

>>> *Catholic Social Teaching for Children* <<<  
**CST: Care of Creation**  
*Catechesis for the Catholic Diocese of Raleigh*

Life and Dignity of Person >>> Rights and Responsibilities of the Human Person >>> Call to Family, Community, Participation >>>

Solidarity >>> Care of Creation >>> Dignity of Work and Rights of Workers >>> Option for the Poor and Vulnerable >>>

Faced with the grave social problems which, with different characteristics, are present throughout America, Catholics know that they can find in the Church's social doctrine an answer which serves as a starting point in the search for practical solutions. Spreading this doctrine in an authentic pastoral priority. In this regard, special care must be taken to train lay persons capable of working, on the basis of the faith in Christ to transform earthly realities. *Ecclesia in America*, Pope John Paul II, 1999

**Scripture**

God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. Genesis 1:1-31

Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard, and gather in their yield; but in the seventh year there shall be a sabbath of complete rest for the land, a sabbath for the Lord. You shall not sow your field or prune your vineyard. Leviticus 25:3

O Lord, how manifold are your works. In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures. ...may the glory of the Lord endure forever; may the Lord rejoice in his works. Praise the Lord. Psalm 104

Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. Isaiah 40:28

Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal... Matt. 6:19-21

Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. ... Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? Matt. 6:25-34

Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions. Luke 12:15-21

All things are lawful for me, but not all things are beneficial. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be dominated by anything. 1Cor. 6:12

Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts. Col. 3:14

**Papal Encyclicals & Bishops' Statements**

We show our respect for the Creator by our stewardship of creation. Care for the earth is not just an Earth Day slogan, it is a requirement of our faith. We are called to protect people and the planet, living our faith in relationship with all of God's creation. *Sharing Catholic Social Teaching*, USCCB, 1999

From the patristic period to the present, the church has affirmed that misuse of the world's resources or appropriation of them by a minority of the world's population betrays the gift of creation since "whatever belongs to God belongs to all." *Economic Justice for All*, USCCB

The most profound motive for our work is this knowing that we share in creation. Learning the meaning of creation in our daily lives will help us to live holier lives. It will fill the world with the spirit of Christ, the spirit of justice, charity, and peace. *Laborem Exercens*, Pope John Paul II, 1981

The seventh commandment enjoins respect for the integrity of creation. Animals, like plants and inanimate beings, are by nature destined for the common good of past, present, and future humanity. Man's dominion over inanimate and other living beings granted by the Creator is not absolute; it is limited by concern for the quality of life of his neighbor, including generations to come; it requires a religious respect for the integrity of creation. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #2415

Because of the blessings God has bestowed on our nation and the power it possesses, the United States bears a special responsibility in its stewardship of God's creation to shape responses that serve the entire human family. As pastors, teachers, and citizens, we bishops seek to contribute to our national dialogue by examining the ethical implications of climate change. *Global Climate Change*, USCCB, 2001

Care For the environment represents a challenge for all of humanity. It is a matter of a common and universal duty, that of respecting a common good, destined for all, by preventing anyone from using "with impunity the different categories of beings, whether living or inanimate – animals, plants, the natural elements – simply as one wishes, according to one's own economic needs." It is a responsibility that must mature on the basis of the global dimension of the present ecological crisis and the consequent necessity to meet it on a worldwide level, since all beings are interdependent in the universal order established by the Creator. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, Pontifical Council, 2005

Learn More

Office of Peace & Justice, Catholic Diocese of Raleigh  
[www.dioceseofraleigh.org](http://www.dioceseofraleigh.org)  
 919-821-9751 [jurski@raldioc.org](mailto:jurski@raldioc.org)

Now Available: *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*  
 USCCB. To order: 1-800-235-8722 (Order #5-692)  
[www.usccb.org/publishing/compendium.shtml](http://www.usccb.org/publishing/compendium.shtml)

*Renewing the Earth*, USCCB, 1991 statement  
[www.nccbuscc.org/sdwp/ejp/bishopsstatement.htm](http://www.nccbuscc.org/sdwp/ejp/bishopsstatement.htm)

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- Objectives:** To learn the themes of Catholic social teaching, its gift, its roots in the life of Christ and the Gospel, papal encyclicals and bishops' statements, its challenge to today's Catholics and its essential role in Catholic faith and identity.  
 To journey more deeply in our life of faith; to respond in our world today as salt and light, and to rejoice in the Good News.  
 To experience the option for the poor and vulnerable in Christ, locally and globally.

**Overview**

Read the Catholic Teaching on the reverse page.  
 ~Reflect on this teaching :  
     In your own life, your community, country and world.  
     In connection with the other themes of CST listed on the border.  
     In Jesus' life as the Son of Man.  
     In terms of the reign of God.  
 ~Read the US Catholic Bishops' statement, *Renewing the Earth*, 1991  
[www.nccbuscc.org/sdwp/ejp/bishopsstatement.htm](http://www.nccbuscc.org/sdwp/ejp/bishopsstatement.htm)

**Preparation**

Newsprint  
 Make copies of:  
     Page 1 of this Snip-it  
     Johnny Appleseed Song  
     The Story of Johnny Appleseed

*Or*

Visit Heifer International's *Read to Feed* educational site, [www.readtofeed.org](http://www.readtofeed.org), where you will find a treasure of educational material for children up thru grade 6. Includes games/puzzle, story, book lists, and print and do sections. Check out "Caring for the Earth".  
 Heifer International is a nonprofit, humanitarian organization dedicated to ending world hunger and saving the earth.

