

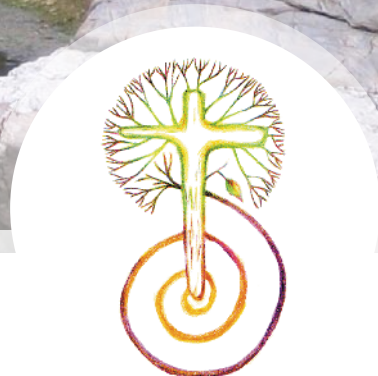
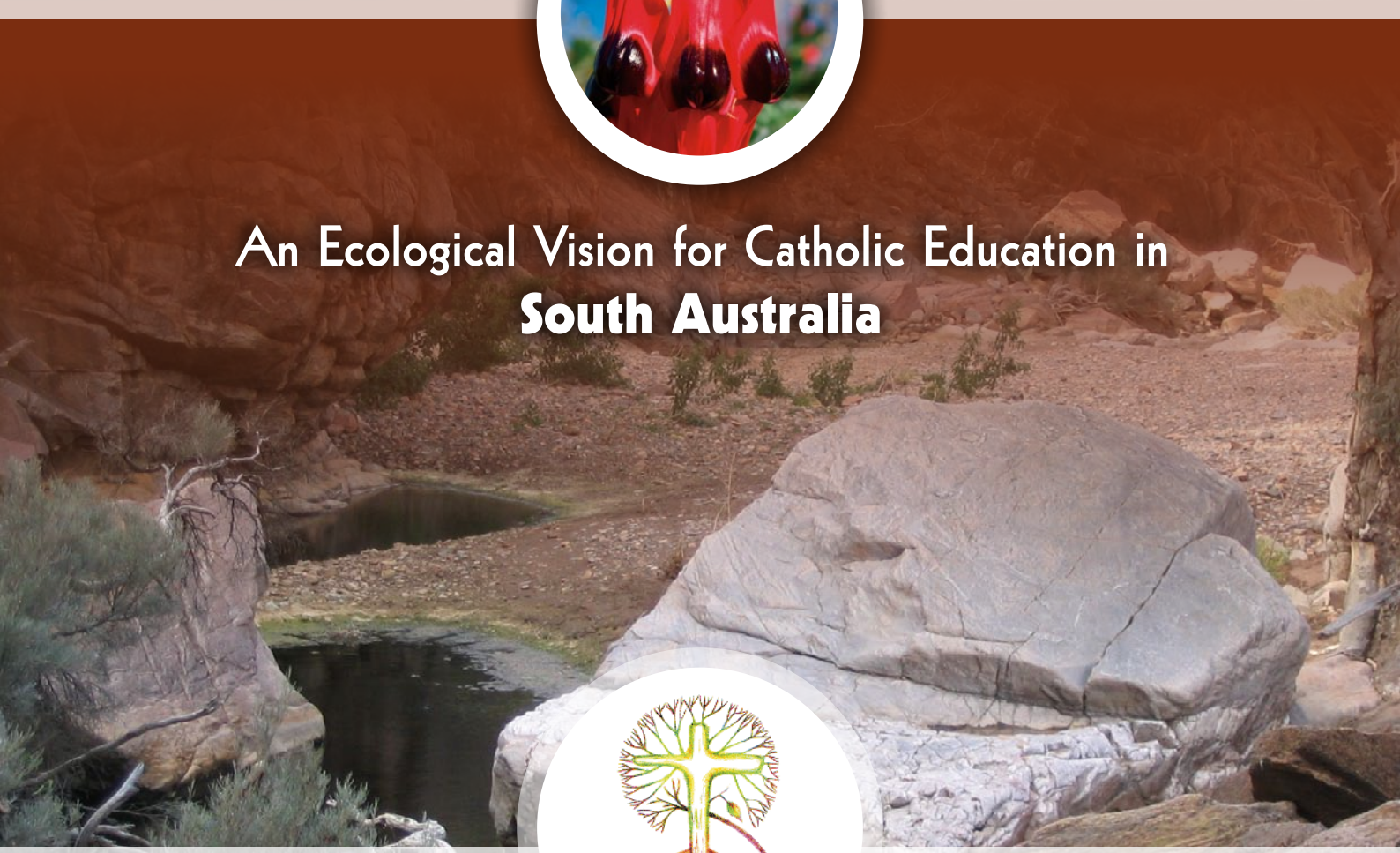
Remove the sandals from your feet ... you are standing

# On Holy GROUND

Exodus 3:5



An Ecological Vision for Catholic Education in  
**South Australia**

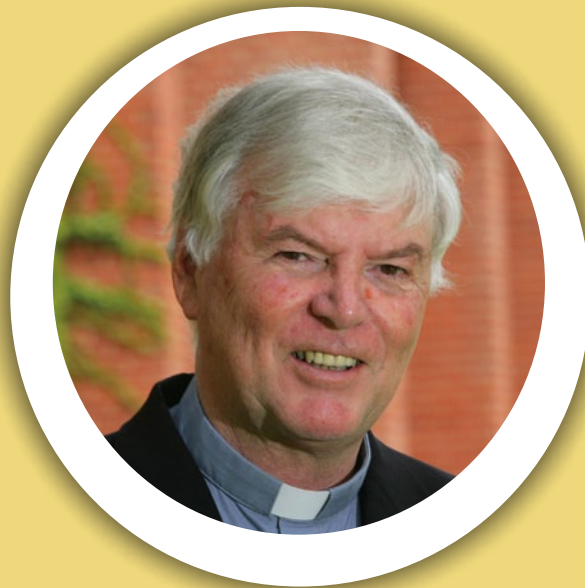


Catholic Earthcare Australia

[www.catholicearthcare.org.au](http://www.catholicearthcare.org.au)

# GREETINGS

From Archbishop Philip Wilson & Bishop Greg O'Kelly



It is time for us to reflect upon our relationship with God's creation and the great environmental challenges that we as a nation and the world are facing. In recent years, the Catholic Church in Australia has responded to many of these challenges, particularly by acknowledging their spiritual, theological, moral and humanitarian aspects. The Catholic Church, through her agency, Catholic Earthcare Australia, has produced several publications to raise community awareness of the challenges and possibilities for the environment in which we live.

Caring for God's creation and respecting our fragile ecosystems are now acknowledged as core elements of Christian social responsibility. Our Christian vocation calls us to take this responsibility seriously and to respond with appropriate action and lifestyle choices.

It is with great appreciation for all concerned that we endorse this document 'On Holy Ground' which is available to the schools of the Archdiocese of Adelaide and the Diocese of Port Pirie. Educators are key leaders in developing the 'ecological conversion' that Pope John Paul II sought. Pope Benedict has also spoken powerfully about the ecological conversion required, linking world peace with ecological harmony.

We ask our school communities to respond to the challenge presented by 'On Holy Ground.' This ecological vision document encompasses all aspects of Catholic education, from the classroom curriculum to the ethical use of resources. It provides opportunities for communities to be active participants in the call to care for the earth. However, the theological, ethical and social issues explored in this document are relevant to the whole Church. All Catholic communities are encouraged to work with this document in developing transformational and sustainable ways of living On Holy Ground.

This vision requires that all Church communities respond to the ecological challenges before us. Future generations have a right to live fully and express their humanity within a sustainable and ecologically diverse environment. Therefore we, together with all the people of planet Earth, have a responsibility to take seriously our call to care for life, a life gifted by God.

We commend this document to all members of the Catholic Church in the dioceses of Adelaide and Port Pirie, especially those working in education, for their reflection, prayer and action.

Most Rev Philip Wilson DD JCL  
Archbishop of Adelaide

Most Rev Greg O'Kelly SJ AM DD  
Bishop of Port Pirie

15 September 2010



## From the Director of Catholic Earthcare Australia

***Recent years have witnessed the development of numerous "sustainability" projects in Catholic schools including veggie gardens, frog ponds, worm farms and recycling programs. These initiatives have been led by inspirational teachers, parents and students often in response to local, national and international ecological challenges. I'd like to send a clear message to these leaders that their efforts have not gone unnoticed. Indeed, their actions both highlight the need for sustainable reform in schools and bear witness as to how we may all play our part in caring for God's Creation.***



The core business of Catholic Earthcare Australia is 'ecological conversion'. We believe that humanity has been given a particular responsibility to help protect and sustain God's Creation. We therefore find it truly inspiring to see Catholic students, teachers and parents across Australia, opening their minds, hearts and hands in response to the late Pope John Paul II's call for an "ecological conversion".

'On Holy Ground SA' is an ecological vision statement, which seeks to further stimulate this ecological awakening within the whole Catholic Church, including Catholic schools, and help guide Her towards sustainability. To facilitate such a transformation I am delighted to include in this South Australian version of On Holy Ground, ASSISI -A Strategic, Systems-based, Integrated Sustainability Initiative. ASSISI offers a formation program that aims to build a 'spirituality of communion' with Creation and Creator. The key to this approach belongs to understanding who we are as Christians and what we have been called to do while we live here on Earth. At this time, we are being called to change our lifestyles and organisations so that they are sustainable within the ecosystems where we live, work and play. In addition to this formation program ASSISI also includes practical tools. One of these tools enables organisations to measure and report on sustainability outcomes, to make sustainable decisions, and to track the steady improvements of their programs and initiatives.

We hope that On Holy Ground with the inclusion of ASSISI will assist all Catholic organisations to journey further on the path to ecological sustainability so that, over time, sustainability becomes integrated into every dimension of Catholic life.

We believe that we are called to reflect God's love through the way we live our lives on Earth. And we know that we have a unique capacity to make positive changes in the way we live that will help to grow God's kingdom on Earth. Building the kingdom in real and concrete ways is a potential in every moment. May this moment be filled with the grace of God's Holy Spirit to move you closer to God's divine presence in the beauty of Creation.

All the very best on the journey ahead from all at Catholic Earthcare Australia.

Jacqui Remond  
15th September, 2010

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# INTRODUCTION

## READING THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES



*Australians live within one of the most diverse ecosystems on the planet - the "Land of the Holy Spirit", as the first European maps recorded our ancient continent. Environmentally, it is important for us to "read the signs of the times" - "the signs of the Spirit". We have been gifted with the care of this beautiful land and must hand it on to the next generation in a healthy and pristine condition. To carry out this sacred duty expresses our love for the Creator, each other and the rest of creation. This is sometimes called our "ecological vocation".*

Australians are global citizens, widely travelled and many with access to sophisticated technology, satellite and media information. We are well aware of the environmental crises enveloping the planet. We can read the signs.

