



CATHOLIC
EDUCATION
MELBOURNE

Seeking to Live the Good News

CATECHIST BOOK

YEAR
2

Seeking to Live the Good News Catechist Book – Year 2

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This Catechist Book is a companion to *Seeking to Live the Good News Student Workbook – Year 2*.

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Introduction

Seeking to Live the Good News, with the *Preparing to Receive the Sacrament* series, form a Year One to Year Six parish religious education program. It consists of a Catechist Book and a Student Book covering eight lessons per term per year. It is designed to help catechists facilitate student learning in the parish environment.

The world is where we are called to experience God as Creator, Jesus as Saviour and the Holy Spirit as Guide. The Church engages us in reflecting on, and being open to, the revelation of God in the world, through sacrament, word and service. The Church calls catechists to be witnesses to Jesus Christ in their interactions with students and in their preparation of lessons. The Church calls them not only to assist students to grow in faith but also to continue their own faith formation.

Seeking to Live the Good News contributes to this reflective process by offering a variety of strategies and approaches consonant with current educational practice. The program assists catechists to share and pass on the story of Jesus Christ and to nurture a growing relationship with Christ.

LESSON 1

I Am Special

Background for the Catechist

Please take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

Being in the image of God the human individual possesses the dignity of a person, who is not just something, but someone. He/she is capable of self-knowledge, of self-possession and of freely giving him/herself and entering into communion with other persons. And he/she is called by grace to a covenant with his Creator, to offer him a response of faith and love that no other creature can give in his stead (CCC 1994, n. 357).

God is the source of everything good: joy, beauty, courage, creativity, generosity; God is the source of human life too. God shares life with all creation and in a special way with human beings, who are made in God's image. In the creation stories of Genesis God looks at all creation, including human beings, and sees that indeed it is very good. Being made in God's image is also the basis of our 'specialness', which is not derived from our own gifts or talents or perceived beauty, skill or 'likeableness' but from the fact that we are all children of God and each uniquely called to reflect our origins in God in a way that no one else can.

Student Focus

Students of this age are family-centred and self-focused and have no difficulty appreciating that they are special and created by God.

Students respond easily to the idea that they come from God, even while appreciating that they are born of specific parents.

Teaching Point

God made me and I am special.

Remembering Point

God made me and I am special.

Beginning

(15 minutes)

Welcome the students to the new year and sit them around a prayer focus you have prepared. Introduce yourself.

Invite the students to introduce themselves by saying their name and the favourite game they like to play.

Ask the students to go to their seats. Give the students a piece of A4 paper folded in half longways (see illustration opposite).

Tell the students: Write your first name in large letters on one half of the paper. Use big letters and lots of colours. Decorate your name making it as attractive as you like. *(Give the students a few minutes and help those who need assistance in writing their names.)* When you have finished, stand it in front of you so that I can see your name.

Tell the students: I will collect your names at the end of each lesson and each week I will try to match your name with you.

Invite the students to pray by saying: Let's say a prayer now to begin our lesson. Each week we will start with a short prayer beginning with the Sign of the Cross. Can any one show us how to make the Sign of the Cross? *(Take examples or show the students yourself if you have no response. The students may have to practise this a few times.)*

Tell the students: Repeat each line after me.

Catechist: Lord Jesus,

Students: Lord Jesus,

Catechist: Help us to listen today.

Students: Help us to listen today.

Catechist: Keep us close to you

Students: Keep us close to you

Catechist: Always.

Students: Always.

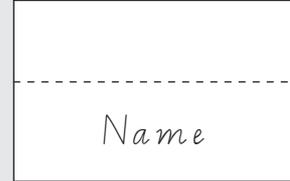
Catechist: Amen.

Students: Amen.

Tell the students: As I look at your names written so beautifully, there is something that stands out. Each one of you has written your name in a different way. Even those of you who have similar names or the same name *(leave this out if you don't have duplicate names)* have written your names using different colours or decorated them differently. Each one of you is different. Today we are going to look at who made us different and how important that is and how we are special.

PREPARATION

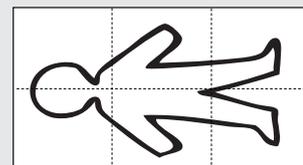
1. Prepare a prayer focus using a cloth, a candle and the Bible . (See Appendix 1, page 5.)
2. Have an A4 sheet of paper folded in half lengthwise, for each student.



3. Have a set of coloured pencils or felt pens available for the students to use.
4. You might need to have a list of the students' names, so that you can record what they like or can do for future lessons.
5. Have the student workbooks ready for use.
6. Stick six sheets of A3 paper together (3x2).



7. Before the class, have one child lie down upon the sheet. Draw around the child with a thick pen/texta.



Middle

8. Have the response written on a sheet of paper for the students

*Thank you, God,
for making me
special.*

9. Prayer Sheet (A3 size) using large letters

*You can ...
because God
made you and
you are special.*

(25 minutes)

Ask the students: Who gave you your name? Why do you think your Mum and Dad gave you your name? (Take answers from the students and emphasise how parents want to identify each of their students and know them to be special – that each one of their siblings is special and individual.)

Invite the students to open their workbook at page 2 and complete the statements. Have them write their name, and write why their parents chose their name and what their favourite food is.

Invite the students to stand around an outline of a person (life-size) that you have on the floor or on a table. (See Preparation column on previous page.)

Ask the students: What makes you special and different from all your brothers and sisters and from your friends? (Take a few oral answers from students before inviting the students to write.)

Invite the students to write or draw their answers to this question on the inside of the person outline. (You might have to help them, asking things like: What can you do that no one else can? What do you like doing?)

After about 10 minutes, **ask the students** to finish their drawing or the word they are writing.

Ask the students to explain what they have written or drawn. You might ask them some questions to obtain further information.

Tell the students: These pictures and words tell us that we are all different from each other. They also tell us that we are special because no one can do what we do in the way we do it. There is an important reason why we are special. It is because God made each of us to be special and different from everyone else. God knows each of us and wants each of us to be here because God loves us so much.

Invite the students in turn to say one thing that they can do that is special to them. Then all the other students respond as follows:

Students: I can ...

All: You can ... because God made you and you are special.

Let all students say something and let everyone respond.

End

(10 minutes)

Use prepared prayer sheet with the words *Thank you, God, for making me special* written in large letters.

Invite the students to gather around the prayer focus (where you have placed the person outline) with their name sheet that they made at the beginning of the lesson.

Tell the students: We are now going to pray about how special we are to God and to our parents. We remember that *God made me and I am special*. We can thank God for this because it helps us become great people doing just what God wants us to do.

Invite the students to say the words on the A3 sheet after each prayer. (Run through the words with them so they know what the response says.)

Catechist: Let us think about our lesson and prepare for our prayer.
Thank you, God, for being with us today and helping us understand that you made each one of us and we are special. When we think of this we can pray to you:

Students: Thank you, God, for making me special.

Catechist: For every time we do something new or we learn a new way to do something:

Students: Thank you, God, for making me special.

Catechist: For the times we do things that show we are special:

Students: Thank you, God, for making me special.

Catechist: For the times our parents help us to be the special people God wants us to be:

Students: Thank you, God, for making me special.

Catechist: God made us all and we are all special. God, may we always remember this and be the best we can.

All: Amen.

Collect the name cards and workbooks. Dismiss the students.

Appendix 1: Prayer Focus

PREPARATION

Bag of 'Tricks'

Collect items to build a prayer focus and store them in a bag or a box. This can help eliminate last-minute searching.

A Basic Set

1. Candle and candle holder, e.g. tea light in a container
2. Matches/safety gas lighter
3. Variety of coloured cloths for liturgical seasons
4. Bible.

Optional Items

- Cross
- Icons, posters, photos
- Rocks, pebbles, shells, twigs
- Bowl
- Oil/oil burner
- Wheat, grapes
- Small vase
- Prayer cards
- Intention box.

Design Principles

- Simple and uncluttered
- Connected to lesson
- Consistency, i.e. always have one
- Diversity, i.e. use a variety of items, locations, times.

A Prayer Focus:

- Helps establish a prayerful atmosphere
- Stimulates the imagination
- Provides a glimpse of beauty/colour
- Provides an object of attention/focus
- Helps visual learners
- Provides a centring point
- Contributes to a prayerful atmosphere
- Teaches students about signs and symbols without many words
- Provides a structure/framework on which to build prayer
- Becomes routine with variety
- Helps students:
 - to become quiet, to settle
 - to anticipate what is to come
 - to be ready for prayer
 - to wonder.

How to Set up a Prayer Focus

- Set it up before the session (if the teaching space is available) to provide a point of attention and interest.
- 'Build' it as the opening activity of the session.
- 'Build' it as the session proceeds.
- Invite students to participate at your direction.
- Invite students to create a prayer focus.

Where to Place a Prayer Focus

- On a table (or a raised object like an upturned crate)
- On the floor
- In a corner or in the centre of the learning space
- In an adjacent area to the learning space, e.g. the next room, in the corridor, so that students physically move from one location to another.



Jesus Prayed

Background for the Catechist

Please take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

Jesus' filial prayer is the perfect model of prayer in the New Testament. Often done in solitude and in secret, the prayer of Jesus involves a loving adherence to the will of the Father even to the Cross and an absolute confidence in being heard (CCC 1994, n. 2620).

The gospels make it clear that the wellspring of Jesus' life and work was his relationship with God through prayer. As a devout Jew, Jesus observed the rhythm of Jewish daily prayer. In addition the gospels describe his frequent presence in both the synagogue and the Temple and mention his regular withdrawal from the disciples' company and from his work, to pray alone. The kinds of things Jesus prayed for are revealed in the prayer that he taught his disciples:

- that God's name should be praised
- that God's will should be done
- that all should have sufficient of what is needed for life
- that forgiveness should be the hallmark of human life
- that no one should be tested beyond what they are capable of bearing
- that we would all be saved from evil.

Jesus used formal words from the psalms and the Scriptures in his daily prayer but we know he also used his own words when he prayed to God in the course of his work among the people.

Student Focus

Students of this age like ritual and routine and they are also spontaneous individuals. Helping them to establish a prayer regime and encouraging their spontaneity will help them to develop a rich prayer life. Regular prayer would be a natural progression for these students.

Teaching Point

Jesus prayed often to his Father.

Remembering Point

Jesus often prayed to his Father.

PREPARATION

1. Prayer Focus: A cloth and a candle in a glass.
2. As you light the candle, say: 'We light the candle to remind us that Jesus is the light of the world'.
3. Have the name cards from last week ready to use.
4. Have your list of students with their likes and abilities recorded from last week.
5. Have the student workbooks ready for use.
6. Read the scripture texts and practise **telling** them as stories.

Beginning

(10 minutes)

Welcome the students and gather them into a circle.

While handing the name card to a student say that student's name and say something about them e.g. Hello, Joseph, who likes football; Hello, Maria, who likes ballet; Hello, Michael, who likes books ...

Invite the students to join in with you when they can tell what's coming next: to recall names of classmates and something about them from last week.

Ask the students to sit around the prayer focus and get ready for prayer.

Catechist: Let's join our hands (pause for a moment) and now let us make the Sign of the Cross.

As you light the candle say:

Catechist: We light the candle to remind us that Jesus is the light of the world.

Invite the students to repeat the prayers after you.

Catechist: Our Father, Jesus' Father, help us to pray often like Jesus did.

Students: Our Father, Jesus' Father, help us to pray often like Jesus did.

Catechist: Our Father, Jesus' Father, help us to learn about Jesus.

Students: Our Father, Jesus' Father, help us to learn about Jesus.

Catechist: Our Father, Jesus' Father, help us to be like Jesus.

Students: Our Father, Jesus' Father, help us to be like Jesus.

Tell the students: We've just said a prayer. Today we're going to learn about when Jesus prayed.

Middle

(35 minutes)

Tell the students: Jesus prayed often to God, his Father.

Tell this story from Mk 1: 16–35:

One day Jesus called Peter and Andrew, James and John to be his disciples and follow him. Then he went to synagogue and healed a man on the Sabbath. After that he went to Peter's house and healed his mother-in-law. Soon lots of people were coming to the house and Jesus healed them all. The next morning while it was still dark Jesus got up and went out to a deserted place to pray.

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder what Jesus might have talked about with God, his Father, that morning. *(I had a busy day yesterday; I've found four good men to follow me; there are many people who need my help...)*
- I wonder why Jesus got up so early. *(He had a busy day ahead of him; he liked the stillness of early morning...)*
- I wonder why he went to a deserted place to pray. *(He didn't want to be disturbed; it was quiet there...)*

Tell the story from Mt 14: 22–23:

One day Jesus taught and fed more than five thousand people. Afterwards he told his disciples to get into the boat and go to the other side of the lake while he sent the people home. As evening fell Jesus went up the mountain all by himself and prayed.

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder what Jesus said to God, his Father, that evening. *(It was hard work trying to teach so many people; I was glad to tell people about you; Thank you for helping me look after so many people...)*

Tell the story of Lk 6: 12–13:

One night Jesus went up the mountain to pray and he spent the whole night talking to his Father. In the morning he called all his disciples to him and he picked twelve to be apostles.

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder what Jesus talked to God, his Father about during that night. *(Who will I pick to be apostles? Will James be able to do a good job?...)*

Tell the students: We've now had three different stories about Jesus praying.

- When did Jesus pray? *(morning, evening, all night)*
- Where did Jesus pray? *(in deserted places, on the mountain)*

Tell the students: We can be like Jesus and pray often.

Show the students page 4 in their workbook. Show them the first picture in the 'Jesus prayed often' activity, and identify the time of day (e.g. early in the morning).

Tell the students that this is what they were told in Mk 1: 35.

Ask the students: What does the story tell us about where Jesus prayed? *(Ask a specific student for the answer.)*

Give out the workbooks and ask the students to sit at their tables.

Invite the students to write, in the space provided, the place where Jesus prayed. Repeat for each of the pictures.

Tell the students that when they have finished they can decorate the sentence at the top of the page: 'Jesus prayed often'. (15 minutes for the workbook activity)

Walk around while the students are completing the work. Affirm everyone's effort, e.g. Joseph, I love your colours; Maria, you've listened to the stories well...

PREPARATION

Alert the students when time is nearly up.

Ask three or four students to show their work and to read the heading to the rest of the group.

End

(10 minutes)

Tell the students: Let's sing a song that tells us about the stories of Jesus we heard about in the lesson. **Teach the song** to the students.
(Sing to the tune of Frère Jacques or Where is Thumbkin.)

Where is Jesus? (twice)
On the mount (twice)
Praying to his Father (twice)
All night long. (twice)

Where is Jesus? (twice)
On the hill (twice)
Praying to his Father (twice)
About his work. (twice)

Where is Jesus? (twice)
All alone (twice)
Praying to his Father (twice)
About his day. (twice)

Sing these verses two or three times.

Have the students repeat the Remembering Point: *Jesus often prayed to his Father.*

Tell the students: Now let's end our lesson by singing our prayer:

Help us, Jesus, (twice)
Pray like you (twice)
To God, our Father (twice)
About our day. (twice)

Collect the name cards and workbooks. Dismiss the students as usual.

Jesus in the Liturgical Year

Background for the Catechist

Please take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

In the liturgical year the various aspects of the one Paschal mystery unfold. This is also the case with the cycle of feasts surrounding the mystery of the incarnation (Annunciation, Christmas, Epiphany). They commemorate the beginning of our salvation and communicate to us the first fruits of the Paschal mystery (CCC 1994, n.1171).

The Church Year is divided into cycles of preparation for and celebration of aspects of the life and message of Jesus. The central celebration of the year is the Triduum (Three Days). This feast, which begins on Holy Thursday evening with the celebration of the Lord's Last Supper, is followed by Good Friday, Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday. It commemorates the mystery of Christ's suffering, death and resurrection. The penitential season of Lent, which lasts 40 days, precedes the Triduum and the 50 day season of Easter flows from it.

The seasons of Advent and Christmas explore the mystery of the past, present and future coming of Christ. Advent, which begins four weeks before Christmas, focuses on the future coming of Christ to fulfil history before exploring the mystery of the Word made Flesh, which is celebrated on Christmas Day and during the 12 days which follow.

The rest of the year is called Ordinary Time during which readings from the Gospels of Matthew (Year A), Mark (Year B) and Luke (Year C) tell the story of Jesus and his message, Sunday by Sunday.

Student Focus

These students are familiar with the feasts of Christmas and Easter. It is easy to move from the students' familiarity with Easter and Christmas to the discovery of their origins, namely the birth of Jesus and his death and resurrection. Students of this age love stories about Jesus and they can hear them at our Sunday liturgies.

Teaching Point

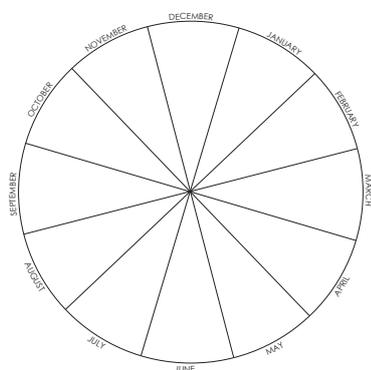
We discover more about Jesus through the seasons of the liturgical year.

Remembering Point

The seasons of the liturgical year tell us about Jesus.

