.** **The commandments show the Israelites how to love God and treat other people with respect and fairness.** The commandments guide the Israelites in making good choices in their daily lives, showing what pleases God and what harms their community.

D5.1.1	Play with possibilities, asking questions about the Ten Commandments.	Suggested discovery questions
Discern	God chooses the right people to do his work.	1. What if God had chosen someone else instead of Moses... how might the story have been different, and why do you think God still chose Moses? 2. If you were Moses and didn't feel ready to lead, what might help you believe that God had chosen the right person? 3. What if God asked you to do something big and important... how would you know it was the right job for you?

R5.1.2	Reflect on what makes them truly happy.
Respond	Debate: is it good to have commandments to follow? Do they lead to true happiness? Ask pupils to create a 'happiness journal' by writing or drawing about moments when they feel truly happy, then link these to the ways Moses trusted and followed God. Prompt them to consider how trusting God can guide their choices and relationships. Pupils create a simple 'life map' showing choices they make daily. They highlight decisions that align with kindness, fairness, or faith, reflecting on how these actions, inspired by Moses' example, contribute to their own happiness and the well-being of others.

Textual references

Exodus 19:3-8	The Sinai Covenant with Moses
Exodus 20:1-17	The Ten Commandments

Key vocabulary

commandment	a law or instruction given by God to guide people living rightly with Him and with others
Sinai	the mountain where Moses meets God and receives the Ten Commandments, marking a key moment in Israel's relationship with God

Teacher Notes

This week's learning explores the giving of the Ten Commandments within the Sinai Covenant, a defining moment in the Old Testament. After leading the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt, Moses brings them to Mount Sinai, where God renews His relationship with them and reveals how they are to live as His holy people. The commandments are not arbitrary rules but form the moral heart of Israel's identity, shaping how the people relate to God and to one another.

The Sinai Covenant continues the pattern seen throughout salvation history: God initiates the relationship, and the people are invited to respond in faith and obedience. The commandments express what right relationship looks like. The first three commandments focus on loving and honouring God, recognising His uniqueness, and ensuring that worship remains faithful and free from idols. These commandments highlight that the Israelites are to be a people who place God at the centre of their lives.

The remaining commandments guide how the community is to flourish. They emphasise respect for family, the dignity of life, honesty, justice, and purity of heart. In an ancient world often marked by violence, inequality, and superstition, these commandments provided a radically different vision for human living. They challenged the Israelites to become a model of holiness to surrounding nations.

The commandments also serve a protective purpose. They help the community recognise behaviours that damage trust, cause injustice, or break relationships. By choosing to follow God's commandments, the Israelites freely enter a way of life that leads to happiness, stability, and peace. The biblical tradition consistently teaches that God's laws are given not to restrict but to enable true freedom.

For pupils, it is helpful to see how the commandments still shape Christian moral teaching today. Jesus affirms them and brings them to fulfilment by rooting them in the two great commandments of love of God and love of neighbour. When pupils understand that the commandments flow from God's desire for the good of His people, they can begin to explore how God's guidance supports their own growth in happiness, responsibility, and holiness.



U5.1.2 Make links between the Ten Commandments and Jesus' summary of the law in Matthew's Gospel

Know

The first three of the Ten Commandments show how to love God, and Jesus says the greatest commandment is to love God with all your heart, soul, and mind.

The last seven of the Ten Commandments show how to love other people, and Jesus says the second greatest commandment is to love your neighbour as yourself.

Jesus' Great Commandment explains the purpose of all Ten Commandments: they guide us to live in love for God and for others.



D5.1.3 Discuss what loving our neighbour means for Christians today. For example, welcoming asylum seekers and refugees. Express a point of view and give reasons relating to the Church's teaching on the common good and love of neighbour.

Discern

The Ten Commandments and Jesus' summary of the Law are inseparable.

Suggested discovery questions

1. How do Jesus' words about loving God and loving others connect to the Ten Commandments?
2. Is it possible to follow some commandments but ignore others? What might happen if someone does?
3. Why do you think Jesus' summary helps us understand what God truly wants from us in a way that the Ten Commandments alone might not fully explain?



R5.1.3 Discuss and dialogue with others about how rules can help people be happy (YCfK 110).

Respond

In small groups, give pupils different scenarios where someone breaks a rule (e.g. lying, cheating, stealing). Ask them to act out what happens when rules are ignored versus followed. Afterwards, discuss how following rules helps everyone be happier and safer, linking it to God's commandments.

Ask pupils to compare rules in games they play (like football or board games) with God's commandments. They can create a table showing how rules in both contexts protect people, prevent harm, and promote fairness. Facilitate a dialogue about how these rules help people live well.

Textual references

Ex 20:1-17	The Ten Commandments
Matthew 22:36-40	Jesus' summary of the Law (aka 'The Great Commandment')
YouCat for Kids 110	Why is it important to God how I live?