Some commentators and scientists are saying that at the present rate of degradation our planet has a very limited future.

From around the world we are receiving scientific data. The United Nations report (2005) indicates that ecologically so devastating has human impact been on Earth's ecosystems, that we have entered "terra incognita" (land unknown) - that is, a phase in the history of Earth's evolution that "humans have never experienced before".<sup>1</sup>

Like much of the planet, our own country is deteriorating environmentally. There is incontrovertible evidence that our rivers, soil, land, air and oceans are in a worse state than twenty years ago.<sup>2</sup>

Scientists tell us that we are losing species (and biodiversity) at an exponential rate.<sup>3</sup> Climate change is affecting us all.

The Federal Government's State of the Environment Report indicates that shamefully we have the highest rate of greenhouse gas emissions per capita in the developed world.<sup>4</sup>

As Christians we are called, as a matter of urgency, to address this grim reality in the context of our living out our faith, and the biblical call to be good and wise custodians of creation and of God's Earth.

The recently published Compendium of Social Doctrine of the Catholic Church reminds us that: "The common good of society is not an end in itself; it has value only in reference to attaining the ultimate ends of the person and the universal common good of the whole of creation".<sup>5</sup>

So much of our Australian economy is dependent upon the use of fossil fuels. Economic rationalism and 'market forces' are driving our fossil-fuel economy to the detriment of the common good.

Pope John Paul II has reminded us that, "the environmental crisis is not merely a technical one but a moral one", calling for radical changes "in lifestyle and unsustainable patterns of consumption and production".

Our own Catholic Bishops, have been challenging us to read these signs for the last decade. In 2002, they established Catholic Earthcare Australia and published, for distribution throughout the whole church, "A New Earth: The Environmental Challenge" as their Social Justice Statement for that year.



For many years, numerous Catholic schools have taken their ecological responsibilities seriously, devising and implementing a range of environmental initiatives within the classroom and the school environs.

In order to address the need for a uniformed Ecological Vision for all Catholic schools in South Australia, Catholic Earthcare Australia produced and actively promotes *On Holy Ground* in partnership with the Catholic Education Office South Australia.

Across Australia people are taking a stand on behalf of the environment. Schools have been amongst the forerunners. In 2005, The Australian Government published “*EDUCATING FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE, A National Environmental Statement for Australian Schools.*” This is a valuable and critical national statement.<sup>6</sup>

Educators from across many dioceses of Australia have contributed to the development of *On Holy Ground*, An Ecological Vision for Catholic Education in South Australia. This document provides an ecological model, called ASSISI, for Catholic schools in South Australia who respond to the Australian Catholic Bishops’ call for ‘ecological conversion.’



While there is a need for environmental education in all sectors of the Australian community, this booklet will serve as a recommended tool for encouraging and assisting the Catholic community in learning to live more sustainably. In the process, it is hoped that young people experience the inexhaustible love of the Creator, through the teachings and example of Jesus Christ.

We must always remember that the future is not somewhere we are going; it is something that each of us creates every day.<sup>7</sup>

As a people of faith we are today called to celebrate the splendour of God’s creation, to be good stewards of Mother Earth and to safeguard the integrity of all creation.





# AWAKENING

## AN ECOLOGICAL VISION FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

### Definition of Ecological Education

Ecological Education is a life-long process of recognising values and clarifying concepts in order to develop skills and attitudes necessary to understand and appreciate the inter-relatedness of all creation; to know of creation as a gift from God which requires equitable sharing and wise stewardship. It also entails practice in decision making for living a life that is ecologically and ethically sustainable.

### Aims & Goals of Ecological Vision

**The long-term vision for Catholic ecological education is the embedding of ecological values into school programmes and practices.**

**This is critical for:**

- Promoting ecologically sustainable development.
- Improving the capacity of people to address environmental issues.
- Effective participation in decision-making.
- Living out one's ecological vocation.

**The Goals within the Ecological Vision are:**

- To foster in learners an appreciation of creation as a gift, their relationship with it and their responsibility as co-creators for its future.
- To develop in learners the knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and commitment to initiate individual and collective responses that are environmentally responsible and reflective of their ecological vocation.
- To inspire learners to decrease their ecological footprint and increase their spiritual one, as creatures made in the image and likeness for God.

Ecological education develops in people an understanding of their role in creation as co-creators and as members of a species with a profound capacity to affect other species and the ecosystems that support life on Earth.



## Objectives of the Ecological Vision

**Through direct contact with the environment and practice in ecological decision-making, and by involvement in liturgy, prayer, justice initiatives, scripture and study, learners are able to develop:**

- A moral and spiritual response as stewards of the gift of creation.
  - An aesthetic appreciation of environments, both built and natural.
  - An understanding of the operation of natural systems and the impact of human activity on these systems.
  - Recognition of the balance between protection and use of our environmental and natural resources.
  - Skills for environmental investigation, including participation, critical analysis and evaluation.
- An informed sense of responsibility for the environment, particularly the local catchment.
  - A commitment to participate in environmental management and improvement.
  - A preference for a personal lifestyle compatible with ecological sustainability.

Effective ecological education promotes the integration of a range of disciplines and the application of the knowledge and skills from across key learning areas, especially the Religious Education curriculum of each Diocese.

A balanced approach to the development of ecological education programmes considers the principles of democratic process, individual rights and responsibilities, equitable and ecologically sustainable development.

***"For us to sit or lie on the ground is to be enabled to think more deeply and to feel more keenly: we can see more clearly into the mysteries of life and come closer in kinship to other lives around us."***

Anne Pattel-Gray Through Aboriginal Eyes: The Cry from the Wilderness,  
World Council of Churches Publications, Geneva, 1991





## Ecological Principles for Catholic Education

**The 1990 World Day of Peace Message of Pope John Paul II presented a comprehensive but concise overview of the spiritual and moral dimensions of ecological problems. From it can be drawn a set of principles for making ethical judgements about ecological issues.**

- The natural world has value in itself and not merely for its use by humans.
- The world and all in it must be freed from what can be termed a state of suffering.
- Humans are part of the created world and inextricably part of a material existence.
- Earth belongs to God and is only on loan to humans who are called to care for it.
- Human choices in their use of the Earth gives humanity a hand in forming its history, a vocation to heightened consciousness within the life of Earth.
- Ecological education provides the background for wise and moral decisions.
- There are limits to world resources and the environmental services that Earth can meet before pushing it to a new epoch.
- Excessive demands are imposed on the Earth by nations with a consumerist economy and life-style.
- Restraint, penance and self-imposed limitations are part of authentic human living and are in the tradition of choosing sacrifice for the greater good.
- The right to a safe ecological environment is a universal human right.
- The fascinating beauty and intricacy deep in the natural world has great value for the artist and for healing the human spirit and body.
- Models of development, social structure and styles of technology must integrate environmental factors if there is to be authentic development.
- Super-development, often for the purpose of economic gain, poses an additional threat to the environment.
- Political leaders at every level have a duty to administer a nation for the good of all, including its environmental goods.
- The richer nations have an obligation to dismantle structural forms of global poverty and help poorer nations experiencing social or environmental problems.
- Future generations should not be robbed or left with extra burdens for they have a claim to a just administration of the world's resources by this generation.

*"Climate Change - Our Responsibility to Sustain God's Earth", a Position Paper of the Bishops' Committee for Justice Development Ecology & Peace, Nov 2005, p11, presented at Catholic Earthcare Australia Conference, Canberra*



# DISCOVERING

## A CATHOLIC CONTEXT AND RATIONALE



*"... there are deep springs within each one of us. Within this deep spring, which is the very Spirit of God, is a sound. The sound of Deep calling to Deep. The sound is the Word of God – Jesus."*

Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr, January, 1998

God's whole creation is the context and concern of the mission of Christian people.

We must proclaim the Gospel and be a loving presence for the needy and work to transform unjust structures of our society.

Evangelisation today needs to be deepened to express an authentic commitment to care for Creation. We need to rediscover the great eco-traditions of our Church inspired by the teaching and example of Jesus Christ and lived out by his followers.

In July 2002, at the launch of Catholic Earthcare Australia, Archbishop John Bathersby stated, "The entire life of Christians is an exploration into Christ. Each generation pushes back ever so slightly the envelope of his mystery ... One of the most significant

developments in Catholic understanding of the Christian mission in more recent times is its embrace of creation in all its vitality and beauty and the need to educate people about the depth of vision demanded of those who would follow in Christ's footsteps."

Catholic educators are called to read the signs of the time, discern the movement of the Spirit, and to hear the cries of the suffering earth and its communities. **These signs are being made clear through:**





## A Call from the Earth - Our common home

***"Looking outward to the blackness of space, sprinkled with glory of lights I saw majesty but no welcome. Below was a welcoming planet. There contained in the thin, moving, incredibly fragile shell of the biosphere is everything that is dear to you, all human drama and comedy. That's where life is: that's where all the good stuff is!"***

Astronaut: Loren Acton



"The web of life on Earth is under threat from accelerated climate change. That web compares to a seamless garment and it needs the application of a consistent ethic to protect it, one that considers life now and in the future, and ranges from protection of the unborn child to cherishing the diversity of species. Life is one, and human well-being is at its base interwoven with all life on

Earth and the rhythm of its systems. The suffering of any one part means that all creation groans, and rapid global climate change dramatically displays that suffering."

"Climate Change - Our Responsibility to Sustain God's Earth", a Position Paper of the Bishops' Committee for Justice Development Ecology & Peace, November 2005, page 7

### Ecological Household Calculator



To access Catholic Earthcare's calculator go to [www.globalcarbonsystems.com/au-ce-ep](http://www.globalcarbonsystems.com/au-ce-ep) and register your details by clicking on the 'Register' tab.

Select your Diocese from the drop down list and enter the requested details such as your postcode, name, email address and password. Once you have completed the requested details click 'Save'.

Then click on the 'Login' tab and enter the email address and password you used to Register.

The calculator contains instructions on how to use it and online "Help" is available for each question.

## A Call from the Primary Custodians of our Land

***"Without land we are nothing ...  
Without land we are a lost people."***

Djon Mundine O.A.M.



