

Resource Package

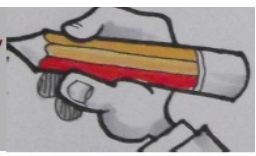
Catholic Earthcare Australia



Introduction

'Pure Gift' is Catholic Earthcare Australia's new resource for adults and senior secondary students. The core of this resource package is an animation of a legacy letter written by Luke Edwards to his three young sons.





Two strands of resources have been developed to support the 'Pure Gift' clip.

Liturgical Strand

Carmel Pilcher rsj has written a set of liturgical resources.

Formation and Prayer Exercises Strand

Luke Edwards has developed a range of prayerful exercises and contemplative reflections based on themes contained within the animated clip.

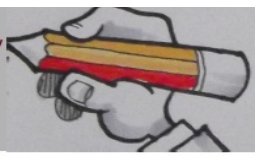


The 'Pure Gift' resource has a flexible design and offers a selection of options for the user within each theme.

The 'Pure Gift' resource package is a growing series. As additional resources are developed, these will be added to the resource package.

Material is intended to assist the user in the growth and understanding of their emerging ecological consciousness. It is hoped that these exercises might provide moments of insight and transformation to stimulate and sustain the movement for ecological conversion at a personal and communal level.





'Pure Gift' the animated clip

The 'Pure Gift' clip is 5:39 minutes long. To view the clip

- Connect to the internet
- Adjust speaker volume
- Click in image below.



Liturgical Strand

Two Liturgical resources inspired by the themes found within 'Pure Gift' are currently available:

- [Liturgy of the Word](#) For a pdf version [click here](#).
- [Prayer of the Church](#) For a pdf version [click here](#).

Users are encouraged to modify these in keeping with the intended context of use.





Liturgy of the Word

OPENING SONG

Suggestions:

- a) The Deer's Cry, by Shaun Davey and Rita Connolly
- b) Cosmic Hymn of Praise, by Michael Mangan – follow [link to lyrics and copyright info](#)
- c) By Breath, [Sara Thomsen](#)
- d) Mystery by [Paul Winter](#)

ENTHRONING OF THE WORD

The Book of the Scriptures is processed to the place of proclamation

GREETING

Leader: We praise our God who is the author and creator of all life.

All: Thanks be to God

CALL TO PRAYER *(from Supplement Psalms for Morning and Evening Prayer: Sisters of the Good Samaritan)*

Leader: The land reflects your face, O God – ever ancient, always new.

All: Give praise in God's holy place.

Leader: The land sounds with your voice, O God – calling for justice and tolerance.

All: Give praise in God's holy place.





Leader: The land breathes with your life, O God – the spirit
alive in the people.

All: Give praise in God's holy place.

OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray,
God our provider,
You spoke and our world was made.
From the fruits of the earth
you nourish us and give us life.
Make us good stewards of your gifts
and grant us, even now in this world,
a foretaste of that glory
to which you are drawing the whole of Creation.
We make our prayer through Christ who is the
source of our life.
All: Amen

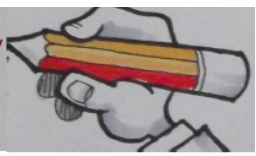
READING

Romans 8:18 - 27

'The whole creation has been groaning in labour pains until now'

I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. We know that the whole of creation has been groaning on labour pains until now, and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is not seen is





not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

Likewise, the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 29 (ICEL translation)

All: Give glory to God, honour God's name

Give the Lord glory, you spirits!
Give glory! Honour God's strength!
Honour the name of the Lord!
Bow when the Lord comes,
majestic and holy. R/

God's voice thunders
above the massive seas;
powerful, splendid,
God shatters the cedars,
shatters the cedars of Lebanon,
makes Lebanon jump like a calf,
Sirion like a wild ox. R/

God's voice strikes fire,
makes the desert shudder,
Quadesh shudder in labour,
deer writhe in labour,
God strips the trees. R/

All shout 'Glory' in your temple, Lord.
For you rule the mighty waters,
you rule over all for ever.





Give strength to your people, Lord,
and bless your people with peace. R/

GOSPEL **John 15: 1 - 11**

'I am the vine, you are the branches.'

'I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine-grower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you.

Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.

Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

My Father is glorified in this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.

REFLECTION

**Participating in the continuing Groaning of Creation:
A Father's Reflection on the Birth of his Children**





On 3 occasions, I have been blessed to be present at the birth of my three beautiful children; each an experience of immeasurable joy and suffering.

As a husband, I have been witness to and experienced my wife's pain in labour and endured the pain and anguish of watching on, offering seemingly limp touch and encouragement, while we wait for utter joy to arrive.

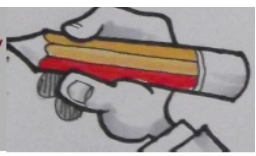
On either side of this divide lies unfettered potential- an unfolding into life that will be nurtured, buffeted and held by the forces of destiny and a trinity of mystery, love and being human.

To be swept up in this most intimate and divinely laced event is to be opened up to the vulnerability of life and to be confronted with the paradox and contradictions that make up the rawness of reality. It is a giving over to the presence of suffering and to the realization that life cannot be lived without enduring it, indeed it is the very cycle that makes all life possible. Suffering is what makes joy so radical. This duality is made all the more real once the shrill vulnerable cries of your newborn pierce the air that inhabits their unknown world, only to be calmed by the touch of their nearest kin.