Key vocabulary

Teacher Notes

Understanding Matthew 22:36-40 and the Ten Commandments

Jesus' summary of the Law comes from Matthew 22:36-40, when a scholar of the Law asks Him which commandment is the greatest. Jesus responds: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbour as yourself.'

The Ten Commandments, given to Moses on Mount Sinai (Exodus 20:1-17), provide specific rules for living in right relationship with God and others. They are foundational for Jewish and Christian moral teaching.

Jesus' summary does not replace the Commandments; it unites them. Loving God encompasses the first four Commandments (honouring God, not worshipping other gods, respecting God's name, and keeping the Sabbath). Loving others encompasses the remaining six (respecting parents, not killing, not stealing, not committing adultery, not bearing false witness, not coveting).

This helps pupils see that the Commandments are not a checklist to follow mechanically; they guide us toward love. By focusing on love, Jesus shows the heart behind the rules: the moral principle of treating God and others rightly.

Pupils should understand that some points of view about what God wants may be incomplete or misleading. For example, someone might obey some rules but ignore others, misunderstanding God's desire for love and relationship. Jesus' summary clarifies that loving God and neighbour is the essence, helping people apply the Commandments in daily life.

Key points for discussion:

- Love is the lens through which all commandments are understood.
- The Commandments and Jesus' summary are inseparable; one explains the other.
- Not all interpretations of what God wants are equally valid; the Law points to love as the ultimate goal.

	U5.1.3	Correctly use developing specialist vocabulary to describe what a covenant is, recognising that God made several covenants throughout history.
Know	**A covenant is a binding agreement between God and human beings, which makes them His people.** God makes covenants with His people at key moments in history to guide them and show His plan, such as with Noah after the flood, Abraham to create a great nation, and Moses at Mount Sinai.	

Discern	Covenants are binding, faith-based agreements which have consequences.	Suggested discovery questions 1. What if someone promised God they would follow His ways, like Noah, Abraham, or Moses... what might happen if they keep that promise? What might happen if they don't? 2. Why do you think God asks people to trust Him and enter into a covenant? How does this show that covenants depend on faith and have important consequences? 3. If God's covenants with Noah, Abraham, and Moses were broken, what do you think the consequences would be for them and for others? How does this help you understand why faith and commitment matter?

	R5.1.3	
Respond	Reflect on the Sacrament of Reconciliation. In what ways does the Sacrament require a commitment to God? Is this the same for the other sacraments?	

Textual references

Genesis 8:20-22	God's covenant with Noah
Genesis 15:1-6	God's covenant with Abraham
Exodus 19:3-8	God's covenant with Moses (aka 'The Sinai covenant')

Key vocabulary

Teacher Notes

This week's learning explores the meaning of a covenant and how God uses covenants to form a relationship with His people. In the Old Testament, covenants with Noah, Abraham, and Moses mark moments when God expresses His faithfulness and calls His people into deeper trust and obedience. A covenant is not simply a contract. It is a sacred, binding agreement grounded in faith, loyalty, and mutual commitment. God promises to remain faithful, and His people are invited to respond by living in accordance with His will.

Each covenant reveals something distinct about God's relationship with humanity. With Noah, God promises never again to destroy the earth by flood, showing His protection and mercy. With Abraham, God promises descendants, land, and blessing for all nations, highlighting God's long-term plan for salvation. With Moses at Sinai, God gives the Law to shape the life of His people and guide them in holiness. All these covenants rely on human faithfulness, and when this faithfulness falters, the consequences affect not only individuals but whole communities. This helps pupils understand why commitment and responsibility matter in any covenant relationship.

These ideas provide an important theological bridge to the Sacrament of Reconciliation. In this sacrament, Catholics renew their covenant relationship with God by acknowledging where they have fallen short and by consciously choosing to turn back to Him. Teachers should help pupils understand that the commitment involved in Reconciliation is essentially a decision to say 'yes' to God: to accept His guidance, seek forgiveness, and take concrete steps to live more faithfully. This commitment is not abstract. Real-life examples, such as apologising to someone they have hurt, choosing honesty over convenience, or reflecting on how they could act more kindly, help pupils connect the sacrament with their lived experience.

Reconciliation is not a single moment but part of the lifelong journey of faith. Catholics repeatedly return to this sacrament because renewing their relationship with God is an ongoing practice. Like the Old Testament covenants, it invites believers to reflect, repent, and begin again, trusting that God remains faithful even when human beings falter.

	U5.1.4	Use developing specialist vocabulary to show how the Ten Commandments help human beings live good and happy lives.
Know	The Ten Commandments are divine laws that guide human behaviour so people can live morally upright lives **Obeying the Commandments helps grow virtues such as honesty, respect, and compassion, which contribute to personal and communal happiness.** They are the basis of modern-day British laws.	

