



Teachers' Guide: Y6 Creation and Covenant

Session 1	
Learning Focus	HEAR / LIVE Show understanding of how the CST principle of Stewardship links with Laudato Si 66 and 67.
Recall and Retrieval	What do you understand by the word stewardship ? What do you already know about the Creation story?
Sequence of knowledge throughout the lesson	Key knowledge Pupils will know: Know how the Creation story links with the CST principle of Stewardship. Know that all humans are called by God to Stewardship. Know that Christians believe that Christ is the redeemer of all creation. Know that Pope Francis' encyclical of Laudato Si invites everyone to consider how human actions are affecting the earth and the poorest people. Know ways stewardship links to Laudato Si.
Key skills/disciplinary knowledge	U6.1.2. Simply explain the Church's teaching on the purpose of Laudato Si' 66-67. Make links with the term 'stewardship'.

Explain the Christian belief that Christ is the redeemer of all creation.

In Christian theology, the belief that Christ is the Redeemer of all creation is rooted in the idea that Jesus Christ, through His life, death, and resurrection, restores and redeems not only humanity but the entire created order. Here's a detailed explanation of this belief:

1. Christ's Role in Creation

Christian belief holds that Christ is central to creation itself. According to the New Testament, particularly in the Gospel of John and the letters of Paul, Christ is described as having an integral role in the creation of the world:

- John 1:1-3: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made."
- Colossians 1:16: "For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him."

These passages affirm that Christ is the divine Word through whom all things were created, establishing His foundational role in the cosmos.

2. The Fall and Its Consequences

Christian doctrine teaches that the Fall of humanity, described in Genesis with Adam and Eve's disobedience, introduced sin and disorder into creation. This sin brought about a rupture not only between humans and God but also disrupted the harmony of the created order. The effects of the Fall extended to all creation, leading to suffering, decay, and death.

3. Redemption Through Christ

In Christian belief, Christ's redemptive work addresses not only the sins of humanity but also the broader impact of sin on creation:

- Romans 8:19-22: Paul writes, "For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God."

This passage suggests that creation itself is awaiting redemption and restoration through Christ's work.

- Ephesians 1:10: "To bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ."

This verse underscores the idea that Christ's redemptive work aims to unify and restore all aspects of creation, not just humanity.

4. The Cosmic Scope of Redemption

Christian theology often describes Christ's redemptive work as cosmic in scope. Through His resurrection and eventual return, Christ is believed to restore and renew the entire created order. This includes:

- The Resurrection: Christ's resurrection is seen as the first fruits of the new creation, signalling the eventual restoration of all things.
- 1 Corinthians 15:22-24: "For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. But each in turn: Christ, the first fruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him."
- The Second Coming: The future return of Christ is anticipated as the moment when He will bring about the final redemption and renewal of creation.
- Revelation 21:1-5: Describes a new heaven and a new earth, where God will dwell with His people, and "there will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

5. Theological Implications

The belief that Christ redeems all creation has significant theological and practical implications:

- Hope for Restoration: It provides hope that despite the current state of suffering and disorder, the entire cosmos is destined for renewal and restoration.
- Environmental Stewardship: This belief informs Christian attitudes towards environmental care, encouraging stewardship of the Earth as part of the redemptive mission.
- Holistic Salvation: It emphasizes that salvation in Christ encompasses not just spiritual renewal but also the physical and material aspects of existence.

In summary, the Christian belief that Christ is the Redeemer of all creation encompasses the idea that Jesus, who played a central role in creation, also redeems and restores the entire created order affected by sin. This redemption is seen as both a present reality and a future hope, encompassing spiritual, physical, and cosmic dimensions.

How does the creation story link with the CST principle of Stewardship?

The creation story, particularly in the context of Judeo-Christian traditions, provides a foundational narrative that directly connects with the Catholic Social Teaching (CST) principle of Stewardship. Here's how they link:

1. **Creation as a Gift:** The creation story describes how God created the world and everything in it, which is often interpreted as a divine gift to humanity. In the CST principle of Stewardship, this gift

is seen as a responsibility. Humans are entrusted with the care and management of creation, not as owners, but as caretakers. This aligns with the idea that the natural world is sacred and should be respected and nurtured.

- 2. Responsibility to Care for Creation:** According to the creation narrative, humanity was placed in the Garden of Eden to "tend and keep" it (Genesis 2:15). This mandate is understood in CST as a call for stewardship, where humans are responsible for ensuring that creation is preserved and protected for future generations. This involves ethical management of natural resources, prevention of environmental degradation, and promotion of ecological balance.
- 3. Interconnectedness of Creation:** The creation story emphasizes the interconnectedness of all living things, as God saw that everything He created was "very good" (Genesis 1:31). This reflects the CST principle that all elements of creation are interconnected, and human actions should consider their impact on the whole environment. Stewardship involves recognizing this interconnectedness and acting in ways that sustain and enhance the health of the planet.
- 4. Human Dignity and the Environment:** CST teaches that the environment should be protected not just for its own sake, but because it affects human dignity and well-being. The creation story underlines that humans are made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27), which establishes a special dignity. Stewardship is therefore also about ensuring that the environment supports human flourishing and respects human dignity.
- 5. Stewardship:** The creation story implies that resources are to be used wisely and responsibly. Stewardship in CST involves the ethical use of resources, ensuring that they are used sustainably and that future generations inherit a healthy environment.

In summary, the creation story and the CST principle of Stewardship are deeply connected through the themes of responsibility, respect, interconnectedness, and ethical management of the natural world. The creation narrative provides the theological foundation for the idea that humanity's role is to care for and protect the environment as a divine mandate.

What is Laudato Si?

Laudato Si', subtitled "On Care for Our Common Home," is an encyclical letter written by Pope Francis and published on May 24, 2015. It addresses environmental issues and calls for global action to protect the environment and promote sustainable development. The title, "Laudato Si'," translates to "Praised Be," a reference to the canticle of Saint Francis of Assisi, "Canticle of the Creatures," which praises God through His creation.

Here are some key aspects of *Laudato Si'*:

Environmental Crisis: The encyclical highlights the urgent environmental crisis, including climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss. It emphasizes that these issues are interconnected with human activities and are having a profound impact on the planet.

Integral Ecology: Pope Francis introduces the concept of "integral ecology," which stresses that environmental issues are deeply linked with social issues. He argues that caring for the environment involves addressing social justice, inequality, and the needs of the poor, who are often most affected by environmental degradation.

Human Responsibility: The encyclical calls for a shift in how humanity perceives and interacts with nature. It advocates for a more respectful and responsible approach to using natural resources, urging people to view creation as a common home rather than a commodity to be exploited.

Critique of Consumerism: *Laudato Si'* critiques the culture of excessive consumption and materialism, which contributes to environmental harm and social inequality. It calls for a change in lifestyle and values toward simplicity and sustainability.

Global Solidarity: Pope Francis emphasizes the need for global cooperation and solidarity in addressing environmental challenges. He calls for international agreements and collective actions to combat climate change and protect the planet.

Spiritual and Ethical Dimensions: The encyclical also explores the spiritual and ethical dimensions of environmental stewardship, encouraging a deeper reflection on humanity's place in creation and our moral obligation to care for it.

Overall, *Laudato Si'* is a comprehensive and influential document that combines theological insights with scientific evidence to advocate for environmental protection and social justice. It aims to inspire individuals, communities, and nations to work together in fostering a more sustainable and equitable world.

How does the CST principle of Stewardship link to Laudato Si 66 and 67?

In *Laudato Si'*, paragraphs 66 and 67 delve into the concept of stewardship and its application to environmental and social issues. These sections highlight how the CST principle of Stewardship is intricately linked to the encyclical's call for responsible care of the environment. Here's how these paragraphs connect to the CST principle of Stewardship:

Paragraph 66: The Interconnectedness of Creation

In this paragraph, Pope Francis emphasizes that creation is an interconnected web of life, where everything is related. He asserts that this interdependence requires a harmonious approach to environmental care, acknowledging that human actions have far-reaching impacts on the natural world and vice versa.