***"Dreaming is not what you see or what you tell. It is what you feel and them old people give that to you, to make you feel at one with the land, with that plant, that animal, with that waterhole."***

Quentin Agius, 2007 'Sacred Land'

***"These creatures, these great creatures are just as much alive today as they were in the beginning. They are everlasting and will never die. They are always part of the land and nature as we are. We cannot change nor can they. Our connection to all things natural is spiritual."***

Silas Roberts - Chair, Northern Land Council, 1977 Ranger Enquiry



***"My mother's land can be dry and harsh. Yet every cluster of rocks, mountain, waterhole, river, cave is sacred - every feature."***

Maisie Cavanagh, 1998 Sydney



## A Call from Science



***"We have contributed to a climate system that human beings have never before experienced."***

Dr Janette Lindesay, Climatologist, Australian National University,  
Catholic Earthcare Climate Change Conference, Canberra, 19 November 2005

**"We have changed the very chemistry of the planet, we have altered the biosystem, we have changed the topography and even the geological structure of the planet, structures and functions that have taken hundreds of millions of years and even billions of years to bring into existence.**

**Such an order of change in its nature and magnitude has never before entered into Earth history or into human consciousness."**

Fr. Thomas Berry C.P.

**"Climate change will disrupt various natural systems that affect human health:**

- Regional food production.
- Constraints on infectious agents.
- Patterns of heat stress.
- Exposure to extreme weather events (fire, flood, storms, cyclones, etc.)"

Professor Tony McMichael,  
Bio-medical Scientist, Australian National University

### **Millennium Eco-systems Assessment**

"Over the past 50 years humans have changed the eco-system faster and more extensively than any period in human history ... the result ... a substantial and largely irreversible loss in the diversity of life.

The substantial gains in human well-being have been achieved at growing cost to the environment ... these problems, unless addressed, will substantially reduce the benefits that future generations get from eco-systems. This degradation of eco-system services could get significantly worse during the next 50 years.

Reversing the degradation ... is a challenge ... involving significant changes to policies, institutions and practices ... will have to be substantial when compared to the actions currently taken."

Summary of Millennium Eco-System Report, 2005,  
Compiled by 250 Scientists for the United Nations

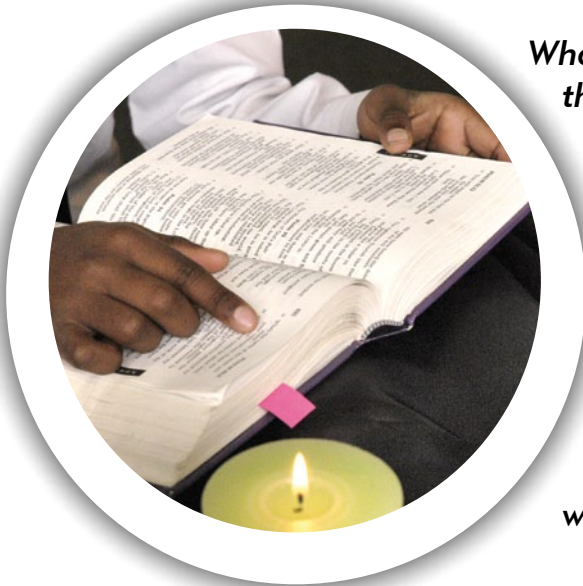
***"I can't imagine a world without whales!"***

Anna, 11 years, Greenpeace Ad



## A Biblical Call

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*What is the place of human beings in relation to the rest of creation? According to the Bible, we too are God's creatures. We are part of the inter-connected community of creation, inter-related with all other creatures. As people created in God's image we are called to work with creation, and to do so in such a way as to manifest the love and respect that God has for each creature. We are to be humble stewards before God. We are told "to cultivate and take care" of what God has gifted.*

As we reflect about this in our own context, we interpret this to mean that our special part of creation, the Australian continent, is entrusted to us by God.

We are to receive its fruitfulness as God's gift. We are called to be faithful trustees, respecting the integrity of God's creation.

This involves a call to protect the biodiversity of Australia. According to the Bible, the diversity of creation not only springs from the hand of God, but gives expression to God:

"O Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures." (Psalm 104:24)

Jesus' story, "Consider the Lilies in the Field" is but one of many teachings to lead us to deepen our understanding of God's love for us through the gift of Creation.

***God's covenant with Noah embraces all of God's diverse creatures.***

(Gen 9:12-16) The Gift of Wonder, page 8



***Christ is the visible likeness of the invisible God. He is the first-born son, superior to all created things...***

***God has created the whole universe through him and for him..***

(Col 1:15-16)



## A Call from Catholic Theology

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*There are several things we can say about creation, about God, about God's priorities, ... God is always "acting" as Creator, not just "in the beginning", but throughout cosmic history, right now and into the future. God as Creator is always enabling, empowering and calling - but not controlling - us and all the things around us into being ... Creation is unfinished - it is only being completed, moving towards full communion with God as it unfolds ... " - " we human beings have extraordinary responsibilities towards one another and towards our environment. We are in fact deeply and irretrievably embedded in Nature - not separated from it, or above it."* Fr. Bill Stoeger S.J. Catholic Earthcare Climate Change Conference, Canberra, 19 November 2005

***"... we are part of the interconnected community of creation, inter-related with all other creatures ..."***

Fr. Denis Edwards Catholic Earthcare Climate Change Conference, Canberra, 19 November 2005



***"The Earth which sustains humanity must not be injured, it must not be destroyed."***

Hildegard of Bingen

Some of the greatest theologians of the church have meditated on the diversity of creatures and have seen this as expressing the abundance of the Trinitarian God. According to St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Bonaventure, the diversity of species represents the wonder and beauty of God that transcends any one creature. God's creatures express and represent the Trinity. They are not simply there for human use, but have their own dignity, value and integrity. Such a view challenges the destruction of species and their habitats in the modern era.

As we ponder this ... we see the rivers and all their birds, fish and animals as creatures that emerge and are sustained by God's ongoing creation. The loving act of ongoing creation has enabled them to flourish in this place. They are part of a story of ongoing creation that takes place over millions of years.

They are God's gift to us. They can communicate something of God to us. We are called to care for them, as fellow creatures before God and as loving and wise stewards of God's creation.

"The Gift of Water" Statement - 2004,  
Catholic Earthcare Australia.

## A Eucharistic Call *All creation rightly gives you praise.* 3rd Eucharistic Prayer



***"The Eucharist provides the movement of the cosmos with its direction; it anticipates its goal and at the same time urges it on."***

Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, San Francisco, 2002

Pope John Paul II urged Catholics to see that  
***"The Eucharist is celebrated in order to offer  
'on the altar of the whole Earth the world's  
weak and suffering'."***

(in the beautiful words of Teilhard de Chardin) Gift and Mystery, 1995



***"We need to appreciate all over again that the whole universe is  
a sacrament, vivified by the presence of the Creator Spirit."***

Sr. Elizabeth Johnson, R.S.J.

***"Knowingly destroying the living systems  
of our planet amounts to a denial of  
what we celebrate when we gather for  
Eucharist. Eucharist is a sacrament of the  
Risen Christ transforming creation. 'The  
Christ we encounter in the Eucharist is  
the risen one in whom all things were  
created and are reconciled' (Col. 1:15-  
20); 'to gather up all things in Him'  
(Eph. 1:10). In every Eucharist we are  
taken up into God. We participate in the  
divine Communion."***

Fr. Dennis Edwards, Catholic Earthcare Climate Change  
Conference, Canberra, 19 November 2005

***"We participate in this transformation in  
Christ. The most intense moment of our  
Communion with God is at the same  
time an intense moment of our  
communion with the Earth."***

Fr. Tony Kelly C.S.S.R.

***"The culture created by the living ethos  
of a vibrant Christian community centred  
on the Eucharist, offers, the most  
powerful long-term resource for  
ecological commitment."***

Sr. Pat Fox R.S.N. (Quoting John Zizioulas)

## A Papal Call



*The Church has a responsibility towards creation and she must assert this responsibility in the public sphere. In so doing, she must defend not only earth, water and air as gifts of creation that belong to everyone. She must above all protect mankind from self-destruction.*

Pope Benedict XVI, Caritas Inveritate

Pope John Paul II for many years drew attention to the environmental crises facing humanity. In his 1990 New Year Message, he stated:

***"Christians, in particular, realise that responsibility within creation and their duty towards nature and the Creator, are an essential part of their faith."***



Nine years later, in his 1999 New Year Message, Pope John Paul II warned that "the danger of serious damage to land and sea, and to the climate, flora and fauna, calls for a profound change in modern society's typical consumer life-style, particularly in the richer countries".

Again, on 17th January 2001, (General Audience, Vatican), he drew attention to the continuing environmental deterioration of the planet, describing humanity's disregard for the integrity of

creation as "humiliating ... the earth, that flower-bed that is our home". Prophetically, in this address, the Pope called the world's Catholics to an "ecological conversion" to avoid planetary "catastrophe".

