



Stewardship & Environment

Catholic Christians, Jews and Humanists all believe that protecting and preserving the environment for future generations is important. For Catholics and Jews this belief is based on the biblical belief that God has created humans as stewards to rule the earth. Humanists believe that we should take care of creation and everything within it, but reject belief in God.

Sources of Authority

"Each community...has the duty to protect the earth and ensure its fruitfulness for coming generations" (Laudato si)

'God blessed them and said to them, "Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."' (Gen 1:28)

"The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it." (Gen 2:15)

Key Belief	
Catholic beliefs about stewardship & environment	Catholics believe that both stories of creation in Genesis show that human beings are the most important part of creation. God made humans superior to the rest of creation by giving them reason and free will. This is the reason why God made humans stewards of the world. Catholics should be concerned about looking after the environment and the planet. Catholics need to work to protect the planet, cutting down on pollution, caring for animals and making sure that the world is in the best shape to pass on to future generations. Pope Francis wrote an Encyclical letter called 'Laudato si' in 2015 which means 'Care for our Common Home'. This letter inspires Catholics to protect the earth and take part in Catholic Social Teaching. The two greatest commandments are to love God and to love their neighbour. The idea of neighbour means not just those close to us, but people in different countries. Catholics should be concerned about those who suffer badly from climate change.
Jewish beliefs about stewardship & environment	The book of Genesis (the first book of the Torah) states that God created the universe and everything in it. Jews believe God is both a lawgiver and a judge. The Torah gives clear rules on being stewards of the earth and Jews believe God will judge them on how well they follow the Torah. As part of the covenant Moses made with God at Mt Sinai, Jews aim to follow the 613 mitzvot. A covenant is a promise or an agreement and Jews are told that they must never destroy things on the land that are useful and give the land a rest from growing crops every 5 years.
Humanist beliefs about stewardship & environment	Humanists agree with Catholics and Jews that we should look after the environment. However, they believe the universe was created by the Big Bang and has developed through the process of evolution. They reject belief in God and do not believe that God created the universe. Humanists like Peter Singer believe we have to protect and preserve the environment and that includes all life including animal life. Humanists believe we should control population through the use of contraception which is in direct contrast to Catholic beliefs.