Beginning

1. Have the prayer focus set up from the beginning of the class. Use a coloured cloth to reflect the season – green for Ordinary Time or gold for Easter or purple for Lent. Have a candle to match and the Bible open to one of the stories of Jesus that you will use in the lesson.
2. Prepare a Personal Calendar from the template in Appendix 3a on page 14, enlarging the template to A3.



3. Have the student workbooks ready for use.
4. From a religious calendar or a set of religious cards or from the Internet, gather a set of pictures to match various seasons of the year – an empty tomb, the Last Supper, the nativity, visit of the Magi. For Ordinary Time you might choose a picture of the Wedding at Cana, since this is going to be used in the lesson.
5. Have the name of each liturgical season on a piece of card, e.g.

EASTER

6. Don't use Triduum with the students. This simply means the three important days of Easter that form the holiest and most significant days of our year – Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday.

(10 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Show the students the circular personal calendar you have prepared.

Ask the students to tell you of special times in their life that they like to remember each year.

Create a timeline of the students' life events over one year, e.g. school terms, their birthday, parents' birthdays or celebrations or any other special holidays and events, and place some of the examples in the circle in the appropriate month. The students might wish to add sports events or successes.

Tell the students: This is a way of marking special and important days and celebrating them. The Church too has a similar way to follow important times. It's called the 'liturgical year' and we often call it the 'Liturgical Seasons'. It marks the special times which we celebrate and remember each Sunday when we go to Mass.

Distribute the workbooks.

Invite the students to open their books at page 6. Have a look at the drawing of the liturgical year. Run through the diagram with the students explaining the different sections. (See Appendix 3b at the end of the lesson for explanations.)

To guide your explanations ask the students questions such as:

- What does this picture mean?
- How many different liturgical seasons are there?
- Why do we call them 'seasons'?

Tell the students: These seasons tell us a lot about Jesus.

Middle

(30 minutes)

Invite the students to spread the names of the liturgical seasons and the pictures across a table or the floor.

Invite the students (in pairs) to match the pictures with the appropriate liturgical season. (You may have to help students identify some of the pictures and which season they represent.)

Select a picture from each of the three main seasons, (Easter, including the Triduum and Lent, Christmas, including Advent, and Ordinary Time).

Ask the students: Who would like to tell us what this picture is about? (If no student offers or it is difficult tell the story yourself.) Select a student and listen to the story. Assist the students in filling out the story by using 'I wonder' statements, allowing the students to offer their reflections, e.g.

Christmas: I wonder why Jesus was born in a stable (if the picture depicts a stable).

Easter Sunday: I wonder why the tomb is empty.

Ordinary Time and the Wedding Feast at Cana: I wonder why Mary told Jesus and not the steward that they had run out of wine.

Invite the students in pairs to share with each other 'I wonder' statements about the stories. (Allow five minutes for the students' statements, taking all their answers.)

Direct the students to look again at the liturgical calendar in their workbook on page 6.

Connect the seasons of the liturgical year on the calendar with the stories about Jesus in the following way:

Tell the students: In Ordinary Time we hear a lot of stories about Jesus and what he does, just like the Wedding Feast at Cana and how thoughtful he was. During the Easter season we learn about Jesus' death and resurrection. During Advent and Christmas we learn about how we wait to celebrate Jesus' birth and what this means for us. We also learn about how John the Baptist, Jesus' cousin, prepared the way for Jesus.

Say to the students: We have been looking at stories about Jesus that we hear during the liturgical year. These stories and times tell us something about Jesus.

- What sort of things do we know about Jesus from the stories we have told each other today? (Take answers from the students and write them on the whiteboard / blackboard or sheet of paper.) (Assist the students to recall the stories from earlier and what they tell us about Jesus.)

Invite the students to write things that they know about Jesus in the space below the particular liturgical season on the calendar. Students might colour in the calendar to suit the season if there is time (green for Ordinary Time, gold/yellow for Easter and Christmas, purple for Lent and Advent).

End

(10 minutes)

Tell the students: Each Sunday is one day in the liturgical year and, depending upon the season, we can learn something about Jesus by listening to the stories told to us in the gospels. Today we have looked at some of the liturgical seasons and some of the things we can learn about Jesus. Let us gather around this prayer focus with our picture of the liturgical year and our workbooks.

Tell the students: Today we have drawn the seasons of our own year when we celebrate special events. In the liturgical calendar we come to know more about Jesus.

Please open your workbook at page 7 for the response to our prayer.

Catechist: We light the candle to remind us that Jesus is present with us.

Let us make the Sign of the Cross together.

We pray that we may learn more about Jesus through the seasons of the liturgical year.

Students: Jesus, may we come to know more about you.

Catechist: Jesus, you told us about yourself in the stories we hear on Sundays at Mass.

Students: Jesus, may we come to know more about you.

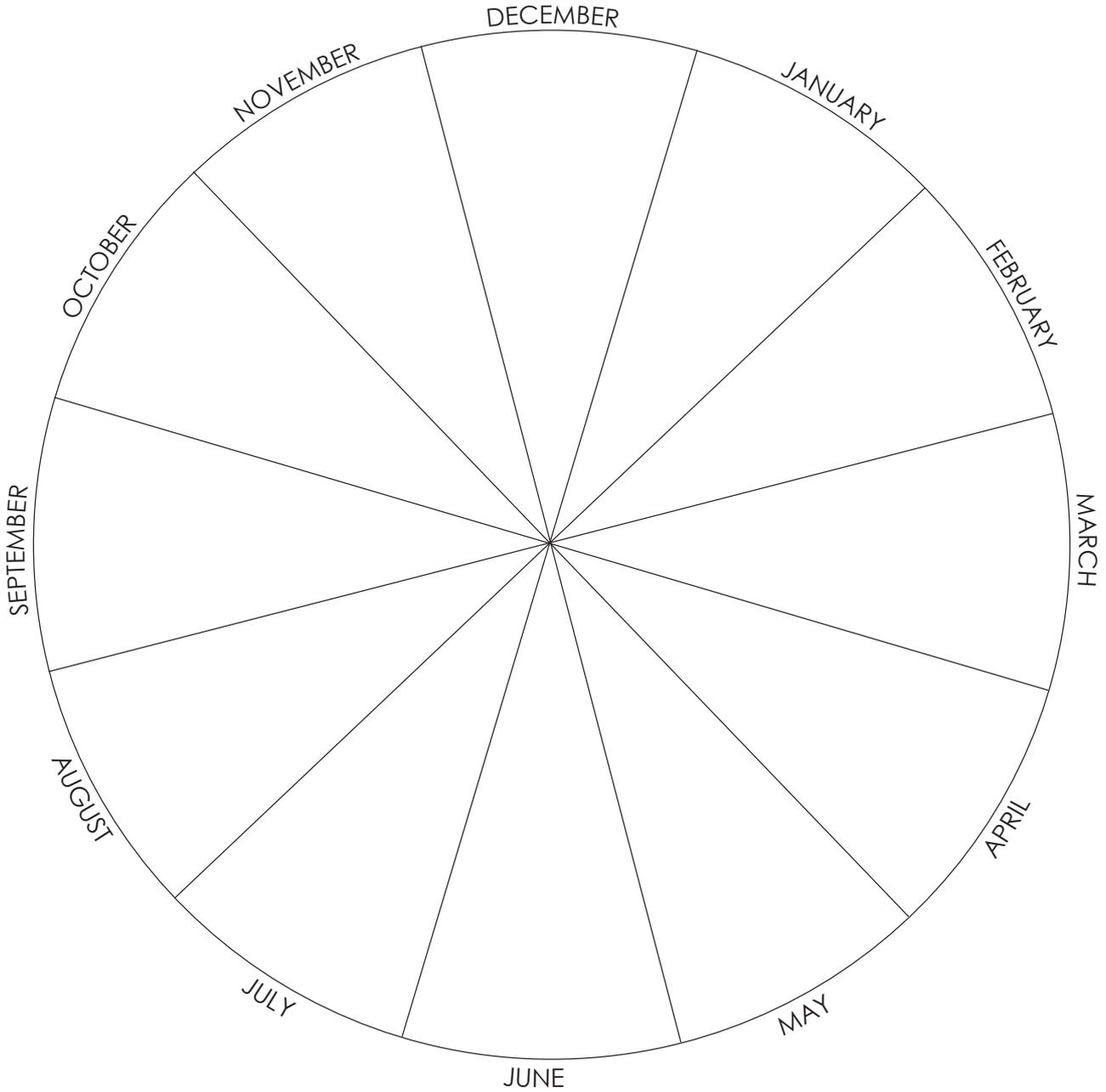
Catechist: Help us to listen carefully and learn more about you through each liturgical season.

Students: Jesus, may we come to know more about you.

Collect the name cards and workbooks. Dismiss the students as usual.

Appendix 3a: Personal Calendar

Enlarge this diagram on a photocopier to fit on an A3 size piece of paper for use with your lesson.



Appendix 3b: Explaining the Diagram in the Workbook

Keep the explanation simple.

First ask the students what they think the picture might mean. Allow them to be free with answers.

Ask the students to reflect on the 'I wonder' statements in the lesson.

Then help the students understand the diagram by explaining, in simple terms, the three seasons mentioned on the diagram.

Identify **Advent and Christmas** as starting in the last week of November or first week in December. You could draw attention to the Advent wreath. Tell the students that the Christmas season goes on until 6 January – the coming of the Magi to visit Jesus.

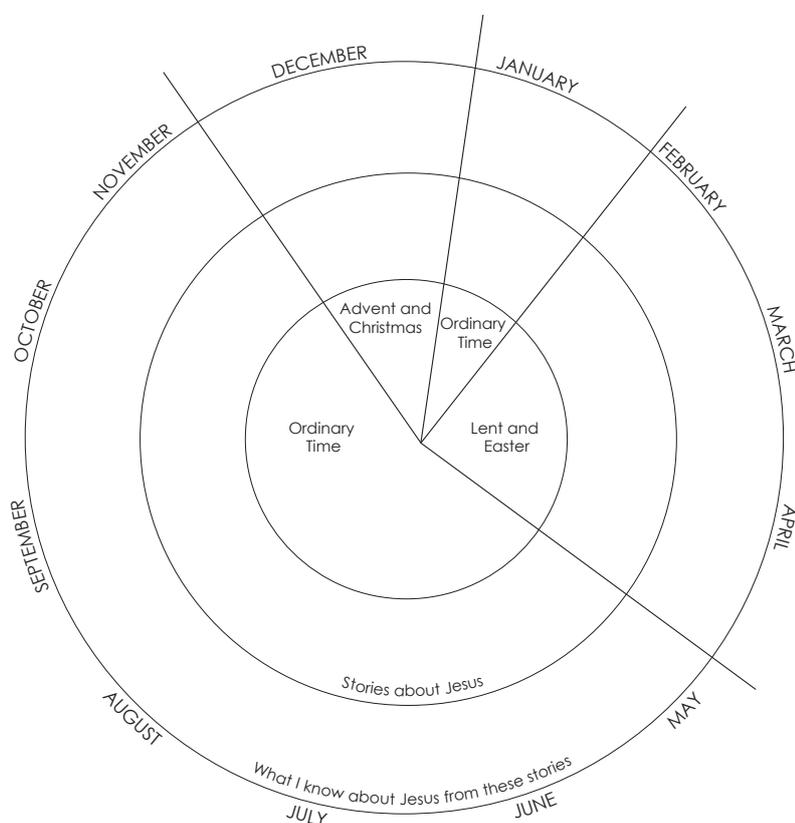
Point to **Lent and Easter**. Ask the students what they know about this time. (You will get a variety of answers, but they offer some insight into the students' knowledge.)

Give the students simple explanations of this season, as there are two further lessons that will be exploring Lent and Easter in more detail.

Remind the students that Lent is a time to get ready for the very important feast of the Catholic Church – Easter. Tell the students that Easter is the time when Jesus rose from the dead after he had suffered a lot of pain so that we might be saved.

In **Ordinary Time** it is difficult to focus on one story. This is because it contains all the 'other' stories that we hear about Jesus.

Tell the students that in Ordinary Time we are able to learn about the message that Jesus wants us to know. Ordinary time is when nothing really amazing happens – like Christmas or Easter – but we are able to listen to all the wonderful things Jesus did while he was on earth.



Ash Wednesday and Lent

Background for the Catechist

Please take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

'Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying: "the time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent, and believe in the gospel".' (Mk 1: 14–15). *'To carry out the will of the Father Christ inaugurated the kingdom of heaven on earth' (LG n. 3) Now the Father's will is 'to raise up [all] to share in his own divine life' (LG n. 2) He does this by gathering [all people] around his Son Jesus Christ. This gathering is the Church, 'on earth the seed and beginning of that kingdom' (LG n. 5) (CCC 1994, n. 541).*

Ash Wednesday is a special moment of entry into the season of Lent. The Church community celebrates this day as the beginning of our preparation for the great feast of Easter. Lent takes the form of a renewal of our lives through prayer, fasting and almsgiving. It is a time when we can 'start again', turn around or 'get back on track'. The reception of the ashes on Ash Wednesday marks our commitment to Lent and all that it means. By entering into prayer, fasting and almsgiving we are actively seeking to bring about the kingdom.

Student Focus

Students of this age are very responsive to the stories and traditions of our faith and they love using their imaginations. They are not ready for the deep theological understandings that adults have of Ash Wednesday and its significance for Lent. These students will benefit from and engage with the understanding that Ash Wednesday is an important day in the Church's liturgical calendar; that it marks the beginning of a time of preparation for a special feast and celebration within the Church; and that they too can prepare for this special celebration in ways appropriate to their age and stage of development.

Teaching Point

Ash Wednesday is the beginning of Lent.

Remembering Point

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday.

Beginning

1. Prayer focus: Bible, purple cloth, bowl of ashes. (The ashes can be prepared by burning dried leaves and paper. Then sieve the ashes and put them in a jar.)
2. Put the opening prayer on a card or a large sheet of paper or the blackboard/whiteboard.
3. Have workbooks ready to use.
4. Make a copy of the morning offering for each student. See Appendix 4 on page 21.

O, my God, I give to you all I think or do or say. All my work and all my play I will give to you today. Amen.

(15 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual. (Ash Wednesday may have passed, but it is still valuable to reflect with the students about the importance of this day as the 'beginning' of Lent.)

Invite the students to stand or sit around the prayer focus prepared according to the suggestions opposite.

Invite the students to repeat after you:

Catechist: God, our Father, be with us

Students: God, our Father, be with us

Catechist: as we come to listen to your word.

Students: as we come to listen to your word.

Catechist: May we learn more about you and Jesus

Students: May we learn more about you and Jesus

Catechist: so that we can live as you want us to live.

Students: so that we can live as you want us to live.

Catechist We make this prayer through Jesus, your Son.

Students: We make this prayer through Jesus, your Son.

All: Amen.

Direct the students' attention to the prayer focus.

Say to the students: Today we are going to find out why we have a special day called 'Ash Wednesday'. Today I have chosen a purple cloth to remind us that we are beginning Lent. I have a bowl of ashes, which we will use later to remind us that Lent is a special time when we get ready for Easter. (*Point these out and hold these up for the students to see.*) Today we are going to see how Ash Wednesday is the beginning of Lent and what this means.

Ask the students: What are some of the things you do to get ready for a special celebration? (*Draw from the students responses such as have a shower, get dressed in new clothes and shoes; buy presents and prepare party food or special food. Draw from the students the fact that they are thinking about going to the party or celebration for many days before the event.*)

Tell the students: Ash Wednesday is the time when we think about how we can get ready to celebrate the great feast of Easter, when Jesus rose from the dead. Ash Wednesday is the beginning of Lent. Lent is the time when we actually start to get ready for Easter by doing all the things we have thought about on Ash Wednesday. We also make a special promise to get ready for Easter and we show this promise to others by having a cross drawn on our foreheads in ash. Today we will look at what all this means for us.

Middle

(30 minutes)

Pick up the bowl of ashes from the prayer focus.

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder how I might have got these ashes. *(Take a few answers – from burning paper or wood or cigarettes, remembering that these will be varied with no single answer.)*

Tell the students: These ashes came from burning ... *(insert what you burnt)*. When Father ... *(add parish priest's name)* uses ashes on Ash Wednesday they are usually made from burning the palms left over from Palm Sunday last year.

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder why Father used the left-over palms. *(Take a few answers. There is no particular answer that you are seeking; rather you are trying to help the students think about what the connection might be. You can encourage the students and affirm each one.)*

Tell the students: One reason Father used the left-over palms is that they remind us that Ash Wednesday has a special link with Easter and preparing for Easter. Now let's look at how we prepare for Easter.

Distribute student workbooks and **invite students** to open their workbooks at page 8.

18

Tell the students: On Ash Wednesday we are all invited to prepare for Easter. At the Ash Wednesday services we are reminded that Jesus died for us. The Ashes are put on our forehead and the priest says the words, 'Repent and believe in the Good News', to remind us about Jesus' life, death and resurrection and what we are called to believe. *(Work through the description of what will happen or has happened at an Ash Wednesday service.)*

Tell the students: Everyone is expected to prepare for Easter by talking to God more (prayer); by doing something extra, not just giving up something (fasting); and by helping others more (almsgiving).

Ask the students: What can you do to prepare for Easter?

Invite the students to talk to the person beside them about what they might do during Lent.