*"Before it's too late, we need to make courageous choices that will recreate a strong alliance between man and earth. We need a decisive "YES" to care for creation and a strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible."*

Benedict XVI: "Pope Urges Young to care for Planet", Associated Press, 2nd September 2007





## A Call for Justice



*"I cannot be silent when my brothers and sisters are threatened. I become the voice of those who have no voice ... the voice of the generations to come ... it is possible to make a difference ... Let our response now be even more generous and effective."*

Pope John Paul II, May 10, 1980

***With environmental degradation,  
"it is always the poor who will be impacted upon disproportionately."***

Fr. Sean McDonagh S.S.C, Catholic Earthcare Climate Change Conference, Canberra, 19 November 2005

***"As one of the world's biggest emitters per capita of greenhouse gases, Australians are directly implicated in harming the many innocent peoples of the Pacific whose ecological footprint ironically, is radically lighter than our own."***

"Climate Change - Our Responsibility to Sustain God's Earth", a Position Paper of the Bishops' Committee for Justice Development Ecology & Peace, November 2005, page 18

***"Australians have special responsibility to assume, on behalf of all humanity, stewardship of the Pacific Ocean. The continued health of this and other oceans is crucial for the welfare of peoples, not only in Oceania but in every part of the world."***

"Ecclesia in Oceania", Vatican City, 2001

***"Kirribati and other small nations in the Pacific are looking for a Good Samaritan. At this point in history, we are asking, 'Who will be a Good Samaritan for us?'"***

Monsignor Michael McKenzie, Catholic Earthcare Climate Change Conference, Canberra, 19 November 2005



***"There is nothing as strong as gentleness and nothing as gentle as real strength."***

St Francis de Sales

## Answering the Calls



***"...We must conclude that we are still betraying the mandate God has given us; to be stewards called to collaborate with God in watching over creation in holiness and wisdom ..."***

Pope John Paul II & Patriarch Bartholomew 1, 10 June, 2002

### What is our response to those many calls?

#### We Make a Christian Response in Love:

***"We can know God personally through Jesus - a personal God - he sets our relationship to the community of life."***

Bishop Chris Toohey, ABC Radio,  
7th December 2005

***"There is a power that has been since all eternity and that force and potentiality is green!"***

Hildegard of Bingen

#### We Work towards Ecological Conversion:

***"It is necessary, therefore, to stimulate and sustain the 'ecological conversion' ... protecting the radical good of life in all its manifestations and preparing an environment for future generations that is closer to the plan of the Creator."***

Pope John Paul II, 17 January 2001

***"I believe ecological conversion is about seeing with new eyes after a change of heart."***

Bishop Chris Toohey, ABC Radio,  
7th December 2005

#### We find individual and community ways to live out our Ecological Vocation in our response to the call to be Co-creators:

***"Revelation teaches that men and women are created in the 'image and likeness of God' (Genesis 1:26) and thus ... enables them, by the work of their hands to reflect God's own creative activity. In a real way they are meant to be 'co-creators' with God, using their knowledge and skill to shape a cosmos in which the divine plan constantly moves to fulfilment."***

Pope John Paul II, Address, 8 November 2004

## The Church's Best Kept Secret



*In 2004 the "Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church" was published. This document provides a comprehensive compilation of what has been described as the "Church's best kept secret"- namely, the social teachings of the Church that have developed organically over the last 100 years. These modern teachings have reclaimed a biblical heritage that placed great emphasis on the prophetic tradition of justice and the preferential place of the poor in the kingdom of God.*

*The Compendium particularly in Chapter Ten, "Safeguarding the Environment" has enunciated principles appropriate for responding to the ecological crises that humanity is challenged by today. In the words of the Compendium these teachings are offered "as food for human and spiritual growth, for individuals and communities alike."*

### Some Key General Principles [through an ecological lens]:

#### The Principle of Creation and the Dignity of the Person

God freely confers being and life on everything that exists. Men and women created in God's image and likeness are called to be the visible sign and the effective instrument of divine

gratuitousness in "the garden" where God has placed them "as cultivators and custodians" of the goods of creation.

#### The Principle of the Common Good

While the dignity of the human person is affirmed, individuals live in common with others and the rights of the individual must be balanced with the wider common good of all. The rights and needs of others must always be respected.

However, the common good of society is not an end in itself; it has value only in reference to attaining the ultimate ends of the person "and the universal good of the whole of creation".

The implications of this principle gave birth to a] the principle of the universal destination of goods and b] the preferential option for the poor.

a] The universal destination of goods means that God intends that the goods of creation are meant for all. Each person must have access to the level of well-being necessary for their full development. Although the Church upholds the right to private property this is subordinate to the right to

common use and the overall "common good of the whole of creation." There is a social mortgage on private property conditioned by the strict requirement of prudent stewardship.

b] The preferential option for the poor calls us, in a world marred by deepening divisions between rich and poor, to heed the story of the last judgment (Mt. 25.31-46) and instructs us to put the needs of the poor and vulnerable first. This means, in the words of the Catholic Bishops of the United States that "the needs of the poor take priority over the desires of the rich; the rights of workers over the maximization of profits and the preservation of the environment over uncontrolled industrial expansion".

It has been recently observed that nature is the "new poor" in its fragility and vulnerability, as the world's ecological crisis deepens.



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## The Principle of Subsidiarity

It is impossible to promote the dignity of the person or creation without showing concern for the family, groups, associations or “local territorial realities”. Implicit here is recognition of the person’s right to experience an affinity with their environs- identify a sense of place within, and right relationship with, their local catchment area and biogeographical region. Society does not exist in isolation from the natural world but is intimately connected with and dependent upon it for survival.

The principle of subsidiarity places responsibility for the well being of people and the health of

their life supporting natural environs - as close as possible to the grassroots. The people or groups most directly affected by a decision or policy should have a key decision-making role in determining their closeness to the earth, the fertility of the soil and locally grown produce, the well-being of other creatures, and the health of natural waterways within their local catchment and biogeographical regions. These people should be only interfered with in order to support them in cases of need, and to help coordinate their activities with the activities of the rest of society with a view to the common good.

## The Principle of Solidarity

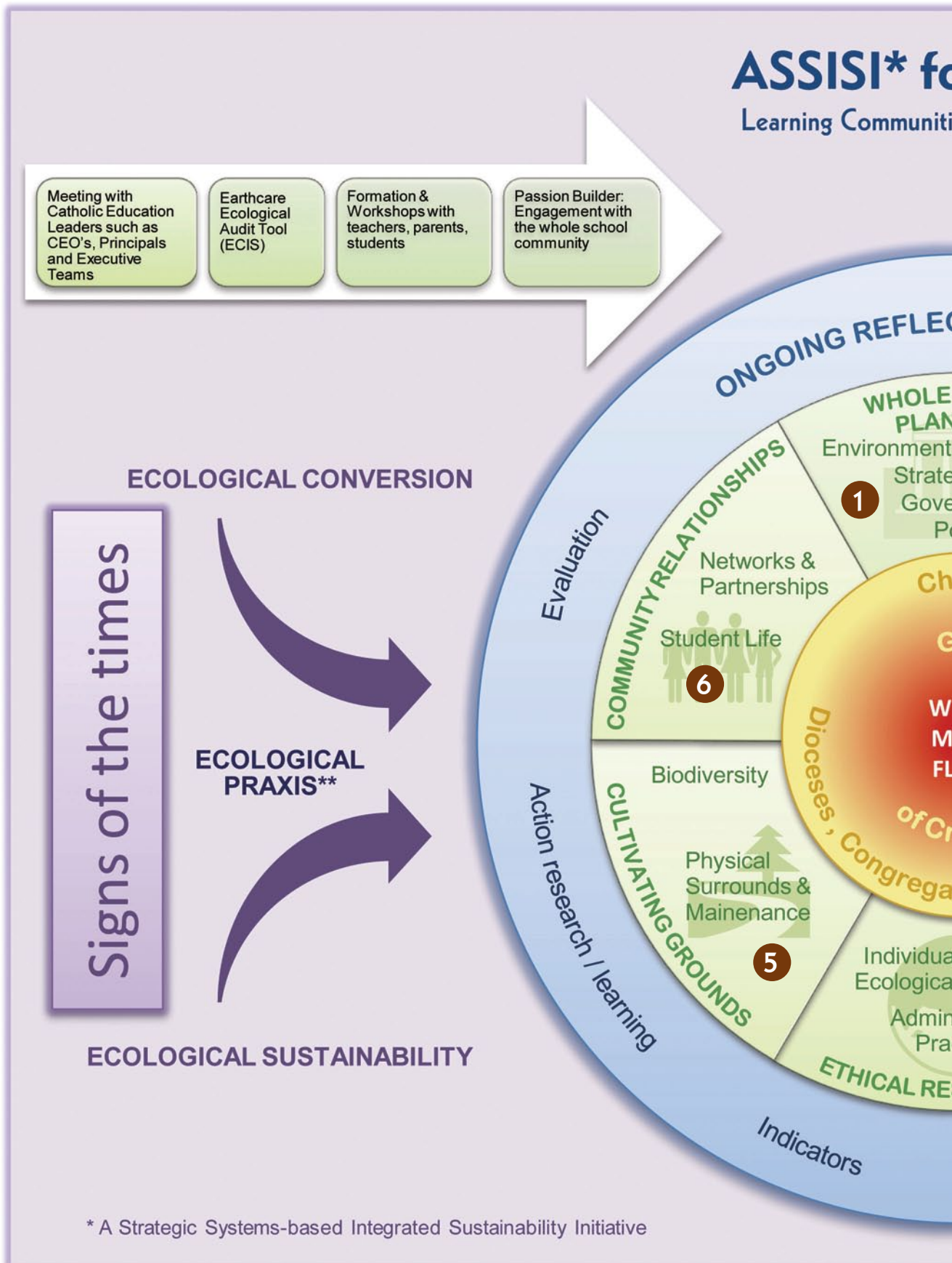
This principle means that basically we are all responsible for each other. It involves a determination to commit oneself to working for change so that everyone will be able to meet their potential. In regard to God’s other creatures we are called to a kinship with them, to find in them what God sees as “good’ (Gen 1:4), to recognize them for what they are and to establish with each of them a relationship of responsibility.

In an era of globalization, our responsibility for one another is not only local and international, it is also intergenerational - we have a sacred duty to ensure that the planet [understood as a “single ecosystem”] that future generations inherit, reflects undiminished the marvel of creation in all its beauty, diversity and complexity.



# TRANSFORMING

## ASSISI MODEL



# for Schools

es for Sustainability



ECOLOGICAL CONVERSION



ECOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY

Word in Action

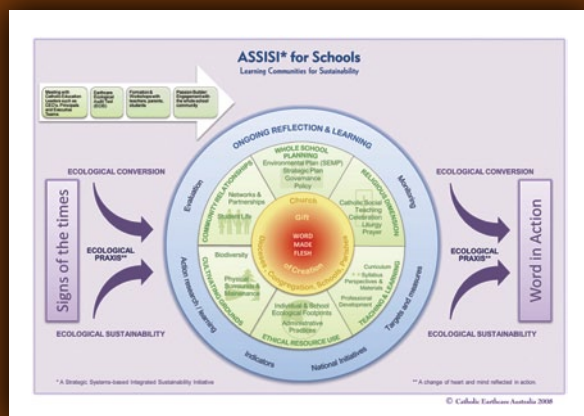
\*\* A change of heart and mind reflected in action.



# TRANSFORMING

## ASSISI

Catholic Earthcare Australia has designed ASSISI as a strategic pathway for Catholic Schools to engage with answering the calls for ecological conversion and sustainability. ASSISI seeks to enable the whole school system to shift to become sustainable over time and to integrate Catholic faith values and Catholic Social Teaching principles into the approach, the process and the outcomes.