Link to Stewardship: This aligns with the CST principle of Stewardship, which stresses that humans are caretakers of creation, not its owners. Stewardship involves recognizing the interconnectedness of all living things and understanding that responsible management of the environment is essential for maintaining this delicate balance. By acknowledging the interconnectedness described in paragraph 66, the principle of Stewardship is reflected in the call for a holistic approach to environmental care.

Paragraph 67: The Technocratic Paradigm and Its Limitations

Pope Francis critiques the "technocratic paradigm" that views nature primarily as a resource for human exploitation. He argues that this paradigm leads to environmental degradation and social inequality. Instead, he calls for a renewed understanding of the environment that recognizes its intrinsic value and the need for a more ethical approach to development.

Link to Stewardship: This paragraph critiques the very antithesis of the CST principle of Stewardship. The technocratic paradigm's focus on exploitation contrasts with the Stewardship approach, which advocates for the ethical and sustainable use of resources. By challenging this paradigm, Pope Francis reaffirms the need for Stewardship, which emphasizes responsible and respectful management of creation, guided by ethical considerations rather than purely utilitarian or profit-driven motives.

Integrative Connection

Together, paragraphs 66 and 67 of *Laudato Si'* underscore the CST principle of Stewardship by:

Affirming Interconnectedness: By highlighting the interconnectedness of creation, Pope Francis calls for a stewardship approach that respects and preserves this web of life.

Critiquing Exploitation: By critiquing the technocratic paradigm, he reinforces the need for stewardship that prioritizes ethical management and sustainability over exploitation and short-term gains.

Promoting Ethical Responsibility: Both paragraphs reflect a call for a shift in how humanity interacts with the environment, aligning with the CST principle of Stewardship that advocates for a responsible, respectful, and sustainable approach to caring for creation.

In essence, *Laudato Si'* reaffirms the CST principle of Stewardship by calling for a deeper, more ethical engagement with the environment, recognizing the interconnectedness of life, and critiquing approaches that undermine sustainable care of the Earth.

Session 2	
Learning Focus	HEAR / BELIEVE Show understanding of the Christian belief of the first sin or 'original sin' by making links with the second story of Creation. (Genesis 2: 5-10, 15-23, 3:1-7, 9-13, 17-19)
Recall and Retrieval	What do you understand by the word covenant ? Can you think of any Bible stories that include making a covenant?
Sequence of knowledge throughout the lesson	Key knowledge Pupils will know: Know that the second story of Creation in Genesis teaches about the first sin; original sin'. Know the Church teaches that the world is in disarray because humans choose to do evil again and again. This is called original sin.
Key skills/disciplinary knowledge	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

What does the second story of creation in Genesis teach about the first sin?

The second creation story in Genesis, found in Genesis 2:4b–3:24, provides a detailed narrative that focuses on the origins of humanity and the introduction of sin into the world. This story complements and adds depth to the first creation account in Genesis 1. Here's a breakdown of what the second creation story teaches about the first sin, also known as original sin:

1. Creation of Humanity

The second creation story begins with the formation of man (Adam) from the dust of the ground, and then God breathes life into him (Genesis 2:7). This account emphasizes a more personal and direct relationship between God and humanity. It describes how God placed Adam in the Garden of Eden to work and care for it (Genesis 2:15).

2. The Creation of Eve

Following the creation of Adam, the narrative describes the creation of Eve from one of Adam's ribs (Genesis 2:21-22). This act establishes the close relationship between man and woman and underscores the idea of partnership and equality in their shared human nature.

3. The Command and the Temptation

The central focus of the story is on the command given by God and the subsequent temptation that leads to the first sin:

- **God's Command:** God instructs Adam that he may eat freely from any tree in the garden except for one—the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 2:16-17). The prohibition is clear: eating from this tree will result in death.
- **The Temptation:** The serpent, described as more cunning than any other beast, tempts Eve by questioning God's command and suggesting that eating the fruit will not lead to death but will make them like God, knowing good and evil (Genesis 3:1-5).

4. The Fall and Original Sin

Eve, persuaded by the serpent, eats the fruit from the forbidden tree and gives some to Adam, who also eats (Genesis 3:6). This act of disobedience constitutes the first sin, often referred to as “original sin” in Christian theology. Here’s what this event teaches:

- **Disobedience to God:** The sin involves a direct violation of God’s command. The disobedience signifies a fundamental breach of the relationship between God and humanity.
- **Awareness and Shame:** After eating the fruit, Adam and Eve become aware of their nakedness and feel shame. This newfound awareness represents a loss of innocence and the introduction of moral and existential awareness (Genesis 3:7).

5. Consequences and Punishments

The narrative describes the consequences of this sin:

- **Alienation from God:** Adam and Eve’s disobedience results in a loss of the direct, harmonious relationship with God. They hide from God and are confronted about their actions (Genesis 3:8-13).
- **Expulsion from the Garden:** As a result of their sin, Adam and Eve are expelled from the Garden of Eden. They are destined to experience toil, pain, and eventual death (Genesis 3:14-19).
- **The Protoevangelium:** Despite the harsh consequences, there is a note of hope. God speaks of a future offspring of the woman who will eventually crush the serpent’s head (Genesis 3:15). This is often interpreted as the first hint of the Gospel, or the protoevangelium, which Christians understand as a foretelling of Christ’s victory over sin and evil.

6. Theological Significance

The second creation story and the account of original sin have profound theological implications:

- **Human Free Will:** It highlights the role of free will in human choices. Adam and Eve’s decision to disobey reflects the capacity for moral decision-making.
- **The Nature of Sin:** Original sin is understood as the foundational act of disobedience that affects all of humanity. It is not just an individual act but a state that has repercussions for human nature and relationships.
- **Need for Redemption:** The narrative sets the stage for the need for redemption. The consequences of original sin emphasize the necessity of salvation, which Christian theology believes is provided through Jesus Christ.

In summary, the second creation story in Genesis teaches that the first sin—original sin—originated from disobedience to God’s command, introduced shame and suffering, and resulted in the fall of humanity from a state of grace. This narrative underscores the theological need for redemption and salvation, foundational to Christian belief.

What is the Catholic Church’s teaching on Original Sin?

The Roman Catholic teaching on original sin is a central aspect of Catholic theology, addressing the nature, origin, and implications of the first human sin as described in the Genesis creation narrative. Here’s an overview of the Catholic Church’s teaching on original sin:

1. Definition and Nature of Original Sin

- **Original Sin Defined:** Original sin is the term used by the Catholic Church to describe the first act of disobedience committed by Adam and Eve, the first human beings, which brought sin into the world. It is considered the sin of the first humans and has a lasting impact on all humanity.
- **Nature of Original Sin:** According to Catholic teaching, original sin is not merely an individual act but a state of human nature that has been transmitted to all subsequent generations. It is characterized by the loss of original holiness and justice that Adam and Eve enjoyed before their fall. This state of original sin affects human nature and relationships with God, others, and creation.

2. Theological Basis

- **Scriptural Foundations:** The doctrine of original sin is based on interpretations of the Genesis creation narrative (Genesis 3) and is supported by passages in the New Testament that refer to the effects of Adam's sin. For example, Romans 5:12-21 and 1 Corinthians 15:21-22 discuss how sin entered the world through one man and how it is redeemed through Christ.
- **Church Tradition:** The Catholic Church's understanding of original sin has been developed and clarified through the teachings of the Church Fathers, councils, and theologians over the centuries. Key figures include St. Augustine of Hippo, whose writings significantly shaped the Church's doctrine on original sin.