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder how you might talk to God more.
- I wonder how you might do something extra.
- I wonder how you might help others more.

Take responses from the students. Explore possibilities with the students as follows.

Tell the students: Let's look at some ways we can prepare for Easter during Lent. One way of talking to God more is to say a morning prayer every morning. When I pray this prayer I am telling God that I am going to do my very best and offer all that I do to God because God has given me my life and everything in it. Let's learn the prayer.

Give out Prayer sheets. Invite the students to pray the morning offering with you. Repeat the prayer a few times with the students. Then invite them to trace over the letters.

Tell the students that they can take the prayer home and say it every morning when they get out of bed.

Direct the students to draw themselves talking to God in the box provided on page 9 of the workbook. (Allow 2 minutes.)

Ask the students how they might do something extra. Give examples if few are forthcoming, e.g. *I can pay better attention in class; I can get ready for bed before I am told to; I can share a treat with others.*

Invite the students to draw how they might do something extra in the box on page 9 of the workbook. (Allow 2 minutes.)

Ask the students how they might help others more. (*I can talk to someone at school who looks lonely; I can make friends with a new student; I can invite someone else to join our game.*)

Invite the students to draw how they might help others. Direct them to the box on page 9. (Allow 2 minutes.)

Point to the Remembering Point on page 9 of the workbook. Ask the students to read it with you – Ash Wednesday is the beginning of Lent – and decorate the words. (Again allow only a few minutes.)

End

(5 minutes)

Invite the students to gather around the prayer focus.

Tell the students: Today we promise to get ready for Easter.

Catechist: Let us make the Sign of the Cross together. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Catechist: On Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent, we remember to get ready for Easter by talking to God more, by helping others and by doing something extra during Lent. We put ashes on our foreheads to show we promise to get ready for Easter.

Please take turns to come and put your thumb in the ashes and draw a cross on your forehead, like this (demonstrate on your own forehead). Remember that this cross of ashes reminds us that we are beginning Lent, a time to prepare for Easter. (When they have all had a turn invite them to repeat the prayer after you.)

Catechist: Repent and believe in the Good News.

All: Repent and believe in the Good News.

Catechist: Blessed God, help us to prepare well for Easter.

All: Blessed God, help us to prepare well for Easter.

Catechist: Amen.

All: Amen.

Collect the name cards and workbooks. Dismiss the students as usual.

Appendix 4: Morning Offering

O, my God, I give to you
all I think or do or say.

All my work and all
my play I will give to
you today.

Amen.

Mary, Our Mother

Background for the Catechist

Please take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

Because of her singular cooperation with the action of the Holy Spirit the Church loves to pray to Mary and with Mary, the perfect 'prayer', and to 'magnify' and invoke the Lord with her. Mary in effect shows us the 'Way' who is her Son, the one and only Mediator (CCCC 2006, n. 562).

The Church prays to Mary... above all with the Hail Mary, the prayer with which the Church asks the intercession of the Virgin (CCCC 2006, n. 563).

God chose Mary to be the Mother of Jesus; therefore she holds a unique place in Christian tradition. We honour her because she gave flesh and human identity to Jesus. She is the first and best of believers because she willingly accepted God's will. She is the mother of God, the mother of the Church and our mother. We can pray to her in all our needs. As the Hail Mary is one of our traditional ways of praying to Mary, it is useful for students to learn how to say this prayer and what it means.

Student Focus

From their experience of Christmas stories students know about Mary as the Mother of Jesus. They can be led to an appreciation of Mary as our mother too.

The students best understand within a context. Therefore they will best understand the Hail Mary within the context of the scripture stories (Annunciation and Visitation).

Teaching Point

Mary is Jesus' mother and our mother too.

Remembering Point

Mary is Jesus' mother and our mother too.

Beginning

1. Prayer focus: White cloth, candle, statue or picture of Mary.
2. Hymn about Mary.
3. CD player.
4. Star shape printed or drawn onto a large sheet of paper or the blackboard/ whiteboard. (See Appendix 5a on page 26.)
5. Workbooks ready for use.
6. Provide a copy of the angel and Mary puppet for each pair of children. The template can be found on Appendix 5b on page 27.
7. Scissors (or have pictures already cut out).
8. Hymn: *Hail Mary*.
9. If you don't have time or you are unsure about allowing the students to come up with the actions, some have been provided in the Appendix 5c on page 28.

(15 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual. Then gather them around the prayer table or have them seated where they can see what you are doing.

Point out the significance of each item. The white cloth reminds us of Mary, the mother of Jesus. We light the candle to represent Jesus. We have a picture/statue to help us focus on Mary.

Invite the students to pray:

Catechist: We are going to pray today remembering Mary, the mother of Jesus. Let's make the Sign of the Cross together. Repeat the responses after me.

Catechist: Mary, Jesus' mother, pray for us

Students: Mary, Jesus' mother, pray for us.

Catechist: Mary, our mother too, pray for us.

Students: Mary, our mother too, pray for us.

Pause

Catechist: Mary was chosen by God to be the mother of Jesus. We always ask Mary to speak to Jesus for us.

Catechist: Repeat after me: Mary, Jesus' mother, pray for us.

Students: Mary, Jesus' mother, pray for us

Catechist: Mary, our mother too, pray for us.

Students: Mary, our mother too, pray for us.

Bring the students back to their desks or seats or gather them around you on the floor.

Ask the students: What are some of the things your mum does? What are mums like?

Record the students' responses inside a star shape on a large sheet.

When you have quite a few answers invite the students to open their workbook at page 10. Direct the students to copy three responses from the sheet into the middle of the star shape.

Tell the students: Jesus has a mother; her name is Mary.

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder how Mary, Jesus' mother, is like your mother. (Take responses from students. You might like to tell the story of Jesus lost in the Temple, if the responses are few.)

Record the students' responses on each of the points of the star shape. You can have more than one thing for each point. Then invite the students to copy one example of Mary being like their mother on each of the points in their books.

Middle

(25 minutes)

Say to the students: God asked Mary to be the mother of Jesus and she said, 'Yes.' You can follow the story on page 11 in your books.

Read the first part of the story of the Angel visiting Mary (Luke 1: 26–38) as found in the student workbook on page 11.

Distribute the template of the angel and Mary puppets, one character per student. Invite them to decorate their character of the Angel or Mary and then cut it out. In pairs, students retell the story using the hand puppets.

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder how you would feel if you were Mary in this story. *(Take the answers from the students, giving all students the opportunity to speak if they wish).*

Tell the students: We honour Mary because God chose her to be the mother of Jesus. Mary is the mother of God, and Mary is our mother too.

Direct the students to their workbooks on page 12. Invite them to rearrange words in their workbook to create a sentence about Mary. *(Mary is Jesus' mother and our mother too.)*

Read the remainder of the story (Luke 1: 39–45).

Invite the students to follow the story in their workbooks as you read.

Ask the students:

- Have you heard some of these words before? *(Hail Mary, blessed are you among women ...)*
- What do you think these words mean?

Full of grace

Explain to the students: When we are willing to say 'yes' to God we let God love us. This love is God's grace. So the angel was saying to Mary that she was full of God's love.

Blessed are you among women

Explain to the students: Mary is very special because God chose her to be Jesus' mother. Since God chose her, she is blessed – holy.

Fruit of your womb

Explain to the students: This is an unusual way of saying that Jesus was growing inside Mary, waiting to be big enough to be born. Just like when you grew inside your mum, so the baby Jesus grew inside Mary.

Tell the students: Now let's learn the special prayer to Mary that the angel spoke when he came to visit her. Turn to page 12 in your workbook and we will read the words and then we will make up special actions for each line. Some of you might know this prayer already.

Read the prayer and have the students follow the words with you. You might ask some of the better readers to read out the prayer for everyone while others follow. Then read the prayer together.

Tell the students: Let's see what actions we can put to these words that will help us remember and pray this prayer better.

Ask the students: What might be a good action for 'Hail Mary, full of grace'? Remember that 'Hail' is another word for 'Hello'. *(Encourage the students to suggest some ideas. Take the best and practise with everyone a couple of times. Remember, simple is best and most easily remembered. Also remember that the fewer actions the better. Appendix 5c on page 28 has some actions for the prayer.)*

Guide the students as a group to practise the actions that accompany the phrases of the prayer. Spend time practising the actions and the words.

Invite the students to stand and practise these actions while saying or singing the prayer.

End

(10 minutes)

Catechist: Let's make the Sign of the Cross together.

Catechist: Repeat after me: Mary said 'Yes' to God.

Students: Mary said 'Yes' to God.

Catechist: Mary is Jesus' mother. May we say 'yes' to God too.

Students: Mary is Jesus' mother. May we say yes to God too.

Catechist: Mary is our mother too. Help us to say 'yes' to God.

Students: Mary is our mother too. Help us to say 'yes' to God.

Say or sing the 'Hail Mary' with actions.

Catechist: God, help me to be like Mary.

Students: God, help me to be like Mary.

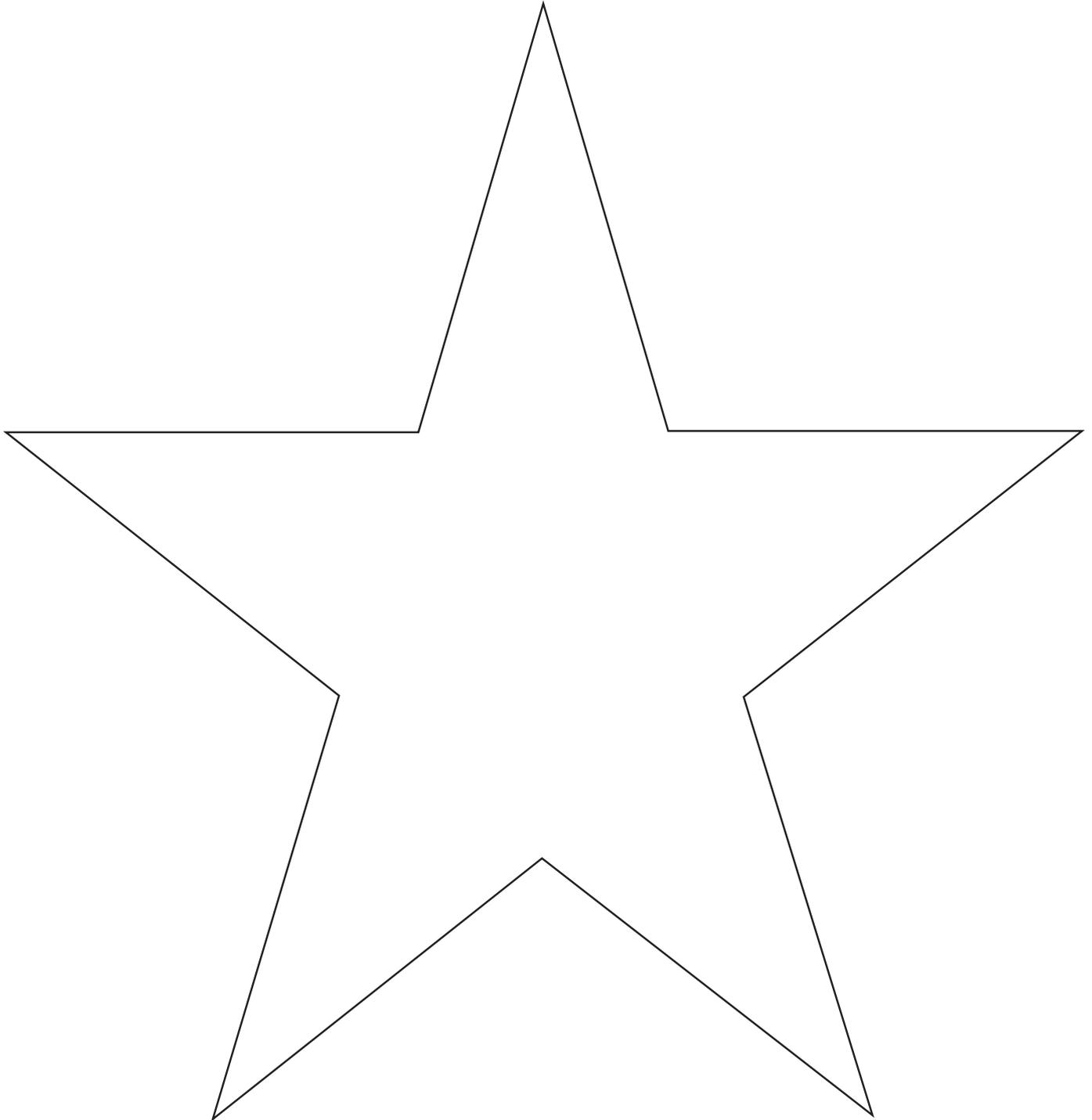
Catechist: Thank you God for giving us Mary, the mother of Jesus and our mother.

All: Amen.

Collect the name cards and workbooks. Dismiss the students as usual.

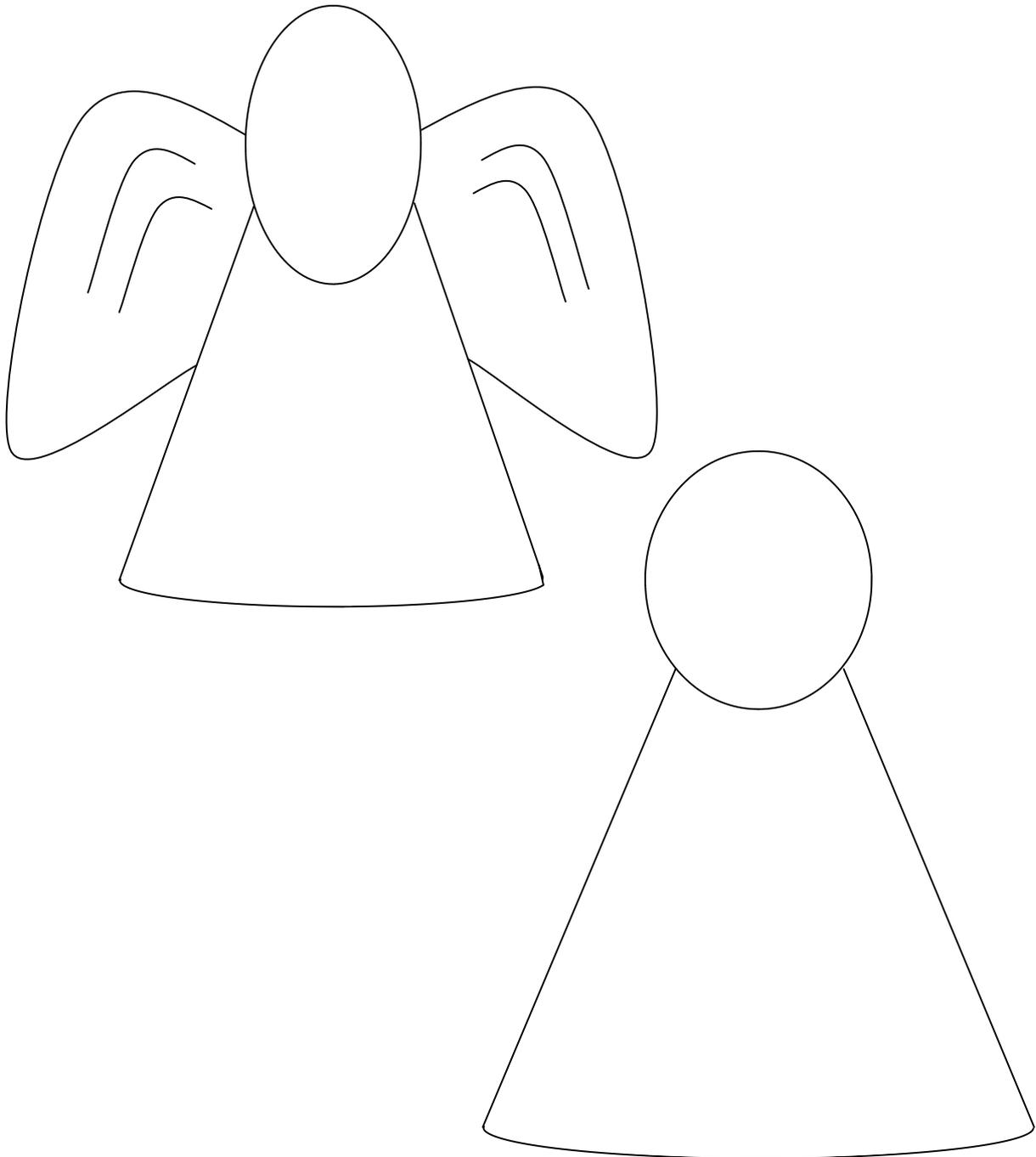
Appendix 5a: Star Template

Photocopy this star onto an A3 sheet.