Discern	Law and order can provide a trustworthy space for all of us to live our lives in a fulfilling way.	Suggested discovery questions 1. What might happen in a community if people ignored both God's covenants and the Ten Commandments? 2. How do the Ten Commandments help people keep the promises God made in His covenants? 3. If you were helping someone understand why God gives covenants and commandments, which example from the Bible would you use and why?

	R5.1.3 **R5.1.2**	Discuss and dialogue with others about how rules can help people be happy (YCfK 110). Reflect on what makes them truly happy.
Respond	How close are the Ten Commandments to the rule of law (British Values)? Reflect on your blessings in the context of prayer, what makes you feel happy and why? Use prayer journalling/praying in colour or another form to explore and express your ideas	

Textual references

Exodus 20:1-17	The Ten Commandments

Key vocabulary	
divine law	God-gvien instruction that helps people live in ways that reflect His holiness and love
moral behaviour	choosing actions that are good, fair and respectful, guided by God's teaching
virtue	a habit of actiing in a consistently good way, such as honesty, justice, or compassion

Teacher Notes

This week's learning explores the Ten Commandments as divine laws given by God to shape a holy, just, and flourishing community. In the Old Testament, God gives these commandments to Israel as part of His covenant relationship with them. Unlike ordinary human laws, which can change over time, the Commandments express God's unchanging wisdom and show humanity how to live in ways that reflect His goodness, justice, and love.

The first three Commandments focus on loving and honouring God. They protect the relationship between God and His people by encouraging worship, reverence, and faithfulness. When pupils understand these as more than rules, they can begin to see them as foundations for trust and gratitude in their own relationship with God.

The remaining Commandments focus on how human beings treat one another. These commandments foster honesty, respect, fairness, and responsibility. They show that moral living is not only about avoiding harm but also about promoting the wellbeing of others. When communities follow principles such as truthfulness, fidelity, and reverence for life, strong relationships are nurtured and society becomes safer and more compassionate.

Teachers may wish to draw attention to how the Ten Commandments influenced later legal systems. British law, for example, contains principles that echo biblical teaching, such as prohibitions against stealing and harming others, and the protection of truth.

It is also helpful to link the Ten Commandments with the wider covenant story. God gives commandments not to restrict freedom but to guide His people towards happiness and communion with Him. Jesus later summarises the entire Law with the two Great Commandments: love God and love your neighbour. This shows that the Ten Commandments are ultimately about shaping the kind of people who can build a just society and live joyfully in relationship with God.

U5.1.5	Correctly use developing specialist vocabulary to describe sin as deliberately spoiling our friendship with God and each other.	
Know	**Sin is a deliberate choice to disobey God and spoil our friendship with Him.** **Sin harms our relationships with other people by causing hurt, mistrust, or conflict.** The word sin is a specialist term that shows how our actions can separate us from God and others, even when we know what is right.	
Discern	Sin spoils relationships. Forgiveness can repair this - but there are issues. God forgives, but humans might find this challenging.	Suggested discovery questions 1. How does breaking a rule or hurting someone affect the relationship between people, and why might it be hard for humans to forgive each other even if God forgives? 2. What might be different ways people respond when someone asks for forgiveness, and why do you think some responses feel easier or harder than others? 3. How does the idea of God always forgiving challenge or support the way humans try to forgive, and what could we learn from this about our own relationships?
Respond	Reflect on times when you felt distant from God or someone special to you? How did you rectify this? Why is it important to do this? Explore how, for Catholics, a relationship with God can be repaired through the Sacrament of Reconciliation.	

Textual references

Key vocabulary

Teacher Notes

The Sacrament of Reconciliation, sometimes called Confession, is one of the seven sacraments in the Catholic Church. It is a formal way for Catholics to recognise and repair their relationship with God when they have sinned. The Church teaches that sin not only harms a person's relationship with God but also with others and themselves.

Reconciliation is grounded in God's mercy and love. Catholics believe that through this sacrament, God forgives sins and restores grace, allowing the individual to experience peace and spiritual renewal. A priest acts in the person of Christ, offering absolution, but it is the penitent's sincere contrition, confession, and resolution to amend their life that are essential.
The sacrament has four key elements: contrition (sorrow for sin), confession (telling the sins to the priest), penance (a prayer or action to show repentance), and absolution (forgiveness from God through the priest). By completing these steps, Catholics can reflect on how their actions have affected others and God, accept responsibility, and make positive changes.
Reconciliation also supports moral development and helps Catholics understand the ongoing need for God's guidance in their lives. It emphasises that human beings are not perfect, that mistakes can be corrected, and that God's love is constant and transformative.

Teachers can stress that this sacrament is not only about forgiveness but also about growth, responsibility, and restoring harmony in the community, reinforcing the idea that faith involves action as well as belief.