3. Transmission of Original Sin

- **Inherited Condition:** Catholic teaching holds that original sin is transmitted from generation to generation. It is not a personal act committed by each individual but a condition inherited from Adam and Eve. This condition affects human nature and results in a propensity towards sin and a weakened will.
- **Not Personal Guilt:** Original sin is not considered personal guilt for each individual but a state of alienation from God that each person is born into. The individual becomes personally responsible for their own actions and choices but inherits the consequences of Adam and Eve's first disobedience.

4. Consequences of Original Sin

- **Loss of Original Holiness and Justice:** The primary consequence of original sin is the loss of the original state of holiness and justice that Adam and Eve enjoyed. This state of grace was replaced by a condition of sinfulness and separation from God.
- **Human Vulnerability:** Original sin introduces a tendency towards sin, often referred to as concupiscence. This inclination makes humans more susceptible to sin and disorder, affecting their moral and spiritual life.
- **Suffering and Death:** The Catholic Church teaches that original sin introduced physical suffering and death into the human experience. While suffering and death are not directly caused by individual sins, they are consequences of the original fall from grace.

5. Redemption from Original Sin

- **Role of Christ:** Catholic teaching asserts that Jesus Christ, through His life, death, and resurrection, provides redemption from original sin. Christ's sacrifice reconciles humanity with God and restores the possibility of grace and eternal life.
- **Sacrament of Baptism:** The Catholic Church teaches that the sacrament of Baptism removes the guilt of original sin and initiates a person into the Church. Through Baptism, individuals are cleansed of original sin and receive the grace to live a life in Christ. However, the effects of original sin, such as concupiscence, remain and must be addressed through the ongoing practice of faith and virtue.

6. Implications for Christian Life

- **Moral Responsibility:** While original sin affects human nature, individuals are still responsible for their own actions. The grace received through Baptism and the strength provided by the Holy Spirit help Christians to overcome sin and live a life of holiness.
- **Ongoing Struggle:** Catholics believe that the struggle against sin is a lifelong process. Original sin's effects persist, and believers must continually seek God's grace, participate in the sacraments, and strive for moral and spiritual growth.

In summary, the Roman Catholic teaching on original sin emphasizes that it is the inherited state of separation from God resulting from the first human disobedience. It is not personal guilt but a condition affecting all humanity, with consequences for human nature and relationships. Redemption through Christ and the sacrament of Baptism offer reconciliation and grace, while the ongoing struggle against sin remains a part of the Christian life.

Session 3	
Learning Focus	HEAR / BELIEVE Show understanding of the literary forms found in the text's studied (Genesis), including the use of metaphor, symbolic language and poetry. 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.
Recall and Retrieval	Give a definition for 'original sin' and explain your understanding of original sin.
Sequence of knowledge throughout the lesson	Key knowledge Pupils will know: Know the Genesis account of Creation and the Fall is not a literal scientific description. Know the story of Adam and Eve explains why the world is no longer as good as it was in the beginning. (YCfk 22). Know the Genesis account expresses beliefs about God, the world, and human beings.
Key skills/disciplinary knowledge	U6.1.1. Show understanding of the literary forms found in the text's studied, including the use of metaphor, symbolic language, and poetry. 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.

Explain the literary forms found in Genesis, including the use of metaphor, symbolic language, and poetry.

The Book of Genesis, the first book of the Bible, contains a rich variety of literary forms, including narrative, poetry, metaphor, and symbolic language. These elements work together to convey deep theological and spiritual truths. Here's an overview of the primary literary forms found in Genesis:

1. Narrative Prose

The majority of Genesis is written in narrative form, telling the stories of creation, the patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob), and early human history. This prose style is straightforward but often interwoven with symbolic and metaphorical elements, offering more than just a historical account. Key stories include:

- Creation (Genesis 1-2): A poetic and structured narrative that describes God's creation of the world in six days. The repetition of phrases like "And God said" and "It was good" gives this passage a liturgical, rhythmic quality, though it is still primarily narrative.
- The Flood (Genesis 6-9): The story of Noah and the Flood is a narrative that combines historical elements with symbolic imagery, such as the ark representing salvation and the rainbow symbolizing God's covenant.
- Patriarchal Narratives (Genesis 12-50): These narratives focus on the lives of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. They are foundational stories of the Hebrew faith, filled with themes of covenant, faith, and God's guidance.

2. Poetry

While most of Genesis is narrative, there are significant poetic elements interspersed throughout the text. These often occur in the form of blessings, prophecies, or praises:

- Genesis 1 (The Creation Story): Though written in prose, the first chapter of Genesis has a poetic structure, with its repetitive phrases and parallelism (e.g., the creation of light and darkness, the heavens and the earth). This structured, rhythmic pattern resembles poetry in its balance and cadence.
- Lamech's Song (Genesis 4:23-24): This short passage is a poetic song of vengeance, showcasing early Hebrew poetic structure.
- Jacob's Blessing of His Sons (Genesis 49): This chapter contains poetic blessings and prophecies that Jacob speaks over his sons. It is a clear example of Hebrew poetry, characterized by parallelism, symbolic language, and metaphor.

3. Metaphor and Symbolism

Genesis is rich in metaphorical and symbolic language, conveying deeper spiritual and moral truths through everyday images and symbols:

- The Garden of Eden (Genesis 2-3): The garden itself, the Tree of Knowledge, and the Tree of Life are highly symbolic. Eden represents a state of perfect communion with God, while the trees symbolize divine knowledge and eternal life. The serpent is also a powerful metaphor for temptation and evil.
- The Covenant of Circumcision (Genesis 17): Circumcision becomes a symbol of the covenant between God and Abraham's descendants, representing a physical and spiritual mark of God's promise.
- Names and Places: The naming of individuals and places often carries symbolic meaning. For example, the name "Israel" given to Jacob means "he who wrestles with God," symbolizing Jacob's struggle and relationship with God.
- Numbers and Patterns: Numbers, such as "7" (completeness) and "40" (testing or trial), frequently appear in Genesis with symbolic significance.

4. Mythic Elements

Genesis incorporates mythic storytelling elements, though not in the modern sense of "false stories." These mythic forms serve to convey universal truths about humanity, creation, and divine interaction with the world:

- The Creation Account (Genesis 1-2): The structured, ordered account of creation follows a cosmic pattern, akin to ancient Near Eastern creation myths, but it presents a monotheistic worldview, with one God creating the universe ex nihilo (out of nothing).
- The Tower of Babel (Genesis 11): This story uses mythic imagery to explain the origin of human languages and the scattering of nations. The tower is a symbol of human pride and the desire to reach the divine on human terms, leading to God's intervention.

5. Symbolic Actions and Events

Key events in Genesis often have deeper symbolic meanings beyond the literal story:

- The Flood (Genesis 6-9): The flood is not only a historical narrative but also a symbolic representation of divine judgment and renewal. Water often symbolizes chaos and cleansing, while the ark represents God's provision for salvation.
- Abraham's Sacrifice of Isaac (Genesis 22): This event is rich in symbolism, particularly in Christian interpretations where Isaac is seen as a type (foreshadowing) of Christ. The ram provided in place of Isaac symbolizes God's provision and foreshadows the sacrificial system.

6. Genealogies

The genealogies in Genesis (e.g., Genesis 5 and 10) serve a dual purpose. They provide a historical framework by tracing the lineage from Adam to Noah and then from Noah to Abraham. They also carry theological significance, showing the continuity of God's plan through generations.

7. Covenant Language

Throughout Genesis, covenantal language is crucial. God's promises to Abraham and his descendants are marked by formal covenants, which include symbolic acts (like circumcision) and blessings. The covenants use metaphorical language to express God's enduring faithfulness and the special relationship with His chosen people.

Conclusion

Genesis blends prose, poetry, metaphor, and symbolic language to create a deeply layered text that communicates more than just historical events. Through narrative and mythic forms, the book conveys timeless truths about creation, human nature, and God's relationship with humanity. Its literary richness invites readers to explore these stories on multiple levels—historically, theologically, and spiritually.