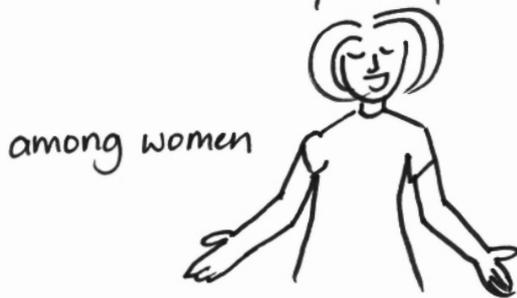
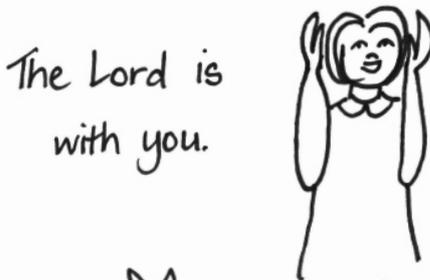
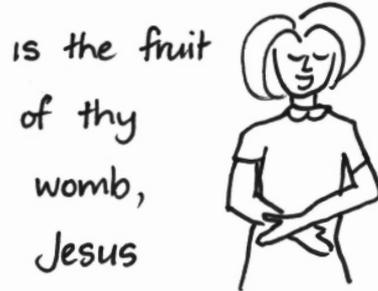


Appendix 5b: An Angel and Mary

Copy on the photocopier and cut out. Have the students decorate the characters. Stick onto a ruler or pencil with sticky tape and use as a puppet. The one on the right can be used to represent any character.



Appendix 5c: Actions for the Hail Mary



K. Whelan

Saints Live Like Jesus

Background for the Catechist

Please take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

The witnesses who have preceded us into the kingdom, especially those whom the Church recognises as saints, share in the living tradition of prayer by the example of their lives, the transmission of their writings, and their prayer today (CCC 1994, n. 2683).

The saints show us how a life lived in Christ looks in vastly different eras and contexts. Apart from saints who have been canonised, there are countless men and women who have lived exemplary Christian lives but who are unknown to us. Known or unknown, the saints are friends of God and our friends. They pray for us and inspire us by their lives to love and serve God in whatever circumstances we find ourselves.

Two saints who exemplify holiness in very different circumstances are St Patrick, who lived in fifth-century Ireland, and St Elizabeth, who lived in thirteenth-century Hungary. They allowed God to work through them in very different situations: in Patrick's case, preaching to the Irish tribes and clans who had not heard the Gospel, and in Elizabeth's, helping the famine-stricken people who lived at her door.

Student Focus

Students of this age are attracted to and by 'famous' people. They want to know their stories and they try to emulate them. Saints have interesting stories that can capture students' imaginations and can lead to emulation.

Teaching Point

Saints show us how to live like Jesus did.

Remembering Point

St Patrick and St Elizabeth show us how to live like Jesus.

Beginning

(5 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Invite the students to gather around the prayer focus.

Catechist: Let's join our hands (pause a moment) and make the Sign of the Cross.

We light the candle to remind us that Jesus is the light of the world and he is with us as we pray.

Repeat each line of the prayer after me.

Catechist: Hail, Mary, full of grace, pray for us

Students: Hail, Mary, full of grace, pray for us.

Catechist: Help us to live like Jesus, your son.

Students: Help us to live like Jesus, your son.

Catechist: Help us to see when people need us.

Students: Help us to see when people need us.

Tell the students: Last week we saw how Mary said 'yes' to God. Today we are going to learn how St Patrick and St Elizabeth said 'yes' to God.

1. Prayer focus: a coloured cloth of your choice, and candle.
2. Read the stories from Appendix 6a and 6b on pages 33–34.
3. Make copies of the Puppet templates, one set for each pair of students (Appendices 6c and d pages 35–36).
4. Instructions for constructing the puppets are in Appendix 6c page 34.
5. If possible, have a world map to locate Ireland, England and Hungary.
6. Scissors, sticky tape and drink cups, yoghurt or cream tub, for each student.
7. Workbooks.

Middle

(35 minutes)

Invite the students to gather around you on the floor (if they are not already on the floor).

Tell the students: I'm going to tell you two stories about these two saints, Patrick and Elizabeth. They are important people because they worked hard to live like Jesus did. They told people about Jesus and cared for others, just like Jesus did. While you are listening to the stories, think about how each of these people lived like Jesus.

(If possible, before you begin the story, it would be useful to locate Ireland, England and Hungary on a world map so that the students have an idea where these are in relation to Australia.)

Tell the story of Patrick *(with enthusiasm)*.

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

(Accept the students' answers. We do not know what Patrick felt, so any possible answer will be acceptable. The same for the other 'I wonder' statements.)

- I wonder how Patrick felt when he was kidnapped by the pirates.
- I wonder what Patrick did to grow closer to God.
- I wonder what sort of things Patrick told the people of Ireland to do to live like Jesus.

Tell the story of Elizabeth *(with enthusiasm)*.

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder why Elizabeth was disguised when she went to take bread from the palace kitchen to the poor.
- I wonder what other ways Elizabeth could have helped the poor.

Hand out a puppet template and a drink cup to each student or allow them to choose either St Patrick or St Elizabeth. (You might like to use a recycled yoghurt or cream carton, either is suitable.)

Tell the students to colour in their puppet, cut it out and stick it onto the drink cup.

Direct the students to retell the story of their saint to the person beside them.

Send the students back to their desks or to their seats. Invite the students to open their workbooks at page 13 and put a tick in the box that answers the question:

- How can we be like St Patrick?
- How can we be like Saint Elizabeth?

Direct the students to draw a picture that shows their wonderings about the following statements:

- I wonder what we can do at home to live like Jesus.
- I wonder what we can do at school to live like Jesus.

End

(10 minutes)

Direct the students to fill in the missing words on the next page. (At this time of the year the students may need help in writing sentences. You could suggest that they simply write an action word or draw a picture instead.) Then invite them to trace over the Remembering Point. Have the students read out the Remembering Point when they have all finished.

Gather the students around the prayer focus and invite them to repeat the prayers after you.

Catechist: Mary, mother of Jesus, pray for us.

Students: Mary, mother of Jesus, pray for us.

Catechist: Mary, our mother, pray for us.

Students: Mary, our mother, pray for us.

Catechist: St Patrick, God's messenger, pray for us.

Students: St Patrick, God's messenger, pray for us.

Catechist: St Elizabeth, carer of the sick and poor, pray for us.

Students: St Elizabeth, carer of the sick and poor, pray for us.

Invite the students to take their puppets home and tell their families about St Patrick or St Elizabeth.

Collect the name cards and workbooks. Dismiss the students as usual.

Appendix 6a: St Patrick

Long, long ago in England there lived a boy called Patrick. He was about 16 years old. One day some raiders landed nearby, saw how young and strong Patrick was and kidnapped him and his friends to work as slaves. They put them in their boat and took them to Ireland.

Patrick worked hard in Ireland for six years. All that time he prayed constantly to God.

One night in a dream, Patrick became aware that God wanted him to go back home. So he ran away and walked across Ireland to a sea port where he eventually found a boat that would take him back to England without having to pay the fare.

When he got home his family were so pleased to have him back. Day by day he grew closer to God. Patrick never forgot the people of Ireland and he knew that one day he would walk amongst them again. Eventually he became a priest. He was such a good priest that he was made a bishop. About this time he realised that God wanted him to go back to Ireland to teach the people about Jesus. Before Patrick went to Ireland the people had never heard about Jesus. So he got into a boat and went back.

Patrick spent the rest of his life helping the people of Ireland to know about Jesus. He taught them and cared for them just as Jesus would have done. Patrick told everyone about how to live a good life just like Jesus. He was so successful that by the time he died everyone in Ireland was trying to live like Jesus.

Many of the first settlers in Melbourne were Catholics who came from Ireland. When they began to build their cathedral they dedicated it to their favourite saint, Patrick. That's why our cathedral is called St Patrick's Cathedral.

Appendix 6b: St Elizabeth

Long, long ago there lived in Hungary a princess called Elizabeth. At the age of 14 she married Prince Louis whom she loved. They had three children. She prayed often and tried to live very simply. She cared for the poor and sick, just like Jesus. She often went out from the castle disguised as a poor woman to take bread from the palace kitchen to the poor. She also built a hospital below the castle and went down to care for the sick, making their beds and giving them food.

After six years of marriage Prince Louis was killed in the Crusades; she was very sad.

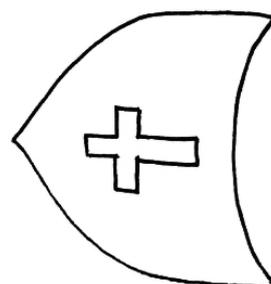
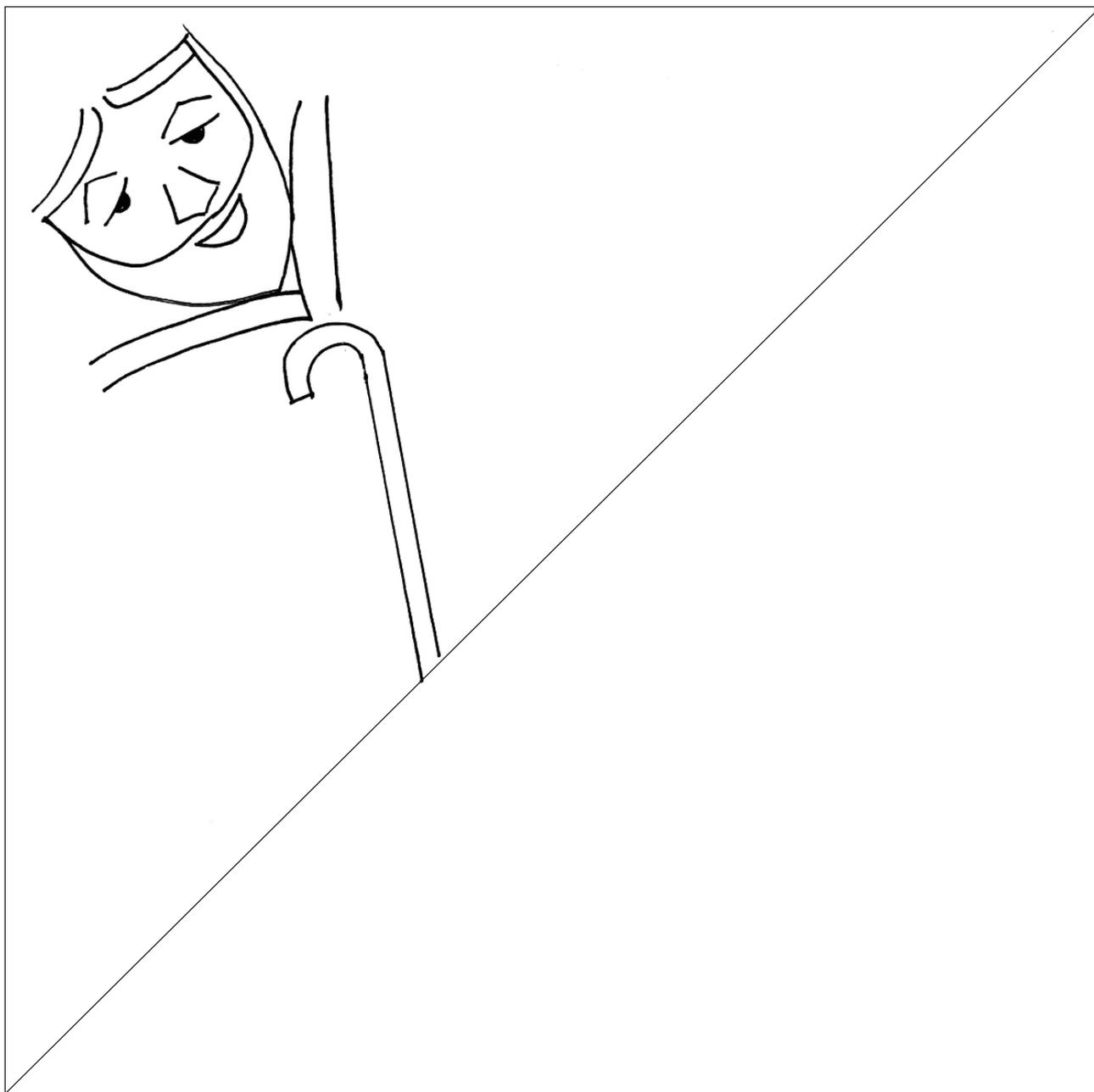
Elizabeth left the castle and continued to care for the poor and sick just as Jesus did.

Appendix 6c: Making Puppets

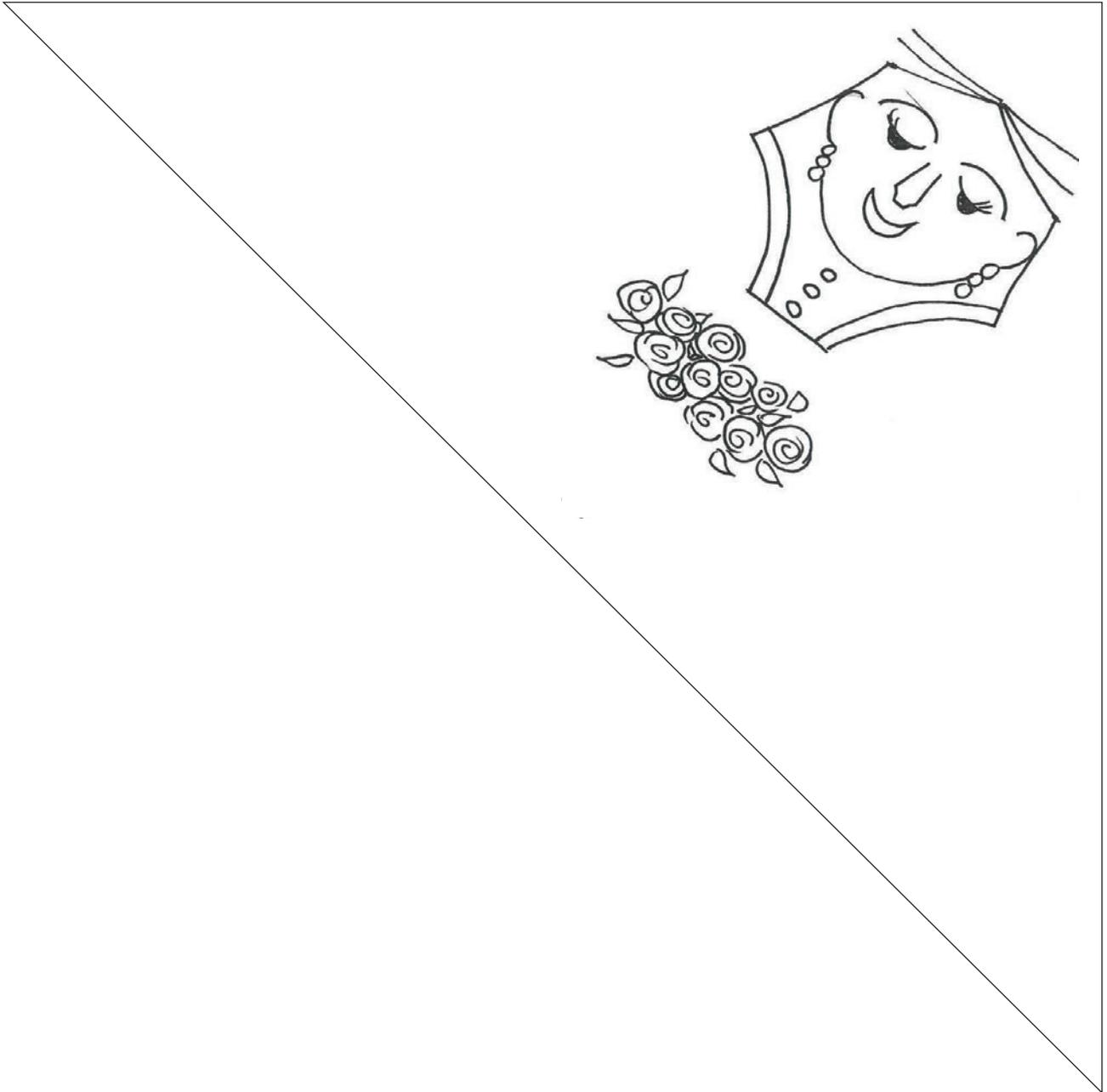
You will need two drinking cups or yoghurt tubs and the templates on the next two pages. Use the following instructions:

1. Cut around the triangle with the picture of Patrick and Elizabeth.
2. For Patrick, cut out the mitre.
3. Decorate the cut-out puppets (and the mitre, if relevant).
4. Wrap the triangle around the cup and where the two corners meet, stick with one piece of tape.
5. Use the cup puppets to tell the story.

Appendix 6d: St Patrick Template



Appendix 6e: St Elizabeth Template



Good Friday

Background for the Catechist

Please take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

The desire to embrace his Father's plan of redeeming love inspired Jesus' whole life, for his redemptive passion was the very reason for his Incarnation. And so he asked, 'And what shall I say? "Father, save me from this hour"? No, for this purpose I have come to this hour.' (Jn 12: 27) And again, 'Shall I not drink the cup which the Father has given me?' (Jn 18: 11) From the cross, just before 'It is finished', he said, 'I thirst' (Jn 19: 30; 19: 28) (CCC 1994, n. 607).

The Church commemorates the death of Jesus on the Cross on Good Friday. Jesus' death is at the heart of Christian faith because it reveals how God in the person of Jesus entered the darkness of human suffering and evil, recognised it, met it and overcame it. Jesus' physical suffering and death on the cross revealed for all time the depth of God's love which holds nothing back. In dying, Jesus rose to new life. We are called to emulate Christ, to take up our cross daily and to follow him.

Student Focus

Students of this age admire love, fidelity, bravery and goodness. Jesus' death on the cross exemplifies these qualities. Students can be led to emulate Jesus' love, fidelity, bravery and goodness. Students of this age readily understand the concept of self-giving and can tell stories and give examples of human self-giving.