One realises, that each birth, each life contains potential and that each life participates in creation's groaning towards fulfillment.

It has occurred to me that both as a husband, watching someone you love dearly go through such an experience, and as a father, caring tenderly for his children, that it may be something like God's love for us... that you dare to love unconditionally and with a vulnerability that wrestles with the instinct to protect and control, allowing space for the





spirit of grace that lies at the heart of all life to be given the freedom to emerge - to contribute to and participate in the unfolding of God's graced story. Such groaning is an emergence towards wholeness and transformation. Such groaning is held in the deep love of Christ - inching ever forward to a communion that transcends and includes our human weaknesses, accomplishments and trials.

SONG

Suggestions:

- a) By Breath, [Sara Thomsen](#)
- b) Mystery by [Paul Winter](#)

PRAYER RESPONSE

Leader: Creator God, you continue to give birth in many ways each day through our openness to your will. Hear us as we pray:

For mothers everywhere, that they are strengthened as they share in God's work of nurturing and sustaining

All: Creator God, hear our prayer

For those who, either through war or some other disaster are without the loving care of a parent, that we will see it as our duty to compassionately support and care for them

All: Creator God, hear our prayer

For all living creatures in our world that we will nurture, not destroy; care for, not neglect; realise our connection with rather than separation from

All: Creator God, hear our prayer

For what else shall we pray...

All: Creator God, hear our prayer





Let us confidently stand before our God knowing that in Christ all things are possible as we pray:

Our Father

If appropriate it might be possible to move to plant something in an appropriate garden or park nearby.

At the conclusion of the planting (or some other creative activity) ...

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Leader:

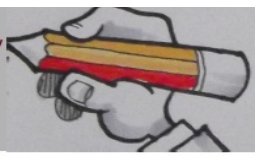
By your word,
Creator God,
we and all creatures
are formed, sustained, and fed.
Teach us to live in peace
with the world your hands have made,
that as faithful stewards of your good earth,
we may reverence you in the works of creation.
We make our prayer through Jesus Christ who is
our brother.

SENDING FORTH

Leader: Go in peace to create a new world in the name of
the Creator God

All: Thanks be to God





Prayer of the Church

GATHERING

Leader: Peace with God the Creator

All: Peace with all of creation.

HYMN

Suggestions:

- a) The Deer's Cry, by Shaun Davey and Rita Connolly
- b) Cosmic Hymn of Praise, by Michael Mangan – follow [link to lyrics and copyright info](#)
- c) By Breath, [Sara Thomsen](#)
- d) Mystery by [Paul Winter](#)

PSALM 104 1-15; 24, 27-30; 33-34 (ICEL translation)

I will bless you, Lord my God!

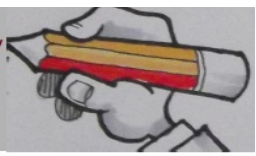
You fill the world with awe.

You dress yourself in light,
in rich, majestic light.

You stretched the sky like a tent,
built your house beyond the rain.
You ride upon the clouds,
the wind becomes your wings,
the storm becomes your herald,
your servants, bolts of light.

You made the earth solid,
fixed it for good.
You made the sea a cloak,
covering hills and all.





At your command
the sea fled your thunder,
swept over mountains,
down the valleys to its place.

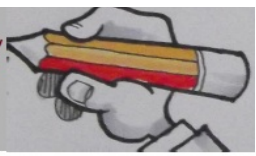
You set its limits,
never to drown the earth again.
You feed springs that feed brooks,
rushing down ravines,
water for the wild beasts,
for wild asses to drink.

Birds nest nearby
and sing among the leaves.
You make grass grow for cattle,
make plants grow for people,
food to eat from the earth
and wine to warm the heart,
oil to glisten on faces
and bread for bodily strength.

God, how fertile your genius!
You shape each thing,
you fill the world
with what you do.
All look to you for food
when they hunger;
you provide it and they feed.

You open your hand, they feast;
you turn away, they fear.
You steal their breath,
they drop back into the dust.
Breath into them, they rise;
the face of the earth comes alive!





I will sing to my God,
make music for the Lord
as long as I live.
Let my song give joy to God
who is a joy to me.

Glory to you Source of all being, Eternal Word and Holy
Spirit as it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen

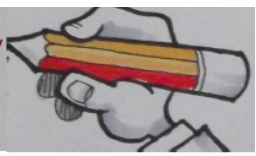
READING from the Letter of John Paul II: *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* (9)

The varied scenario of celebrations of the Eucharist have given me a powerful experience of its universal and, so to speak, cosmic character. Yes, cosmic! Because even when it is celebrated on the humble altar of a country church, the Eucharist is always in some way celebrated *on the altar of the world*.

It unites heaven and earth. It embraces and permeates all creation. The Son of God became human in order to restore all creation, in one supreme act of praise, to the One who made it from nothing.

He, the Eternal High Priest who by the blood of his Cross entered the eternal sanctuary, thus gives back to the Creator all creation redeemed. He does so through the priestly ministry of the Church, to the glory of the Most Holy Trinity. Truly this is the *mysterium fidei* which is accomplished in the Eucharist: the world which came forth from the hands of God the Creator now returns to him redeemed by Christ.





Pause

PRAYERS OF RESPONSE AND INTERCESSION

That all the peoples of earth, who face common dangers and share a common destiny,

may learn to share justly and fairly, the world's limited resources.

That those in our world who hunger and thirst for daily bread and human dignity

may find those of us who have plenty to become generous stewards of God's bountiful gifts.