How does Genesis express beliefs about God, the world and human beings?

The Book of Genesis is foundational for expressing core beliefs about God, the world, and human beings in Judeo-Christian thought. Through its narratives, symbolic language, and theological themes, Genesis outlines how these three aspects are interconnected in profound ways. Below is an exploration of how Genesis expresses these beliefs:

1. Beliefs about God

Genesis presents a clear vision of God as the Creator, sustainer, and moral authority over the world. The text introduces several key attributes and roles of God:

- **God as Creator:** In the opening chapters (Genesis 1-2), God is portrayed as the sovereign Creator who brings order out of chaos. The creation account emphasizes God's power and authority, where He speaks the world into existence. His creative acts are systematic, intentional, and good. This conveys the belief that the universe is not a random accident but a purposeful creation by an intelligent and benevolent deity.
- Genesis 1:1 states, "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth," showing that God exists eternally and independently of the created order.
- **God's Transcendence and Immanence:** God is both transcendent (above and beyond creation) and immanent (intimately involved with it). In Genesis 1, God is depicted as transcendent, creating the universe with divine command. In Genesis 2, however, God is more immanent, forming humans from the dust and breathing life into them, walking with them in the Garden of Eden. This dual depiction conveys that God is both majestic and personal.

- **God as Sustainer:** After creating the world, God continues to sustain it. He blesses His creation (Genesis 1:28), providing for the needs of humanity and the earth. The regularity of natural cycles, seasons, and life is viewed as a result of God's ongoing care.
- **God as Moral Authority and Judge:** In the story of the Fall (Genesis 3), God gives moral commands to Adam and Eve, outlining the boundaries of human freedom. When they disobey, God acts as judge, issuing consequences for their actions. Similarly, in the story of Noah and the Flood (Genesis 6-9), God judges humanity's wickedness but also shows mercy by saving Noah's family. Genesis portrays God as both just and merciful, holding humanity accountable while providing opportunities for grace and redemption.
- **Covenantal God:** God is presented as a God of promises and covenants. He makes covenants with Noah (Genesis 9) and Abraham (Genesis 12, 15, 17), binding Himself to His people with promises of blessing, land, and descendants. This covenantal relationship reflects God's faithfulness and ongoing engagement with His creation and people.

2. Beliefs about the World

Genesis also expresses core beliefs about the nature of the world, emphasizing that it is God's creation and inherently good but affected by sin.

- **The Goodness of Creation:** Genesis repeatedly affirms the inherent goodness of the world. After each act of creation, God declares that it is "good" (Genesis 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25). When He creates humans, the culmination of creation, He declares that it is "very good" (Genesis 1:31). This underscores the belief that the material world, created by God, is fundamentally good and reflects God's wisdom and design.
- **The World as Ordered and Purposeful:** The orderly progression of creation in Genesis 1- from light and darkness, to the separation of land and water, to the filling of the earth with plants, animals, and humans - reflects a belief that the world is structured and purposeful. This counters ancient worldviews that saw the universe as chaotic or capricious, emphasizing instead that creation operates according to divine laws and order.
- **Creation's Role in God's Plan:** The world is portrayed as a stage for God's redemptive activity. The land, seas, animals, and all living things are created to sustain life and provide a context for humanity to fulfil their divine calling. The land promised to Abraham and his descendants later in Genesis is central to God's plan for salvation and restoration, pointing to the importance of the physical world in God's covenantal purposes.
- **The Effect of Sin on the World:** Despite its original goodness, the world is impacted by sin after the Fall (Genesis 3). The ground is cursed, leading to toil and hardship for humanity. The introduction of death, suffering, and moral evil into the world marks a distortion of the original order, but Genesis also hints at future restoration through God's promises and covenant.

3. Beliefs about Human Beings

Genesis provides profound insights into the nature, role, and destiny of human beings. These beliefs have shaped Judeo-Christian views on human dignity, purpose, and moral responsibility.

- **Humans Created in the Image of God (Imago Dei):** One of the most significant theological statements in Genesis is that humans are created "in the image of God" (Genesis 1:26-27). This means that humans are uniquely reflective of God's nature and character in ways that other creatures are not. Being made in God's image implies:
 - Dignity and Value: Every human being has intrinsic worth because they bear God's image.
 - Rationality and Morality: Humans have the capacity for reason, creativity, and moral decision-making, reflecting God's wisdom and righteousness.

- Relational Capacity: Just as God is relational (seen in the divine dialogue in Genesis), humans are created to be in relationship with God and each other.
- **Humans as Stewards of Creation:** In Genesis 1:28, God commands humans to "fill the earth and subdue it," giving them dominion over the animals and the land. This expresses the belief that humans have a God-given role as stewards or caretakers of creation. They are meant to cultivate and care for the earth, using their abilities to bring order and flourishing to the world.
- **Human Freedom and Moral Responsibility:** The story of Adam and Eve in Genesis 3 reveals that humans have free will, with the ability to choose obedience to God or rebellion. This freedom carries moral responsibility, as seen when Adam and Eve disobey God's command and face the consequences of their actions. The Fall introduces the concept of sin—alienation from God—and its effects on human nature and the world.
- **The Complexity of Human Nature:** Genesis portrays humans as complex beings capable of both great good and great evil. Cain's murder of Abel (Genesis 4) demonstrates the capacity for violence and jealousy, while figures like Noah, Abraham, and Joseph exhibit faith, courage, and obedience. This dual capacity for good and evil reflects the tension between humans' divine image-bearing nature and their fallen state after the Fall.
- **God's Relationship with Humanity:** Despite human sin, Genesis reveals God's enduring desire to relate to and redeem humanity. God seeks out Adam and Eve after their sin, makes a covenant with Noah after the Flood, and calls Abraham to be the father of a chosen people. This ongoing interaction reveals God's love, mercy, and plan for human restoration.

Conclusion

Genesis expresses profound beliefs about God as the sovereign Creator and moral authority, the world as a good but fallen creation, and human beings as dignified, image-bearing creatures with moral responsibility. It sets the stage for understanding God's ongoing relationship with humanity and the rest of creation, emphasizing themes of covenant, redemption, and hope despite the effects of sin. These theological truths have shaped Jewish and Christian views on the nature of reality, human purpose, and the divine plan for history.

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.

In theological terms, sin is understood as a willful disobedience or rebellion against God's divine law, and its consequences are far-reaching, affecting not only the individual but also their relationships with God, other people, and the created world. Here's an explanation using theological vocabulary:

1. Sin and the Relationship with God (Theological Alienation)

- **The Fall:** The doctrine of *original sin* refers to the first act of disobedience by Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3). This act of sin resulted in the *Fall* of humanity, which ruptured the intimate and harmonious relationship between humanity and God.
- **Separation from God:** Sin results in *alienation* from God. Theologically, this alienation is often described as a form of spiritual death, where the sinner becomes estranged from the source of life, God Himself. This breach of communion with God is characterized by shame, fear, and guilt, as seen when Adam and Eve hide from God after eating the forbidden fruit (Genesis 3:8-10).
- **Loss of Original Justice:** In *Catholic theology*, the original state of humanity in Eden is described as *original justice*, where Adam and Eve lived in perfect harmony with God. Sin disrupts this state, leading to the loss of *sanctifying grace*, which is the grace that allowed humans to live in communion with God.

- **Divine Wrath and Judgment:** Sin also brings about God's *wrath*, a theological term that refers to God's righteous judgment against sin. However, God's judgment is not just punitive but also redemptive, offering the possibility of reconciliation through grace.

