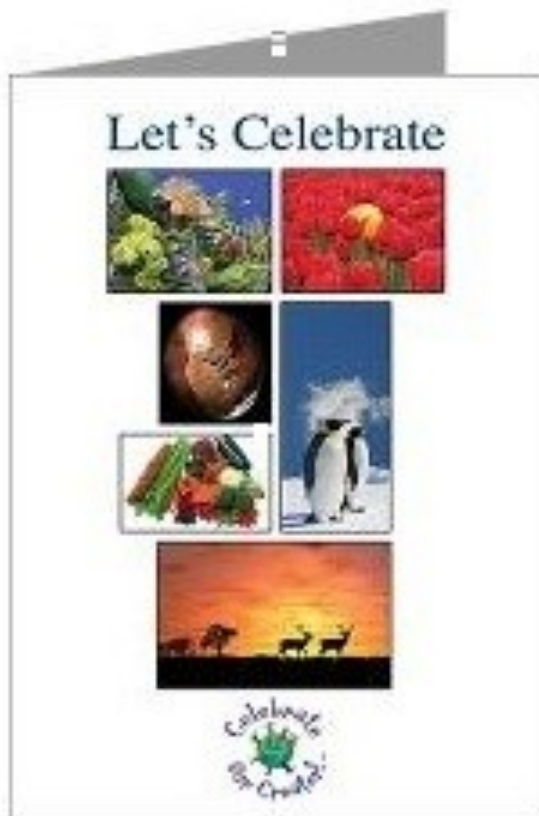


Celebrate Our Creator

Curriculum and Supporting Material
For Use in Faith Formation, Earth Day, Laudato Si' Week
Care4Creation, Season Of Creation and VBS Activities.



(And for use in everyday reflection on God our awesome Creator, too.)



It's Time To Celebrate Our Creator®



Come! Behold the deeds of the LORD, the astounding things he has wrought on earth. PS 46

Take a breath of fresh air or a drink of refreshing water... look at the many stars... enjoy the sun's warmth, think of swimming in the ocean amid all the fish... enjoy a meal with family and friends... hold a baby. Such wonders!!!

At the Global Institute For Transformation® (GIFT), we believe a key building block to fervent faith in God is appreciating God as our awesome Creator and appreciating His innumerable gifts. So GIFT offers the Celebrate Our Creator® curriculum and materials for use in Earth Day, Laudato Si' Week; Season of Creation, VBS, Sunday Schools, Catechism, Children's Liturgy, Care4Creation activities — even ongoing home parties.

Appreciating God as our Creator — and reflecting on the wonder of His creation — is very much needed today, considering that much of the developed world is turning away from God, and is increasingly believing that our world simply evolved. As we all know, many of the world's respected institutions now teach that there was no Creator.

Sadly, failure to acknowledge God as our Creator undermines a fundamental Christian truth: that we are created in the image of our loving, creative and all powerful God, with great dignity and creative potential. This is at the heart of Christian revelation.

But we've been given many gifts: life; the awesome world we live in; and everything we need to live by. Oxygen, water, sunlight, gravity, food, family, friends, fun, emotions, motion — everything — all are gifts from our awesome Creator.

So we should Celebrate Our Creator. We were created with a purpose. God has a plan for us. And that He wants us to be with Him forever. Our loving Father wants us to live with Him in eternal joy, following our earthly existence. We can believe this all the more if we reflect on the incredible wonders of God's creation in all its majesty.

It would do us good to reflect on God's gifts of creation and life, and how we're all blessed with the gifts of life as equal children of our loving Father; that we're all brothers and sisters; and that we should be concerned about each other, about justice and peace, and about equality and solidarity. In fact, reflecting on all these gifts should compel us to want to allow God to transform our lives so we live and love more like Jesus and support our world.

We can also reflect on our Creator's own example of how we should live: a life of selfless love and compassion for one another, just as Christ — the son of God, through whom all things were created shared God's Incredible, selfless love with us. As a sacrifice and example. So we could ultimately live with Him forever.