That those who study the earth and its elements may be assisted and encouraged in their work,

so that we will be taught how best to nurture and sustain nature.

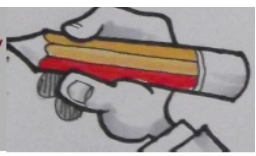
That we will value all of God's creation

and live in harmony with our sisters and brothers, plants and animals, the earth and the planets.

Leader: And so with confidence in our Creator we pray the prayer that Jesus taught us:

Our Father ...





CANTICLE

Colossians 1:12-20 (ICEL translation)

Give thanks to the Father,
who made us fit
for the holy community of light
and rescued us from darkness,
bringing us into the realm
of his beloved Son
who redeemed us,
forgiving our sins.

Christ is an image
of the God we cannot see.
Christ is firstborn in all creation.

Through Christ the universe was made,
things seen and unseen,
thrones, authorities, forces, powers.

Everything was created
through Christ and for Christ.
Before anything came to be, Christ was,
and the universe is held together by Christ.

Christ is also head of the body, the church,
its beginning as firstborn from the dead
to become in all things first.

For by God's good pleasure
Christ encompasses
the full measure of power,
reconciling creation with its source
and making peace by the blood of the cross.





CONCLUDING PRAYER (ICEL translation)

God, Creator and Provider,
yours is the earth and its fullness,
the mighty oceans teaming with life.
Help us to tend wisely
what is ours in trust.
Prosper the work of our hands
and multiply the harvests of land and sea
for the good of peoples everywhere
and the glory of your name.
Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy
Spirit,
God for ever and ever.

BLESSING (ICEL translation)

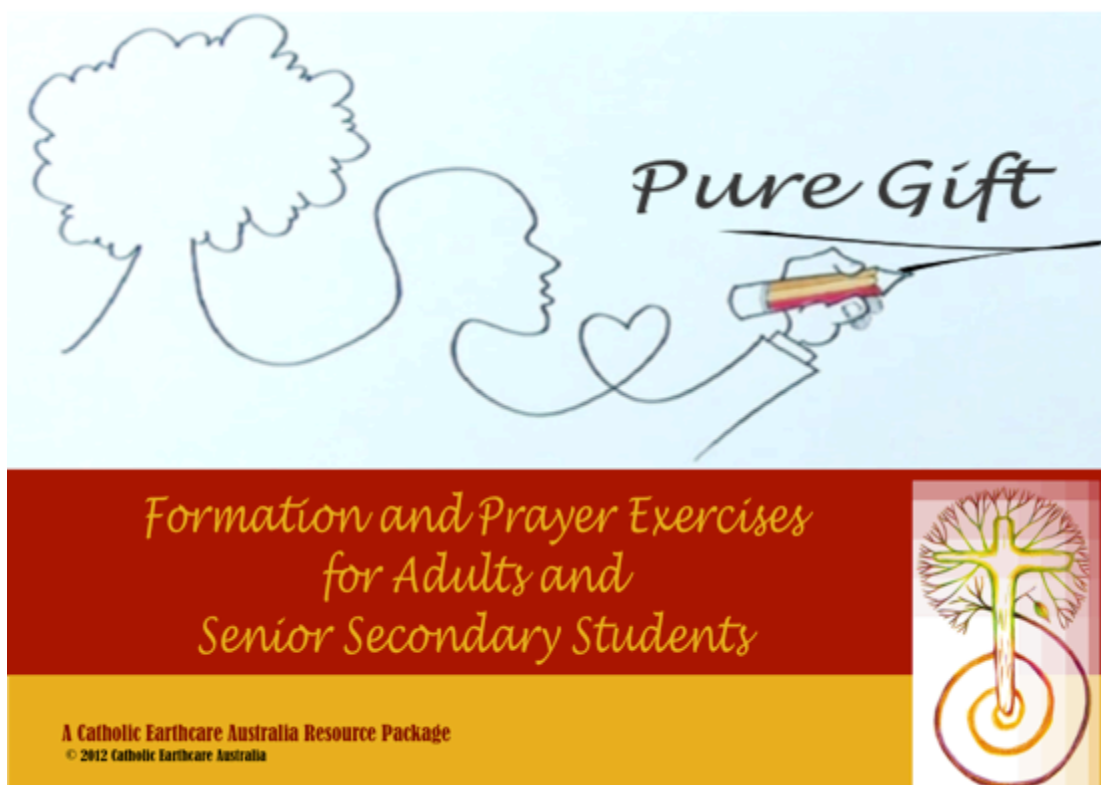
Leader: Be present O God, to your servants who call upon
you,
and bless us with your unfailing kindness.
Since we glory to have you as our maker,
restore in us the beauty of your creation
and keep intact the gifts you have given us.

DISMISSAL

Leader: As those called by God to live in relationship with
our earth, let us go in peace to love and serve our God
together with all of creation.

ALL: Thanks be to God





The 'Pure Gift' resource package offers a range of prayerful exercises and contemplative reflections based on themes contained within the animated clip. Material is intended to assist the user in the growth and understanding of their emerging ecological consciousness. It is hoped that these exercises might provide moments of insight and transformation to stimulate and sustain the movement for ecological conversion at a personal and communal level.

The 'Pure Gift' resource has a flexible design and offers a selection of options for the user within each theme. The material is suited to use by individuals, small groups and for classroom use in the senior secondary context.