### ASSISI Formation Program for Ecological Conversion and Sustainability

The ASSISI formation program has been designed to enable staff, students and parents to develop a vision and pathway for their school to become sustainable. It combines contemplation, conversation and action as a basis for designing interventions across the whole school. This includes whole school planning and strategy development (including operations); the religious life of the school; all teaching and learning processes, including curriculum; the school grounds and buildings; resource use; and relationship with the local community. This is reflected in the School Environmental Management Plan (SEMP).

Catholic Earthcare Australia encourages Catholic Schools to develop a SEMP that is informed by Catholic Social Teaching on Ecology and includes the aspirations of staff, students, parents and the wider community. Catholic Earthcare Australia also provides a process that enables leaders and key influencers of the school community to form a 'Sustainability Steering Group' that helps guide the school community on the journey of ecological conversion and sustainability, supported by the SEMP.

In order to enable the process of ecological conversion, a number of social processes have informed the development of the ASSISI Formation Program. These processes include Groom's Pedagogy of Praxis; Otto Scharmer's work on Theory U; Peter Senge's work on systems thinking and learning organisations. **These participative approaches enable Catholic Schools to make collective decisions in the following six areas, thus enabling a whole school approach:**

### ASSISI is A Strategic Systems-based Integrated Sustainability Initiative which offers the following to all Catholic Schools in South Australia:

- An ecological footprint tool to measure, track and report on the school's progress to reduce its ecological footprint for \$300 per annum, called ECIS.
- A Formation Program for staff, parents and students, typically as a spirituality day followed by a 1.5 hour planning workshop from which the School Environmental Management Plan (SEMP) emerges.
- A passion-building program led by students which engages the whole school community, called 'One Earth'.
- An intensive transformation program for senior students and adults called, 'Creation and Reconciliation'.

## 1 Whole School Planning

Within this dimension Catholic schools develop strategies, goals and actions that lead to the following: a School Environmental Management Plan which is linked to the school's strategic plan, reviewing the schools mission statement,

reviewing governance structures to enable sustainability principles to inform the schools, developing environmental policies (underpinned by the principles of Catholic Social Teaching).

## 2 Religious Dimension

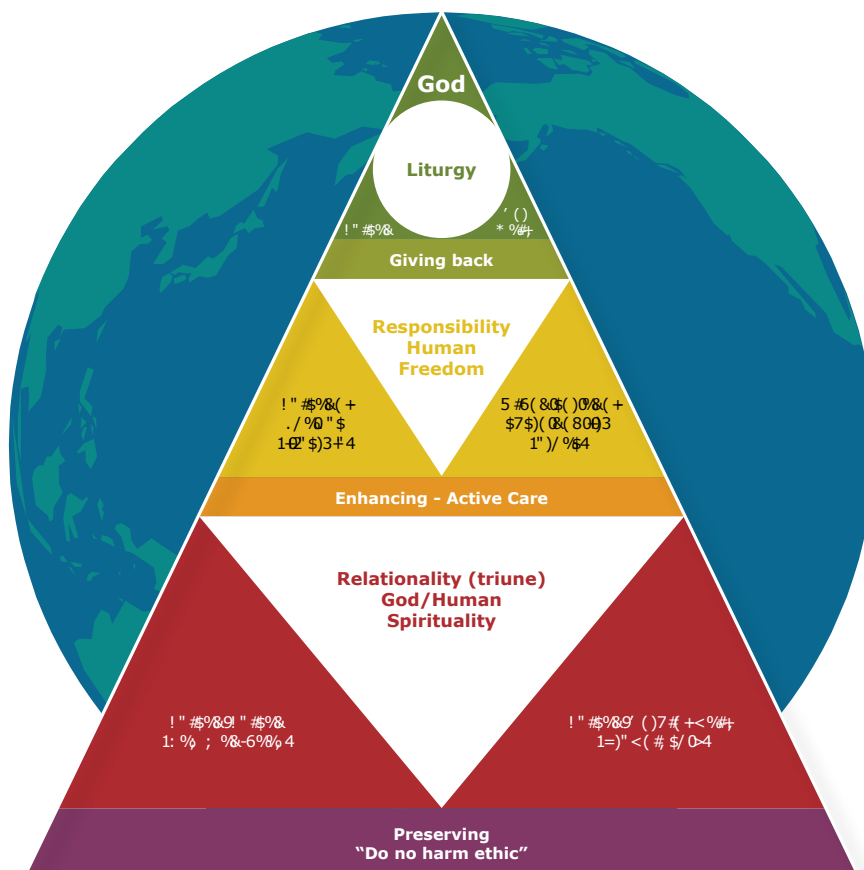
Through ASSISI students, staff and parents in Catholic schools are encouraged to read the 'Signs of the Times' and become 'Word in Action'.

Schools are encouraged to regularly reflect and respond to Sacred Scripture that draws attention to the relationships between humanity, our Creator and Creation; reflecting and responding to Catholic Social Teaching on Ecology (see The Churches Best Kept Secret on pages 18 and 19 for

an introduction); developing liturgy, prayer and celebrations that enable schools to focus on caring for God's Creation.

Celebrating environmental days throughout the school year is made easy with Catholic Earthcare's educational resources. See the environmental calendar for themes and dates at: [www.catholicearthcare.org.au/Calendar](http://www.catholicearthcare.org.au/Calendar)

### Sustainability Ethos - from law to love



The journey of ecological conversion calls us to exercise our human freedom, to choose life and take greater responsibility for the gifts God has given. In giving back we further advance our ecological conversion - being at one with Creator and Creation.

### 3 Teaching and Learning - Curriculum



**There are three areas for development:**

1. Utilising teaching/learning opportunities in all Key Learning Areas
2. Professional Development of Staff
3. Community Education

**It is important Catholic schools:**

- Identify and integrate areas of the Religious Education curriculum relevant to ecological education. Spirituality, moral teaching, liturgy, prayer and social / ecological justice are key focus areas within this.
- Identify and integrate outcomes related to sustainability and ecological (environmental) education within the relevant curriculum documents, frameworks and scope and sequences specific to CESA (Catholic Education, Sth Australia). Crossways, Religious Education Framework for SA Catholic Schools is a pivotal document.
- Use the extra-curricula opportunities provided by special events and school community actions to enhance the classroom curriculum learnings.
- Conduct an audit of existing environmental education practices and develop an annual School Environmental Management Plan which incorporates the six ASSISI ecological focus areas (in green) in the ASSISI Model, page 20-21 (and for a guide to develop each of these focus areas see Appendix 2).
- Plan / co-ordinate / integrate professional development opportunities on the theme of ecological conversion and sustainability for staff.
- Plan / co-ordinate / integrate community education opportunities especially for parents, family and parish.





## 4 Ethical Resource Use

*"We must change our consumption habits ... the Earth's resources are finite and cannot be stretched ... We are living beyond our environmental capacity. We have to face the hard issues of radically changing our habits ..."*

"Let the Many Coastlands Be Glad", Page 21, Catholic Earthcare, June 2004

*"Ecological Conversion is to increase our spiritual footprint, and at the same time to lighten our ecological footprint."*

Col Brown - Director, Catholic Earthcare, Australia ABC Radio, 7th December 2005

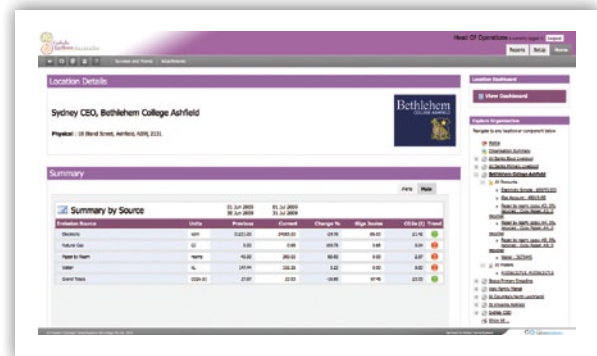
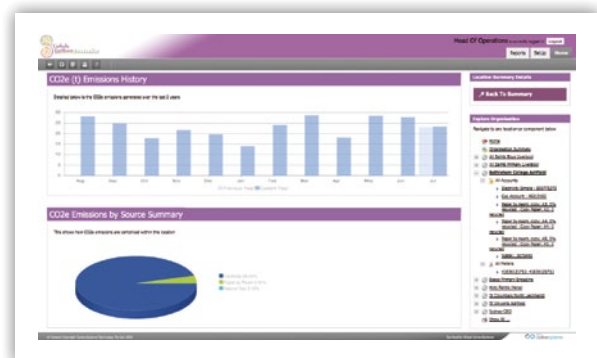
### Ecological Footprint Tool (ECIS)

Catholic Earthcare Australia has partnered with CarbonSystems to provide Catholic organisations with the means for measuring and reporting on their environmental performance as a part of the ASSISI sustainability initiative. The purpose for this partnership is firstly, to enable Catholic organisations to measure their ecological footprint and secondly, to reduce their footprint using the intelligence gained from the audit tool 'ECIS' (Energy & Carbon Intelligence System).

ECIS is being offered through Catholic Earthcare Australia to all Catholic organisations including Catholic Schools, Education Offices, Diocesan Offices, Parishes, Agencies, Universities, Health Organisations, Religious Congregations and Orders. ECIS is available to Catholic Schools for \$300 per annum. To find out more please contact Catholic Earthcare Australia or Global Carbon Systems on 02 9389 6800.

*"In a sense sustainability is good stewardship through time and in effect a matter of intergenerational justice. It means that the Earth's resources are to be used with future needs in mind."*

Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference, "Commonwealth for the Common Good"



## 5 Cultivating Grounds and Buildings



*"Catholic Earthcare plans to develop the grounds so that God's Creation flourishes on Catholic properties, creating spaces for people to reflect and feel nurtured by God's Creation; and enabling Australia's biodiversity to increase."!*

Jacqui Remond, Report on ASSISI May 2010,  
Australian Catholic Bishops Conference

*Learnsapes are places where a learning programme has been designed to permit users to interact with an environment. They may be natural or built; interior or exterior; located in, near or beyond schools; and related to any one of, or many, key learning areas. They must be safe and accessible.*

*Schools involved in Learnscape projects have increased the diversity of their school grounds and buildings by adding features such as gardens, forests, ponds, shelters and outdoor classrooms. The increased diversity of the grounds and buildings allows for the design of a wider range of learning experiences and the creation of a Learnscape environment.*

*Learnsapes are gaining worldwide acceptance as valuable pedagogical innovations.*

Sources: The School Learnsapes Trust 2000, [www.learnsapes.org](http://www.learnsapes.org)



### 'Cultivating Grounds'

School grounds are increasingly being seen as an exciting place to enable outdoor learning in all areas of education. Many schools are developing their grounds for teaching and learning or 'Learnsapes'.