**Curriculum**

On newsprint list the various responses from the class to the question:  
 What do you like most about our earth?  
 Then have a discussion:  
     about how we take care of creation:  
         Animals / Plants/ Water / Land  
     our relationship to creation:  
         we are a community with God and all God's creation  
 Briefly summarize the Church's teaching for God's creation, our relationship to creation, and responsibility to be good stewards. We can all help be good stewards. List ideas (recycle, live simply, examine the difference between needs and desires, plant a tree, learn, teach others.

*Johnny Appleseed Story and Song*  
 Using the handouts, tell or read together the story of this one man who helped God's creation.  
 There are lots to do with this including the simple song:  
     write a prayer / share other stories / elect to take on a local environmental project on water, animals, plants, and land in N.C.

Use the appropriate material found on the Heifer website and talk about this important environmental work. The diocese purchased "The Ark" as a retirement present for Bishop Gossman. Talk about the animals and plants included in The Ark, their story and how these were sent into the world and will multiply. Culture, geography, relationships, giving, and stewardship are part of the experience.

Send Page 1 of the Snip-it home for sharing with the family. What are some things families can do to become better stewards of our environment?

...everyone must consider every neighbor without exception as another self, taking into account first of all their life and the means necessary to living it with dignity, so as not to imitate the rich man who had no concern for the poor man Lazarus (Luke 16:18-31). ...Furthermore, whatever is opposed to life itself, ...whatever insults human dignity, such as subhuman living conditions, arbitrary imprisonment, ...as well as disgraceful working conditions, where men are treated as mere tools for profit, rather than as free and responsible persons; all these things and others of their like are infamies indeed. They poison human society, but they do more to those who practice them than those who suffer from the injury. *Gaudium et Spes*

# Johnny Appleseed Song



The Lord is good to me, and so I thank the Lord, for  
giving me the things I need, the sun and the rain and the  
apple seed, the Lord is good to me.

Oh, the Lord's been good to me.  
And so I thank the Lord  
For giving me the things I need:  
The sun, the rain and the appleseed;  
Oh, the Lord's been good to me.

I wake up every day  
As happy as can be,  
Because I know the Lord is there  
Watchin' over all my friends and me  
The Lord is good to me.

Oh, and every seed I sow  
Will grow into a tree.  
And someday there'll be apples there  
For everyone in the world to share.  
Oh, the Lord is good to me.

## Spanish Verse

Oh, here I am 'neath the blue, blue sky  
Doing as I please.  
Singing with my feathered friends  
Humming with the bees.

Dios se acordó de mí,  
Y a El le agradeezco  
Porque me dio  
Un Corazón  
Y así amar su creación,  
Dios se acordó de mi.

I wake up every day,  
As happy as can be,  
Because I know that with His care  
My apple trees, they will still be there.  
The Lord's been good to me.

# The Story of Johnny Appleseed

Johnny Appleseed in real life was one John Chapman, born on September 26, 1774, near Leominster, Massachusetts. Little is known of his early life, but he apparently received a good education which helped him in his later years. By the time he was 25 years old, he had become a nursery man and had planted apple trees in the western portions of New York and Pennsylvania. Some of the orchards in those areas were said to have originated with his apple trees.

When the rich and fertile lands lying south of the Great Lakes and west of the Ohio river were opened for settlement in the early 1800's, John Chapman was among the very first to explore the new territory. This was the Northwest Territory from which the states of Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, and Illinois were later formed. For nearly half a century Johnny Appleseed roamed his territory. When settlers arrived, they found John Chapman's young apple trees ready for sale. In the years that followed, he became known as the Apple Tree Man, or Johnny Appleseed.

His manner of operation was simple. He went into the wilderness with a bag of apple seeds on his back until he found a likely spot for planting. There he would clear the land by chopping out weeds and brush by hand. Then he planted his apple seeds in neat rows and built a brush fence around the area to keep out straying animals. His nurseries varied in size. Some were only an acre or so, others covered many acres.

He did all of the work himself, living alone for weeks at a time with only the Indians and wild animals for companionship. He never carried a gun or weapon of any kind. He was a deeply religious man who lived by the Golden Rule and had no fear of man or beast. Indians accepted him as a friend, and he is reputed to have talked at times to the wild animals who watched him as he worked in his nurseries. Undoubtedly, they sensed his kind and gentle nature. Once, it is reported, he was caught in a snow storm and crept into a hollow fallen tree for shelter. He found it occupied by a hibernating bear and her cubs, but spent the night there nonetheless. There is no report, however, of how much space he kept between them and himself.

He sold his trees for a few pennies each, accepting any of the coins current on the frontier. Some had no cash, and from those he accepted a simple promise to pay at a later date. Few failed to keep their word. He sometimes accepted payment in used clothing.

As he was a small man, his bartered clothing usually fit him poorly. This led to some of the humorous descriptions of his appearance in those early years. Like many of the settlers, he went barefooted a great deal because shoes were hard to come by and seldom fit his tough gnarled feet. As he ate no meat, he carried a stewpot or kettle with him. In this he could gather nuts or berries in season, carry water, get milk from a settler's cow, boil potatoes, or drop a handful of coarse-ground meal into the boiling water to make an unpalatable but nourishing meal. He has been pictured wearing such a pot on his head, but more likely he kept it tied to his pack rather than let it bounce on his head.

He preferred to walk, carrying his precious apple seeds and the simplest of camping gear on his back. He also used a boat, canoe, or raft to transfer larger loads of seeds along the many waterways. Customarily, he obtained his apple seeds every fall. At first, he went back to the cider presses in western Pennsylvania where he selected good seeds from the discarded apple pressings. He washed the seeds carefully and packed them in bags for planting the following spring. In later years, as cider presses were located in the new territory, he gathered his seeds closer to home.

There is no way to estimate how many millions of seeds he planted in the hundreds of nurseries he created in the territory lying south of the Great Lakes and between the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. This was his service to mankind.