	**U5.1.6**	Know that a virtue is a positive habit that helps people live a good life.
Know	A virtue is a positive habit that helps people live a good life. A virtue is something you have to practise/exercise so it becomes a habit. Sometimes it is not easy.	

	**D5.1.2**	Express a point of view about what are positive habits (virtues) and negative habits and how virtues might help them grow in goodness.
Discern	Virtues help everyone to live better lives	Suggested discovery questions 1. If someone shows curiosity and open-mindedness in learning about others, how might this help them make better choices and live more happily? 2. How would practising generosity and compassion change the way people around you feel, and what might happen if nobody used these virtues? 3. Imagine someone always tries to be just and loving. How could their actions affect their friendships and the wider community, and what challenges might they face?

	**R5.1.4**	Reflect on their habits and where they could 'grow in virtue' to be better neighbours.
Respond	How might people grow in virtue to be better neighbours? Respond by getting involved in charitable outreach campaigns in your school. Consider the impact of your actions in your local area, nationally and globally. Reflecting on the *Catholic School Pupil Profile*, discuss the quote 'What are the qualities you see in others that you would most want to have yourselves? What kind of person would you really like to be?' from Pope Benedict XVI.	

Textual references

Key vocabulary	
disposition	a strong, steady tendency within a person to act or think in a certain way, developed over time
habit	a pattern of behaviour formed through repeated practice that becomes part of a person's character
virtue	a positive moral habit that helps a person freely choose what is good and become more like Christ

Teacher Notes

This week's learning is an excellent opportunity to consolidate pupils' knowledge and understanding of the *Catholic School Pupil Profile*. The virtues envision what a well rounded and well educated, good and virtuous young person would be like; someone made in the image and likeness of God.

This week's learning introduces pupils to a more mature understanding of virtue as a stable disposition toward goodness. In classical Christian teaching, especially in the writings of St Thomas Aquinas, a virtue is not simply a good action. It is a habit of choosing what is good, true, and loving, developed through repeated practice with the help of God's grace. Pupils at this age can begin to appreciate that virtues shape a person's character, influencing not only what someone does but also what kind of person they are becoming.

Catholic theology distinguishes between natural virtues, which can be developed through effort and good habits, and theological virtues, which are gifts from God received at Baptism. While pupils do not need this full distinction, it is helpful for them to grasp that virtues grow through cooperation with God. Practising patience, honesty, or compassion is not always easy, yet perseverance strengthens the moral life and leads to greater freedom and happiness.

Virtues also have a communal dimension. Catholic social teaching emphasises that personal virtue contributes to the flourishing of society. When pupils practise virtues such as justice, compassion, and generosity, they influence the moral environment around them. Virtuous actions can inspire others, contribute to peace, restore relationships, and build trust. This is why the Catholic School Pupil Profile focuses on the kind of persons pupils are becoming, rather than only on individual actions.

Pupils may find it helpful to explore the difference between a virtue and a talent. A talent is something someone can be good at without moral significance, such as running fast or drawing well. A virtue, however, is always moral. It concerns how a person seeks the good in all circumstances. This distinction helps pupils understand that growing in virtue requires conscious choices, reflection on mistakes, and the desire to become more Christ-like.

Encourage pupils to link virtue to real situations in their school and community life. Ask how practising virtues might influence friendships, group work, encounters with those in need, and engagement with global issues. These practical examples allow them to see virtue as active, relational, and transformative.

U6.1.2	Simply explain the Church's teaching on the purpose of the second Creation story and the purpose of scientific accounts, referencing Laudato Si' 66-67. Make links with the term 'stewardship'.	
Know	The second Creation story in the Bible helps us understand the special relationship between God, human beings and the earth, showing that people are called to care for creation as stewards. Scientific accounts, like the theory of evolution, explain how the world and life developed, while the Bible explains why the world is created and what our purpose in it is. **In Laudato Si' 66–67, the Church teaches that science and faith work together, reminding us that caring for creation is part of our responsibility of stewardship towards God's gift of the earth.**	

D6.1.2	Express a point of view about what the story of the Fall says about human beings and suffering, giving reasons why they think this way.	Suggested discovery questions
Discern	Sin makes people selfish and careless, which harms the earth and others. God calls us back to our true purpose of stewardship, to care for creation with love and responsibility.	1. How does sin get in the way of humans fulfilling their God-given purpose of stewardship? 2. How can I choose to care for the world and others instead of letting selfishness get in the way? 3. How can forgiveness and making better choices help us live as true stewards, even when we fail?

R6.1.1	Consider the ways in which their life and the life of their communities could be transformed by taking seriously the belief in the innate dignity and equality of all human beings.	
Respond	As a school community, how do we show respect for the dignity of the human person? How do we show that we have dominion and stewardship? How can you do this in your life outside of school?	