Any denial of God and His Creation — and the resulting ramifications — is detrimental to the wellbeing of society, robs us of a great source of joy and peace, and is a sad offense to God. God deserves our joyful love.

Relatedly, the Church encourages us to realize that the environment (God's creation) is God's gift to everyone. And that in our use of it, we have a responsibility to the poor, to future generations and to humanity as a whole, to be effective stewards of creation, rather than abusers or exploiters of creation for our own selfish benefit.

In fact, Church leaders have expressed that we need to practice a different lifestyle, wherein our duty to care for the environment is linked to our duties of loving, caring for, and sharing our gifts with our fellow human beings. To address these issues in a fun, educational and inspiring manner, start by Celebrate Our Creator® curriculum. that follows this introduction, and take advantage of the reinforcing Celebrate Our Creator® materials.



A Curriculum Framework For Celebrate Our Creator

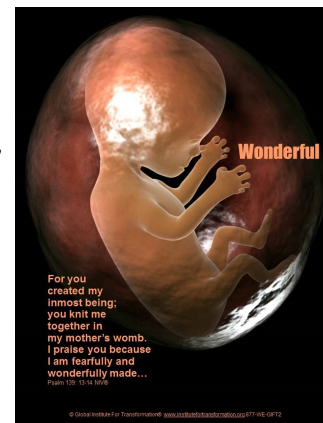
This curriculum is suitable for children's ministries, family devotions, and neighborhood outreach.

Ways To Promote A Foundational Truth That God Made This World And That He Made Us In His Image

One way to start is to ask children to name their biggest real-life hero. Then ask them, “Who made that hero?”

Explain that God, through Jesus, made everything that lives. This includes each of us, and even those we may think of as heroes. That being the case, then ask the children whether our real hero should really be God, Himself, and Jesus, through whom everything was made, and the Holy Spirit whose power has always filled the earth.

But however you start... discuss that our loving God made us, His children, wonderfully — in His image and with a plan for our lives. To be happy... to know Him and His love for us... and to be in a loving relationship with Him now and for all eternity.



Explain that God is concerned about us, and that He's not only concerned about us, He is also concerned about all our brothers and sisters around the world. And He's concerned about the world He created.



Discuss that God made us and all life, in ways only He knows. And that He's given us everything that we need to live on. Then consider sharing some of these gifts during the discussion... tastes of fruits; flowers to feel, see and smell; animal pictures or videos; photos of stars; etc.



Also, take time to explain that God is love, and that He loves us so much, that He — in the person of Jesus, part of the Holy Trinity — even came down from heaven and gave His life for us on the cross, so we could be with Him forever.

And explain all of this should be cause for Celebration! A reason to Celebrate Our Creator!



Explain that we're going to Celebrate God, Our Creator, our hero.

Explain that we need to remember that every thing we have is a gift from God.

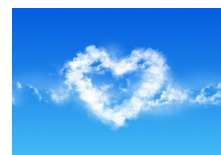


Share that we need to thank our God — and that we should truly love God for all his gifts, considering:

- ♦ The life He's given us and all He has provided for us and done for us in this great world that He's given us
- ♦ The love He's shown us, including even coming to this earth to be with us — and dying on the cross for us.

And explain that God really wants us to love Him; to love and care for all His children; and to care for His creation, just as He has loved and cared for us.

