

CREATION AND COVENANT

Knowledge organiser


Key vocabulary	
God	The one supreme being, who creates and sustains everything.
revelation	The way in which God is made known to humans, which Catholics believe is most perfectly done through Jesus.
literal sense	The meaning of the text as the author intended it to be; this is different to reading a passage literally which means accepting it as word-for-word truth.
literary form	The style of writing used, for example a letter or a poem.
creation	The act of bringing something into existence; or the universe and everything in it (which Catholics believe God created).
creationism	The belief that the Bible accounts of creation are literally true.
scientism	The belief that science can provide all of the answers in life.
prayer	The way in which humans communicate with God.
stewardship	The duty to care for something. Catholics believe that God gave them the duty to care for the earth and everything in it.

OPTIONS	
Ethical	Sustainable development is trying to live in a way which prevents harm to the environment and prevents the earth's resources running out. Catholics support sustainable development because caring for the environment is part of their duty as stewards of creation.
Lived religion	Sister Dorothy Stang worked to protect the Amazon rainforest and help bring settler farmers together to give them greater power in challenging deforestation. She did this because she believed that God gave all humans the duty to be stewards of creation.
Artistic expression	Art is often used in religion to express complicated beliefs. For example, Donald Jackson's Genesis Frontispiece , from the St John's Bible, shows the first creation story. Each column in the artwork illustrates one day of creation.

The Bible

The Bible is the holy book for Christians. It contains God's Word.

- The Old Testament** is the part of the Bible written before Jesus' life, and contains the history and faith of the Jewish people..
- The New Testament** is the part of the Bible written after Jesus' life, and contains accounts of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus and the early history and faith of the Church.




- For Christians, the Bible is a form of **revelation** as they believe it is how God speaks to them.
- Catholics believe the Bible is **inspired**, meaning the Holy Spirit guided human writers to write down the truth from God.
- Most Catholics do not read the Bible literally. Instead they aim to understand the **literal sense** of the Bible (the message that God wanted to communicate to them).

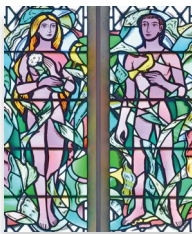
Stories from Genesis

Catholics believe that **God created all life** and everything that is created comes from God alone.

- In the **first creation story** God creates the universe and everything in it over six days; God creates using spoken word; God creates *ex nihilo* (out of nothing).
- This story teaches that **God is eternal** (exists beyond time and has no beginning or end); **transcendent** (outside of space and time); and **omnipotent** (all powerful).
- It teaches that **creation is good**.
- It teaches that **humans are created imago Dei**; they have a responsibility to be **stewards** of creation; they have been **created good**.
- Catholics interpret this as a symbolic story to help answer the questions '*Where did the world and everything in it come from?*' and '*Why are we here?*'



- In the **second creation story** God orders chaos and creates harmony; man is created by God from the earth and God breathes life into him; woman is created by God from man's rib.
- This story teaches that **God is immanent** (close to humans and acting in the world).
- It teaches that **creation is lovingly made for humans** to live together in a relationship with the world and with each other.
- It teaches that humans have a responsibility to be **stewards** of creation.
- Catholics interpret this as a symbolic story to help answer the question '*What is our purpose?*'



Scientific theories about creation

- The **Big Bang theory** says that the universe began around 15 billion years ago from a hot, dense point of energy.

- The **theory of evolution** suggests that all living things change over many generations to suit their environment, and that this happens because of natural selection.

Most Catholics are not creationists. Instead they believe there is no conflict between science and religion since **science tells us how** life exists and **religion tells us why** life exists.

How do teachings about God's role in creation impact Catholics today?

- The Catholic Church teaches that we should try to reduce human suffering and increase cooperation and friendship between all people (**Catholic Social Teaching**).
- The four core principles of Catholic Social Teaching are: the dignity of the human person, the common good, subsidiarity, and solidarity.
- Catholics believe they have a duty to care for the world and everything in it (**stewardship**).
- Pope Francis describes stewardship as responding to 'the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor' (*Laudato si*).
- Prayer** is the way in which people communicate with God. It is a response to God's **revelation**.
- When Catholics pray, they lift their hearts and minds to God. It is a way of walking with God throughout their lives.