Textual references

Genesis 2:5-10, 15-23, 3:1-7, 9-13, 17-19	The Second Creation Story (aka Adam & Eve)
Laudato Si' 66-67	

Key vocabulary

Stewardship	To look after the world and everything in it
Dominion	The power humans have over the earth on behalf of God
The Fall	The moment when the first humans decided to disobey God and consequently fell away from His immediate presence and righteousness

Teacher Notes

Context of the Second Creation Story
In the story of the Fall, Adam and Eve crossed the boundary that God had set for them (not to touch the forbidden fruit). They try to go beyond how God had created them; this power belongs only to God.

As a consequence of their disobedience to God, Adam and Eve (and therefore all of humanity) suffer, but God does not abandon them.

God finds a way to restore the balance and provide for their needs. For example, by giving them clothes.

Laudato Si' 66-67
We have been entrusted by God to be stewards of Creation and have responsibility to care for our common home.

Human life is grounded in three closely intertwined relationships: with God, with our neighbour and with the earth itself. (Laudato Si' 66).

Laudato Si' 66–67 helps pupils see that faith and science are not opposed, but answer different questions. Pope Francis explains that the Creation accounts in Genesis show the meaning and purpose of creation: that everything comes from God, that humans are made in God's image, and that we have a vocation to care for creation. The second Creation story in Genesis 2 highlights the closeness between humans, the earth and God, emphasising stewardship rather than domination.

By contrast, scientific accounts, such as the Big Bang or evolution, explain the processes of how the universe and life developed. The Church teaches that these discoveries are not in conflict with faith but complement it. Science explains the how, while Scripture explains the why.

In Laudato Si' 67, Pope Francis stresses that misunderstanding Genesis has sometimes led people to exploit creation. Instead, the true meaning is that humans are caretakers, entrusted with creation for the good of all. This responsibility is called stewardship. Pupils should understand that stewardship means protecting and using the earth's resources wisely so that future generations can live well and so that creation continues to praise God.

	U6.1.3	Show understanding of the Christian belief of the first sin or 'original sin' by making links with the second story of Creation.
	Know	**Original sin comes from Adam and Eve disobeying God in the second Creation story; they chose a human-centred world instead of a God-centred world.** Original sin, committed during The Fall, is inherited by all humans and makes it harder for us to always choose good. Sin damages our ability to live as God intended, including our stewardship of creation, but God's plan calls us back to goodness.

	Discern	Because of original sin, all humans inherit a tendency to turn away from God, which can harm our relationship with Him, with others, and with Creation.

Suggested discovery questions

1. How does knowing that Original Sin affects everyone help us understand why people sometimes make wrong choices?
2. In what ways can turning away from God hurt our relationships with other people and the world around us?
3. How might recognising our tendency to sin help us think about the ways we try to live in a God-centred way?

Respond	Pupils create a visual web mapping how Original Sin can affect human choices, relationships, and the environment. They then add ideas for positive actions that could transform these situations, linking personal behaviour to the wider community. Provide short stories where characters face moral choices. Pupils identify how a tendency to turn away from God influences the decisions, and then discuss or write about how acting differently could bring about goodness in their community. What would the world be like today if Adam and Eve had not disobeyed God?

Textual references

Key vocabulary	
The Fall	the first act of human disobedience that resulted in separation from perfect unity with God
grace	God's loving help that strengthens us to choose good and live as He intends
original sin	the wounded state of mankind that we are born into even before we make our own free decision to sin. *It does not refer to our own sin or guilt*.

Teacher Notes

Use the artwork *Expulsion from the Garden of Eden* by Thomas Cole (1800s, UK and US) to explore what the world could have been like without original sin.

The doctrine of original sin is central to understanding Christian belief about the human condition. In Genesis 3, Adam and Eve freely choose to act against God's command. This act of disobedience is traditionally called The Fall because it represents humanity's rupture from perfect harmony with God, self, others, and creation. The Church teaches that original sin is not a personal wrongdoing committed by each individual, but a state or condition that affects all human beings. It means we inherit a wounded human nature that tends towards self-interest, fear, and mistrust. Pupils can be helped to see this not as inevitable moral failure, but as an explanation for why choosing good can be difficult and why the world does not reflect God's original intention.

A key theological idea is that original sin introduces disorder into relationships. Instead of seeing God at the centre of life, humans often put themselves at the centre, which leads to brokenness in families, friendships, communities, and humanity's care for creation. Catholic theology describes this as a distortion of human freedom. Freedom is meant to be the capacity to choose what is good, but original sin weakens that capacity. This helps pupils recognise why people sometimes struggle to act with kindness, justice, or responsibility even when they know what is right.

God's response to original sin is not abandonment but invitation. Throughout Scripture, God calls humanity back into right relationship with Him, beginning with the covenants made with Noah, Abraham, and Moses, and ultimately fulfilled in Jesus Christ. The doctrine of grace is essential here. Grace is the help God gives so that humans can choose goodness despite their weakened nature. Pupils can be encouraged to see that God's plan for creation remains one of healing and restoration.

