

CATHOLIC
DIOCESE
of
BALLARAT



Diocesan e-News

STEWARDS OF CREATION: A CHANGE OF HEART

On March 15 this year, the Catholic Education Office Ballarat launched the Sustainability Framework – *Stewards of Creation: A change of heart*. The framework is aimed at assisting schools and the Education Office to focus on educating students and staff in environmental sustainability.

Much of the thinking surrounding this framework was informed by Pope Francis' encyclical "*Laudato Si'*: on care for our common home" (2015) and various education for sustainability documents from both government and Catholic Education sources.

One of the major reasons for developing the framework is to link the work schools currently implement as part of the Victorian Curriculum with the Diocese's Religious Education Curriculum *Awakenings* and the Catholic belief that we are indeed responsible for caring for the earth.

There are three focus areas –

- Respect for Earth
- Respect for People
- Respectful Distribution

The endeavour has been made to link actions for each of our Aspects for School Improvement to these focus areas. The foci and actions are elaborated upon in the framework document.

The working party and others, will now take on the task of looking at curriculum and other resources to see where schools can be further assisted in developing and implementing the framework: *Stewards of Creation: A change of heart*.

Dr Susan Crowe
Education Officer: Sustainability, Liturgy and Special Projects

See Poster below:



*As co-creators with God,
we will promote and demonstrate
respect for Earth, respect for people
and respect for distribution*

Education for Environmental Sustainability:

Education for Environmental Sustainability meets the needs of the present “without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”¹

The principles of sustainability are embedded within our Catholic Tradition. “Care for creation is not a new component of our Catholic identity. It is as old as Genesis, and is woven into the very fabric of Catholic mission.”² This is achieved in collaboration and dialogue with all of humanity.

The dominion over creation given to humanity (Gen: 1-28”) is one of stewardship, caring for and handing on in partnership with God.³

1. Brundlant, WCED,(1987), p.82
2. Catholic Health Association
3. Awakenings (2005). p. 98

Stewards of Creation: A change of heart

Diocesan Education Vision

As partners in Catholic education and open to God’s presence, we pursue fullness of life for all.

Mission

We journey towards this vision through:

- proclaiming and witnessing to the good news of Jesus Christ
- ensuring quality learning that promotes excellence and fosters the authentic human development of all
- living justly in the world, in relationship with each other and in harmony with God’s creation
- exploring, deepening and expressing our Catholic identity in diverse ways
- enabling each one of us to reflect more fully the image of God

*Good education plants seeds when we are young,
and these continue to bear fruit throughout life.*

(Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'* para 213)

Focus Areas:

Respect for Earth

Cultivation of the sense of the Sacred and interconnectedness which recognises and responds to God's presence

ECOLOGICAL

Natural cycles
Interdependence:–
one thing does not exist without another
Biodiversity
Conservation
Habitats
Natural Resource Management
Ecological Footprint

Respect for People

Every human person is created in God's image and likeness and therefore is vulnerable and worthy of respect

ECONOMIC

Energy efficiency
Fiscal responsibility
Sustainable consumption
Renewable resources
Steady state economy
Environmental awareness
Waste minimisation
Resource recovery
Consumers
Finite resources

Respectful Distribution

Stewarding of the resources available for the common good of all creation

SOCIAL

Respect
Cultural heritage
Diversity
Participation
Social Justice
Community engagement
Advocacy
Governance
Cooperation
Collaboration
Rights and duties
Promotion of Peace

Actions:

Catholic School Culture:

- Responding to the invitation to actively carry out God's work as co-creators
- Promote a commitment to steward and care for God's gift of Creation
- Ensure a rigorous curriculum that promotes sustainability and care of the environment, founded within the Catholic story and vision

Community Engagement:

- Develop a sustainability committee inclusive of all stakeholder groups
- Promote and develop parents as partners in the journey of sustainability
- Engage with and create links with the wider community to promote sustainability
- Develop networks and create connections with industry and local business

Leadership and Stewardship:

- Develop a whole school approach to sustainability
- Promote leadership practices which lead to sustainable management of resources
- Create resource efficiency in the areas of water, waste, energy and biodiversity
- Develop policies and procedures e.g. Green purchasing policy
- Participation in environmental resource management programs and initiatives
- Undertake evidence based decision making
- Consider product life cycle and efficiency versus cost
- Embrace, harness and promote initiatives which will lead to greater sustainability
- Consider passive and active measures in building design
- Embed sustainability into the School Improvement Framework and External Review Processes
- Provide opportunities for professional development

Learning and Teaching:

- Challenge students to 'think global, act local'
- Encourage learning that is:
 - about the environment where focus is placed on students' understanding of important facts, concepts, theories and actions
 - in the environment which involves students being in direct contact with the natural world to develop awareness, affinity and care for the environment
 - for the environment where we aim to promote a willingness and ability to adopt lifestyles that are compatible with the wise use of environmental impacts on the natural and social world

Wellbeing:

- Promote healthy living across all dimensions of school life
- Provide stimulating outdoor environments for outdoor play
- Provide opportunities for sustainability themed life-long learning experiences for the school community
- Engage with and support the individual needs of all learners leading to success for all
- Using sustainability and environment to provide opportunities for the community in practices of meditation, reflection and stillness

Resources:

Laudato Si': On care for our common home Pope Francis 2015

http://w2.vatican.va/content/dam/francesco/pdf/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si_en.pdf

Awakenings Core Document Catholic Education Office Ballarat 2005

AVAILABLE IN ALL SCHOOLS

Kinship with the Earth Sandhurst Catholic Education 2012

http://www.ceosand.catholic.edu.au/ceo/downloads/cat_view/52-learning-teaching/56-environment-sustainability/137-kinship-with-the-earth.html

On Holy Ground: An ecological vision for Catholic Education in New South Wales Catholic Earthcare Australia 2007

<http://catholicearthcare.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/On-Holy-Ground-Queensland.pdf>

Education for Sustainability in the Archdiocese of Melbourne Catholic Education Office Archdiocese of Melbourne 2013

<http://cevn.cecv.catholic.edu.au/SchoolImprovement.aspx?id=12276>

Jesus and the Natural World: Exploring a Christian Approach to Ecology Denis Edwards 2012

AVAILABLE IN ALL SCHOOLS

Sustainability Curriculum Framework: a guide for curriculum development and policy makers Commonwealth of Australia 2010

<http://www.environment.gov.au/sustainability/education/publications/sustainability-curriculum-framework-guide>

Living Sustainability: the Australian Government's national action plan for education for sustainability Commonwealth of Australia 2009

<https://www.environment.gov.au/system/files/resources/13887ab8-7e03-4b3e-82bb-139b2205a0af/files/national-action-plan.pdf>