In keeping with Catholic Earthcare Australia's desire to be as environmentally friendly as possible, this is an online resource that contains links to additional materials in various media.





Structure of the 'Pure Gift' Resource Package

The 'Pure Gift' resource is arranged in independent themes. Each theme is taken from the animated clip and supported with appropriate snippet embedded in the text. Links are provided for additional online resources.

The 'Pure Gift' themes invite the user to move through six steps:

- ✓ FRAME – a description of the context
- ✓ CLIP AND SCRIPT FOCUS – reference to connecting images and text
- ✓ OPENING THE SPACE- suggestions for focusing on the theme
- ✓ WORDS OF WISDOM- the invitation to visit scripture and other inspirational writings
- ✓ BLESSING- suggested closing prayer and/or ritual action
- ✓ GOING DEEPER - suggestions for further personal exploration

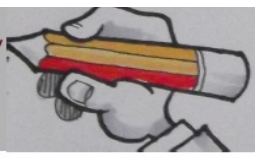
Using the Resource Package

Some Suggestions for Using the 'Pure Gift' Resource Package

Technical - This is an online resource and has been designed to be used with a computer or similar device.

Snippets of 'Pure Gift' are embedded within this resource package.





Access to the suggested links and websites requires an Internet connection.

Computers and similar devices can be connected to data projectors or to digital televisions either wirelessly or via the appropriate cords. Refer to the relevant equipment manuals for further information.

Practical- It is the role of the leader/facilitator to attend to the preliminary details such as

- ✓ creating a welcoming, prayerful space,
- ✓ selecting formation and prayer exercises appropriate to the group they are leading,
- ✓ determine the timeframe for theme and the gathering,
- ✓ enable members of the group to participate as fully as they are comfortable to do,
- ✓ providing additional materials, such as art materials or encourage members of the group to bring their own materials





Pure Gift Formation and Prayer Exercises

Within the Formation and Prayer Exercise strand four themes have been developed. Each theme is available

- ✓ on screen
- ✓ as a pdf version [best for printing] or
- ✓ as a PowerPoint version.

Theme One: The Art of Surrender

[Click here](#) for a short cut to Theme One

[Click here](#) for a pdf version

[Click here](#) for a PowerPoint version

Theme Two: The Art of Conversation and Co-Inquiry

[Click here](#) for a shortcut to Theme Two

[Click here](#) for a pdf version

[Click here](#) for a PowerPoint version

Theme Three: Grace as Pure Gift

[Click here](#) for a shortcut to Theme Three

[Click here](#) for a pdf version

[Click here](#) for a PowerPoint version

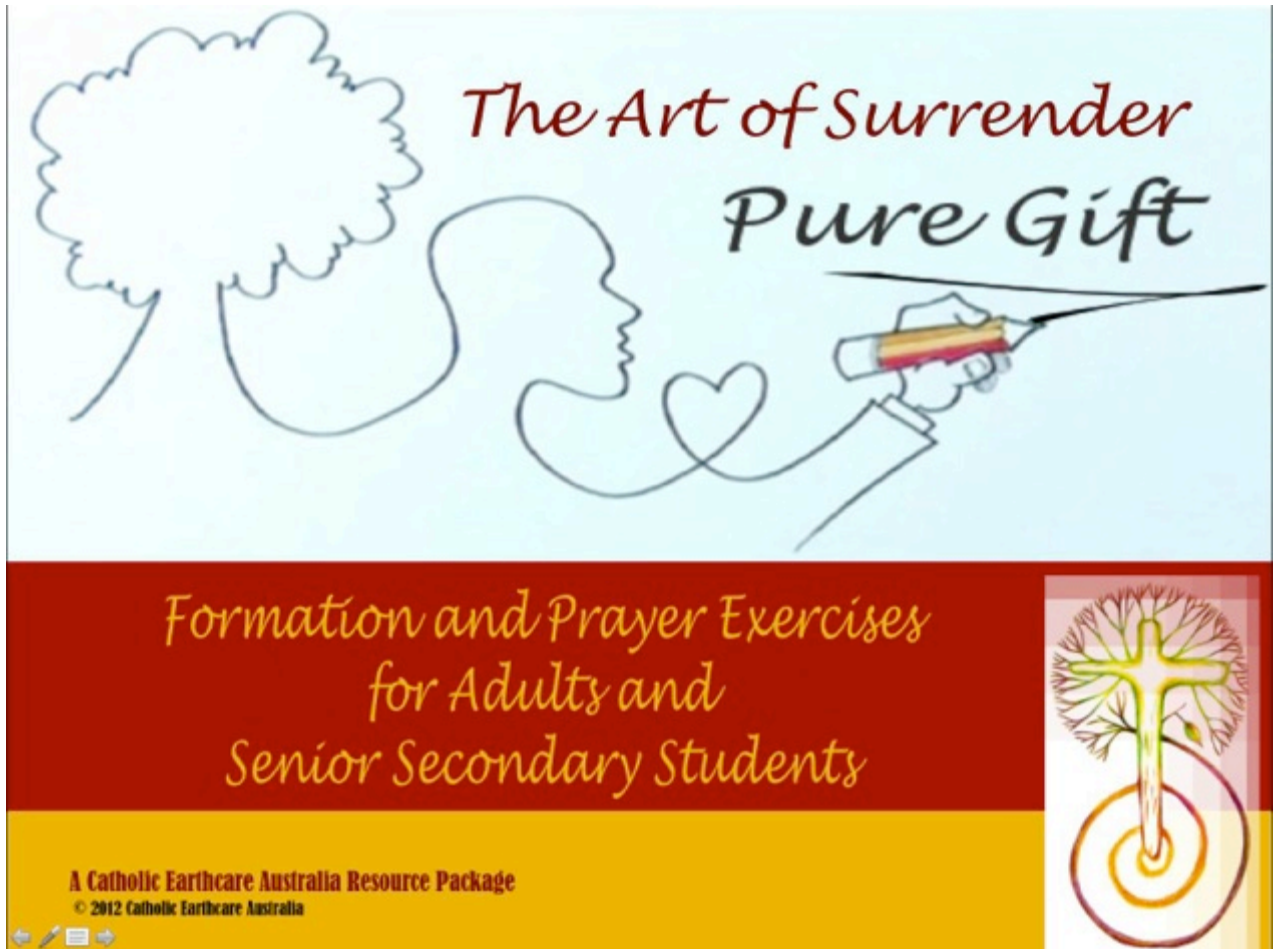
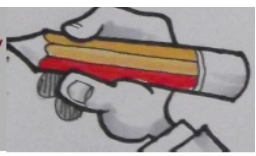
Theme Four: The Call to Participation

