

6 —A Broken World

Objectives

By the end of this lesson students will be able to ...

- state that the universe was created out of God's goodness and love.
- recognize the disorder in the world that results from our not living up to our role as "stewards of creation."
- recognize that in our own hearts we are torn between doing what we know is right and our impulse to do wrong.

For the Catechist

In the last unit, "God Works in Creation," students learned how God created the world through His goodness and love. They read in Genesis "*God looked at everything he had made, and he found it very good*" (Gen 1:31). The students discovered that we were created to live out our lives in God's love. They also learned that God calls us to share in His divine nature. We have been created in God's image and likeness, and we are called to cooperate with Holy Spirit to continue to grow in God's image and likeness.

Unit 2 asks the students to recognize and believe that evil exists and works against God's plan for His creation. In this first lesson from Unit 2, students begin to learn about what happens when we do not live in God's goodness and love. This lesson discusses the problems that result from our turning away from God. Students of this age are aware of the destruction and disorder of the world today. Through the television and their other media sources, they see the devastation caused by wars and natural disasters. Some of them might have been affected by damage from storms. Others might be suffering themselves or watching others suffer from illness.

But at this age the students are most concerned about the problems in their own lives. They are beginning to feel independent and capable of making their own choices. Also, they are discovering that it is easier to make the wrong choice even though they know what God expects of them. As St. Paul said, "*For I do not do the good I want, but I do the evil I do not want*" (Rom 7:19). Many people can recognize after they made some mistakes that they never imagined how easy it is to make a wrong choice.

Materials Needed

Opening Prayer: Vespers folder

Review: Unit Review worksheet from lesson 5 and a snack (candy, cookies) and drink

Introduction: Easel or wall pad, markers

Guided Reading: student text, pens or pencils

"Uncreation": pen or pencils [Supplemental: poster board, markers, magazines, glue]

Vespers: Folders, prayer sheets, tape or glue, scissors

Activity A: "Journal," and Journal folders and pens or pencils

Closing Prayer: Vespers folder

1. Opening Prayer

Gather around the icon table and pray the beginning prayers from Vespers.

2. Review

- Announce that today's review is a quiz game.
- Ask the students to divide into two groups or divide them into two groups by girls and boys or counting off by 2s.
- Ask the questions from the review sheet at the end of Unit One and keep score for the number of correct answers.
- Accept any similar answers to the ones in the instructional manual answer sheet. If there is no correct answer, give them the answer and go on. [At the end of the quiz, go back to discuss the answers they did not know.]
- Add the scores, and the group that won gets the snack for today first. [In advance buy candy or cookies and juice for today's class.]

3. Introduction

- Hold up some items that are broken (a broken pencil, a cracked mirror, a broken crayon, ripped paper, dented cans, deflated ball).
- Ask the following questions and allow time for discussion:
 1. *Are these items still useful?*
 2. *Why do we like to use items that are not broken?*
 3. *Today's lesson is called "A Broken World." What is broken in our world today (Polluted streams and land, destruction in forests, vandalism, murder, drugs)*
 5. *Is our land and are broken people still useful?*
 6. *Why would God want us to help these broken people and natural surroundings? (He wants us to help them become the way they were created—beautiful and whole—just like we like to see pencils and mirrors the way they are to be—not broken.)*

4. Guided Reading, Page 28

- Have everyone think of a place as beautiful as the waterfall on this page.
- Ask if anyone wants to describe it.
- Have volunteers read the words on page 28.
- As a group, reread the scriptural passage from Isaiah.

Guided Reading, Page 29, Wisdom from the Prophets

- Divide the students into groups in 2: each student reads and understands one of the paragraphs in this section about prophets.

Background Reading (Creation Is Good)

"At the end of each day of creation, Genesis 1 presents God looking out over His latest handiworks and pronouncing them 'good.' The phrase is repeated six times in the first chapter: 'And God saw that it was good.' Genesis stresses that everything God made must have been good originally since all creation bears the mark of its Creator, who is all-good. To account for the existence of evil in the world, we must look to the choices and ambitions of the first human couple. God created nothing evil, nothing neutral. The willful misuse of inherently good things by free human beings brought evil into the world" (OTB 36).