This week's learning begins to explore how the effects of original sin extend beyond personal morality to the wider world. Pupils should understand that stewardship, relationships, justice, and care for the environment are all affected by humanity's tendency to turn away from God, yet all are capable of renewal when people choose goodness with God's help.

	U6.1.5	Use theological vocabulary to describe and explain the belief that sin damages the relationship with God, the relationship with others and relationships with the created world, making relevant links with the second account of Creation and Laudato Si' 66
Know	Sin weakens the bond with God by disrupting the trust and obedience He asks from humanity, showing why a God-centred life is necessary. Sin creates ripple effects in human communities, making cooperation, justice, and compassion more difficult to maintain. **Sin undermines responsible stewardship of creation, illustrating how human choices can prevent the flourishing of the world God entrusted to us, as highlighted in Laudato Si'**	

Discern	Humans often give in to temptation and sometimes fail to love.	Suggested discovery questions 1. When people harm the environment or each other because of selfish choices, how does this show that humans sometimes fail to love as God calls them to? 2. Why might different people make different choices when faced with temptation, and how do these choices affect relationships with God, others, and creation? 3. Looking at examples of people's actions in the world, which responses reflect God's call to love and care, and which show what happens when humans give into temptation?

Respond	Pupils research a local environmental or social issue (e.g., recycling, community garden, or helping vulnerable people). They create a simple action plan that demonstrates loving care, explaining how their choices can improve the community and honour God's call to stewardship. Through, prayer, use an Examination of Conscience to reflect on the theme of temptation. (see notes) Use an Examen to support pupils in reflecting times that they have grown closer to Jesus and shown his love, and times where they have found this hard to do.

Textual references

Laudato SI' 66

Key vocabulary

Teacher Notes

Sin undermines responsible stewardship by breaking the harmony between humans and creation. In Catholic teaching, God entrusted the world to humanity in the Creation accounts, especially the second story, giving humans the role of stewards. When humans act selfishly, harm the environment, or exploit resources without care, they fail in this vocation. Laudato Si' 66 reinforces this by emphasising that ecological responsibility is not optional but a moral and spiritual obligation rooted in respect for God's creation
.
Teachers should explain that sin's impact is not only personal but also collective: poor choices can damage ecosystems, harm communities, and make it more difficult for others to live sustainably. Catholic theology links this to the broader concept of original sin: human weakness and disordered desires mean that people can misuse creation. Discussing real-life examples, such as pollution or overconsumption, helps pupils see the practical effects. Pupils should understand that stewardship is both a gift and a responsibility, and that God calls people to repair the harm caused by sin through virtuous action, care for others, and protection of the natural world.

Teachers can emphasise that reflecting on the consequences of sin in creation deepens pupils' understanding of the moral and spiritual significance of ecological care.

Examination of Conscience
This should be led prayerfully and not written down. Pupils should be guided to have 'an honest dialogue with themselves'. It should always end with the positive reflective statements that help pupils look to the future with an opportunity to change and to grow in virtue.
Did I choose to do something I knew was wrong?
When I was tempted to lie, did I tell the truth?
When I was tempted to be unkind, did I choose kindness instead?
When I was tempted to be lazy, did I try to do my jobs (schoolwork, chores, prayers)?
When I was tempted to keep everything for myself, did I share with others?

Will I choose what I know is right and good?
Can I tell the truth, even when it is hard?
Can I show kindness, even when I feel upset?
Will I try my best in my schoolwork, chores, and prayers?
Can I share with others, just as Jesus shares His love with me?

	U6.1.4	Explain some Christian beliefs about the Sacrament of Baptism.
Know	Baptism unites us with Christ, frees us from sin, and gives us a new life through water and the Holy Spirit.. **Baptism enables a person to live out the virtues of faith, hope, and love in their daily relationships and decisions.** **Through Baptism, Christians share in the life of the Church and are called to act as stewards of God's world and of the dignity of others.**	

Discern	Baptism is like a covenant - it is a good thing. It has benefits and challenges for the person being baptised	Suggested discovery questions 1. How do you think being part of God's family through Baptism can help someone live a good life, and why might some people find it challenging? 2. In what ways is Baptism like the covenants God made with Noah, Abraham, or Moses, and how do these examples show both benefits and responsibilities? 3. If someone had never been baptised, how might their life or relationship with God and others be different, and what reasons could different people give for agreeing or disagreeing with Baptism?

	R6.1.2	Reflect on the evidence in the world that human beings have not always lived as God has wanted and the effects of this on human beings and the environment.
Respond	How should Christians use the gifts of faith, hope and love which have been bestowed upon them by the Holy Spirit at the Sacrament of Baptism for the good of the environment? Consider how the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit given at Confirmation can be used to help us be good stewards of Creation. Relating to current news stories, what does the climate crisis tell us about humans and their designated role as stewards to protect God's creation?	