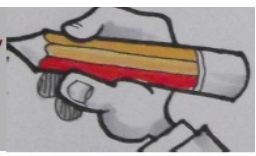
[Click here](#) for a shortcut to Theme Four

[Click here](#) for a pdf version

[Click here](#) for a PowerPoint version







The Art of Surrender – theme one

FRAME

The Christian journey can be seen as a 'giving over' – a movement of surrender that gives space to the big-heartedness of a God of infinite love.

Our role is to get ourselves out of the way so that grace can more easily play its salvic and formative part.

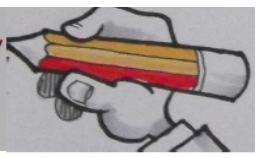
This is no easy process and a life-times work of art. A letting go of human will to let come the spirit of limitless love and compassion.

CLIP AND SCRIPT FOCUS:

You may choose to view 'Pure Gift' in its [entirety](#) and then the snippet relevant to this theme, or just the snippet below.

[Click here](#) for the relevant Snippet of 'Pure Gift' for *Theme One: The Art of Surrender*.





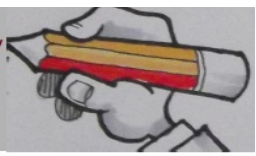
Snippet of script from 'Pure Gift' for Theme One: The Art of Surrender'.

Dear Patrick, Dominic and Lachlan,

For a while now I have wanted to try and explain to you what it is that I do and why - in some ways this is the simplest, yet hardest thing to do. How do you explain that once you have discovered it, you can only do what you are called to?

Ever since I can remember, I have known a gentle and persistent presence, something of a whisper that has been a constant companion, waiting for me to surrender. It's only now that I can look back to recognise this movement as an encounter with the patient and unconditional love of God, to name what it's asking of me and to live into it by returning the gaze. For once you have found it, you can only give it back...





OPENING THE SPACE:

Having viewed the clip and read the snippet of script, consider the concept of surrender. You may wish to replay the clip and / or re-read the snippet from the 'Pure Gift' letter. Reflect quietly on the clip and the text for a minute or two.

Suggestions for sharing:

- a. Share your reflections of reading the frame as a way of leading into this moment of personal reflection
- b. Consider and share, 'What is it that whispers deeply with in you?'

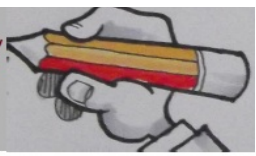
WORDS OF WISDOM:

To deepen the exploration of the idea of surrender you are invited to prayerfully take in either or both of the following texts:

Genesis 28:10-17 [NRSV]

Jacob left Beer-sheba and went toward Haran. He came to a certain place and stayed there for the night because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place. And he dreamed that there was a ladder set up on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. And



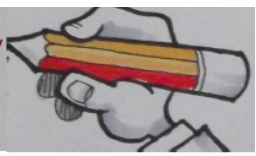


the LORD stood beside him and said, “I am the LORD, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring; and your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and all the families of the earth shall be blessed in you and in your offspring. Know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and bring you back to this land ; for I will not leave you until I have done what I promised you.” Then Jacob woke from his sleep and said, “Surely the LORD is in this place - and I did not know it!” And he was afraid and said, “How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.”

“It remains the dream of every life to realise itself, to reach out and lift itself up to greater heights. A life that continues to remain on the safe side of its own habits and repetitions, that never engages with risk of its own possibility, remains an unlived life. There is within each heart, a hidden voice that calls out for freedom and creativity. We often linger for years in spaces that are too small and shabby for the grandeur of our spirit.”

John O'Donohue: A Book of Blessings, 2008, p192





RESPONSE:

Suggested questions for reflection

- a. What is it within your heart that is calling out for freedom and creativity?
- b. What image/images of God do these reflections provoke within you? What impact does that have upon your notion of God?

BLESSING:

There is a beautiful creature living
In a hole you have
dug,

so at night I set fruit and grains and little pots of wine and milk
beside your soft earthen
mounds,

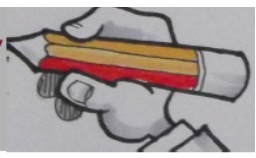
and I often sing to you,
but still, my dear, you do not come out.