Teaching Point

On Good Friday the Church remembers how Jesus died.

Remembering Point

On Good Friday we remember how Jesus died.

Beginning

(5 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Gather the students around a prayer focus that has a red cloth and a crucifix.

Invite the students to make the Sign of the Cross. (Ensure students have their workbook open at page 15 and follow the prayer with you.)

Catechist: Today we will remember how Jesus died. He did something very special for us, so that we can share in God's love. Let us pray to Jesus.

Catechist: Jesus, you gave your life for us.

Students: Help us to love others like you do.

Everyone makes the Sign of the Cross again.

Tell the students that we make the Sign of the Cross to remind us of this special thing Jesus did for us, that he gave his life for us.

1. Prayer focus: A red cloth and a crucifix.
2. Workbooks.
3. Worksheet with scenes from the story of Jesus death in Luke.
4. A poster or simple picture of Jesus' death.
5. Take four sheets of A3 paper and write at the top of each sheet the name of one of the scenes from Jesus' Passion in Luke:
 - Jesus is sentenced to death.
 - Simon helps Jesus carry his cross.
 - Jesus talks to the women.
 - Jesus is put into the tomb.

Middle

(35 minutes)

Gather the students around you (as for storytelling). Tell the story of Jesus' death using the story in Appendix 7a on page 41.

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder why Jesus was going to die on the cross.
- I wonder why they asked Simon to help.
- I wonder why the women were crying.
- I wonder how you would have felt if you had been there watching.

(Encourage the students to answer. You might get answers that you were not expecting. Don't dismiss responses that might seem wrong. Answer with positive responses such as 'it could have been like that, we are not sure' or ask a further question such as 'would you feel like/do that?')

Allocate the students to four groups and hand out a sheet of paper to each group, with the title of a scene from Jesus' Passion. Invite the students to draw the scene named on their sheet. Each sheet has the name of the scene the students will draw. (Keep back the scene of Jesus dying on the cross to use as the central focus for the next activity.)

When the students finish their drawings gather the students around you.

Tell the students that this story and the drawings they have made tell us something important about Jesus.

Ask the students: What do you think it is telling us about Jesus? (Draw from the students an understanding that Jesus loved us a lot, wanted to do what God asked of him and was brave.)

Tell the students: On Good Friday we remember all these things about Jesus and the story of his death because it is an important day which led to Jesus rising to new life on Easter Sunday.

Place the picture of Jesus dying on the cross on a table or somewhere similar, e.g. a wall, a floor or a blackboard. Invite the students to place their picture in correct order on either side of the picture of Jesus dying on the cross. (The order is as follows: 1. Jesus is sentenced to death; 2. Simon helps Jesus carry his cross; 3. Jesus talks to the women; 4. Jesus dies on the cross; and 5. Jesus is put into the tomb.)

Praise the students' work and correct the order as necessary.

Invite one of the students to retell the story using the pictures.

End

(10 minutes)

Direct the students to page 16 of their workbook and ask them to copy the correct title for each scene in the box provided with the picture. (You may have to run through the pictures and the titles laid out on the table, floor or board to remind them.)

Gather the students around the prayer focus. Place the pictures of the story of Jesus' death on the cloth around the crucifix.

Catechist: Let's make the Sign of the Cross together and then say the response: We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.

All: We proclaim your death, O Lord, and profess your resurrection until you come again.

Catechist: Good Friday is a special day for the Church. Jesus help us to be like you, loving, brave and doing what God wants.

All: We proclaim your death, O Lord, and profess your resurrection until you come again.

Collect the name cards and workbooks. Dismiss the students as usual.

Appendix 7: Luke 23: 25–56

On that day, Jesus was taken to the Roman Governor called Pilate. Although Pilate couldn't find anything wrong with what Jesus did, he handed him over to be sentenced to death on the cross. A man called Simon was forced to carry the cross behind Jesus as they set out for a place called The Skull.

While they were walking, a crowd of people followed behind, crying. Some women were very upset and Jesus stopped to comfort them.

Two criminals were also being put to death with Jesus. Many people stood around the cross, watching, while some threw dice for his clothes. The soldiers and one of the criminals made horrible comments about Jesus. The other criminal knew Jesus was a good man and asked him to remember him when he reached his kingdom. Jesus promised the man that there was a place for him in heaven on that day.

At noon a dark cloud covered the sun and everything went dark. People were frightened. While this was happening, Jesus called out to his father in a loud voice, 'Father, into your hands I commend my spirit' and then he died.

After Jesus died, a good man named Joseph received permission to bury Jesus' body. The women who had followed Jesus to the cross went away to get perfume and ointment to put on Jesus' body after the Jewish holy day. They remembered where Jesus was laid in the rock-carved tomb, so that they could come back on the Sunday.

Easter

Background for the Catechist

Please take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

No one was an eyewitness to Christ's Resurrection and no evangelist describes it. No one can say how it came about physically. Still less was its innermost essence, his passing over to another life, perceptible to the senses. Although the Resurrection was an historical event that could be verified by the sign of the empty tomb and by the reality of the apostles' encounters with the risen Christ, still it remains at the very heart of the mystery of faith as something that transcends and surpasses history (CCC 1994, n. 647).

Belief in the Resurrection of Jesus is the cornerstone of Christianity. 'If Christ has not been raised then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain' (1Cor 15: 14). Saint Paul puts it that bluntly to the community in Corinth. Two thousand years of faith, preaching of the gospel, love and service of others and the celebration of the presence of the living Christ in the Church testify to the truth of the resurrection of Jesus. However, the nature of resurrection remains a mystery. The gospels' accounts of the empty tomb and the encounters with the risen Lord witness to the fact that the disciples experienced his personal presence among them. However, no one can say what happened. It is simply a mystery that, after his death, Jesus' disciples found his tomb empty and experienced him alive and really and truly present with them. Our faith alone assures us that, through the death and resurrection of Jesus, death will not conquer, goodness will have the upper hand and that all creation will one day share in the glory of God.

Student Focus

Students of this age find the Resurrection of Jesus difficult to reconcile with what they already know of how the world works. They love mystery and therefore we should avoid trying to explain the mystery of the Resurrection and let the stories speak for themselves.

Teaching Point

During Easter the Church remembers and celebrates Jesus' rising to new life.

Remembering Point

At Easter we remember that Jesus rose to new life.

Beginning

1. Prayer focus: A white cloth, a candle, an Easter egg, a rounded stone (to represent the stone that was rolled away from the tomb).
2. Put the *students' response* on a prayer strip:

Jesus, you are with us always.

3. An Easter hymn about Jesus being alive.
4. CD player.
5. Workbooks.

(5 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Invite one of the students to set up the prayer focus. As each item is laid out – beginning with the white cloth – ask the students to tell you what each item might mean. (The white cloth reminds us of a special event, and today we remember it is Easter. The candle represents the light of Christ (Jesus) and we light it to remind us that Jesus is with us now. The stone reminds us of the stone from Jesus' tomb that was rolled away and the Easter egg reminds us of new life, just like a real egg is the sign of new life for the chicken. When we look inside the chocolate egg we can imagine the darkness of Jesus' tomb and how empty it was when he rose from the dead. Break open the chocolate egg.) Have the prayer strip (description in the Preparation column) in a place where the students can read it during the prayer.

Tell the students: Today we will listen to a story about some friends of Jesus who went to the tomb on the Sunday morning after Jesus died and was buried. But first let us pray to God that we will remember that Jesus rose to new life and is with us always.

Catechist: Let's make the Sign of the Cross together.

Catechist: The response is: Jesus, you are with us always.

Students: Jesus, you are with us always.

Catechist: On Good Friday Jesus died and was buried.

Students: Jesus, you are with us always.

Catechist: On Easter Sunday he rose from the dead.

Students: Jesus, you are with us always.

Catechist: We pray that we will remember that Jesus rose to new life for us.

All: Amen.

Middle

(30 minutes)

Direct the students to page 18 of their workbooks to the story 'Alleluia, Jesus Is Alive' and read the story to the students.

Invite the students to stand and find a space that is away from everyone else.

Tell the students: We will now show with our body, faces and hands what these friends of Jesus were feeling after Jesus died. First let us reflect together on the following:

- I wonder what Mary of Magdala and the other women expected when they went to the tomb. *(Take verbal answers to this question, encouraging as many students as possible to answer.)*
- I wonder what the women felt when they realised that Jesus was not there.

Ask the students: Show me with your face, hands, body, how you think the women felt. *(Encourage the students, affirming them for their expressions. Identify some if possible, e.g. Yes, Paul, I can see you think the women were afraid, very good.)*

- What do you think the women said to the disciples when they returned to the group? *(Take verbal answers but also ask them to think about how the women stood, as well as how they felt, when they told the disciples.)*

Ask the students: Show me how the women would have told the disciples about what they saw. *(Respond positively to their efforts.)*

Now show me how they would have felt when they all heard the news that Jesus was risen to new life? *(Again respond positively.)*

Tell the students: Now everyone stand still and face me. These friends of Jesus were not expecting Jesus to be gone from the tomb. They were surprised that he was risen, but they believed that Jesus had really risen to new life with God, his Father. So let us all say together:

Catechist: Jesus rose to new life.

Students: Jesus rose to new life.

Ask the students: What is a symbol we use at Easter to represent new life? *(egg, butterfly, ... Help students think about things that reflect new life. If a rabbit is mentioned, encourage them to think of a bunny. The Easter Bunny has connections with an ancient early Christianised tradition that the students at this age do not need to understand. The focus on new life is a better approach.)*

- Why do you think we use these symbols at Easter? *(Help the students to understand that just as eggs are the new life of a chicken and caterpillars change and have a 'new life' as a butterfly, so Jesus died for us and then rose to a 'new life'.)*

Direct the students to page 19 in their workbook and run through the egg and the caterpillar symbols used to signify new life.

Ask the students to fill in the gaps of the sentence.

Invite the students to fill in the Gospel story on page 19 of their workbook. (This will become the final prayer.)

If time permits allow the students to colour in the picture of the Easter egg.

While the students are quietly working, ask them individually to explain why the Easter egg is used as a symbol of new life.

End

(10 minutes)

Direct the students to the completed prayer section on page 19 of their workbook.

Catechist: The response is 'Alleluia'.

Students: Alleluia

Catechist: Let's make the Sign of the Cross together. In the name...

Catechist: Let us pray to God that we will remember that Jesus rose to new life and is with us always. Mary of Magdala and other friends of Jesus went to the tomb.

Students: Alleluia.

Catechist: They saw that the big stone had been rolled away.

Students: Alleluia.

Catechist: The women went inside the tomb.

Students: Alleluia.

Catechist: Two men appeared beside them.

Students: Alleluia.

Catechist: They told the women that Jesus was not there.

Students: Alleluia.

Catechist: Lord, may we always remember that Jesus rose to new life for us.

All: Amen.

Listen to the Easter hymn you have selected or dismiss the students as usual collecting name cards and workbooks.

Jesus Taught Us How to Pray

Background for the Catechist

Please take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

But Jesus does not give us a formula to repeat mechanically. As in every vocal prayer, it is through the Word of God that the Holy Spirit teaches the children of God to pray to their Father. Jesus not only gives us the words of our filial prayer; at the same time he gives us the Spirit by whom these words become in us 'spirit and life' (CCC 1994, n. 2766).

When Jesus spoke of God the word he used most often was 'Father'. To him God was not a vague transcendent being light years away but the loving, merciful, just and holy Father to whom he turned constantly in prayer. Our images of God can easily become overlaid with attributes of remoteness, indifference and detachment that are not only less than divine but less than human. Just as human parents want what is good for their children, we assume God our heavenly father is no less sensitive. Prayer is quite simply an expression of dependence on God and acknowledgment that all comes from God. When we pray we become children before God our Father and thus we will enter the Kingdom.

Student Focus

Students of this age easily assume the stance of prayer before God as they are used to calling on parents and others for all their needs. Generally love and affection characterise relations between children and parents, though we need to be sensitive on the occasions when this seems not to be the case. We can use other images as well as 'father', e.g. friend, creator, parent. We need to encourage simple spontaneous prayers of love and praise and thanks as well as introducing the traditional words of the Lord's Prayer. Knowing the Lord's Prayer can help the students to participate with others in the communal prayer of the church.

Teaching Point

Jesus taught us how to pray.

Remembering Point

Jesus taught us how to pray.

Beginning

1. Prayer focus: A yellow cloth, the Bible, an Easter symbol of your choice.
2. A large decorated box.
3. Large pieces of paper with the words of the Our Father written on them. Have one phrase per piece of paper, beginning with 'Our Father'.

(5 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Gather the students around the prayer focus.

Invite the students to sit quietly in prayer, telling them that it is still the time when we think about what Jesus did for us at the first Easter. We can sit quietly thanking Jesus. (This should only be one to two minutes at the most.)

Tell the students: Now let us pray with words. Repeat after me:

Catechist: Jesus, you are our friend.

Students: Jesus, you are our friend.

Catechist: You died and rose from the dead for us.

Students: You died and rose from the dead for us.

Catechist: Help us to pray to you always. Amen

Students: Help us to pray to you always. Amen.

Tell the students: Now we are going to learn how to pray in the same way that Jesus taught his disciples. The disciples asked Jesus to teach them how to pray. So he taught them a special prayer that we still say today. It is very special to the Church as well. Can anyone guess what that prayer might be? (Help the students to come up with the 'Our Father' or 'The Lord's Prayer'.)

Middle

(30 minutes)

Ask the students:

- Why do you think Jesus prayed?
- When did Jesus pray? (*Morning, afternoon and evening. Cf. lesson 2.*)
- Why do you pray?
- When can you pray?

Tell the students: We can be like the disciples and ask Jesus to teach us how to pray.

Invite the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder what Jesus would say to us. (*Take all answers.*)

Tell the students: It would be good to have Jesus tell us exactly what we are to do and how we can pray. Jesus will help us in our prayer if we pray often. We would also find that Jesus would probably tell us the same things he told the disciples about praying when they asked him to teach them to pray. Jesus taught the disciples by showing them. Remember in lesson two, we saw that Jesus went to quiet places at different times and prayed alone to his Father. We can do the same. Jesus also taught the disciples a special prayer that we can learn to say. We call it 'The Lord's Prayer' or the 'Our Father'. We can learn this prayer and remember that Jesus taught this to the disciples.

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Gather the students around the table. Have a large decorated box on the table. Inside the box have the words of the 'Our Father' on large pieces of paper.

Invite the students to pick a phrase and put it on the table in front of them.

Ask the students what these words mean. Continue in this way until all the words and phrases are on the table.

Invite the students to bring forward the phrases in order. You will need to direct the order, e.g. We begin our prayer by saying who we are praying to, so in this prayer we are praying to God, our Father. Can you find for me the words that say 'Our Father'?

Continue this process phrase by phrase helping the students to identify each part of the prayer and to place it sequentially on the blackboard or table. At the conclusion say the prayer together pointing to the words.

Tell the students: Now let's put some actions to the prayer.

Teach the students the actions (See Appendix 9a page 50).

Direct the students to page 20 of their workbooks and invite them to trace over the words of the 'Our Father' using their favourite colours.

End

(10 minutes)

Invite the students to complete the crossword on page 22 of the workbook. (You might have to do this as a whole group. Solution Appendix 9b, page 50.)

Gather the students around the prayer focus.

Tell the students: We will sing the song from Lesson 2 in the workbook, page 5, and then say the 'Our Father' with the actions.

Catechist: Let us make the Sign of the Cross together.

Now let us sing our song.

All: Help us, Jesus...

Catechist: Let us pray the Our Father with actions.

All: (Everyone prays the 'Our Father' with actions.)

Catechist: Repeat after me: Jesus taught us how to pray. Thank you, Jesus.

All: Jesus taught us how to pray. Thank you, Jesus.

Collect the name cards and workbooks. Dismiss the students as usual.