2. Sin and the Relationship with Others (Anthropological and Social Consequences)

- **Fracture of Human Relationships:** Sin introduces conflict, jealousy, and violence into human relationships. This is seen in the story of *Cain and Abel* (Genesis 4), where Cain's sin of envy leads to the first murder. Theologically, sin damages the unity of the human family, leading to what can be called *relational alienation* or *social fragmentation*.
- **Loss of Communion:** Humanity, created to live in a state of *communion*, which refers to deep interpersonal fellowship rooted in love and respect, is fractured by sin. Sin leads to selfishness, pride, and the breakdown of mutual love, resulting in estrangement between individuals and communities.
- **Injustice and Oppression:** On a broader societal level, sin manifests as *structural sin* or *social sin*. These are collective forms of sin that pervade institutions and cultures, leading to systemic injustice, inequality, and oppression. Examples include racism, economic exploitation, and war—sins that distort God's intention for human community.
- **The Need for Reconciliation:** The Bible and Christian tradition emphasize that sin's impact on human relationships can only be healed through *reconciliation*, which involves repentance, forgiveness, and restoration of right relationships. Christ's work of redemption is central to this reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:18-19), healing not only the vertical relationship with God but also the horizontal relationships between people.

3. Sin and the Relationship with Creation (Ecological Disharmony)

- **Cosmic Disorder:** Theologically, sin disrupts not only human relationships but also the order of the natural world. This is seen in the *curse of the ground* in Genesis 3:17-19, where the ground becomes resistant to human efforts and brings forth thorns and thistles. This reflects an *ecological alienation*, where the harmonious relationship between humanity and creation is damaged.
- **Human Dominion Corrupted:** Prior to sin, humanity was given *dominion* over creation (Genesis 1:28) as stewards of God's creation, tasked with caring for and cultivating it. However, sin corrupts this dominion, turning it into exploitation and abuse of the environment. Theologically, this is understood as a failure to fulfil the vocation of *stewardship*, leading to environmental degradation and the exploitation of natural resources.
- **Groaning of Creation:** In *Pauline theology*, creation itself is said to be affected by human sin. In Romans 8:19-22, Paul describes creation as "groaning" and longing for the ultimate redemption of humanity. This passage reflects the idea that the entire cosmos is subject to corruption and decay as a result of sin, awaiting liberation.
- **Ecological Sin:** Modern theological discussions, particularly within the framework of *eco-theology*, refer to *ecological sin* as the sin of harming the environment and neglecting humanity's responsibility to care for creation. This form of sin disrupts the balance and harmony of God's creation and is a reflection of humanity's alienation from both God and nature.

4. Redemption and Restoration

- **Atonement and Reconciliation:** Christian theology teaches that the effects of sin—whether they concern the relationship with God, other humans, or creation—can only be healed through the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. The **atonement** is the act by which Christ, through His death and resurrection, reconciles humanity to God, overcoming the alienation caused by sin (Romans 5:10). This **atoning sacrifice** (1 John 2:2) is central to restoring relationships at all levels.
- **Sanctification and Transformation:** In the process of **sanctification**, believers are gradually conformed to the image of Christ, restoring their relationship with God and enabling them to live in love and harmony with others and creation. Sanctification is the gradual healing of the effects of sin and the restoration of **shalom**, the Hebrew word for peace and wholeness, in all relationships.
- **New Creation:** Ultimately, Christian eschatology looks forward to a time when all of creation will be restored. Revelation 21:1-5 speaks of a **new heaven and a new earth**, where God will dwell with humanity, and the effects of sin will be completely undone. This hope for **new creation** reflects the belief that God's plan includes not just the redemption of humanity but the renewal of all creation.

Conclusion

In theological terms, sin is understood as a profound distortion of relationships—between humanity and God (**theological alienation**), between people (**relational alienation**), and between humanity and the created world (**ecological disharmony**). Sin's pervasive effects are counteracted by God's redemptive work in Christ, which seeks to restore these broken relationships through **atonement**, **reconciliation**, and the promise of a renewed creation. Through repentance, sanctification, and the pursuit of justice and stewardship, believers participate in the healing of these fractured relationships.

Session 4	
Learning Focus	HEAR / BELIEVE 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. Make links with the beginning of John's Gospel. (John 1:1-5, 16-18)
Recall and Retrieval	Use your knowledge organiser to quiz your peer on the religious vocabulary taught so far.
Sequence of knowledge throughout the lesson	Key knowledge Pupils will know: Know that St John lets his readers know that in Jesus, nothing less than a new Creation is beginning. Know that in Jesus, God restored humanity's relationship with him.
Key skills/disciplinary knowledge	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.

Explain the Christian belief that in Jesus a new covenant is made and through Him, the relationship with God can be restored. Make links with the beginning of John's Gospel. (John 1:1-5, 16-18)

The Christian belief that in Jesus a new covenant is made and through Him the relationship with God is restored is central to the understanding of Christ's mission and identity. This new covenant, established through Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, fulfills and surpasses the old covenant made with Israel, restoring humanity's broken relationship with God. The beginning of John's Gospel (John 1:1-5, 16-18) emphasizes the divine nature of Jesus and His role in reconciling humanity with God, directly linking Him to this new covenant.

1. The New Covenant in Jesus

- **Covenant and Salvation History:** In the Bible, a *covenant* is a sacred agreement between God and humanity. In the Old Testament, God made covenants with Noah, Abraham, Moses, and David, each expressing different aspects of God's relationship with His people. However, these covenants were often marked by human failure, as sin repeatedly damaged the relationship between God and humanity. The *new covenant* promised in Jeremiah 31:31-34 anticipated a future, deeper covenant where God would write His law on human hearts and forgive their sins fully.
- **Jesus as the Mediator of the New Covenant:** Christians believe that this new covenant was realized in Jesus Christ. Unlike the old covenant, which required continual sacrifices and adherence to the law, the new covenant is based on Jesus' once-for-all sacrifice on the cross. In Jesus, humanity's sins are forgiven, and a permanent restoration of the relationship with God is made possible. Jesus is described as the *mediator* of this new covenant (Hebrews 9:15), meaning that through Him, humanity is reconciled to God.
- **Restoration of Relationship:** Sin, as discussed in Christian theology, created a profound *alienation* between humanity and God, starting from the Fall in Genesis 3. Jesus, as the *Messiah* and *Savior*, bridges this gap. Through His death, Jesus atones for sin, and His resurrection brings the possibility of eternal life with God. In this way, Jesus restores the original harmony between God and humanity, which was lost through sin.

2. John 1:1-5 – Jesus as the Divine Word (Logos)

- **“In the beginning was the Word”:** The opening of John’s Gospel echoes the language of Genesis 1:1, indicating that Jesus (the *Word* or *Logos*) is eternal and was present at the creation of the world. This emphasizes the divine nature of Christ. Jesus is not merely a prophet or a moral teacher but the very *Word of God*, who was with God and was God from the beginning. This underscores that Jesus is the means through which God communicates and reveals Himself fully to humanity.
- **Creation and Re-Creation:** John 1:3 states, "Through Him all things were made," showing that Jesus, as the Logos, was involved in the original creation of the world. However, because sin entered the world and disrupted the relationship between God and creation, Jesus' coming into the world marks a new beginning—a *re-creation*. The *light* in John 1:4-5 represents this life-giving and illuminating power of Jesus, who dispels the darkness of sin and death, restoring humanity to its intended relationship with God.
- **Jesus as the Source of Life and Light:** John 1:4 declares, "In Him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind." This life and light refer not only to physical creation but also to spiritual renewal. Jesus brings life in its fullest sense—eternal life—and His light reveals truth, enabling people to come out of spiritual darkness and into the light of God’s presence. This is directly linked to the new covenant, where God’s law and presence are internalized in the hearts of believers (Jeremiah 31:33).

