

# Acts of Worship

## **Virtue: Thankfulness**

### **Virtue to live by:**

I am grateful for all I have and praise God for all he has given me.

### **Week 1: theme – gifts and talents**

#### Gathering together

Focal point:

Green fabric

Objects which you can talk about which refer to own gifts and talents

#### Word

### **Matthew 5:14-16**

"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

Alternatively, you can use:

### **Matthew 25:14-30**

The Parable of the Bags of Gold

"Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them. To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag,[a] each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. The man who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained five bags more. So also, the one with two bags of gold gained two more. But the man who had received one bag went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.

"After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five more.' "His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!' "The man with two bags of gold also came. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with two bags of gold; see, I have gained two more.'

"His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'

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“Then the man who had received one bag of gold came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. So I was afraid and went out and hid your gold in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.’ “His master replied, ‘You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest.

“So take the bag of gold from him and give it to the one who has ten bags. For whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

Youtube videos of the Parable of the Talents:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UblAZDPu3Pg> or

### Response to/reflection on the Word

Ask the children - What is a gift? What is a talent? All gifts/talents come from God.

Say to the children... “Stand up if you would like to thank God for your gift of....” (e.g. football, being a mathematician, dance, music etc) Keep repeating the instruction using a variety of gifts and talents until everyone has stood up. Celebrate all of our gifts and talents.

### Going forth

How can they use their talents as gift for God and others? How can we let our own light shine for others?

### Ideas for music:

This little light of mine

Share the light of Jesus

O, o, o, how good is the Lord?

Thank you Jesus

Gather, Gather in the light of his flame (Boyce and Stanley)

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**Week 2: theme – giving thanks**

Gathering together

Focal point:

Green fabric

Word

Luke 17:11-19 - Jesus Heals Ten Men With Leprosy

Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus travelled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy[a] met him. They stood at a distance and called out in a loud voice, "Jesus, Master, have pity on us!" When he saw them, he said, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were cleansed.

One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him—and he was a Samaritan. Jesus asked, "Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?" Then he said to him, "Rise and go; your faith has made you well."

Response to / Reflection on the Word

Saying 'thank-you' is very easy to do but very easy to forget. This story from Jesus' life and shows how people responded to him. In this case it is a Samaritan who thanks Jesus. The disciples are surprised because, for them, the Samaritan people did not have a 'true' or 'real' faith and yet only the Samaritan shows the right response to the gift of health that Jesus has given. *Do we always remember to say thank you? Do we always remember to say thank you to God?*

*How does it feel if people forget to say thank you? How does it feel to be thanked? Valued?*

Going forth

Say 'Thank you' to other people and say 'Thank you' to God for this school day

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### **Week 3: theme – thanking God for His world**

#### Gathering together

Focal point:

Green fabric

Globe

#### Word

Genesis 1 The Story of Creation

In the beginning, when God created the universe, the earth was formless and desolate. The raging ocean that covered everything was engulfed in total darkness, and the Spirit of God was moving over the water. Then God commanded, "Let there be light"—and light appeared. God was pleased with what he saw. Then he separated the light from the darkness, and he named the light "Day" and the darkness "Night." Evening passed and morning came—that was the first day. Then God commanded, "Let there be a dome to divide the water and to keep it in two separate places"—and it was done. So God made a dome, and it separated the water under it from the water above it. He named the dome "Sky." Evening passed and morning came—that was the second day. Then God commanded, "Let the water below the sky come together in one place, so that the land will appear"—and it was done. He named the land "Earth," and the water which had come together he named "Sea." And God was pleased with what he saw. Then he commanded, "Let the earth produce all kinds of plants, those that bear grain and those that bear fruit"—and it was done. So the earth produced all kinds of plants, and God was pleased with what he saw. Evening passed and morning came—that was the third day. Then God commanded, "Let lights appear in the sky to separate day from night and to show the time when days, years, and religious festivals[c] begin; they will shine in the sky to give light to the earth"—and it was done. So God made the two larger lights, the sun to rule over the day and the moon to rule over the night; he also made the stars. He placed the lights in the sky to shine on the earth, to rule over the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God was pleased with what he saw. Evening passed and morning came—that was the fourth day. Then God commanded, "Let the water be filled with many kinds of living beings, and let the air be filled with birds." So God created the great sea monsters, all kinds of creatures that live

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in the water, and all kinds of birds. And God was pleased with what he saw. He blessed them all and told the creatures that live in the water to reproduce and to fill the sea, and he told the birds to increase in number. Evening passed and morning came—that was the fifth day. Then God commanded, “Let the earth produce all kinds of animal life: domestic and wild, large and small”—and it was done. So God made them all, and he was pleased with what he saw. Then God said, “And now we will make human beings; they will be like us and resemble us. They will have power over the fish, the birds, and all animals, domestic and wild, large and small.”

..... God looked at everything he had made, and he was very pleased. Evening passed and morning came—that was the sixth day.

(You could use the Godly Play creation story – example on Youtube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iBgSHFGnSZI>)

### Response to / Reflection on the Word

Display images of nature, e.g. giraffe, jellyfish, flowers. Discuss diversity of God’s world.

What can we be thankful to God for? (Take suggestions)

Alternatively, could play: For the beauty of the earth by John Rutter

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xlBkpAm3fhw>)

Ask the children to think about the images and the words – what could they be thankful for?

### Going forth:

Give each child a leaf shaped piece of paper – each child to write or draw something on that they are thankful for. Older children could write a thank you prayer.

Music ideas;

If I were a butterfly

Autumn days

Think of a world without any flowers

Count your blessings

This could be extended by linking to ‘Laudato Si’ and Cafod -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KOgF2Kgel6k> and the idea of stewardship.

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### **Week 4: theme – stewardship**

#### Gathering together

Focal point:

Green fabric

Junk modelling/plastics

Use Image of plastics in the sea

#### Word:

Genesis 1:28-31

God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground." Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food." And it was so. God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.

#### Response to the word

Show images/ plastics etc and discuss how we are polluting our world. God gave us this beautiful planet and asked us to look after it. Are we doing a good job?

Refer back to 'Laudato Si' – One God, One World. Show Cafod video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KOgF2Kgel6k>

After watching the film, allow some time for children to reflect on the following question: *What can I do, to look after this beautiful world?*

#### Going forth:

Give the children a mission to try and do ONE thing this week to look after the world, e.g. turning off lights, recycling etc.

#### Ideas for music:

I am the Earth (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TNtmqStVRoo>)

Wonderful World – Louis Armstrong.