Appendix 9a: Actions for Praying the Our Father



Our Father who art in heaven
(Raise both hands high, look up)



Give us this day our daily bread
(Cup hands together in front of body)



Hallowed be thy name
(Bow head, cross arms over chest)



And forgive us our trespasses
(Bend head, hold hands in 'fists' upon chest)



Thy Kingdom come
(Move one arm outward)



As we forgive those
(Move one hand outward)



Thy will be done
(Move the other arm outward)



Who trespass against us.
(Move the other hand outward)



On Earth
(Bend toward earth, pointing arms downward)



And lead us not into temptation,
(Turn face away, hold hands to the side as a 'stop' signal)

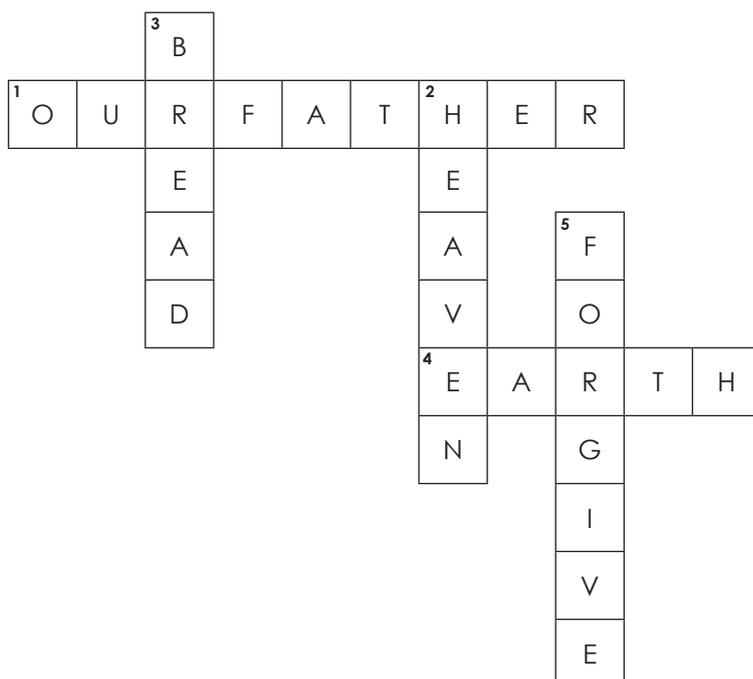


As it is in heaven.
(Look up, reach upward with both arms)



But deliver us from evil. Amen.
(Raise both arms in gesture of 'freedom')

Appendix 9b: Solution to Crossword in Student Workbook (P22)



The Good News of Jesus

Background for the Catechist

Please take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

The Word of God, which is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, is set forth and displays its power in a most wonderful way in the writings of the New Testament which hand on the ultimate truth of God's revelation. Their central object is Jesus Christ, God's incarnate son: his acts, teachings, Passion and glorification, and his Church's beginnings under the Spirit's guidance (CCC 1994, n. 124).

The Scriptures, consisting of the Old Testament, the record of the religious experience of the people of Israel, and the New Testament, the record of the foundational experience of the Christian Church, are a touchstone of Christianity. They are rightly called 'the Word of God'. At the heart of the New Testament are the four gospels, accounts of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus – the Good News for us and for the world. When they are read in faith and love they are one of the means by which Jesus remains present to his people throughout history. The gospels are not history or biography but proclamations and actions of Jesus Christ written so that human beings might come to faith in him.

Student Focus

The stories of Jesus in the gospels make a wonderful point of connection with students of this age, who are always very receptive to story telling. Profound as these stories are, they are accessible even to quite small children and can be responded to on many levels. It is important to expose students of this age frequently to the stories of Jesus. It is valuable to identify where these stories occur in the Bible, while telling the story in your own words.

Teaching Point

The New Testament tells the story of the Good News of Jesus.

Remembering Point

The New Testament is the Good News of Jesus.

Beginning

(10 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Invite the students to sit in a circle round the prayer focus. Light the candle and say:

Catechist: Last week we learnt the prayer that Jesus gave us. We call it the Our Father. Let's say it together.

All: Our Father, who art in heaven ...

Tell the students: Today we're going to look at the New Testament, the part of the Bible where we find the stories of the Good News of Jesus.

Show the students the Bible. Open it at the beginning of the Old Testament where the words 'Old Testament' appear. Then show them where the New Testament begins. Show the students the contents page of the Bible, so that they can see the two testaments and the books contained in each.

Tell the students: Today we're going to look at some of the stories that are in the New Testament.

Ask the students: Do you know any stories about Jesus? (*The 'Our Father', healing people, feeding 5000 people, Jesus was born at Bethlehem ...*) Yes, all those stories are in the New Testament. All these stories are part of the Good News of Jesus.

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder why it's called the 'Good News'. (*Accept the answers. This is a great opportunity for the students to deepen their appreciation of the value of Jesus' message.*)

Tell the students: Yes, the Good News is all these things, all the great stories of Jesus and all the things Jesus wants us to know about God.

Ask the students:

- Who can tell me a 'good news' story about their life? (*Again ask three or four students to share their story and affirm them.*)
- What might be the 'good news' message is in these stories? (*These will differ according to the story. Help the students see the good part of the story, or the message the experience offers everyone. Remember to keep it simple.*)

Tell the students: Just as our good news stories tell us something, the New Testament, the Good News of Jesus, tells us something very important. These Good News stories help us understand what Jesus is trying to teach us. We can learn what Jesus' message is about God by listening to the Good News of Jesus in the New Testament.

1. Prayer focus: A coloured cloth, a candle, the Bible.
2. Bookmarks in the Bible for Old Testament and New Testament.
3. Bibles for students to consult (if possible).
4. **Story Stations:** If you have space, set up three different 'stations' or foci, one for each story, in three different places. Place the items listed below (a, b, c), at the stations. (If you do not have space, use three bags/baskets/boxes containing the items.)
 - a) A yellow cloth and a small set of nativity figures.
 - b) A white cloth and a bandage or a bandaid.
 - c) A brown cloth with some scattered seeds.
5. Have the following on a strip of card for prayer time: *Jesus, help us to remember that you are the Good News of God.*

Middle

(35 minutes)

Invite the students to gather round the first story station.

Tell the story of Jesus' birth:

The emperor wanted to make a list of everyone in the empire. Everyone had to go to their home town. So Joseph took Mary to Bethlehem, his home town, to register their names on the list. While they were there Mary gave birth to a son. She wrapped him in bands of cloth and laid him in a manger because there was no room in the inn.

Ask the students: Put up your hand if you have heard this story before.

- When (at what time of the year) do you think we would have this story? (*Christmas, Jesus' birthday*)

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder what the message or 'Good News' is in this story. (*This will open up the story in ways you may not be expecting. Take the students' answers and remember there is no right or wrong answer as this is the students' own reflection on the message. This will offer a great learning experience.*)

Tell the students: This story is part of the Good News of Jesus. It is in Luke's Gospel in the New Testament section of the Bible.

Invite the students to open their workbooks at page 23 and to find the story of Jesus' birth. Direct the students to write what they think is the Good News of Jesus in the story.

Invite the students to gather round the second story station.

Tell the story:

A great crowd gathered round Jesus. A leper came and knelt before Jesus. He asked Jesus to make him well. Straight away Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him. He said, 'Be made well!' and the leper was cured. Jesus told him not to tell anyone but to go to the priest and make the necessary offering.

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder how the leper felt when he asked Jesus to make him well.
- I wonder how the leper felt when his leprosy had disappeared.
- I wonder what the message or 'Good News' is in this story.

Tell the students: This story is part of the Good News of Jesus. It is in Matthew's Gospel in the New Testament section of the Bible.

Invite the students to open their workbooks at page 23 and to find the story of the leper. Have the students write what they think is the Good News of Jesus in this story.

Invite the students to gather round the third story station.

Tell the story:

One day there was a big crowd around Jesus. He began to teach them in parables. This is one of them.

A man went out to sow seed. Some of the seed fell on the path and the birds ate it. Some if it fell on rocky ground and after it had started to grow it soon withered in the hot sun. Some seed fell among the weeds and was choked. Other seed fell on good soil and grew and produced a very, very, very good harvest.

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder why Jesus told parables. *(To help people understand, because people knew about seeds, it's easy to remember stories.)*
- I wonder what the message or 'Good News' is in this story. *(Remember to take all the students answers and that there is no right or wrong answer.)*

Tell the students: This story is part of the Good News of Jesus. It is in Mark's Gospel in the New Testament section of the Bible.

Invite the students to open their workbooks at page 24 and to find the story of the sower. Have the students write what they think is the Good News of Jesus in this story.

End

(5 minutes)

Invite the students to gather round the prayer focus.

Catechist: We gather round the lighted candle which reminds us of Jesus, and around the Bible which contains the stories of the Good News of Jesus.

Catechist: The Good News is that Jesus was born.

Students: Jesus, help us to remember that you are the Good News of God.

Catechist: The Good News is that Jesus healed many people.

Students: Jesus, help us to remember that you are the Good News of God.

Catechist: The Good News is that Jesus told us many stories to help us understand.

Students: Jesus, help us to remember that you are the Good News of God.

Catechist: The Good News is that Jesus taught us to pray.

Students: Jesus, help us to remember that you are the Good News of God.

Catechist: Let us pray the prayer Jesus gave us:

All: Our Father, who art ...

Collect the name cards and workbooks. Dismiss the students as usual.

Making Good Choices

Background for the Catechist

Please take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

In all of his life Jesus presents himself as our model. He is 'the perfect man', who invites us to become his disciples and follow him. In humbling himself, he has given us an example to imitate, through his prayer he draws us to pray, and by his poverty he calls us to accept freely the privation and persecutions that may come our way (CCC 1994, n. 520).

Christians believe that Jesus shows us most fully and completely what God intended for the whole human race, so we ought to look to Jesus as a model and guide for our lives. We have to ask ourselves what Jesus was most passionately committed to and become committed to that ourselves. We have to listen to what he said and let his words have an effect in our lives. We have to watch what he did, how he lived and how he related to others and allow his example to affect every choice and decision of our own lives.

Student Focus

Students of this age look to significant adults for direction on how to behave. Students copy the behaviour and decision-making strategies of these significant others and have no difficulty applying the processes to their lives. Presenting Jesus as a significant other, a model for the students, provides them with many ways to make choices that will enrich their lives. Choosing and making decisions are significant aspects of the Year 2 student's developmental process. Encouraging students to make decisions and choices in light of Jesus' own decisions and choices provides a sound guide.

Teaching Point

Jesus is our model and teacher in making good choices and decisions.

Remembering Point

Jesus shows us how to make good choices.

Beginning

1. Prayer focus: A cloth, a candle and automatic lighter.
2. Picture of a pond where a pebble has been thrown and the ripples are evident.
3. Bible: Story of The Wedding at Cana (Jn 2: 1–12).
4. Make cards with the following words written on them:
 - Sharing
 - Caring
 - Forgiving
 - Helping
 - Welcoming
 - Giving
 - Showing kindness.
5. Have a very large bowl of water placed upon the prayer focus.
6. Pebbles or stones – enough for each student – placed next to the large bowl on the prayer focus.
7. Have the following prayer written on a prayer card:
Jesus, you show us how to make good choices. Help me to show kindness to my friends.
8. Cards or paper and writing tools.

(15 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Ask the students to have a quick brainstorm of 'Good News/Good Choices' they have experienced or made throughout the week. Demonstrate one example of each for the students.

Tell the students: We all make good and not-so-good choices. A good choice I made was when I decided to help my friend to cheer up.

Students take turns sharing their news.

Tell the students: Jesus made lots of good choices in his life. He chose to show love and care for others. Jesus decided to be forgiving and friendly to others. Jesus chose to heal people. He chose to show us how to live as God's people. We will find out more about Jesus' choices in today's lesson. Now let us pray together:

Gather the students around the prayer focus, light the candle and invite the students to pray.

Catechist: Let us pray. Repeat each line after me.

Catechist: Jesus, show us how to make good choices.

Students: Jesus, show us how to make good choices.

Catechist: Jesus, help us to care about others.

Students: Jesus, help us to care about others.

Catechist: Jesus, help us to be friendly to others.

Students: Jesus, help us to be friendly to others.

Catechist: Jesus, help us to forgive others.

Students: Jesus, help us to forgive others.

Catechist: Jesus, help us to make good choices.

Students: Jesus, help us to make good choices.

All: Amen.

Middle

(25 minutes)

Show the students a picture of a pond where a pebble has been thrown in and the ripples are evident.

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder what could have caused these ripples.

Tell the students: When a pebble is thrown into the water, little circles appear around where the stone went in and keep moving outwards. The ripples keep reaching out and out. Our choices have the same effect, like the ripples in the water. Our choices have a consequence or effect upon others, just like Jesus' choices had an effect upon others.

Invite the students to turn to page 26 in their workbook.

Direct the students to draw the good choices we can make in our daily lives. When they have finished, invite one or two students to share with the whole group.

Ask students:

- What might be a positive choice? (*Sharing*)
- What might be a negative choice? (*Hurting someone*)
- Your Mum has said you can invite five people to your birthday party. Who will you choose? How will the people you chose feel? How will the people you don't choose feel? How will you feel?

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Tell the students: The choices we make affect others. Our friends, siblings, classmates, school family, parents, teachers are affected by the things we choose to do or the choices we make.

Ask the students: Think of a choice we can make at school or at home that will affect others.

Examples may include answers such as 'When I let Joseph play downball with us, it made him happy and we all had fun together' or 'When I chose to help my Mum with the dishes without being asked, she smiled and hugged me and thanked me for my kindness. I felt good and she did too!'

Tell the students: Let's read a story about Jesus choosing to help people.

Gather the students around you for the telling of the story. Tell the story of the Wedding at Cana (Jn 2: 1–12).

Ask the students: Who were the characters in the story? (*Jesus, Mary, the steward, servants.*)

Tell the students: Turn to page 27 in your workbook and draw the scenes in the story.

1. Mary going to Jesus about the wine running out
2. The servants filling the jars with water
3. The steward tasting the water and it was wine.

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder why Mary decided to talk to Jesus about there being no wine.
- I wonder why Jesus said that it wasn't their concern.
- What good choices did Jesus, Mary and the servants make?
- How can you be like Mary, the servants or Jesus and show kindness to another person?

Organise the students into groups of two or three.

Ask the students to look at the words displayed on the board and decide which good choice they would like to dramatise. (Students might like to dramatise how they can share with others, forgive someone or welcome someone new to their class.)

Invite the students to act out or dramatise their choice. (Students can act out or role-play helping other students in the playground, in class or at home.) Reinforce the ways that students can demonstrate or are demonstrating these good choices in the lesson and in everyday life e.g. It is always good to see people in our class sharing so well. It makes everyone really happy when you cooperate and show respect for each other.

End

(10 minutes)

Ask the students to tell the person beside them 'the good choices I can make today?' (*Students might say 'I will go home and set the table for tea without being asked', or 'I will share my favourite toy with my sister'.*) Then have the students write it down on a card.

Direct the students to share their choice with a different person. Then take the card to the prayer focus.

Tell the students: As we pray our prayers we will place a pebble into the bowl remembering how our choices are like ripples that flow on and affect others.

Catechist: Let's pray to God, our Father, who sent us His Son, Jesus, to show us how to make good choices in our lives.

Invite students to place their chosen 'good choice' card on the prayer focus and gently place a pebble into the water bowl. Respond after each student with the following response:

Catechist: Jesus, you show us how to make good choices. Help me to share with my brother and sisters.

Students: Jesus, you show us how to make good choices. Help me to show kindness to my friends.

Invite the students to take home their prayer and place it in a special place so that it reminds them to make good decisions in their daily lives.

Collect the name cards and workbooks. Dismiss the students as usual.

Jesus Shows Us God's Love

Background for the Catechist

Please take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

The Word became flesh so that thus we might know God's love: 'In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him...For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life' (CCC 1994, n. 458).

Jesus is the clearest revelation of God we have and our strongest hope for union with God is through Jesus, truly divine and truly human. Before we can convey the truth – that Jesus both shows us and gives us God's love – we have to be convinced of it ourselves. It is worthwhile to spend some time reflecting on our own relationship with God in and through Jesus and the extent to which we are responding to the love of God poured out upon us in Jesus, what it really means and the difference it really makes to how we live our lives. Jesus' life among us is the clearest picture we have of the kind of love God has for all of us. Jesus' kind of love was not about nice feelings but always directed to the good of the other.

Student Focus

Even young students can appreciate the way Jesus noticed others, the way he spoke to them, the way he offered not only help and healing but a new way of seeing. Jesus' kindness to people who had lost their way, his readiness to forgive, and best of all, his willingness to give his life for his friends, are special characteristics of Jesus' revelation of God's love.

Teaching Point

Jesus shows us God's love and how we can love God.

Remembering Point

Jesus shows me that God loves me and I can love God.

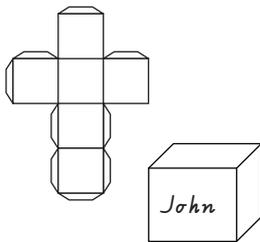
Beginning

1. Prayer focus: A coloured cloth, a candle, a picture of a baby. Have the following on two prayer strips:

Thank you for the people who love me.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

2. Practise telling the story of the washing of feet.
3. A copy of the cube template already cut out for each student (See Appendix 12 on page 64).



4. Sticky tape, coloured pencils, or felt markers.
5. Have the following on prayer strips:

God our heavenly Father you love us.

Heavenly Father I want to show how I love you by...

(10 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Gather the students around the prayer focus.

Tell the students: Babies, like this one, grow and learn how to walk and talk, to go to school and to play all because they are surrounded by people who love them.

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder how we know when people love us. *(They tell us, they help us, they play with us, they cook meals, they protect us.)*
- I wonder how we respond when we know people love us. *(Say we love them, do things for them, give them a hug, chat, help.)*

Invite the students to pray:

Catechist: Let us start with the Sign of the Cross:

All: In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Catechist: Heavenly Father, you gave me people who love me.

Students: Thank you for the people who love me.

Catechist: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Students: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Middle

(35 minutes)

Invite the students to go to their seats.

Tell the students: John tells us in his gospel that at Jesus' last Passover meal (Last Supper) he told his disciples, 'Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another'.

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder how Jesus showed that he loved them. *(taught them, cured the blind man, gave life to the widow's son, talked to people, fed the thousands)*

Yes, these are all ways in which Jesus showed people that he loved them. Today we're going to have the story of Jesus washing the disciples' feet.