3. John 1:16-18 – Grace and Truth through Jesus Christ

- **“From His fullness we have all received, grace upon grace”:** In these verses, John introduces a key theme of Christian theology: the concept of *grace*. Unlike the law, which was given through Moses, grace and truth come through Jesus Christ (John 1:17). Grace refers to God’s unmerited favour, the free gift of salvation offered through Jesus. Under the new covenant, the relationship with God is not based on human effort or the ability to keep the law perfectly, but on God’s grace, made manifest in Jesus.
- **Jesus as the Full Revelation of God:** John 1:18 states, "No one has ever seen God; but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known." Here, Jesus is presented as the full revelation of God. In the old covenant, God’s will was revealed through the law and the prophets, but in the new covenant, God reveals Himself fully in Jesus. The Greek term for "made him known" (*exēgeomai*) indicates that Jesus *explains* or *interprets* God to humanity. This implies that in Jesus, people encounter the fullness of God’s truth and grace, restoring the broken relationship with God.
- **The Incarnation and Mediation:** The *Incarnation*—God becoming human in Jesus Christ—makes the new covenant possible. Jesus, as fully divine and fully human, mediates between God and humanity. His role as the *God-man* allows Him to both represent humanity before God and bring God’s grace and truth to humanity. By becoming human, Jesus identifies with human weakness and sin, but as God, He offers a perfect sacrifice that heals the alienation caused by sin.

4. Theological Significance of the New Covenant

- **A Covenant of Grace:** The new covenant contrasts with the *old covenant* made with Israel at Sinai, which was based on the law and required sacrifices for the atonement of sin. Under the new covenant, Christ's sacrificial death replaces the need for ongoing sacrifices, fulfilling the law and offering a path to God through faith in Him. This is why Christian theology refers to this as a *covenant of grace*—the unmerited favour of God that brings salvation through Jesus.
- **Adoption into God's Family:** Through the new covenant, believers are not only reconciled to God but are also adopted into God's family (Romans 8:15-17). This restored relationship is one of intimacy and closeness, where believers can call God "Father" and live as His children, sharing in the life and love that Jesus shares with the Father (John 17:21-23)
- **Eternal Life and Restoration:** The new covenant is not merely about forgiveness of sins; it promises *eternal life* and a restored relationship with God that begins in this life and continues into eternity. In Christ, believers are given a new heart, a new identity, and a new destiny, fully reconciled to God and destined for eternal communion with Him (John 3:16).

Conclusion

The Christian belief that Jesus establishes a new covenant is rooted in the understanding that Jesus, as the divine *Logos*, fully reveals God and restores the broken relationship between God and humanity. In John's Gospel, Jesus is described as the source of life and light, offering grace and truth that surpasses the old covenant. Through His Incarnation, death, and resurrection, Jesus mediates a new relationship with God—one not based on the law but on grace, enabling believers to be reconciled with God and enjoy eternal life. This new covenant fulfils God's promises, offering complete restoration of the relationship damaged by sin.

Session 5	
Learning Focus	BELIEVE / CELEBRATE 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. Make links with the Nicene Creed Explain some Christian beliefs about the Sacrament of Baptism.
Recall and Retrieval	What type of literary form would you describe John's Gospel prologue to be? Explain why
Sequence of knowledge throughout the lesson	Key knowledge Pupils will know: Know that Baptism is the first Sacrament of the forgiveness of sins. Know that Baptism unites Christians with Jesus Christ, who dies and rises, and strengthens the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Know the symbols in the Sacrament of Baptism that point to a Christian's new life in Christ. Know the Church teaches that the Nicene Creed allows all believers to make a common statement of their faith.
Key skills/disciplinary knowledge	U6.1.4. Explain some Christian beliefs about the Sacrament of Baptism. 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.

Session 6	
Learning Focus	LIVE Describe the work of a Christian or Catholic scientist who has contributed to the scientific understanding of the beginnings of the universe (e.g., Lemaitre)
Recall and Retrieval	What do you already know about the Big Bang Theory?
Sequence of knowledge throughout the lesson	Key knowledge Pupils will know: Know that many scientists are Christians and they do not see any conflict between their faith and science. Know that belief in God as source of the universe is compatible with the scientific account of the beginnings of the universe and the theory of evolution.
Key skills/disciplinary knowledge	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.

What is the Big Bang Theory?

The Big Bang Theory is the leading explanation for the origin and evolution of the universe. It posits that the universe began approximately 13.8 billion years ago from an extremely hot and dense state and has been expanding ever since.

Key points of the theory include:

- **Initial Singularity:** The universe started from a singular point, where all matter and energy were concentrated.
- **Expansion:** After the initial explosion, the universe began to expand rapidly. This expansion continues today, with galaxies moving away from each other.
- **Cosmic Microwave Background (CMB):** As the universe expanded and cooled, it allowed for the formation of atoms. The leftover radiation from this early stage is detectable today as the CMB, a faint glow permeating the universe.
- **Nucleosynthesis:** In the first few minutes after the Big Bang, nuclear reactions produced the light elements, primarily hydrogen and helium.
- **Formation of Structures:** Over billions of years, matter clumped together under gravity, leading to the formation of stars, galaxies, and larger structures.

The Big Bang Theory is supported by various lines of evidence, including the observed redshift of distant galaxies, the abundance of light elements, and the CMB. It's a cornerstone of modern cosmology and our understanding of the universe's history.

Describe the work of Fr Georges Lemaitre and his contribution to the scientific understandings of the beginnings of the universe

Father Georges Lemaître was a Belgian priest, physicist, and astronomer who made significant contributions to our understanding of the universe's origins. His key contributions include:

- **Lemaître's Hypothesis:** In 1927, Lemaître proposed that the universe is expanding, a revolutionary idea at the time. He suggested that if the universe is expanding now, it must have originated from a single point, which he referred to as the "primeval atom" or "cosmic egg."

- **Mathematical Framework:** Lemaître derived solutions to Einstein's equations of general relativity, showing that a dynamic, expanding universe was possible. This mathematical framework laid the groundwork for what would later become known as the Big Bang Theory.
- **Cosmic Expansion:** Lemaître's ideas predated Edwin Hubble's observations of redshifted galaxies, which later provided observational evidence for an expanding universe. Lemaître's work was pivotal in conceptualizing the implications of such observations.
- **Integration of Science and Faith:** As a Catholic priest, Lemaître was also known for his efforts to reconcile scientific findings with religious beliefs. He argued that the scientific understanding of the universe's beginnings does not conflict with the theological view of creation.
- **Influence on Cosmology:** Lemaître's ideas laid the foundation for modern cosmology. His work influenced many subsequent scientists, including those involved in developing the Big Bang Theory and understanding cosmic microwave background radiation.

Overall, Georges Lemaître's contributions were crucial in shaping our understanding of the universe's beginnings and integrating scientific and philosophical perspectives on the cosmos.

Explain how Catholics interpret the creation stories in Genesis in light of the Big Bang Theory and the Theory of Evolution

Catholics interpret the creation stories in Genesis in various ways, especially in light of the Big Bang Theory and the Theory of Evolution. Here are some key points that reflect this interpretation:

- **Allegorical Interpretation:** Many Catholics view the Genesis creation narratives as allegorical rather than literal accounts. They see these stories as conveying deeper spiritual truths about God, humanity, and the relationship between the Creator and creation, rather than precise scientific descriptions.
- **Theological Context:** The Catholic Church teaches that God is the ultimate creator of the universe. The Big Bang Theory and the Theory of Evolution are seen as mechanisms through which God brought about creation. This perspective allows for the belief that faith and reason can coexist, with scientific explanations providing insight into how God's creative action unfolds.
- **Acceptance of Science:** The Catholic Church has largely embraced scientific discoveries, including the Big Bang and evolution, acknowledging that they do not contradict the belief in divine creation. Pope John Paul II, for example, affirmed evolution as "more than a hypothesis" and emphasized the compatibility of faith and science.
- **Special Creation of Humanity:** While accepting evolutionary processes, many Catholics believe in a special act of creation for humanity. This view holds that humans possess a unique spiritual soul, which is directly created by God, distinguishing them from other forms of life.
- **Ongoing Dialogue:** The Church encourages ongoing dialogue between science and faith. Various Catholic theologians and scientists continue to explore how the findings of modern science can enhance and enrich understanding of the creation narratives and God's role in the universe.