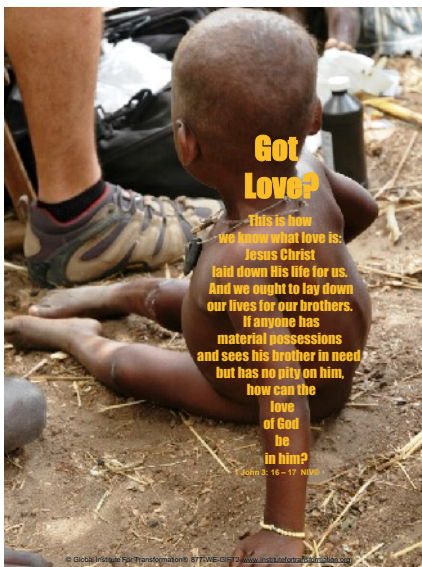
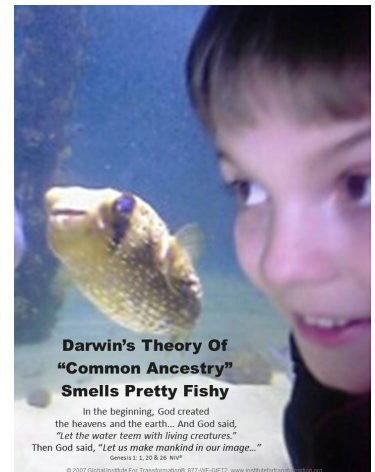
Suggest that during each and every day, including during celebrations such as Earth Day, Laudato Si' Week, the Season of Creation and World Day of Prayer of Creation, we should choose to spend time honoring God -- our awesome creator, provider, sustainer and savior.



We should not only reflect upon our wonderful Earth, but also on our wonderful Creator, our awesome God —and Celebrate Our Creator.

Key Messages To Convey How We Should Live In Order To Honor God Who Made This World And Us:

- ◆ We should spend time thinking about the awesome world God has given us.
- ◆ We should protect and care for this world, and care for one another in the family of God, just like God cares for us!
- ◆ We should always remember: God created this world and all of us. The world wasn't the result of an accident. It was planned. So were we.
- ◆ We should all realize that we were created with great value and a purpose.
- ◆ We need to share sincere love with God and with all His children, our brothers and sisters nearby and around the world.



And we should consider:

Everything is a GIFT from God. Which means every person is a GIFT from God, our Father. We're family. God wants all His children to love one another and to love him, just as our parents want us to live our lives loving our brothers and sisters.

In life, we should think not only about ourselves and our own wants and needs, but also about all God's children, all our brothers and sisters, and all their needs. And we should consider that some of God's children are in great need of our love and support.

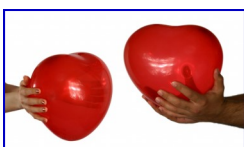
Think of the joy we would all have if we lived our lives giving and receiving gifts "of" each other to one another in "JOYFUL GIFT EXCHANGES." (Notice we do not say gifts "from" each other, but we say gifts "of" each other.) Let's all practice GIFT EXCHANGES where we share the gift of ourselves with others and enjoy the gifts of others; where can we learn about and truly love and care one another.



In these GIFT EXCHANGES, we would spend time together and share our interests and our concerns — and even help each other.



We should also be giving gifts of ourselves back to God, too. Because He created us and provides for us, and He even sent Jesus to save us from our sins, so that we can be with Him forever. (Some ways in which we can give back to God include: to go to Church and share our gifts in fellowship with one another; to talk with God in prayer; to care for the world He's given us; to welcome His presence in our lives, receptive to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and participating in Holy Communion or Spiritual Communion; and to love all our brothers and sisters with all our hearts. Just like we should love God with all our hearts.



GIFT's Celebrate Our Creator® Curriculum

Building Faith Foundations, Encouraging Stewardship And Fostering Solidarity

Curriculum For Celebrate Our Creator Days. For Use in Sunday School, VBS, Earth Day and Beyond

This curriculum is suitable for children's ministries, family devotion, and neighborhood outreach.

1. Conduct Celebrate Our Creator Events

Ask the children to name their biggest hero. Then ask them who made that hero.

Explain that God, through Jesus, made everything that lives - even their hero. Discuss our loving God made us, His children, in His image and is not only concerned about us, but is concerned about all our brothers and sisters around the world. And discuss that he also made everything we need to live on.

Explain that we're going to Celebrate God as Our Creator, our hero.

And, explain that we need to remember that every perfect gift is from above. Explain we need to thank God - in fact, to love God - based on all He's provided for us. And explain that He wants us to love Him and love and care for all His children, and care for His creation, as well.