- The students teach each other what they have learned—definition of prophet and information about Isaiah.

Guided Reading, Pages 29—Our Own Brokenness

- Before the reading begins, write the words *God-centered* and *Self-centered* on the board.
- Ask the students to offer actions that reflect a God-centered or self-centered person.
- Discuss the reasons God wants us to become God-centered. (*He wants us to want to be with Him always.*)
- After a few minutes, ask the students to read the rest of the text aloud.
- Have all the students read the Scripture from St. Paul aloud together again and ask:
 1. *What does this mean? (We do what we know is wrong sometimes.)*
 2. *Have you ever felt like that—you want to do the right thing but you end up making the wrong choice? [Allow students to share if they want to.]*
 3. *Should we apologize to people that we hurt even before we go to confession to ask for God's forgiveness? Why is it hard to apologize first?*

5. Uncreation

- Before reading the poem, explain why the word "man" is used to refer to all humans—not just men.

In Greek translations there are two words for "man." One form means man in a specific sense, and the other form refers to all of humanity, the human race. In the poem we are reading today, the word man refers to all humans.

- Have the students take turns reading the stanzas aloud.
- Answer the questions individually and then share with the entire group.

Supplemental Activity—Work sheet A: Make a collage of pictures that show the scenes described in this poem. Have magazines and newspapers available for the pictures. In the center of a large poster board, place the poem that is found on page in this teacher manual. Glue the pictures around it.

Background Reading (The Role of the Prophets)

"A second group of texts [of the Bible] circulated as scrolls bearing the names of individuals: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, etc. The prophets, whose vocation was to be God's spokesmen at key moments in Israel's journey, preached forcefully about the present and the future. In one sense, they functioned as social critics, pointing out the injustices, the hypocrisy and the abuses in Israelite society and reminded the people and their elders of the moral obligations to God and to each other which the covenant imposed. The message of the prophets often took on concrete political dimensions.

"The message frequently associated with the prophets, the threat of impending doom, is really only one aspect of their ministry of identifying God's plans and presence in current events. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Amos, and Hosea all warned that unless Israel embraced justice, rejected false and foreign gods and regained her pure and unique identity as God's people, God would break the covenant, drive Israel from the land and scatter them abroad. When foreign powers did overtake and destroy Israel in two stages, the prophets saw this national political and military catastrophe as the forewarned execution of God's preannounced plan" (*OTB* 4).

6. Icon Study

- Have the students read the commentary on this icon of the Theotokos known as "She Who Shows the Way."
- Have the students find the prophets as the descriptions are read.

Supplemental Activity—Work sheet B: Divide the 9 scriptural passages among the students. Have them find the passage and read it aloud to the group. Ask everyone to look at the prophet in the icon as the passage is read.

7. Vespers

- Have the students read the information about Litanies aloud.
- Distribute the Vespers folder.
- Give each student one copy of the first part of the Litany (see page 60 in this teacher manual—this page has 2 copies to save on paper).
- Ask the students to tape or glue this section of the Litany at the top of a new page in their folder.

8. Activity A: My Personal Journal

Distribute Worksheet A along with pens or pencils. Have the students complete the worksheet in silence (or you can play religious music if available) and place it in their folder. Plan accordingly, but they should need no more than 5 minutes to complete the journal entry.

9. Activity B: Choices

- Have the students build a story sentence by sentence. Tell them to include bad choices and good choices to hear the effects.

For example: Start the story by saying *"It is Friday night and I am invited to go to the mall with my friends."* [Now have the next person say the next sentence and include a bad choice in that sentence—*"My friend starts talking to someone we don't know."* Now have the next person continue with a bad choice or good choice. Let the students be creative.

- After everyone has a turn, discuss how the choices made a difference.

10. Summary

Ask the students what the main idea of today's lesson. Refer back to the objectives that you might have listed on the board or read at the beginning of class. Ask the students if they have any further comments or questions about what you discussed today.

11. Closing Prayer

- Gather the students at the icon corner.
- Pray the words from "The Great Ektenia" (Vespers booklet).