Tell the story (Jn 13: 13–20):

When Jesus was having his last Passover meal with his disciples he surprised them all. He took off his robe and wrapped a towel around his waist. Then he got a bowl of water and went to each of them and washed their feet. Then he told them that they should copy him and wash each other's feet.

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder why Jesus washed their feet. *(he loved them, he wanted to show that he loved them)*
- I wonder who would normally have done this job.

Tell the students: This is what Jesus did to show that he loved his disciples and that they were to copy him.

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder how we can copy Jesus and show each other that we love and care for them. *(do things that show we care for others, look after our brothers and sisters, share our favourite things with others ...)*

Invite the students to open their workbooks at page 28 and to read the list of ways people help each other. Ask them to think about each and to put a tick next to the ones they could do.

Give each student a copy of the cube sheet already cut out. Ask them to fill in the boxes by writing their name and by drawing actions of loving care.

Help the students to fold the cube along the lines and to fold into a cube. Use sticky tape to hold it together.

End

(5 minutes)

Invite each student to roll the cube and to tell the others about the picture which comes on top.

Tell the students: Jesus used to say that he and his Father loved each other so much that they were one. Everything that Jesus did was to show us that God loves us. All the things that you have drawn are ways you can show that you love God.

Invite the students to gather round the prayer focus and to put their cube on the cloth so that we can finish with a prayer.

Catechist: Let us begin with the Sign of the Cross.

All: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Catechist: God, our heavenly Father, you love us.

All: God, our heavenly Father, thank you for loving us.

Each

Student: Heavenly Father, I want to show how I love you by
(invite each student in turn to tell one of the actions from their cube)

All: God, our heavenly Father, thank you for loving us.

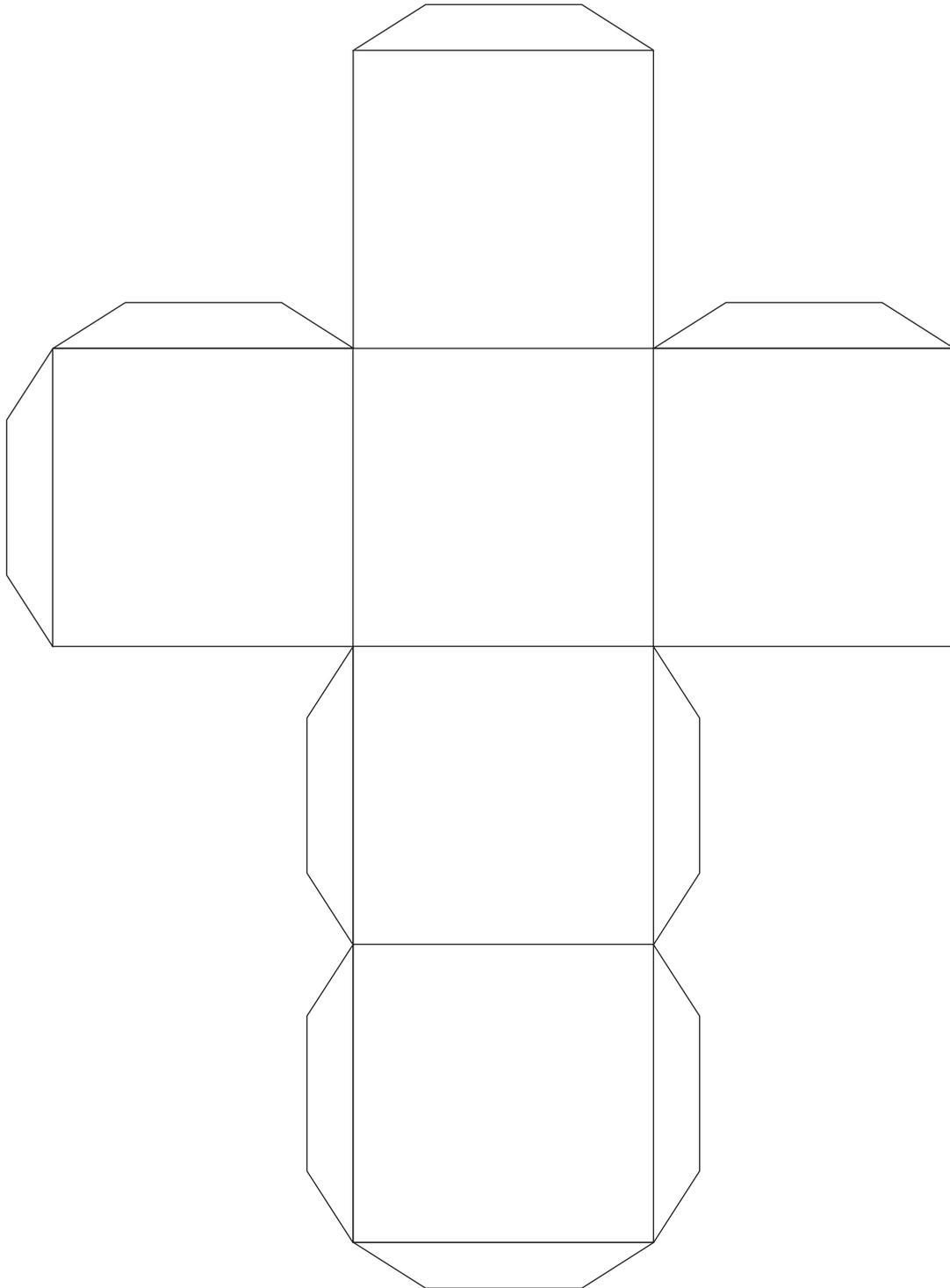
Catechist: Let us pray together:

All: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Collect the name cards and workbooks. Dismiss the students as usual.

Appendix 12 – Cube Template

Enlarge this cube template on a photocopier and make a copy for each student. Copy onto card to make a stronger cube. Cut out the cube shape for each student. Students can write on and decorate the template before they stick the cube together. You can use glue on the tabs or use sticky-tape to secure the flaps.



Sacraments

Background for the Catechist

Please take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

Sacraments are 'powers that come forth' from the Body of Christ, which is ever living and life-giving. They are actions of the Holy Spirit at work in his Body, the Church. They are 'the masterworks of God' in the new and everlasting covenant (CCC 1994, n. 1116).

Sometimes it is not enough for our families and friends to tell us they love us; sometimes we need also the embrace, the kiss, the warm handshake, the small gift to embody the love we share with others. The sacraments are moments when God shares with us in real and tangible ways the life and love which are always ours. They are moments when, if we are open, we can experience within us the joy of union with the God who is life and love.

Student Focus

Students of this age know the importance of the signs of love and friendship that are a part of their lives. No one can 'see' love, forgiveness, kindness. We see instead the signs of love, forgiveness, kindness that are expressed through words, signs and actions. Students are able to identify within their own experience signs and examples of being loved, of having friends and of being forgiven. Students of this age will deepen their awareness and understanding of sacramentality through exploration of their own experiences of love, friendship and forgiveness.

Teaching Point

In the sacraments we celebrate the life and love of Christ through the Church.

Remembering Point

In the sacraments we share in the life and love of Jesus Christ.

Beginning

(10 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Gather the students around the prayer focus. Light the candle, reminding the students about why you are doing that. Have the responses to the prayer on prayer strips for the students to read.

Invite the students to be quiet and to pray.

Catechist: Let us make the Sign of the Cross.

Catechist: We share in God's love when Jesus is part of our life.

Students: Jesus, please stay a part of our life.

Catechist: Everything that Jesus did helps us move closer to God.

Students: Jesus, help us to move closer to God.

Catechist: In the sacraments we find Jesus' love, which leads us to God.

Students: Jesus, your love leads us to God. Help us to follow you.

Catechist: May the love of Jesus be with us always.

All: Amen.

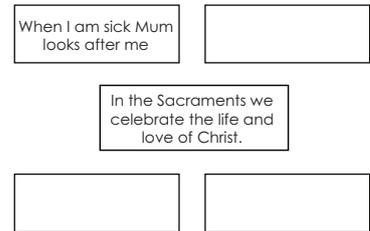
Send the students back to their seats and **tell them:** With the person beside you, make one list of all the times you have been shown love and friendship by your family and friends.

Hand out five strips of card to each pair.

Invite the students to choose five examples from the list and write each of these five on a separate strip of card. When they have completed the strips, **invite each group** to read out their five and put them up on the sheet around the central statement. If any is repeated they can put the strip on top of the one already there. (You can have this sheet on the black/white board or on the floor. Use Blu-tac or something similar if you are putting it on the board, so that you can move the strips later in the lesson).

Tell the students: Here we have many ways that we receive love and friendship from our family and friends. This love of our family and friends helps us grow and become good people. It helps us become loving people.

1. Prayer focus: A yellow or white cloth, a candle, the Bible.
2. Prepare three prayer strips for the responses to the opening prayer.
3. Sheets of paper for the students on which to write their lists.
4. To create a word web/ concept map take:
 - Five strips of card/paper for each pair of students
 - A large sheet of card or paper with 'In the sacraments we celebrate the life and love of Christ' in the centre of the sheet. You will place the students' strips of card (use Blu-Tack or similar) around this statement as per the example below.



5. Enlarged Sacraments Grid (see Appendix 13a on page 69) and cut-out the heart shapes (see Appendix 13b on page 70).
6. Workbooks.

Middle

30 minutes

Tell the students: Just as we receive love from our friends and family, we can also receive the love of God through the Church in a special way through the sacraments.

In our lives we have special times in our family when we share our love with each other, when we are sick, when we have a celebration, when we say sorry to each other, at special meals... (Draw on the examples provided by the students earlier for the word web). There are special times in the Church too when we can share in God's love in Jesus:

- When we share a special holy meal (*the Eucharist*)
- When we say sorry and ask for forgiveness (*Reconciliation*)
- When we welcome someone into the family of the Church (*Baptism and Confirmation*)
- When two people celebrate choosing to be with each other for life (*Marriage*)
- When a man chooses to serve and help others (*Ordination*)
- When we are sick and need special love, blessing and healing from Jesus (*Anointing of the Sick*).

Send the students to their seats. Invite the students to open the workbook on page 30 and complete the sentences.

Use the grid of the seven sacraments (see Appendix 13a on page 69).

Invite the students to place the cards with the life experiences from the beginning activity on the chart to match the sacrament. Show the students the heart shapes with the 'love received' on them. **Invite the students** to match the heart shape with the sacrament and life example.

Invite the students to turn to page 31 in their workbook and to complete the grid using the large grid as example. **Invite the students** to write their own examples of 'love shown' in the heart shapes in their book.

End

(5 minutes)

When the students have completed the work in their books, **invite them** to join you around the prayer focus, bringing their workbook with them open at page 31. Have the large grid placed with the prayer focus.

Catechist: Today we have learnt that we can share in God's love through the sacraments, which are special ways that Jesus helps the family of God.

Let us pray now for our families, friends and all those who show us love, and ask Jesus to be with us in a special way through the sacraments.

Catechist: Jesus, you are our friend and you care for us. Be with our families and friends, so that they may know your love.

Students: Jesus, we rejoice in your life and love.

Catechist: When we share in the sacraments of Jesus we are part of the Church family sharing in the love of Christ.

Students: Jesus, we rejoice in your life and love.

Catechist: Jesus, help us to remember to participate in the Sacraments, so that we can celebrate the life and love of Christ. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Dismiss the students as usual.

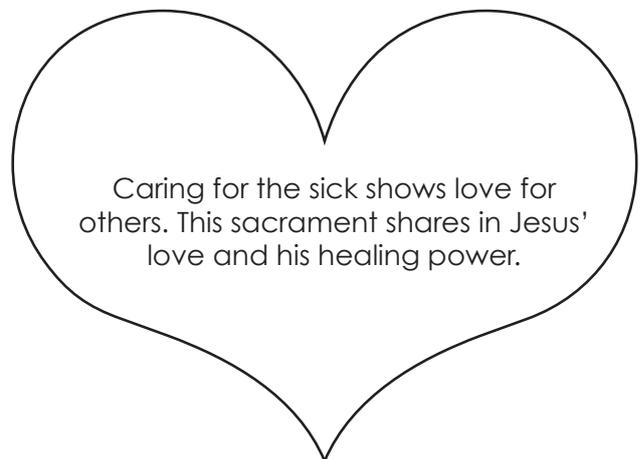
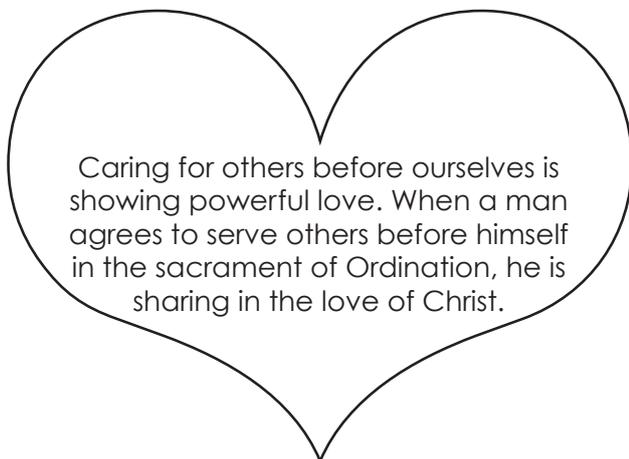
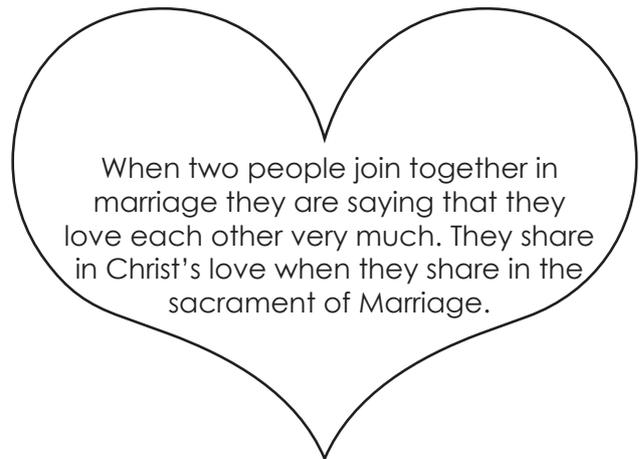
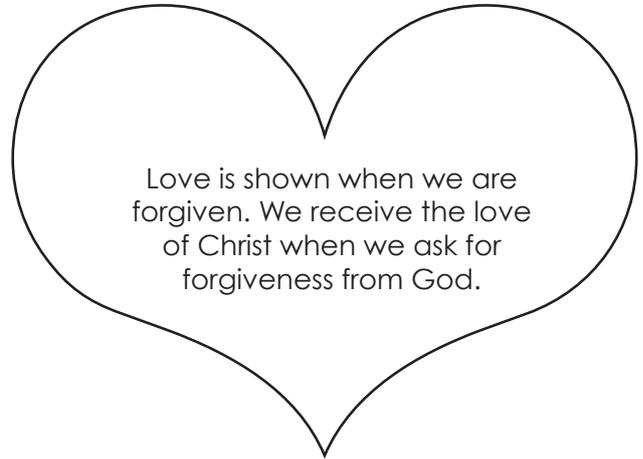
Appendix 13a: Sacraments Grid

Photocopy and enlarge this grid onto an A3 sheet for use with the students.

Sacrament	Life Example	How Love is shown
Baptism and Confirmation		
Reconciliation		
Eucharist		
Marriage		
Ordination		
Anointing of the Sick		

Appendix 13b: Heart Shapes – How Love is Shown

Copy these heart shapes onto coloured paper. These are to be used for the 'how the love is shown' column in the Sacraments Grid in Appendix 13a.



Baptism

Background for the Catechist

Please take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

A sacramental celebration is woven from signs and symbols. In keeping with the divine pedagogy of salvation, their meaning is rooted in the work of creation and in human culture, specified by the events of the Old Covenant and fully revealed in the person and work of Christ (CCC 1994, n. 1145).

Water, the key sign of baptism, and the lighted candle presented to the newly baptised draw their power from their significance in:

- the natural world (Water is the element without which there would be no life, it cleanses, refreshes, restores while light enables vision, clarity and action.)
- stories concerning them in the Old Testament (e.g. creation, the flood, the crossing of the Red Sea, the pillar of fire in the desert, the prophecies of Isaiah).
- their association with the person of Jesus in the actions and words of his ministry (e.g. baptism in the Jordan, the blood and water that flowed from Jesus' side on the cross, the Transfiguration, 'I am the light of the world').

Student Focus

Water and light provide natural starting points for talking about Baptism, as the students will have lots of experiences with both, most of which will be relevant to their sacramental significance as well. As much as possible allow the students to draw parallels between the properties of water and light and the effects of Baptism and enrich these insights by telling some of the stories from the Scriptures.

Teaching Point

The water of life and the light of Christ are key signs of Baptism.

Remembering Point

Water and light are signs of Baptism.

Beginning

(15 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Gather the students around the prayer focus and invite them to get ready to pray.

Catechist: Let us begin by making the Sign of the Cross.

Repeat after me;

Come, Holy Spirit, fill our hearts.

All: Come, Holy Spirit, fill our hearts.

Catechist: Light in us the fire of your love.

All: Light in us the fire of your love.

Catechist: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Invite the students to gather on the mat around you.

Show the students the beans and ask them where they think they come from. If necessary, explain that beans come from plants which grow from seeds like these (show the seeds).