Students, staff and parents can be actively involved in the sustainable management of the grounds through activities such as habitat creation, mulching, vegetable gardening, landscaping, productive enterprises and litter reduction. The opportunities are limited only by the imagination and enthusiasm of the school community. The most effective learnscaping projects are those that have been planned and involve students; parents and the wider community in active participation.

### Buildings and Ecologically Sustainable Design (ESD)

Refurbishing older buildings to incorporate energy efficient elements, water saving devices and where possible making use of natural light and ventilation is encouraged.

New buildings should be designed with ecologically sustainable design principles in mind.

For Catholic Schools, the grounds can be symbolic and representative of the school's ecological vocation. One way that schools are responding is to adopt a local native species and grow a suitable habitat where the species can live for part or all of the year.

## 6 Community Relationships

**Identifying organisations to develop partnerships with and setting up structures to enable networking within and across organisations are good first steps to building sustainable relationships.**

### **Building Relationships with your Local Community for Sustainability**

Many ecological education developments are best achieved through collaborative partnerships with the local and broader community. This might include partnerships with other educational institutions, local councils, businesses, industry, and community groups and networks.

This links student learning to the workplace and to local environmental, cultural and social issues. Students become active participants in the local community.

Schools that have fostered partnerships have often gained access to resources not otherwise available to the school.

Many schools have contributed significantly to community awareness, education and sustainable living practices in their local community through the influence of their collaborative partnerships and activities.



### **Building Relationships with your Global Community for Sustainability**

Catholic Schools are encouraged to respond to the moral and spiritual challenges on a global scale, and some have been doing a great job at this.

The slogan “Live simply so that others may simply live” is integral to the modern Christian life.

Developing and participating in projects with schools and organisations beyond our local community is a meaningful way for schools and school communities to sustain life through ecological justice. We applaud ecological projects of religious congregations, such as the Franciscans in Timor, Jesuits in India, Good Samaritans in Kirribati and Edmund Rice Schools with Indigenous communities.





### A Whole School Approach

**Schools implementing a whole-school approach to ecological education for sustainability typically indicate the following key points as important for success:**

- Active participation of the school leadership team from planning through to implementation.
- A vision of future directions for the school, shared with the school community.
- Sustainability principles embedded in school policies.
- An implementation group drawn from the school community including teachers, non-teaching staff, parents, students and specialist advisors, to give ownership to all

sectors in the school and a structure to ensure that the workload is spread.

- Starting with a clear overview of school operations (waste, water, energy, grounds and canteen), school policies, curriculum, and teaching and learning, before moving on to action planning.
- Moving at a rate that is compatible with the school's ability to change.
- Keeping the school and local community informed and ensuring that successes are celebrated.
- A school environmental management plan (SEMP).

Education for a Sustainable Future, Page 12

### Implementing the Vision

- Go to Catholic Earthcare Australia's ASSISI web page and register your interest to participate in the ASSISI initiative.
- Email [earthcare@catholic.org.au](mailto:earthcare@catholic.org.au) and ask to have a staff day that focuses on ecological conversion and sustainability on a date that would suit your staff.
- Request an ASSISI planning workshop (1.5 hours) and invite staff, some students and parents so that your School Environmental Management Plan (SEMP) can emerge.
- Embed the SEMP activities into your school ethos and link it to your annual school plan
- Ask a staff member and your student leaders to host the 'One Earth' passion building program, to raise awareness for

your whole school community (refer to Appendix 1).

- Enquire about the 'Creation and Reconciliation' program for adults and senior students.
- Promote initiatives that are happening at your school to care for God's Creation through Catholic Earthcare's newsletter and website.
- Celebrate significant environmental days or weeks during the school year using Catholic Earthcare's online calendar and resources for liturgy and learning.
- Enquire about becoming an 'Earthcare' accredited school.

**Appendix 1** offers 'One Earth' which is Catholic Earthcare Australia's passion building program for Catholic Schools to raise awareness about the need to care for God's Creation and become sustainable.

**Appendix 2** charts some detailed phases in becoming Ecological Leaders and includes developing a SEMP, setting up a steering committee and other helpful steps for schools to become sustainable.



An ecological footprint tool is available through Catholic Earthcare Australia for all Catholic Schools for **\$300 per annum** for schools who wish to **measure, track and report** their schools' ecological footprint.

## Quality Teaching and Learning



*We are called to live and participate in a fully conscious and responsible way in the grace and beauty of God's creation. Catholic schools in South Australia are ideally places where young people can dream about, imagine and participate in successful endeavours that transform themselves and their own environments.*

*The key element of learning and teaching is an authentic, purposeful and engaging pedagogy that responds to the signs of our times. Educators are concerned about how we live in our contemporary world in a meaningful and relevant way. Catholic educators are called to explore this in light of our understanding that we are bound together in the community of life, a life gifted by God.*

### Catholic Education South Australia

Learners, educators and leaders within Catholic Education South Australia (CESA) are called to participate in, educate within and contribute to a sustainable vision of life. Catholic schools aim to educate the whole person, taking into account the students' intellectual, moral, spiritual, religious, religious, physical and social development.

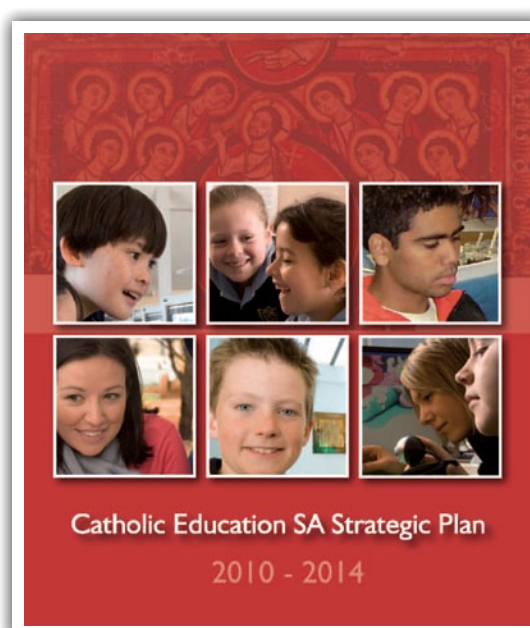
Every facet of life within a Catholic school community provides opportunity for students to experience the gracious activity and presence of God. In implementing and living out the principles outlined within this booklet and using the Assisi Framework, we are guided by the CESA Strategic Plan and by national initiatives in sustainability.

### CESA Strategic Plan

The Catholic Education South Australia Strategic Plan calls us to transform minds and hearts so that the created world is made new again.

It reminds us to be conscious of embracing policies and practices that are faithful to God's call to be stewards of the earth.

In living our call to act in just and sustainable ways it is important to engage with State and National Governments and organisations relevant to local experience.



## National Initiatives in Sustainability

Sustainability is embedded in the Australian Curriculum and school communities are called to engage learners in pedagogy and curricula that explores a commitment to sustainable patterns of living across all learning areas.

It states that “Knowledge, skills and understandings related to sustainability in natural, social, cultural and economic environments are crucial to world class, future focused national curriculum.”

This is guided by the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians (December 2008) goal two, which focuses on successful learners as confident and creative individuals, and active and informed citizens.

Successful learners understand their place as local and global citizens, sustaining and improving both natural and social environments.

Two key Australian Government documents which support the development of a repertoire of rich educational practice in sustainability for CESA are:

- Educating for a Sustainable Future, A National Environmental Education Statement for Australian Schools.
- The Sustainability Curriculum Framework, A guide for curriculum developers and policy makers.

## Sustainability and Connection

Rich experiences are vital to authentic learning, and the collaborative processes of inquiry, action and reflection are necessary in nurturing a respectful and integral relationship with God's creation.

It is of critical importance that young people are given every opportunity to connect with their own local region and to interact with and learn about the natural world.

Educators have a responsibility to participate with students in reforming, living and monitoring ways of being that sustain God's creation now and for the common future of the community of life.





# CELEBRATING

## RESOURCING THE VISION

 **Making Ecological Connections:** Drawing on the wisdom of others



(See Appendix 4 for a list of valuable websites)

To assist schools, in the words of Pope John Paul II to 'stimulate and sustain the ecological conversion', we would recommend using the ECIS Tool to track, measure and report your schools' ecological footprint and a careful study of the chart in Appendix 2.

The chart has been adapted from the NSW government's DET Environmental Policy for Schools - "Steps in Becoming an Environmentally Active School".

We have included in the chart two additional columns specifically designed for Catholic schools, namely "Community Involvement" and "Religious Dimension".

This chart may be used for planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating the school's progress towards more ecologically sustainable operations.

Another framework for measuring a school's growth in ecological awareness can be found in the Appendix (Indicators for a Sustainable Future) to the Australian government document, "Educating for a Sustainable Future - A National Environmental Education Statement for Australian Schools" accessible at [www.curriculum.edu.au](http://www.curriculum.edu.au). This framework enables schools to measure certain aspects of change in areas like school staff participation, curriculum innovation, progress of the management plan, water consumption, electricity consumption, waste minimisation and management, prudent use of school grounds and resources and car pooling.

A number of SA Catholic schools are participating in AUSSI (Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative).

A critical component to the successful and sustainable implementation of the AUSSI initiative, is the monitoring, evaluating and reporting on achievable outcomes. The social, economic/ financial, environmental and educational components achieved at all levels of the AUSSI initiative are important elements in demonstrating the progress made towards the vision of the initiative.  
[www.environment.gov.au/education/aussi](http://www.environment.gov.au/education/aussi)

Education for Sustainability (EfS) is a South Australian program designed to play a strong role in achieving sustainable development in South Australia in the twenty-first century. The program aims to integrate educational programs into visionary, integrated and

sustainable systems and approaches where all decision making considers environmental, social and economic consequences. For more details please visit: [www.decs.sa.gov.au/efs/files/pages/EfS\\_Guide\\_Introduction.pdf](http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/efs/files/pages/EfS_Guide_Introduction.pdf)

For inspiration and ideas, make contact with other eco animators who have initiated projects in catholic schools. Many ecologically active schools are listed in Appendix 3.