The Great Ektenia

PRIEST: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

ALL: Lord, have mercy! *(and after each petition)*

For peace from on high, and for the salvation of our souls,
let us pray to the Lord.

For peace in the whole world, for the well-being of the holy Churches of God and for the union of
all, let us pray to the Lord.

For this holy Church and for all who enter it with faith, reverence, and the fear of God, let us pray to
the Lord.

For His Holiness (N), the Pope of Rome, for our most reverend Archbishop and Metropolitan, N.,
for our God-loving Bishop N., for the venerable priesthood, the diaconate in Christ, and all the
clergy and the people, let us pray to the Lord.

For our civil authorities and all in the service of our country, let us pray to the Lord.

For this city, for every city and countryside, and for those living within them in faith, let us pray to
the Lord.

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For our civil authorities and all in the service of our country, let us pray to the Lord.

For this city, for every city and countryside, and for those living within them in faith, let us pray to
the Lord.

My Personal Journal

Loneliness is an example of brokenness experienced within a person. The following are a few examples of different ways we feel lonely:

Loneliness is watching your best friend drive away to live in another town.

Loneliness is sitting at home on a Sunday afternoon when all your friends have been invited to go skating, but you were not.

Loneliness is spending a few days in bed with the flu, and no one calls or texts to find out how you are.

Loneliness is walking into the school cafeteria, and no one invites you to join their table.

Loneliness is the scary feeling that if someone found out what you really think, he or she would not accept you.

Write your experiences of loneliness.

Loneliness is _____
_____.

Loneliness is _____
_____.

Loneliness is _____
_____.

What do you do when you are lonely? _____
_____.

How can your relationship with Jesus Christ help you deal with your loneliness?

_____.

Uncreation

In the beginning was the earth.

And it was beautiful.

And man lived upon the earth. And man said:

"Let us build skyscrapers and expressways."

And man covered the earth with steel and concrete.

And man said: "It is good."

On the second day,

man looked upon the clear blue waters of the earth.

And man said: "Let us dump our sewage and wastes into the waters."

And man did. The waters became dark and murky.

And man said: "It is good."

On the third day,

man gazed at the forests on the earth.

They were tall and green. And man said:

"Let us cut the trees to build things for ourselves."

And man did. And the forests grew thin.

And man said: "It is good."

On the fourth day,

man saw the animals leaping in the fields

and playing in the sun. And man said:

"Let us trap the animals for money and shoot them for sport."

And man did. And the animals became scarce.

And man said: "It is good."

On the fifth day,

man felt the cool breeze in his nostrils.

And man said: "Let us burn our refuse and let the wind blow away the smoke and debris."

And man did. And the air became dense with smoke and carbon.

And man said: "It is good."

On the sixth day,

man saw the many kinds of people on earth different in race, color, and creed.

And man feared and said: "Let us make bombs and missiles in case misunderstandings arise."

And man did. And missile sites and bomb dumps checkered the landscape.

And man said: "It is good."

On the seventh day, man rested.

And the earth was quiet and deathly still.

For man was no more.

And it was good.

(Reprinted from *THESE STONES WILL SHOUT* (pages 28-29) by Mark Link)

Scripture and the Prophets

Start clockwise, beginning at "noon":

The Patriarch Jacob (holding an orb with the face of Christ in the center—Genesis 32:31)

The Prophet Isaiah (with the flaming coal that touched his lips—Isaiah 6:6-7)

The Prophet Aaron (with the rod that budded—Numbers 17:16-26)

The Prophet Solomon (with a lovers' bed—Song of Songs 1:16)

The Prophet Jeremiah (with a stone—in Jewish tradition Jeremiah was stoned to death by Jews in Egypt who had adopted pagan ways)

The Prophet Abbakum (or Habbakuk) (with a mountain overshadowed by dense forest—the description of Mount Paran In the LXX version of Habbakuk 3:3)

The Prophet Gideon (with the dewy fleece—Judges 6:37-40)

The Prophet Ezekiel (with the door that was shut—Ezekiel 44:1-4)

The Prophet Moses (with the burning bush—Exodus 3:1-6)

The Prophet Daniel (with the stone hewn from the mountain—Daniel 2:45).