I have fallen in love with someone
who is hiding inside
of you.

We should talk about this problem,
otherwise I will never
Leave you
Alone

May the words of Hafiz gift us with the wisdom of knowing
our gifts and the courage to live into them.



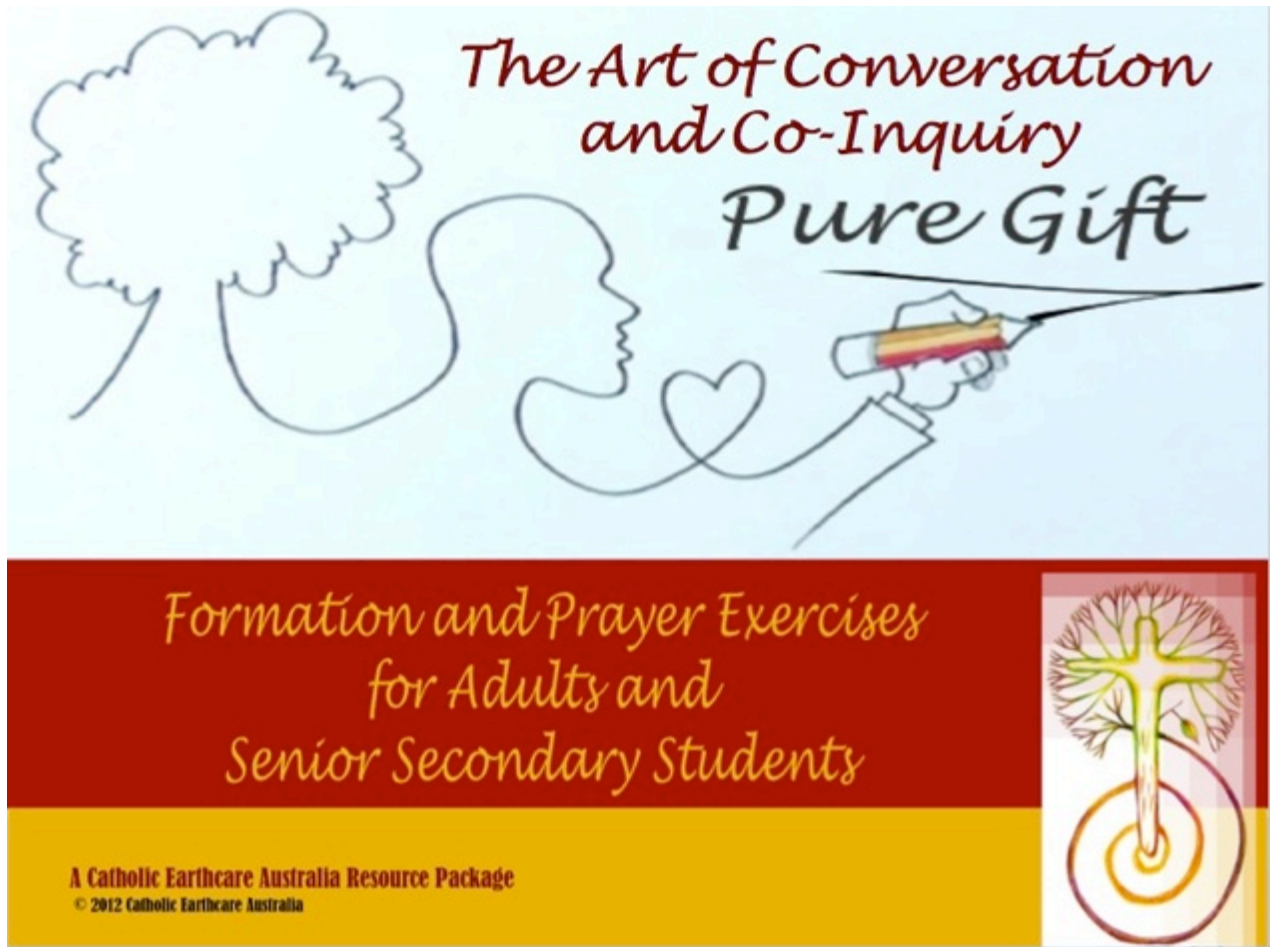
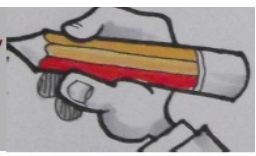


GOING DEEPER: Contemplating an image

Questions to contemplate to capture in creative ways and/or in conversation reflect upon [the image](#) of Jacob's Ladder by Jose de Ribera.

- a. What does this image suggests about the idea of surrendering.
- b. Write your own legacy letter, expressing their call and their deepest wishes for the future.





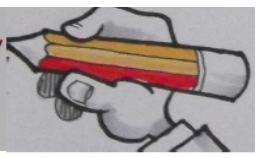
The Art of Conversation and Co-Inquiry *Theme Two*

FRAME

Littered throughout the narrative of Pure Gift are numerous insights into spirituality and life. One way of cultivating a space for these insights to be nurtured and nourishing is to engage in conversation and co-inquiry.

This exercise invites participants into a place where through intentional conversation, the opportunity for growth and the seeds of conversion can take root.





CLIP AND SCRIPT FOCUS:

View 'Pure Gift' in its [entirety](#).

Snippets of script from 'Pure Gift' for *Theme Two: The Art of Conversation and Co-inquiry*.