Textual references

Key vocabulary

Teacher Notes

N.B. This week's learning builds upon pupils' prior learning about the Sacrament of Baptism. Whilst pupils may benefit from a quick recall of this, they are not expected to re-study the Rite of Baptism, and all its signs and symbols, at this point of their learning journey.

Baptism and God's Old Testament Covenants
Baptism can be understood as a personal covenant, similar to the covenants God made with Noah, Abraham, and Moses. A covenant is a solemn promise or agreement that involves commitment and trust. In Noah's covenant, God promised never to destroy the earth by flood, and humanity was called to live responsibly as stewards of Creation. Abraham's covenant involved God promising to make him the father of a great nation, requiring Abraham's faith and obedience. With Moses, God gave the Israelites the Law at Sinai, guiding them to live in ways that honoured God and cared for each other.

Baptism reflects these earlier covenants because it is a promise between the person being baptised (or their Godparents) and God. The benefits include being welcomed into God's family, receiving grace, and beginning a life of faith. The challenges include the responsibility to live according to God's will and the commitment to love others and care for creation. Discussing these connections helps pupils see that covenants are about relationships, trust, and responsibility. Teachers can encourage pupils to consider why God asks for commitment and how this trust helps people grow spiritually and morally.

	U6.1.6	Show some understanding of the Christian belief that in Jesus a new covenant is made and through him the relationship with God can be restored making links with John (1:1-5, 16-18) and the Nicene Creed.
	Know	**Christians believe that in Jesus a new covenant is made, restoring the relationship with God and offering forgiveness for sin.** The new covenant replaces the old covenants with Noah, Abraham and Moses and promises eternal life through faith in Jesus. **The Nicene Creed teaches that Jesus came from heaven for our salvation, helping us share in God's love and life.**

	Discern	Jesus gives us new life and hope because he has repaired our relationship with God.
	Suggested discovery questions	1. Jesus gives us a new type of covenant. How does it differ from what's gone before? 2. If someone believes that Jesus gives new life and hope, how might that change the choices they make every day? 3. How might our lives be different if Jesus had not restored our friendship with God through the new covenant?

Respond	Use Lectio or Visio Divina to focus on the words of the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel and the relevant articles of the Nicene Creed. Which words stand out to you and why? Give pupils short scenarios where someone must decide between forgiveness or holding a grudge. Pupils act out the situations, reflecting on how Jesus' restoration of God's relationship could guide their actions. Afterwards, discuss how living with hope and new life might change outcomes for themselves and others. Ask pupils to create a personal timeline showing moments when they have felt hope, forgiveness, or a fresh start. Then, compare it with key events in Jesus' life that show how he restores relationships with God. Discuss similarities and differences and how these experiences shape choices today.

Textual references

John 1:1-5, 16-18	Jesus, God's Word incarnate (taken from the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel)

Key vocabulary

Teacher Notes

Jesus, the New Covenant
In Catholic teaching, Jesus establishes a new covenant, fulfilling and surpassing the old covenants God made with Noah, Abraham, and Moses. The old covenants promised salvation, guidance, and God's presence but were limited by human sinfulness. The new covenant, revealed in Jesus Christ, restores humanity's relationship with God fully and eternally.

Scriptural foundations include John 1:1-5, 16-18, which emphasises that grace and truth come through Jesus Christ, and the promise of forgiveness and eternal life is realised in him. The Last Supper also marks the institution of the new covenant (Luke 22:20), linking Jesus' death and resurrection with salvation for all.

The Nicene Creed encapsulates this belief: 'For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven…' Through the new covenant, humanity is offered reconciliation with God, participation in divine life, and the gift of the Holy Spirit. Catholics understand Baptism as entry into this covenant, receiving grace to live as followers of Christ. The new covenant highlights God's initiative, human response through faith, and the transformative power of grace to heal relationships with God, others, and creation.

U6.1.7	Describe the work of a Christian or Catholic scientist who has contributed to the scientific understanding of the beginnings of the universe (e.g., Mendel, Lemaitre, Blundell), recognising that many scientists are Christians and they do not see any conflict between their faith and science.	
Know	**Many scientists are Christians and they do not see any conflict between their faith and the study of the universe.** Christians believe that God gave people gifts and talents to explore and understand the world he created. Scientific discoveries about the beginnings of the universe show the wonder of God's creation and how faith and science can work together. *N.B. Pupils must learn this knowledge whilst briefly describing the work of a Christian or Catholic scientist at an age-appropriate level.*	

D6.1.1	Articulate reasons which might lead to judgements different to their own, in response to the claim: 'belief in Creation is compatible with scientific accounts of the beginnings of the universe and the theory of evolution', offering reasoned arguments for their own judgement.	
Discern	Belief in Creation is compatible with scientific accounts of the beginnings of the universe and the theory of evolution'	Suggested discovery questions 1. How might believing that God created the world fit with scientists saying the universe has developed over billions of years? 2. What do you wonder about the ways God could have used evolution or other natural processes in Creation? 3. Why do some people think science and faith cannot agree about the beginnings of life, and how could you respond to them?