2. Lead a Bible Study on God as Our Creator and Sustainer

Read selected verses from John 1: 1-12; Isaiah 40: 25-26; Psalm 8: 1-8; and Psalm 136 verses 1-9 & 23-25; James 1: 17-18; Psalm 3:5; and Genesis 1-11; Genesis 1:1-2:3, 3.

2a. Next, sing or play worship songs related to God as our creator and as an awesome God worthy of respect.

Consider getting song sheets or CDs of the following creation oriented songs.

1. He's Got The Whole World In His Hands
2. Jesus Is My Superhero
3. Indescribable
4. How Great Thou Art
5. Whatever You Do

3. Conduct Celebrate Our Creator Activities

3a. Experience God's Design Through Gardening

Select seeds from either vegetable or flowering plants that have brief germination periods. Fill cups with potting soil. Following the directions on seed packs, prepare the soil for inserting seeds.



3b. Taste God's Provision

Fill additional cups with cut up sections of various fruits and distribute the cups to have them taste God's awesome design in food.



3c. Observe God's Awesome Creation

Play a creation video - we've used ones from Moody Bible Institute. Focus on visuals and story segments that depict animals, plants, stars, etc. Observe and comment on the awesome design of these animals.



4. Encourage Stewardship Of God's Creation

Finally, we should encourage children to not only reflect on God's awesome Creation and love Him with all our heart, mind and strength as our Creator, but also to recognize

- The environment is God's gift to everyone...
- That nature expresses God's design of love and truth...
- And that 'the Church' has a responsibility towards protecting and being stewards of God's creation...
- That everything is a GIFT such that we should care for and share the fruits of God's creation with our brothers and sisters, being concerned about people around the world today.

Children can also draw pictures about ways to use less water, save energy and conserve all our resources as well as to share their resources and creativity with others.

5. Let's get creative and inventive to solve problems and show others God's awesomeness and love.

Because we've been created in the image of God -- our awesome creator -- all of God's children, all of us, have the ability to create and to creatively solve problems.

How cool is that! We can all be inventors! We can all invent new ways of doing things. We can even think of problems in the world that need to be solved and invent solutions.

Problems like people starving from not having enough food, or people needing clean water, and without solutions they can get sick or worse, even die. That's why Global Institute For Transformation (GIFT) has provided farm irrigation and water filtration in places around the world, to address hunger and the lack of clean water.

Can you name some famous inventions and inventors? (Have the children name some famous inventions and inventors.) We all probably know of some inventions.

Electricity:

In 1750, Ben Franklin published a proposal for an experiment to prove that lightning is electricity by flying a kite in a lightning storm. On June 15, 1752, Ben Franklin may possibly have conducted his famous kite experiment in Philadelphia, successfully extracting sparks from a cloud.

The Car:

Karl Benz (think Mercedes Benz) invented the car in 1886. However, the very first car design was that of a toy, designed by a Jesuit missionary to China, Ferdinand Verbiest, in 1672. It was a steam powered two foot long, miniature version of today's car. Some believe he actually built this toy car working with very skilled Chinese metal workers.

Corn Flakes:

This popular breakfast cereal was originally manufactured by Kellogg's through the treatment of maize (corn), which received a patent on April 14, 1896. But the process or way to make the flakes started over 30 years earlier.



6. OK. LET'S CELEBRATE OUR CREATOR!

Now how do you want to really Celebrate our Creator?

You could send a card to someone. Or...

You could take a hike in Nature and appreciate God's blessings.

Or would you want to be an inventor and someone who helps others with inventions?

Do you want to be someone who gives GIFT EXCHANGES "of" yourself and who really, really appreciates the wonderful gift of others in your life?

By going to Church, and receiving Communion, and Praying to God?

As someone who is concerned about all God's FAMILY and wants to share God's Incredible love with everyone.

Whatever way you want, let's all Celebrate Our Creator!





Celebrate Our Creator Fun Stuff



Celebrate Our Creator fun stuff can be ordered through
<https://www.cafepress.com/wegift/4676975>.

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