*...encounter the deep interconnections of
all living things*

...the wonders of the universe

...life as gift

...in tune with the rhythm of life

...the call of our times

*...enchanted with the mystery and deep
spirit of life*

OPENING THE SPACE:

Having viewed the clip and read the snippets of script, consider the call to conversation and co-inquiry. You may wish to replay the clip and / or re-read the snippet from the 'Pure Gift' letter. Reflect quietly on the clip and the text for a minute or two.





You are invited to share your reflections in pairs

- a. Person 'A' chooses one of the lines from above as a focus. Person 'A' then speaks for 2 minutes about their response to the essence of the line they have selected. Person 'B' listens attentively.
- b. Change roles and repeat the process.
- c. Invite participants to pair up with another member of the group to hold a 2 minute conversation. The focus can be on one of the lines previously discussed, or on one that has not been discussed.

Sharing with the whole group

- a. If time allows, gather the participants into a large group format and invite responses from the group about what insights have been gained as a result of the conversations that have been held.

Individual Reflection

- a. Having viewed the clip, reflect quietly on the clip and the text for a minute or two. You may wish to offer your own reflections of reading the frame above as a way of leading into this moment of personal reflection.
- b. A guiding question for this personal reflection may be, 'What is it that whispers deeply with in you?'





A WORD OF WISDOM: the invitation to reflect upon the following thoughts about the spiritual value of conversation:

"Talking happens a lot. It is often monologue. Conversation is rarer, by far. It is always dialogue. No one takes leave of a real conversation the same as when one entered into it. Our conversations create us. Conversation and risk and conversion belong together. Conversation is dangerous, therefore, to anyone unwilling to embrace or at least to accept transformation"

"That conversion and conversations are related in meaning and etymology is no superficial intuition...true conversation always puts conversants at risk, because you cannot truly converse without risk of conversion"

[Conversation, Risk and Conversion: The Inner Public Life of Small Christian Communities, Michael Cowan and Bernard Lee (1997)]

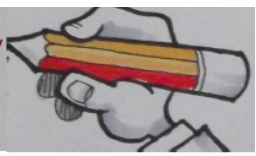
RESPONSE:

Consider and share how we each might rise to the challenge to cultivate a more engaged, open and inquiring stance to the conversations we have.

BLESSING:

How surely gravity's law,
Strong as an ocean current
Takes hold of even the smallest thing
And pulls it toward the heart of the world.
Each thing - each stone, blossom, child -
Is held in place.
Only we in our arrogance



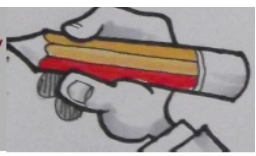


Push out beyond what we each belong to
For some empty freedom.
If we surrendered to Earth's intelligence
We could rise up rooted, like trees.
Instead we entangle ourselves
In knots of our own making
And struggle, lonely and confused.
So, like children we begin again
To learn from the things
Because they are in God's heart,
They have never left him.

- Rilke II, 16

Rainer Maria Rilke, *Rilke's Book of Hours: Love Poems to God*
(New York: Riverhead Books, 1996), 116 - 117





Formation and Prayer Exercises for Adults and Senior Secondary Students

A Catholic Earthcare Australia Resource Package
© 2012 Catholic Earthcare Australia



Grace as Pure Gift - Theme Three

FRAME

Grace...the dripping reality of God's presence in us, and all of creation. A spirit, movement and dance that gave birth to the universe, seeded the stars and gave us life. It is the stuff of life that permeates all things... was then, is now and shall be. Grace transcends, yet includes our will. All it asks is that we give over and surrender, so that we may see and encounter this divine essence.





CLIP AND SCRIPT FOCUS:

You may choose to view 'Pure Gift' in its [entirety](#) and then the snippet relevant to 'Grace and Pure Gift', or just the snippet below.

[Click here](#) for the excerpt from 'Pure Gift' for Theme Three: Grace as Pure Gift.

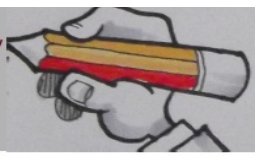


A snippet from the script of 'Pure Gift' for Theme Three: Grace as Pure Gift.

...Most importantly, we give over to grace, knowing really that it is not our work.

And so, we simply craft out spaces for co-inquiry and deep listening, to once again re-connect to the thread, to re-consider what it is to be human, to be re-enchanted with the mystery and deep spirit of life, to fall into a far bigger story than we have designed for ourselves...





OPENING THE SPACE:

Call to mind their ideas of grace and to sit with that image or idea.

Ask, what is the bigger story you are called to?

A WORD OF WISDOM: an invitation to reflect upon the following ideas about grace.

[You may wish to read them out, or place them around the space you are in and invite people to walk around and to reflect upon them, or you could write/[project them](#).]

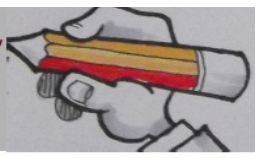
“I know nothing except what everyone knows- if there when grace dances, I should dance.” (W H Auden)

“Grace is the secret essence of all eligible reality”
(Karl Rahner)

*“In Grace, we see ourselves as peers, not only with all peoples, but with the earth itself.”
(Elizabeth Dreyer)*

“God communicates God’s self to human beings in their own reality, in the ebb and flow of their lives, in the horizons they reach and in the dreams that may never see the light of day. This is the mystery and the fullness of grace in the here and now.” (Begin with the Heart: Recovering a Sacramental Vision, 2008, Daniel O’Leary)





RESPONSE: an invitation to consider and act

- a. What thought/thoughts seem to connect with you the most?
- b. What might this be suggesting to you?
- c. Capture some of their responses in whatever creative way feels right for you.
- d. Participating in a paired conversation to share some of the insights you have been opened up to.