Subscribe to Catholic Earthcare Australia's E-newsletter and visit its website for resources, more information about the audit tool, calendar and latest news.  
[www.catholicearthcare.org.au](http://www.catholicearthcare.org.au)



# APPENDIX 1

## ONE EARTH



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**One Earth is launched at a school assembly.**

**One Earth is lead by students in the school community who encourage their fellow students to create the following pieces of work over the period of one month:**

1. Art for Earth's Sake
2. A Song for the Future
3. Ecology through the lense
4. A letter to a leader or politician

A night time event is held at the conclusion of the program where the students work is on display and the whole school community is invited to attend, students, parents and staff.

Special guests are invited to the school to see the student's creative work and to help celebrate by giving a small speech, i.e. your local member.





# ASSISI Phases in Becoming Ecological Leaders



| STEP                   | WHOLE SCHOOL PLANNING   | TEACHING & LEARNING  | ETHICAL RESOURCE USE  | CULTIVATING GROUNDS   | COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS   | RELIGIOUS DIMENSION   |
|------------------------|---|--|---|---|---|---|
| <b>1. Awareness</b>    | <p>Realisation that ecological sustainability needs to become a focus.</p> <p>Finding out about Earthcare and ASSISI.</p> <p>Understanding the need for a whole community approach.</p>   | <p>Understanding the need to educate for ecological conversion and ecological sustainability.</p> <p>Seeing possibilities for ecological conversion and ecological sustainability.</p> <p>Some environmental issues may be in the process of being addressed.</p>                                    | <p>Understanding that global resources are 'finite and should be used prudently.</p> <p>Realising that resources can be managed in an ecologically sustainable way.</p> <p>Individuals promote ecologically sustainable options.</p>  | <p>Understanding our role as caretakers of Earth.</p> <p>Realising that grounds provide opportunities for interconnection with Creation and cultivating the garden planet.</p>  | <p>Understanding our place in the community.</p> <p>Recognising the need for whole school and local community involvement in order to bring about ecological conversion and achieve ecological sustainability.</p>  | <p>Understanding that 'integrity of creation' is a fundamental part of Catholic Social Teaching.</p> <p>Realising that ecological prayer and liturgy need to become part of the organisation's ethos.</p>   |
| <b>2. Discovering</b>  | <p>Discovering ASSISI.</p> <p>Participating in ASSISI's whole school planning and strategy process for ecological sustainability.</p> <p>Forming a planning committee with representatives from all the sub-committees.</p> <p>Developing an environmental management plan (SEMP) as a subset of the organisation's strategic plan.</p> <p>Identifying and planning environmental projects in one or two key areas.</p> <p>Identifying early indicators of success in targeted areas.</p> | <p>Forming an ecological learning sub-committee to identify and assess formation and learning materials and to discover ecological links.</p> <p>Exploring and accessing relevant information about ecological conversion and ecological sustainability.</p>   | <p>Discovering a new perspective that 'resources' are gifts of creation from God.</p> <p>All individuals within the school measure their individual ecological footprint.</p> <p>Forming an ecological audit sub-committee to conduct an ecological audit of the school using the Earthcare Energy Carbon Intelligence System (ECIS).</p> | <p>Forming a sub-committee to co-create the grounds of the school.</p> <p>Sub committee accesses information about the local catchment area and discovers the local endemic species.</p> <p>Sub committee makes contact with the local council to discover programs and funding available for grounds projects.</p> | <p>Initiating the ASSISI process.</p> <p>Forming a community sub-committee to assist with building living relationships both within the school and with local community groups.</p> <p>Inviting guests to address the community about ecological conversion and ecological sustainability.</p> <p>Organising professional learning opportunities through ASSISI Facilitators.</p> | <p>Whole school planning of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prayer/Liturgy/special feasts of the environment.</li> <li>Staff development with a focus on Creation theology.</li> <li>Developing prayer, liturgy and ritual around thanksgiving for the gifts of Creation</li> </ul> |
| <b>3. Transforming</b> | <p>Holding ongoing conversation about ecological conversion and ecological sustainability.</p> <p>Integrating ecological sustainability as a core part of the strategic planning process.</p> <p>Transforming policies and practices so that they reflect ecological conversion and ecological sustainability.</p> <p>Reviewing indicators relevant to the target areas.</p>  | <p>Conducting a learning materials audit.</p> <p>Facilitating educational processes to foster ecological conversion and ecological sustainability.</p> <p>Integrating specific ecological concepts and content into Programmes.</p> <p>Including hands-on activity based learning opportunities.</p> | <p>Conducting the ecological audit (ECIS).</p> <p>Observing, designing and constructing a systems approach to reduce, reuse and recycle and capturing this in an action plan.</p> <p>Setting benchmarks and further developing strategies to reduce the ecological footprint.</p>   | <p>Conducting an audit of the school grounds.</p> <p>Encouraging participation in the audit process.</p> <p>Audit reveals relevant environmental issues.</p> <p>Subcommittee develops an action plan based on achievable objectives.</p>  | <p>Organising professional learning opportunities through ASSISI to deepen understanding of and commitment to Ecological Conversion and Ecological Sustainability.</p> <p>Whole school and community participation in service projects for environmental refugees and targeted areas in the school.</p>   | <p>Establishing special environment days on organisations calendar.</p> <p>Developing service projects for environmental refugees/Missions.</p> <p>Identifying each person's ecological vocation.</p>   |

|   |  |  |  |   |  |   |
|---|--|--|--|---|--|---|
| <p><b>4.</b><br/><b>Sustaining</b></p>  | <p>Developing action plans in all focus areas to give substance to the audit findings.</p> <p>Integrating ecological sustainability into all elements of school planning, including the SEMP.</p> <p>Developing a clear succession plan for those in positions of responsibility.</p> <p>Ensuring governance structures and processes reflect a commitment to informed and equitable ecological decision-making.</p> <p>Organisations are invited to seek Earthcare accreditation.</p>   | <p>The school is in a visible process of continuous learning and systems improvement.</p> <p>There is a marked difference in attitudes towards sustainable practices revealed in social, spiritual and behavioural practices and technical and logistical systems.</p>   | <p>Ongoing reports (ECIS) enable sustainable limits of consumption to be discerned.</p> <p>Sub-committee communicates regular updates about its ecological footprint.</p> <p>Audit sub-committee presents to the Planning committee a proposal for offsetting, a proposal to seek Earthcare accreditation and the action plan which is integrated into the SEMP.</p>   | <p>Carrying out agreed strategies and actions.</p> <p>The action plan has been passed on to the environment planning committee, prioritised and integrated into the SEMP.</p> <p>The SEMP is in place and strategies are progressively implemented.</p> <p>Evaluation and review structures are established.</p>                                  | <p>Collaborative partnerships are formed and the local community become involved with the school in a process of continuous learning and systems improvement.</p> <p>Participating in forums, projects and programmes through a network of supporting organisations.</p> <p>Working with one's ecological vocation within the school and local community.</p>  | <p>Embedding of Catholic Social Teaching about ecology, sustainable living, creation theology and creation spirituality across the school.</p> <p>Developing each person's ecological vocation.</p>   |
| <p><b>5.</b><br/><b>Celebrating</b></p> | <p>Action plans have been finalised in all focus areas. The planning committee has integrated and prioritised action plans.</p> <p>Together with community partners areas of needs are recognised in both local and global contexts and appropriate responses devised (including immersion programs).</p> <p>Opportunities are provided for celebrating success across all dimensions.</p> <p>Opportunities are provided for whole school collaboration and learning across committees.</p> <p>Effective integration has been achieved with national initiatives.</p>  | <p>All programmes, resources and materials reflect the ecological dimension.</p> <p>Everyone in the school understands and shares their ecological conversion.</p> <p>Immersion programmes have been incorporated as part of the organisation's learning experiences, which expose the whole school to the links between environmental degradation, poverty and injustice.</p> | <p>The SEMP is being followed, purchasing is being integrated and ongoing data collection is used to evaluate the effectiveness of the plan.</p> <p>The school and community members participate in activities that exemplify 'best practice'.</p>   | <p>The school is fully engaged in caretaking and enjoying the grounds.</p> <p>The grounds are being used as an educational resource.</p> <p>The grounds are valued as an ecological asset to the school.</p> <p>Regular school events are held in the grounds.</p> <p>Progress is reported and the SEMP is reviewed.</p>                          | <p>Celebrating joint initiatives.</p> <p>Inviting National and International guests involved in ecological conversion and ecological sustainability, to address the school and broader community at learning forums.</p> <p>Identifying local and global needs and mobilising the network of organisations to form project groups to respond to the needs.</p> <p>Collaborating to apply for major grants.</p>                       | <p>Outreach to other organisations in the Diocese as part of the organisation's ecological mission.</p> <p>Involvement in diocesan-wide environmental service projects.</p> <p>Reaching out to the broader community where there is need.</p> <p>Celebrating the diversity of ecological vocations in the organisation and community.</p>                   |
| <p><b>6.</b><br/><b>Leading</b></p>     | <p>The school shows commitment to an SEMP as part of the organisation's strategic plan.</p> <p>Effective action plans are in place and are regularly reviewed.</p> <p>Objectives for all focus areas are being met. Progress is reported in the organisation's annual report.</p> <p>The school is a model for others to follow and a logical and holistic plan is evident.</p> <p>Organisations are invited to participate in a whole system review to ensure ongoing learning and improvement.</p> <p>The learning community connects with other communities to create a new strategic plan to tackle larger local and global environmental and social issues.</p> | <p>The school offers programmes, resources, materials and lived experience to others in local and global contexts.</p> <p>Successful immersion programmes are a feature of school life, with international participation.</p>  | <p>All objectives for ethical resource use are achieved: purchasing, resource use and waste management are integrated across the whole school.</p> <p>"Best practice" is employed emphasising sustainability of resources and minimal environmental impact.</p> <p>Learning opportunities are incorporated and encouraged. Progress is visible and is reported. The school is an example for others to follow.</p> | <p>The way the grounds are cultivated is consistent with the principles of ecological sustainable development.</p> <p>A personal commitment to the grounds is demonstrated.</p> <p>The grounds are a diverse learning environment that contribute ecological value to the local and global environments and are a model for others to follow.</p> | <p>Networking at Local, National and International levels.</p> <p>School and local community witness to the community at large with exemplary projects and programmes.</p> <p>Sustained outreach to social justice projects locally and globally.</p> <p>Working alongside other schools, organisations and communities in helping them on their journey to ecological sustainability.</p> <p>Initiating joint venture projects.</p> | <p>Continued integration of religious education and ecological conversion in whole school planning.</p> <p>Communication, liturgy, prayer reflect a whole organization commitment to an ecological vocation.</p> <p>Sharing with schools and organisations in other locations.</p> <p>Leading the development of ecological vocations in the community.</p> |

Adapted Paul Lucas (2006) - from N.S.W. DET Policy Document Environmental Education Policy for Schools (2001), to include the religious dimension within a Catholic school setting as recommended by Irish Hindmarsh (2004).