R6.1.3	Reflect on the ways in which the discoveries of science can lead to a deeper appreciation of the greatness of God and God's love for all Creation.
Respond	Meditate on how understanding of God's creation and scientific theories about creation complement one another. Does knowing that God created everything including science help lead people to appreciate him more deeply?

Textual references

Key vocabulary

Teacher Notes

Gregor Mendel (1822-1884)
Mendel was an Augustinian monk who carried out experiments on pea plants in the monastery garden. He discovered the basic principles of heredity, including dominant and recessive traits, which laid the foundations for modern genetics. His work showed how God's creation follows orderly patterns. Mendel's religious life and scientific work were complementary; he saw the study of nature as a way to understand God's design. The Church has recognised his contribution to science, and his faith did not conflict with his discoveries. Teachers can emphasise that Mendel used careful observation and experimentation while maintaining a life devoted to prayer and community.

Georges Lemaître (1894-1966)
Lemaître was a Belgian Catholic priest and physicist who proposed the idea of the expanding universe, now known as the Big Bang theory. He combined rigorous mathematics and physics with his theological understanding, seeing God as the ultimate creator behind the universe's origin. Lemaître argued that scientific explanations of the universe's expansion did not contradict faith but rather deepened appreciation for God's creative power. He maintained that science explains how the universe evolves, while religion addresses why it exists. Teachers can highlight that Lemaître shows how faith and scientific reasoning can coexist and enrich each other.

Katherine Blundell (b. 1960s)
Blundell is a contemporary British astrophysicist who studies black holes, galaxies, and the evolution of the universe. She is a practising Christian and has spoken about how her faith inspires wonder at creation and motivates careful scientific inquiry. She emphasises that understanding the cosmos scientifically does not diminish belief in God; instead, it reveals the complexity and beauty of God's creation. Teachers can point out that her work demonstrates that modern science and faith are not mutually exclusive and that curiosity and devotion can coexist. .

	U6.1.1	Show understanding of the literary forms found in the texts studied, including the use of metaphor, symbolic language, and poetry.
Know		Some Bible texts, like the second creation account and John's prologue, use poetry, metaphor, and symbolic language to help us understand God's work and the meaning of creation. **Metaphors in the Bible, such as light, life, or breath, represent deeper truths about God and human life, not just literal descriptions.** **Scientific explanations and religious texts can both use symbolic or figurative language to explore reality, showing that faith and science can help us understand different aspects of God's creation.**

Discern	In the Bible, God often uses poetry, symbols, and metaphors to show important truths about life, creation, and our relationship with Him, helping us understand what really matters

Suggested discovery questions

1. How do metaphors and symbols make God's truths easier to understand than if they were only explained in plain words?
2. Why might poetry or symbolic stories help people remember and reflect on God's messages more than straightforward facts?
3. How do the different literary forms in the Bible help you see God's ideas about creation, humanity, and love in a way that connects with your own life?

Respond

Pupils select metaphors, symbols, or poetic passages from the second Creation story or John 1:1-18. They create a visual collage or digital illustration showing what each symbol communicates about God and creation. Afterwards, they explain how these ideas could influence the way they care for people and the environment in their own community.

Pupils choose a poetic passage from the Bible and write a short reflective journal entry connecting the imagery to their own experiences. They consider how God's truths revealed through literary forms can guide their behaviour, relationships, and contributions to their school, parish, or local community.

Textual references

Genesis 2:7, 2:9	The Second Creation Story (aka Adam and Eve)
John 1:1-5	The Prologue to the Fourth Gospel
Pslam 104:30	O Lord My God, You Are Very Great

Key vocabulary

Teacher Notes

Language in the Bible
Scripture and science use different ways to describe reality. In the Bible, figurative language often conveys truths beyond literal meaning. Examples include:

- Genesis 2:7 God forms Adam from the dust and breathes life into him. This symbolic language shows God as the source of life.
- Genesis 2:9 The Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge represent choices, responsibility, and the gift of life, rather than literal trees.
- John 1:1-5 The Prologue describes the Word as being with God and giving life; light and darkness are symbolic of good and evil, knowledge and ignorance.
- Psalm 104:30 God sending forth the Spirit and creating life reflects awe and wonder; the poetic form conveys the ongoing sustaining of creation.

Teachers can emphasise that scientific language explains how creation works, while figurative or symbolic language in Scripture explains why creation exists and how humans relate to God. Using examples helps pupils see that metaphor and symbolism deepen understanding, and that faith and science answer complementary questions about the universe without contradiction.