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What have we done to the earth?

The Call of Creation  **CAFOD**
just one world



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Questions for discussion

- Think about a time when you have felt connected to nature. Where were you? What was the place like? Describe how you felt.
- In the Bible we often read about the relationship between people and the land. In one of these texts God says, 'Do not defile the land where you live and where I dwell.' (*Numbers 35:34*). What does this text say to you about God's relationship with creation, and about humanity's relationship with the rest of creation?
- In what ways could we express our respect for the rest of creation and enable it to flourish?

The call of creation

"The natural world is made up of many different delicate and intricately interconnected cycles that have nurtured and sustained life for millions of years, giving fertile soil, clean water and a pure atmosphere. Now these life-sustaining mechanisms are breaking down through pollution and abuse."

The Call of Creation, God's invitation and the human response, Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. II: What have we done to the earth?

The story behind the image

Poor countries that are rich in minerals, like the Philippines, benefit little from the wealth that is generated from mining. Legislation tends to favour big multi-national companies rather than local communities.

Enormous amounts of waste are produced by gold mining – as much as 18 tonnes to extract enough for one gold wedding ring. Spillages of toxic mine tailings and mud flows can lead to polluted water, with consequent health and environmental problems. Communities near mines often lose their land and homes, and therefore their livelihoods.

A sacred mountain of the indigenous people living in Canatuan in the Philippines (pictured) has been destroyed by gold mining. In order to extract ore, huge pits have been dug and forests stripped away.

Yet protests by local people have been brutally suppressed. CAFOD is working alongside the community to help get their voices heard.

Reflection

As Shepherds we remind the faithful of God's injunction to us through our first parents to care for and cultivate the Earth (*Genesis 2:15*). As believers, we should live a lifestyle that is outwardly simple yet inwardly rich and compassionate to the Earth community.

Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, 2006