**SEMP = School Environmental Management Plan**

Adapted Jacqui Remond and Megan Senaque (2009) from On Holy Ground NSW to include phase names from DECD The Victorian EIS Implementation Guide 2007 and developed to suit Catholic Organisations.

# APPENDIX 3

## GOOD NEWS STORIES FROM SCHOOLS



**Religious Education Team, Catholic Education Office,** Inquiry Project: Sustainability and Religious Education

The RE Team leads an inquiry project on sustainability which aims to provide fertile ground for the growth and development of a 'green Catholic imagination' in participants learning communities and within themselves. Educators and consultants work alongside each other in forming a research stance where dialogue, debate and conversation are valued.

Over the two years of the project each school community form their own inquiry focus, document their experiences (tell the story), and spend time together reflecting, analyzing and wondering 'what's next?' The RE Consultant takes on the role of 'intimate outsider' in offering a different lens through which to view and review their local experiences within the parameters of the religious dimension of the school.

The inquiries themselves are quite diverse and touch on issues such as: sacramentality and sustainability in the year 11 RE curriculum with indigenous young men, implementing and using the ASSISI Framework, integrating the wetland experiences into the religious dimension of the whole school curriculum, fostering prayer, meditation and silence, and, wondering how indoor and outdoor play deepens young children's experience and understanding of religious education.

**There are currently seven schools, eleven teachers and two RE consultants involved in this project.**

### Galilee Catholic Learning Community, Aldinga (reception – year 7)



At Galilee Catholic Learning Community we aim to support development of educationally sustainable grounds that provide access to diversity; maintain and improve the indigenous ecosystem; animate play and learning; activate broad involvement in adapting places; and foster aesthetically sensitive place identity and differentiation. We see our school buildings and grounds as active agents in our learning environment.

Students, parents and staff at Galilee participate in "Grounds for Learning" inquiry which seeks to appreciate and animate our school grounds as a natural place for play and learning. Each home group of students is engaged in their own environmental project including seed collection and planting; frog pond research and construction; cubby building, and special purpose food, native and play gardens. A consciousness of our living environment is woven into the everyday fabric of our community life.



### St Catherines, Stirling (reception – year 7)



St Catherines community has established a large wetlands on their grounds. The wetlands feed clean water into the Onkaparinga River and provide a home for a diverse range of local flora and fauna. Each class is responsible for the management of their organic waste, they have compost bins and when the compost is ready it is used on the vegetable patch which is watered by the rainwater tanks. Ecology and sustainability have become important and valued perspectives embedded within our whole school curriculum. St Catherines continues to work toward being a sustainable school community, we have focus days for our community on ecology, a children's forum group dedicated to the environment and most of all we have a deep sense of joy and satisfaction when we see the local ecology flourishing.

### Tenison Woods, Richmond (reception – year 7)



Tenison Woods Richmond takes sustainability and ecological awareness very seriously. Much of the school's power is generated by a large bank of solar panels funded by the government. It has rainwater tanks, vegetable gardens, is wrapper free and works to raise awareness and active involvement of the community in the four 'r's: refusing, reducing, reusing and recycling. The school is named after Tenison Woods who was a geologist and a scientist and they want to 'breathe' his spirit and his vision into present day living for now and for future generations.

### Rostrevor College Environmental Education Centre, Woodforde (reception – year 12)



The centre first opened its doors in 2006 and it now hosts more than 50 weird and wonderful critters. We have an assortment of reptiles, mammals, birds, fish, arachnids, crustaceans and invertebrates housed on a permanent basis. The Centre provides a unique experience and opportunity for the students to discover the wonders of the natural environment. We established a Butterfly Garden which has been recognised by the Butterfly Conservation Society.

## Growing Up Green, Marymount College, (years 5-12)



Marymount has more than 160 girls who are a part of the Hove Enviro Group which formed in 2008 with only six students. The girls run the group themselves and they educate and activate others in the school to recycle and reduce the school's waste output. They aim to become a 'no waste' school. Some things the group have initiated in the school are: bokashi bins for compost, container and newspaper recycling which earns money for the school. With the funds they have raised they will purchase a bank of solar panels. The young women involved in this initiative call themselves the "Enviro Angels" and they know that their commitment to sustainability at Marymount makes a difference.

## St Francis, Lockleys (reception – year 7)



St Francis School won the Greenest School in the West, for the development of its frog pond and ecological initiatives. The Puddleblonk, also known as the Eastern Banjo Frog, is one of the three local frog species to have thrived in the evolving wetlands area. Plant development continues for the schools butterfly garden and the erection of environmental murals. The St Francis community values and fosters the innate curiosity of young people and has developed comprehensive environmental and 'hands on' learning experiences and curriculum across the school.

Photo: May 2010 issue of The Southern Cross newspaper, photographer Christian Le Ray

## St Anns Special School, Marion



The students and staff at St Anns have cultivated a vegetable plot and they lovingly tend to it each day. The herbs and vegetables grown in the garden are used in the cooking classes and when we sit together to eat our food we delight in and celebrate our success in 'plot to plate'. We also plant native shrubs to commemorate our Joy Days and St Anns days.

# APPENDIX 4

## WEBSITES AND RESOURCES: Relevant to ecological education

### Local

Sth Australian Gov, Sustainable Schools: Aussi – SA Model:  
[www.decs.sa.gov.au/efs/default.asp?id=28736&navgrp=190](http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/efs/default.asp?id=28736&navgrp=190)

Trees for Life: Trees For Life provides education and opportunities for people to do something practical to improve their local natural environment:  
[www.treesforlife.org.au/home](http://www.treesforlife.org.au/home)

NRM Education: NRM Education supports early learning centres, schools, TAFEs and Universities that are interested in exploring environmental sustainability in their learning programs and management practices:  
[www.nrmeducation.net.au](http://www.nrmeducation.net.au)

Marine Discovery Centre, Henley Beach, South Australia  
[www.marinediscoverycentre.com.au](http://www.marinediscoverycentre.com.au)

CESA Online 'Ecological Sustainability' collection (in CESA Services):  
[online.cesamet.adl.catholic.edu.au](http://online.cesamet.adl.catholic.edu.au)

### National

Catholic Earthcare Australia  
[www.catholicearthcare.org.au](http://www.catholicearthcare.org.au)

AUSSI: Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative:  
[www.environment.gov.au/education/aussi](http://www.environment.gov.au/education/aussi)

Educating for a Sustainable Future – A National Environmental Education Statement for Australian Schools:  
[www.environment.gov.au/education/publications/sustainable-future.html](http://www.environment.gov.au/education/publications/sustainable-future.html)  
[www.environment.gov.au/education/publications/pubs/sustainable-future.pdf](http://www.environment.gov.au/education/publications/pubs/sustainable-future.pdf)

Education for Sustainability Curriculum Framework: Education for sustainability helps students learn to design and implement actions that can contribute to a more sustainable future:  
[www.environment.gov.au/education/publications/curriculum-framework.html](http://www.environment.gov.au/education/publications/curriculum-framework.html)

Eco Connections, Mindfulness of the Sacred in all Creation, Educational Resources:  
[www.ecoedoz.com](http://www.ecoedoz.com)

### Global

The United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014):  
[www.unesco.org/en/esd](http://www.unesco.org/en/esd)

Roots and Shoots, The Power of Youth is Global , Jane Goddall Institute:  
[www.rootsandshoots.org](http://www.rootsandshoots.org)

Learning for a Sustainable Environment, curriculum and learning resources:  
[www.ens.gu.edu.au/ciree/LSE/MAIN.HTM](http://www.ens.gu.edu.au/ciree/LSE/MAIN.HTM)

### Environmental Diary Dates

Refer to Catholic Earthcare Australia webpage:  
[www.catholicearthcare.org.au/Calendar.html](http://www.catholicearthcare.org.au/Calendar.html)



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## FROM THE HEART TO THE HANDS ...

*"We are all painfully aware of the fundamental obstacle that confronts us in our work for the environment.*

*It is precisely this: how are we to move from theory to action, from words to deeds?*

*We do not lack technical scientific information about the nature of the present ecological crisis.*

*We know not simply what needs to be done, but also how to do it.*

*Yet, despite all this information unfortunately little is actually done.*

*It is a long journey from the head to the heart and an even longer journey from the heart to the hands."*

Patriarch of Constantinople Bartholomew, 14th Symposium on Religion Science and the Environment, June 2002

## WITHIN A SINGLE GENERATION ...



*"It is not too late. God's world has incredible healing powers. Within a single generation we could steer the earth toward our children's future. Let that generation start now, with God's help and blessing."*

John Paul II and Bartholomew I,  
Joint Declaration on Environment, June 2002



*"We need to appreciate  
all over again that the  
whole universe is a  
sacrament, vivified by  
the presence of the  
Creator Spirit."*

Sr. Elizabeth Johnson,  
R.S.J.



*The human threat to all  
living things, which is  
being spoken of  
everywhere these days,  
has given a new urgency  
to the theme of creation.*

Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger 1995  
(now Pope Benedict XVI)

*"If you love your native land  
do not let this appeal go  
unanswered! ...  
devise programmes for the  
protection of the environment  
and ensure that they are  
properly put into effect!"*

Pope John Paul II  
June 1999