Overall, many Catholics see the creation stories in Genesis as complementary to scientific understandings of the universe, focusing on the spiritual truths rather than conflicting with scientific explanations.

Explain how God as source of the universe is compatible with the scientific account of the beginnings of the universe and the theory of evolution

The idea of God as the source of the universe can be seen as compatible with scientific accounts of the universe's beginnings, such as the Big Bang Theory, and the Theory of Evolution in several ways:

- **Different Questions:** Science and theology often address different kinds of questions. Science focuses on how things happen (mechanisms and processes), while theology addresses why things exist (purpose and meaning). The Big Bang explains how the universe expanded from an initial singularity, while theological perspectives explore the implications of that event as an act of divine creation.
- **God as Initiator:** Many believers view the Big Bang as God's method of creating the universe. The initial explosion can be seen as the moment God chose to bring the universe into existence, aligning scientific understanding with the belief in a purposeful Creator.
- **Natural Processes:** The Theory of Evolution describes how life develops and diversifies over time through natural processes like natural selection. Many religious perspectives, including Catholicism, hold that God works through these processes, guiding creation in a way that does not negate divine involvement. This allows for the acceptance of evolution as a means by which God shapes life on Earth.
- **Complementarity:** The scientific account of the universe's beginnings and evolution can be seen as complementary to theological narratives. For example, the idea that the universe has a beginning resonates with the notion of creation ex nihilo (creation from nothing), which is a fundamental belief in many religious traditions.
- **Moral and Spiritual Dimensions:** While science explains the physical mechanisms of the universe, it does not address questions of meaning, purpose, or morality. The belief in God provides a framework for understanding these dimensions, allowing individuals to find purpose in their existence and a moral compass that transcends purely scientific explanations.
- **Open to Discovery:** Many religious believers view science as a way to explore and understand God's creation more deeply. This perspective encourages curiosity and appreciation for the natural world, fostering a dialogue between faith and reason.

In summary, the compatibility of God as the source of the universe with scientific accounts hinges on the understanding that both realms can coexist and enrich one another. This allows for a holistic view that appreciates the complexities of existence while affirming the role of a divine Creator.

Session 7	
Learning Focus	LIVE 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. Recognise that many scientists are Christians and they do not see any conflict between their faith and science
Recall and Retrieval	What can you recall about the Catholic scientist, Lemaitre?
Sequence of knowledge throughout the lesson	Key knowledge Pupils will know: Know that belief in God as source of the universe is compatible with the scientific account of the beginnings of the universe and the theory of evolution.
Key skills/disciplinary knowledge	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.

How can the discoveries of science can lead to a deeper appreciation of the greatness of God and God's love for all creation?

Scientific discoveries can lead to a deeper appreciation of God's greatness and love for creation in several meaningful ways:

- **Wonder and Awe:** The complexity and intricacy of the universe—ranging from the vastness of galaxies to the microscopic details of life—can inspire a sense of wonder. This awe often leads to reflections on the creativity and intelligence of a divine Creator, fostering a deeper reverence for God's work.
- **Interconnectedness of Creation:** Scientific insights into ecosystems, evolution, and the interconnectedness of life can highlight the intricate web of creation. Understanding how all living beings depend on one another can enhance appreciation for God's design and love, emphasizing the value of each creature.
- **Natural Laws and Order:** The discovery of natural laws governing the universe—such as gravity, the laws of thermodynamics, and the principles of biology—can be seen as reflections of God's order and reliability. This sense of order can foster trust in God's governance of creation and enhance faith.
- **Beauty in Complexity:** Scientific exploration often reveals stunning beauty in natural phenomena, from the patterns of a snowflake to the spiral arms of galaxies. This beauty can evoke a sense of God's love for creation, as it reflects divine creativity and artistry.
- **Human Capacity for Knowledge:** The human ability to understand and explore the universe can be seen as a gift from God. This intellectual pursuit allows people to engage with creation meaningfully and to appreciate the depth of God's creation, highlighting the relationship between humanity and the divine.
- **Ethical Implications:** Scientific discoveries, particularly regarding environmental issues, can prompt a sense of stewardship and responsibility toward creation. Recognizing the delicate balance of ecosystems can deepen the understanding of God's love for all life and the call to care for the Earth.

- **Unity of Truth:** Many believers find that scientific truths and theological truths ultimately point to the same reality—God's presence in and through creation. This unity can reinforce faith, showing that both science and religion seek to understand the same world.
- **Exploration of Human Nature:** Discoveries in fields like psychology, neuroscience, and genetics can illuminate aspects of human nature, prompting reflection on the uniqueness of humanity as created in the image of God. This understanding can deepen the appreciation of God's love for each individual.

In summary, scientific discoveries can enrich spiritual understanding by revealing the intricacies and beauty of creation, fostering a sense of wonder and connection to the divine, and encouraging ethical stewardship of the world. This interplay between science and faith can lead to a profound appreciation of God's greatness and love for all creation.

How might a 10-year-old reflect on this?

A 10-year-old might reflect on the relationship between science and faith in a more personal and relatable way. Here's how they might think about it:

- **Wonder of Nature:** They could marvel at things like the stars, animals, and plants. They might say, "Isn't it amazing how big the universe is? It makes me think that God created all this because He loves us."
- **Cool Science Facts:** They might enjoy learning about cool science facts, like how rainbows form or how trees grow. They could connect this by saying, "God must be really clever to make everything work together like this!"
- **Life and Ecosystems:** A child might notice how everything in nature seems connected, like how bees help flowers grow. They could reflect, "It's like God made a big team where everything helps each other."
- **Exploring the World:** They could feel excited when doing science experiments or exploring outside. They might think, "When I discover something new, it feels like I'm learning about what God made."
- **Feeling of Care:** If they learn about taking care of the environment, they might say, "We should help take care of the Earth because God created it and loves all the animals and plants."
- **Questions About Life:** A child might wonder about their place in the world. They might think, "If God made everything, then I must be special too. God loves me just like He loves all the other things He created."
- **Stories and Creation:** They could relate stories from the Bible about creation to what they learn in science class. They might say, "Maybe the story of creation is telling us that God made everything really special, just like scientists discover how things work."

Overall, a 10-year-old might express their thoughts through excitement, curiosity, and a sense of connection to both the natural world and their understanding of God.

Session 8	
Learning Focus	LIVE 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.
Recall and Retrieval	(pre-teach) What does it mean to have equality in our community? What does it mean to treat humans with dignity?
Sequence of knowledge throughout the lesson	Key knowledge Pupils will know: Know that some sin is social and embedded in social structures. Know that human dignity and equality link with the protected characteristics. Know that community and human dignity are Catholic Social Teaching principles.
Key skills/disciplinary knowledge	R6.1.1. Considering 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.

Explain what it means to say that some sin is social and embedded in social structures

In a Catholic perspective, when we talk about "social sin" and how it is "embedded in social structures," we are referring to the idea that some sinful actions and attitudes are not just individual choices but are part of broader systems and institutions that can perpetuate injustice and harm.