BLESSING:

The Way It Is

There's a thread you follow. It goes among
things that change. But it doesn't change.
People wonder about what you are pursuing.
You have to explain about the thread.
But it is hard for others to see.
While you hold it you can't get lost.
Tragedies happen; people get hurt
or die; and you suffer and get old.
Nothing you do can stop time's unfolding.
You don't ever let go of the thread.
~ William Stafford ~





GOING DEEPER: you may wish to

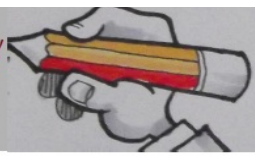
- a. listen to The Deer's Cry, performed by Shaun Davey and Rita Connolly) (download from the Apple Store)
Or you can view at
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DONuyLwWPaY>
- b. consider Denis Edwards' presentation of our grace-filled universe.

The Story of the Spirit and the Story of Grace

'The story of the Spirit that begins with creation continues as the story of grace. The Creator Spirit who fills the universe is from the very beginning the Sanctifier, the bringer of grace. From the beginning, the Spirit is present to human beings in self-offering love. The Spirit of God who graciously accompanies and celebrates every form of life delights in the emergence of human creatures who can respond to the divine self-offering in a personal way. They are offered the gift of transforming grace. A grace-filled universe awaits their arrival. Alongside this story of grace is the tragic story of the wilful rejection of grace. Human beings are born into a world of grace, but are also drawn toward violence and evil. In the midst of such a world, the Spirit offers freedom and salvation in a way that Christians understand as anticipating, and as directed toward, the Christ event'.

Denis Edwards, Breath of Life: A Theology of the Creator Spirit





*Formation and Prayer Exercises
for Adults and
Senior Secondary Students*

A Catholic Earthcare Australia Resource Package
© 2012 Catholic Earthcare Australia



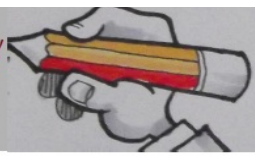
The Call to Participation - Theme Four

FRAME

Within and beyond the lives we lead and are called to, is the constant invitation to participation – a movement of union that is fed by one's surrender to the gift of grace and spirit.

This is a way of being that makes real a spirituality of communion and the incarnation.





CLIP AND SCRIPT FOCUS:

You may choose to view 'Pure Gift' in its [entirety](#) and then the snippet.

[Click here](#) to view a snippet of the 'Pure Gift' clip for *Theme Four: The Call to Participation*.



...All across our country and beyond; in schools, parishes, hospitals and homes, seeds of transformation are being born and being connected - coming together in a movement from perfection to participation, from control to compassion, from fear to faith, beyond certainty to mystery, into a present of presence, towards a future that we were always and forever destined...

OPENING THE SPACE:

Having viewed the clip and read the snippets of script, consider the call to participation. You may wish to replay the clip and / or re-read the snippet from the 'Pure Gift' letter. Reflect quietly on the clip and the text for a minute or two.





You are invited to:

- a. share your reflections on what it is that you are being called to
- b. capture your reflections in whatever creative way you want to

A WORD OF WISDOM: an invitation to be opened up by the following words of wisdom:

“...I live now, not with my own life, but with the life of Christ who lives in me.” (Galatians: 19:21)

“Incarnational spirituality, like ancestral grace, is that combination of divine intoxication with a passionate commitment towards realising right relationships of love and justice at every level of God’s creation” (Ancestral Grace, Diarmuid O’Murchu, page 163)

RESPONSE: an invitation to depth the Words of Wisdom, above

- a. in what ways can these quotes be understood as a call to a participatory way of being?
- b. What do these quotes suggest to you about the nature of the incarnation?



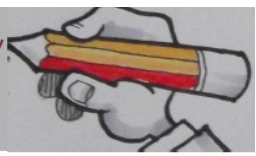


BLESSING:

What to Remember When Waking

In that first hardly noticed moment to which you wake,
coming back to this life from the other more secret,
moveable and frighteningly honest world where
everything began,
there is a small opening into the new day
which closes the moment you begin your plans.
What you can plan is too small for you to live.
What you can live wholeheartedly
will make plans enough
for the vitality hidden in your sleep.
To be human is to become visible
while carrying what is hidden as a gift to others.
To remember the other world in this world
is to live in your true inheritance.
You are not a troubled guest on this earth,
you are not an accident amidst other accidents
you were invited from another and greater night
than the one from which you have just emerged.
Now, looking through the slanting light of the morning
window
toward the mountain presence of everything that can
be,
what urgency calls you to your one love?
What shape waits in the seed
of you to grow and spread its branches against a future
sky?
Is it waiting in the fertile sea? In the trees beyond the
house?
In the life you can imagine for yourself?
In the open and lovely white page on the waiting desk?
~ David Whyte ~ (The House of Belonging)





GOING DEEPER: an invitation to participate in a 'letting go' exercise.

We are constantly called to be in communion with God and all of Creation...

What stops you/me from being in communion?

What do I/you need to let go of?

Capture in words, symbols or drawings what I/you believe I/you need to let go of ... to be in communion...

What does each colour represent for you?

What does each of the lines, shapes and symbols represent for you?

Are there key words or recurring themes?

