



Environment

Infant Activity

The Gift of Life
(For Students in grades K-3)

Materials:
small plastic reusable containers (enough for 1 per student); pk 100 cotton buds; Lawn seeds; Water and medicine dropper; Marker and labels

Instructions:
Each student receives a plastic container in which they place 2 cotton buds. Place a pinch of lawn seeds (no more than 8) into the plastic container.

Use the dropper to dampen the cotton buds, try not to over water. Place in the sunlight and watch them grow; will take about 3-4 days to grow.

Questions:

- What did the seeds need to grow?
- What do we need as humans to grow?
- How do we take care of plants and animals?

'Look to the future with hope, and set out with renewed vigour to make this new millennium a time of solidarity and peace, of love for life and respect for God's creation.'

– Pope John Paul II
(May 8, 2001, Pilgrimage to Malta)

★ What our is environment?

Our Environment is our life source, without it we would not be here. Without air we would not breath, without water we would thirst, without food we would go hungry. The environment gives us so much, but how much do we acknowledge this gift and how do we look after it so that it will never run out.

God gave us a responsibility to look after the environment and its creatures. This work sheet will endeavour to assist you in educating your students about the gift of God's creation and how to respect and care for it.



★ Stewardship In Genesis 1 God creates the world and everything in it. God made humans in his image and asks them to watch over, his creation.

Stewardship means to be of service. The Catholic Church uses the word "Stewards" to describe people doing acts of service, for the Church and its people. This could be looking after the gardens at the church, bringing the Eucharist those who are too ill to make it to mass.

God asks us to be stewards of his creations. So we are then to be of service to the planet, its creatures and each other.

Resources: books & stories

There are some great stories out there for children of all ages that highlight the need to share the earth's resources.

For infants K-2 the Indigenous Dream Time story of Tiddalik the Frog. Who was so thirsty that he drank all the water from all the lakes, rivers and oceans. How did this impact on the other animals?

For students in grades 3-4, the story of The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstine. A story of a Tree that loves a boy and gives him everything she has so that he would be happy. Animated versions of this story can be found on Youtube: www.youtube.com/watch?v=1TZCP6OqRIE

For your senior students, If the World Were a Village by David J. Smith. This illustrated book outlines what the world would be like if was reduced to the size of a village of 100 people. Based on 2008 statistics the book looks at nationalities, languages, ages, religions, food, air and water, schooling and literacy, money and possessions and electricity. A good way to analyse global issues on a smaller scale.



★ Kiribati (Ki - ra - bas)

Kiribati is a group of 32 small islands in the Pacific Ocean that are in great danger. Danger from rising sea levels due to the melting ice caps.

According to the 2005 census information there are over 92, 000 people living on these islands. With rising sea levels it is likely that these people will lose their homes if we do not change.

Scientists have many theories as to why the ice caps, such as the south and north poles, are melting. Some believe it is due to global warming. This is where pollution becomes stuck in the earth's atmosphere and

slowly warms the land and water. It is like putting a blanket with holes over the earth, some of the heat goes out, but some stays in. Over time you would get warmer, even though some of the heat escapes.

Larger countries have a responsibility to monitor and reduce the amount of pollution produced. Here in Australia it is highly unlikely that the whole country will be flooded, like Kiribati. However, Australia is one of the biggest polluters per population in the world. Our actions can impact on other countries, like Kiribati. So how can we help our neighbours?

★ GREEN TEAM

Vinnies GREEN TEAM is a group of Young Adult volunteers, who each weekend provides gardening assistance for those who require help. They plant trees, mow lawns, water gardens and much more.

They also provide social support and friendship for those they assist and the team. These young volunteers have found that they have gained much more out of these projects than they initially expected.

★ What can I do to help?

If we can each be stewards of the earth and care for it like we care for our family and pets. To give back what we take and tell others how they can help.

If we all work together and remember to look after God's creation we will discover new amazing and beautiful things. And we can make the world a better place.

Senior Activity

Environment Audit

For students in grades 4-6

Using the **Towards Environmental Futures** produced by Catholic EarthCare Australia. Students conduct an environmental audit of their classroom, their home or (as a class) the school.

Students then put together a document of suggestions that could help with reducing the impact the school has on the surrounding environment.

Some suggestions could be building a worm farm, using recycled paper for printing, energy efficient lighting, turning off power points, etc.

A copy of **Towards Environmental Futures** is available at www.catholicearthcare.org.au.



Teachers Resources

Below are a variety of different teachers resources. Some are from Catholic EarthCare, YouTube and movies. These resources can be used for the classroom or at a Mini Vinnies meeting.

There are a couple of resources that come highly recommended they are:

1. **Freshwater is sacred water** - An interactive CD-Rom for Primary and Secondary School Students. Produced in 2004 for EarthCare Day the CD provides an education of Australian flora and fauna as well as the vital role of water and its cycle of life. www.catholicearthcare.org.au
2. **YouTube clip of Severn Cullis-Suzuki** a 12 yr old student who addressed the UN on the environment and its impact on her future, very inspiration. www.youtube.com/watch?v=uZsDliXzyAY
3. **The movie 'An Inconvenient Truth' with Al Gore.** This would be more suitable for your senior students.
4. But the best one of all is getting out into the environment and exploring for yourself and admiring God's creation.