Here are some key points to explain this concept:

- **Definition of Social Sin:** Social sin refers to the collective sins that arise from social structures, policies, and cultural practices. These sins can create environments that foster injustice, inequality, and exploitation, impacting groups and communities rather than just individuals.
- **Embedded in Structures:** Some sins become institutionalized within societies, such as systemic racism, poverty, or environmental degradation. These structures may operate in ways that disadvantage certain groups and benefit others, making it difficult for individuals to escape their consequences.
- **Personal Responsibility:** While social sin involves collective dynamics, Catholics believe that individuals still bear some responsibility for their participation in these systems. People can either uphold these injustices through their actions or work towards justice and healing.
- **Call to Action:** The Church teaches that Christians are called to confront and challenge social sin. This includes advocating for social justice, supporting policies that promote the common good, and working to transform unjust structures into ones that reflect God's love and justice.
- **Solidarity:** The Catholic principle of solidarity emphasizes the interconnectedness of all people. Recognizing social sin encourages individuals to see how their actions impact others and to work together towards healing and justice.
- **Dignity of the Human Person:** The Catholic Church teaches that every person has inherent dignity. Social sins often violate this dignity, so addressing them is seen as a moral imperative. Efforts to combat social sin aim to restore dignity and promote the well-being of all.
- **Examples of Social Sin:** Examples might include systemic poverty, discrimination, war, and environmental destruction. These issues require collective action and systemic change rather than just individual repentance.

In summary, the concept of social sin in Catholicism emphasizes the importance of recognizing how individual actions are influenced by and contribute to broader societal issues. It calls for both personal and communal responsibility in working towards justice and love in society.

How does the concept of human dignity and equality link to the protected characteristics?

The concept of human dignity and equality is deeply intertwined with the idea of protected characteristics, which refer to specific attributes or identities that are legally safeguarded against discrimination. Here's how these concepts are linked:

- **Intrinsic Human Dignity:** At the core of Catholic teaching (and many ethical frameworks) is the belief that every human being possesses inherent dignity simply by being human. This dignity is universal and unearned, meaning it applies to all individuals regardless of their characteristics.
- **Equality Before the Law:** The principle of equality asserts that all people should be treated equally and fairly. Protected characteristics—such as race, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, and religion—are recognized to ensure that individuals are not discriminated against based on these aspects of their identity.
- **Protection Against Discrimination:** Laws that protect specific characteristics aim to uphold human dignity by preventing discrimination and ensuring that everyone has the same opportunities and rights. This reflects the belief that all individuals are worthy of respect and should be able to participate fully in society.
- **Promoting Justice:** Recognizing and protecting these characteristics is a way to promote social justice. When marginalized groups face discrimination, their dignity is undermined. Ensuring equality helps to rectify these injustices and supports the inherent worth of every person.
- **Respect for Diversity:** The recognition of protected characteristics acknowledges the diversity within humanity. Valuing this diversity aligns with the understanding that each person's unique attributes contribute to the richness of society and should be respected and celebrated.
- **Moral Responsibility:** From a Catholic perspective, there is a moral obligation to defend the dignity and rights of others, particularly those who may be vulnerable or oppressed. This means actively working against discrimination and advocating for policies that promote equality.
- **Unity in Humanity:** The interconnectedness of humanity means that when the dignity of one person is compromised, it affects the whole community. Upholding the rights associated with protected characteristics strengthens social cohesion and fosters an environment where all can thrive.

In summary, human dignity and equality serve as foundational principles that support the recognition of protected characteristics. By affirming the dignity of every individual and ensuring equal treatment, society can work towards a more just and inclusive world where everyone is valued and respected.

How are community and human dignity Catholic Social Teaching principles?

In Catholic Social Teaching (CST), both community and human dignity are fundamental principles that guide the Church's understanding of social justice and moral action. Here's how each principle is defined and interconnected:

1. Human Dignity

- **Intrinsic Worth:** Human dignity asserts that every person has inherent value and worth, simply by being human. This dignity comes from being created in the image and likeness of God.
- **Foundation of Rights:** The principle of human dignity serves as the basis for human rights. It underlines the need to respect and protect individuals' rights, regardless of their circumstances, identities, or beliefs.
- **Moral Responsibility:** Recognizing human dignity compels individuals and societies to act in ways that uphold and protect the dignity of others, especially the marginalized, vulnerable, and oppressed.

2. Community

- **Interconnectedness:** The principle of community emphasizes that individuals are not isolated but are part of a larger social fabric. This interconnectedness calls for a sense of responsibility toward one another.
- **Common Good:** Community involves working towards the common good, which means creating conditions that enable all members of society to flourish. This includes promoting justice, peace, and solidarity.
- **Mutual Support:** In a community, individuals support one another, sharing resources, talents, and love. This mutual support reflects the belief that everyone has a role in fostering a healthy and just society.

3. Interconnection Between Community and Human Dignity

- **Respecting Dignity in Community:** A true community respects and upholds the dignity of every member. When individuals recognize each other's dignity, it fosters a culture of respect, compassion, and solidarity.
- **Building Just Communities:** Communities that prioritize human dignity work to eliminate discrimination and injustice, ensuring that everyone has access to basic needs and opportunities for growth.
- **Empowerment and Participation:** Communities that honour human dignity encourage participation from all members, ensuring that everyone's voice is heard and valued. This empowerment is essential for social cohesion and justice.
- **Solidarity and Responsibility:** The concept of community highlights the responsibility individuals have towards one another. When one person's dignity is threatened, it affects the entire community, reinforcing the need for collective action to uphold justice and dignity for all.

Conclusion

In Catholic Social Teaching, both human dignity and community are integral principles that guide how individuals and societies should operate. By recognizing the inherent dignity of every person and fostering a sense of community, CST promotes a vision of a just and compassionate society where all can thrive and live fulfilling lives.

In what ways can the life of a 10-year-old and the life of their communities be transformed by taking seriously the belief in the innate dignity and equality of all human beings.

Taking seriously the belief in the innate dignity and equality of all human beings can significantly transform the life of a 10-year-old and their community in several meaningful ways:

1. Empathy and Understanding

- Developing Empathy: A 10-year-old who learns about the dignity of every person is more likely to empathize with others, understanding their feelings and experiences. This can lead to kinder interactions with peers and a deeper appreciation for differences.
- Inclusion: Emphasizing equality helps children appreciate diverse backgrounds, fostering friendships across various cultures, abilities, and circumstances.

2. Respectful Behaviour

- Modelling Respect: When children understand that everyone deserves respect, they are more likely to treat others kindly, whether in school, at home, or in their communities. This can reduce bullying and create a more positive environment.
- Conflict Resolution: Recognizing each person's dignity can help children approach conflicts with a mindset of understanding and resolution, rather than aggression or exclusion.

3. Community Engagement

- Active Participation: Children who are taught the importance of dignity and equality may feel empowered to participate in community service, helping those in need and working toward social justice causes. This builds a sense of agency and responsibility.
- Advocacy: Children may become advocates for their peers and community members who are marginalized, learning to speak up for fairness and justice.

4. Building Stronger Relationships

- Friendship and Solidarity: Understanding dignity fosters genuine connections among peers, as children learn to value each other's uniqueness. This sense of solidarity can lead to a supportive community where everyone feels valued.
- Family Values: When families discuss and practice these principles, children internalize the importance of treating each other with respect and kindness, strengthening family bonds.

5. Awareness of Social Issues

- Education and Awareness: As children learn about dignity and equality, they may become more aware of social issues such as poverty, discrimination, and environmental justice. This awareness can inspire them to think critically about the world around them.
- ****Service Learning****: Schools and communities can create programs that allow children to engage in service projects, fostering a commitment to helping others and understanding societal challenges.

6. Positive School Environment

- Creating a Safe Space: Schools that promote dignity and equality can cultivate an environment where all students feel safe and valued. This enhances learning and overall well-being.
- Encouraging Participation: A focus on equality encourages all students to participate, share their ideas, and feel that their contributions matter, leading to a more vibrant school community.

7. Lifelong Values

- Instilling Core Values: These beliefs can help shape a child's character and values, guiding them into adulthood with a strong commitment to justice, empathy, and service.
- Future Leaders: By nurturing these principles, children can grow into compassionate leaders who prioritize the dignity and equality of all people, contributing to positive societal change.

Conclusion

When a 10-year-old and their community embrace the belief in the innate dignity and equality of all human beings, it leads to a transformative culture of empathy, respect, and active engagement. This not only enhances individual lives but also fosters a more compassionate, inclusive, and just community.