Ask the students: How do seeds turn into plants? (*put them into soil, water them, put them in a light place*)

Tell the students: Today we're going to plant some bean seeds.

Invite a student to spread the newspaper over a table. Put some potting mix into the pot. Then ask one or two students to push a seed into the potting mix and cover it. Another student can put the pot on the saucer. Then invite one student to pour some water into the pot. (Ensure that the students wash their hands with antiseptic liquid or wipes after the activity.)

Ask the students: What will we need to do now? (*put the pot in the sun, near the window, wait for it to grow, keep on watering it ...*)

Tell the students: It will take some days before we see any signs of the seeds growing. I'll take the pot home to look after it and I'll bring it back next week.

Invite the students to go to their tables and open their workbooks at page 33.

Tell the students to fill the gaps in the sentence below the pictures of the plant. (Plants need water and light from the sun to grow.)

1. Prayer Focus: A white cloth, a candle, a bowl of water.
2. Some fresh beans; some bean seeds.
3. A small plant pot and a saucer.
4. Some potting mix.
5. A small container of water.
6. Some newspaper.
7. Gloves.
8. Some antiseptic hand wipes or liquid.
9. A picture of a young child being baptised.
10. Picture of a child's baptism.
11. Workbooks.

NB: Be careful when using potting mix. It has been known to affect students with asthma and to carry bacteria. Wear gloves when you are putting the potting mix into the pot and have the students stand at a reasonable distance from the mix while it is being moved. Give the students who will put the seed into the potting mix a glove to wear. Throw these gloves away after the activity. You could use antiseptic liquid or wipes after the activity if you would rather not use gloves.

Middle

(25 minutes)

Invite the students to sit on the mat around you and tell them Ethan's story:

Hi. My name's Ethan. Last week we had a special celebration at church. It was Sienna's baptism. This is what happened. Mum, Dad, Uncle Nathan, Auntie Hannah, and I had to wait at the church door. So did Granny and Pop and all our family and friends. Father Bill came and drew a cross with his thumb on Sienna's forehead and we all did too. Then we all went into the church.

Father Bill put some oil on Sienna's chest. Auntie Hannah and Uncle Nathan held Sienna and Father Bill poured water over her head. He said, 'I baptise you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit'. Sienna cried a little bit.

Father Bill put his thumb in some oil and drew a cross on Sienna's head. Then he lit a candle from the big Easter candle, which reminds us of Jesus. He gave it to Uncle Nathan for Sienna.

Then we all went home and had a celebration.

Ask the students to raise their hands if they have been to a baptism. If any have, ask them whose baptism it was, who was there.

Tell the students: You have all been baptised. I was baptised too, many years ago when I was little. I wonder who was there when you were baptised? *(mum, dad, granny, grandpa...)*

Tell the students: Baptism is a very important celebration in the Church. It's the time when we become official members of God's family. We use water and light as special signs. *(Show the students a picture of a child being baptised.)*

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder what water is a sign of. *(growing, new life...)*

Respond to the students' reflections: Yes, water is a sign of all those things. It is very important because if we don't have it we can't stay alive. We watered our bean seeds to help them grow. In the Church we use water as a sign of life and of new life.

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder what the lighted candle is a sign of. *(growing, Jesus...)*

Respond to the students' reflections: Yes light is a sign of all those things. It is very important because it helps us to be healthy and to grow strong bones. The lighted candle reminds us of Jesus, who is the light of the world. It reminds us that we can grow in knowing Jesus and in living like him.

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder how we can grow in knowing Jesus. *(read stories from the Gospel, listen to stories about Jesus, listen to Father at Mass, pay attention in R E classes...)*

I wonder how we can grow to be like Jesus. (*look after people, do things for others, help, care, ...*)

Invite the students to return to their tables and to open their workbooks at page 35. Tell them to draw one way they can grow in knowing Jesus and one way they can grow to be like Jesus.

Invite the students to trace over the Remembering Point: Water and light are important signs in Baptism.

End

(5 minutes)

Tell the students to pack up their things and to gather round the prayer table.

Catechist: Let's get ready for prayer by being quiet and still. (Pause.)
Take a few minutes to look at the things on the prayer table.

Let us begin with the Sign of the Cross.

Catechist: Repeat the prayers after me:

The water of Baptism is a sign of life. Thank you, God.

Students: The water of Baptism is a sign of life. Thank you, God.

Catechist: The water of Baptism is a sign of growth. Help us to grow.

Students: The water of Baptism is a sign of growth. Help us to grow.

Catechist: The Baptism candle is a sign of Jesus. Help us see the way.

Students: The baptism candle is a sign of Jesus. Help us see the way.

Catechist: Baptism makes us members of God's family. Thank you, God.

Students: Baptism makes us members of God's family. Thank you, God.

Catechist: Let us pray the prayer Jesus taught us: Our Father ...

Dismiss the students as usual.

God Always Forgives Us

Background for the Catechist

Please take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

During his public life Jesus not only forgave sins, but also made plain the effect of this forgiveness: he reintegrated forgiven sinners into the community of the People of God from which sin had alienated or even excluded them. A remarkable sign of this is the fact that Jesus receives sinners at his table, a gesture that expresses in an astonishing way both God's forgiveness and the return to the bosom of the People of God (CCC 1994, n. 1443).

Forgiveness is one of the basic tenets of our faith and the basis of how Christians are called to act in the world. Jesus through his death and resurrection has overcome sin and in his own person reconciled God and human beings. Our sins are forgiven. Throughout the gospels we see Jesus extending the forgiveness and mercy of God to all who call for it. Like the merciful father of the lost son in Jesus' parable, God is always ready to forgive, always ready to receive us back.

Student Focus

Students of this age know what it is to be forgiven, by parents, siblings, classmates. They can see how the love and forgiveness of parents are like the even greater and more patient kindness and forgiveness of God.

Teaching Point

God always forgives us.

Remembering Point

God will always forgive me.

Beginning

(10 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Invite them to gather around the prayer focus.

Catechist: We light the candle to remind us that Jesus is present with us.

Let us pray:

All: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Catechist: Today we're going to listen to one of Jesus' stories.

Students: Jesus, help us to learn more about ourselves and God.

Catechist: Jesus came to teach us about God.

Students: Jesus, help us to learn more about ourselves and God.

Catechist: Jesus came to show us how to live.

Students: Jesus, help us to learn more about ourselves and God.

All: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Gather the students on the mat around you.

Have the pot with the beans in front of the students. Recall what you did in the last lesson and why.

Ask the students:

- What has happened to the beans so far?
- How have they grown?
- What has helped them to grow? (*Light, water*)

Tell the students: Next week we will have another look to see how our beans are growing.

Now let's prepare ourselves to hear a story.

1. Prayer Focus: A cloth, the Bible, a candle, an automatic lighter.

2. Prayer strip:

Jesus, help us to learn more about ourselves and God.

3. Have the beans in the pot with you to connect with the previous lesson.

4. Prepare to tell the story of the Lost Son (Luke 15: 1–2, 11–32) by reading the biblical text and retelling it in your own words (decide the main three or four scenes).

5. Workbooks.

6. Write each of the following words on one word card:

God	always	us
-----	--------	----

will	no	forgive
------	----	---------

matter	do.	we
--------	-----	----

what

Middle

(35 minutes)

Tell the story of the lost son (Luke 15: 1–2, 11–32).

Ask the students:

- Who were the characters in the story? (*Father, older son, younger son*)
- What are the main scenes or parts of the story? (*Home, far country, home*)

Invite the students to open their workbooks at page 36 and identify the character from the thought bubble clue. Then complete the drawing and complete the labels.

Ask the students:

- Which character do you think you are most like? (*Ask them in what way they are like the character.*)
- Do these characters remind you of anyone? (*Accept what the students say without comment; if they can't answer move on to the next section.*)
- I wonder why Jesus told this story? (*Accept the students' answers and provide the following thought if the students do not provide something close: God is like the father waiting to forgive and to welcome back.*)

Gather the students around you and give out the word cards.

Invite the students to make a sentence using all the words.

Ask the students to read their word starting at the beginning (*remind the students that a sentence starts with a capital letter and ends with a full stop*). Ask the students to place their word cards on the floor in order and then invite them to read the sentence.

Respond to the students: Yes, God will always forgive us no matter what we do.

End

(10 minutes)

Send the students back to their tables and have them open their workbooks at page 37. Invite them to complete the 'Discover the Message' task.

Invite the students to gather around the prayer focus with their workbooks open at page 37. Light the candle.

Catechist: Let us think about Jesus' story and prepare for our prayer.

All: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Catechist: In Jesus' story the father is waiting to forgive his son.

Students: God, you will always forgive me.

Catechist: In Jesus' story the son asks his father to forgive him.

Students: God, you will always forgive me.

Catechist: In Jesus' story the father asks his older son to be forgiving.

Students: God, you will always forgive me.

Dismiss the students as usual.

Pentecost

Background for the Catechist

Please take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

Fifty days after the Resurrection at Pentecost the glorified Jesus Christ poured out the Spirit in abundance and revealed him as a divine Person so that the Holy Trinity was fully manifest. The mission of Christ and of the Spirit became the mission of the Church which is sent to proclaim and spread the mystery of the communion of the Holy Trinity.

'We have seen the true Light, we have received the heavenly Spirit, we have found the true faith: we adore the indivisible Trinity, who has saved us' (Byzantine Liturgy) (CCCC 2006, n. 144).

Pentecost moves the story of our salvation and restoration into the time of the Church. Throughout their history, Israel had watched and waited for the Saviour. The gospels proclaimed his presence among us in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, whose matchless words and signs and especially his death and resurrection inaugurate the new creation. When Jesus' bodily presence withdraws from the world, his Spirit, the Spirit of the living God, is poured out upon the Church. From Pentecost until the end of time it will be through the Church that Christ the Saviour will be shown to the world. The Holy Spirit is sent to stand beside the members of the Church, to encourage, inspire and assist them in the work of taking Christ to the world.

Student Focus

Once again the story of Pentecost and the coming of the Holy Spirit connects with the year 2 students' love of story and drama. In addition, these students love a celebration. There is no better way of introducing the students to the Holy Spirit's coming at Pentecost than the reading of the story from Acts of the Apostles. The vividness of the story and the images of the Holy Spirit as wind and fire capture most imaginations. Help them to understand that the Holy Spirit is like a mighty wind and seemed like tongues of fire. Reflect together on the effect the experience of the Holy Spirit had on the apostles' behaviour.

Teaching Point

At Pentecost the Church celebrates the sending of the Holy Spirit.

Remembering Point

At Pentecost we celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit.

Beginning

(10 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Bring out the pot of beans from the earlier lesson. Talk about what has happened and why.

Invite the students to gather around you and bring out items from the bag and invite the students to create the prayer focus.

Ask the students: What might these things mean? What story might we be about to hear. *(Don't be concerned if the students are unable to give you a correct answer. Allow the students to explore the possibilities.)*

Divide the group into threes and give each group a set of pictures *(refer to the images in Appendix 16a on page 83)*.

Invite the students to look at the pictures and place them in the order in which the events occurred. Help the students as necessary.

Tell the students: All these events led the disciples to this point in the story where they were gathered together in a room, talking about what had happened to Jesus and thinking about what might happen to them.

Now let's listen to the story from the Acts of the Apostles that tells us about a special day in their lives and the life of the Church.

Tell the story of Pentecost, Acts 2: 1 –4 (use the account in the student workbook page 39).

1. Have the beans in the pot with you to connect with the previous lessons.
2. Bag with red fabric, items symbolic of Pentecost – flame, candle and Bible.
3. A set of cards with images of stages of Jesus life, see Appendix 16a on page 83. Photocopy and cut out a set for each group of three students.
4. Rehearse the Frozen Pictures activity Appendix 16b on page 84).
5. Workbooks.
6. Make copies of the Fill-the-gap activity from Appendix 16c page 85 for each student.

Middle

(35 minutes)

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder what the disciples were talking about when they were gathered in the room.
- I wonder how they were feeling since Jesus had gone.
- I wonder what it might have felt like to hear the wind and to see the flames.
- I wonder how you would have felt if you had been there.

Invite the students to stand. Gather them in a space where they can move around.

Tell the students: Now we are going to create frozen pictures of some of the scenes in this story.

Explain to the students: A frozen picture is when you stand completely still in a way that shows what is happening in the story. Let's try one.

Let's use the first part of the story: *On the day of Pentecost Jesus' friends were gathered together in one room.*

1. **Have the students** stand the way they think the disciples might have stood. Encourage the students to stand in a way that is different from their neighbour. They might even be sitting.
2. Then **ask the students** to show on their faces how the disciples were feeling.
3. **Tell the students** to hold that position for the count of ten.
4. Repeat this process for each of the scenes. (Refer to Appendix 16b on page 84 for suggestions of the scenes.)

Gather the students around the prayer focus and ask:

- Which scene did you like best?
- Why?
- How do you think you would have felt after the flames landed above your head? Show me on your face.

Tell the students: Pentecost is an important event in the life of the Church. It is the day when the disciples first went out to talk about all the great things that Jesus did. They talked to all the people who were gathered outside their building, from all over the world. In our lesson today, we remember and celebrate that the Holy Spirit gave the disciples the courage to start the Church. Pentecost is called the birthday of the Church, so we celebrate this day.

End

(10 minutes)

Send the students back to their seats and direct them to open their workbooks at page 38.

Tell the students: Complete the word-find activity with the person sitting beside you.

Hand out the Fill-the-Gap activity sheet in Appendix 16c on page 85.

Invite the students to take home this activity sheet (if you want them to).

Gather the students around the prayer focus. Ask the students to have their workbooks open at the prayer on page 39.

Tell the students: Let's now finish our lesson by praying in celebration of the coming of the Holy Spirit.

Catechist: Let's make the Sign of the Cross together.

Catechist: Lord, fill us with the Holy Spirit like the disciples were.

All: Holy Spirit, be with us.

Catechist: Lord, give us the courage to talk about you to others.

All: Holy Spirit, be with us.

Catechist: Lord, help us to remember that the Holy Spirit came to the Apostles at Pentecost.

All: Holy Spirit be with us.

Dismiss the students as usual.

Appendix 16a: Stories in Jesus' Life

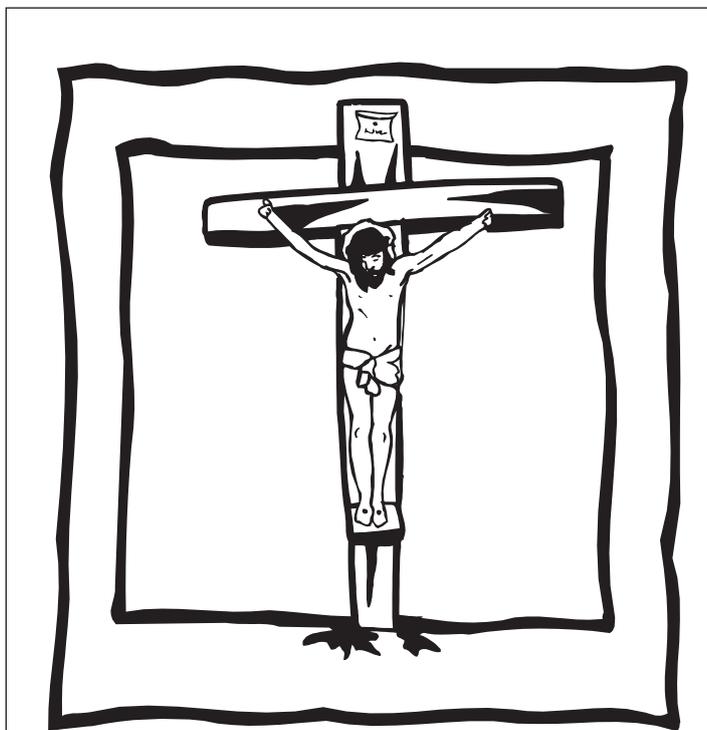
Enlarge these images on the photocopier and cut out. Use in the activity outlined in the lesson.



The Birth of Jesus



Jesus Calms the Storm



Jesus Dies on the Cross



Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand

Appendix 16b: Frozen Pictures

Frozen Pictures

Frozen pictures is a type of drama where students take on a pose that reflects a scene in the story.

Method

1. Read the story and become very familiar with it. Divide the story into 3–6 scenes depending on the length.
2. Divide the group into a corresponding number of groups and give each group one of the scenes.
3. Help the students get into a pose that reflects the scene. Asking the students to show how the characters feel is often a great way to help the students feel part of the scene.
4. Practise with the students getting into the scene while you are reading and keeping the pose for the remainder of the story.
5. You might use a 'curtains down, curtains up' strategy to change between scenes: down being eyes closed, up being eyes open.

Scenes for Frozen Pictures

Some scene suggestions for the reading of the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost:

1. On the day of Pentecost Jesus' friends and Mary were gathered together in one room.
2. The coming of the Holy Spirit – flames and wind.
3. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit.

Appendix 16c: Solution to the Word Find

X	A	L	P	V	E	A	N	T
P	E	N	T	E	C	O	S	T
S	B	F	C	X	W	O	L	P
L	P	O	L	V	B	Z	W	C
M	I	I	L	A	K	O	I	P
Z	O	W	R	G	M	E	N	Q
N	L	X	V	I	S	E	D	A
O	I	M	B	D	T	F	J	Z
O	T	M	V	N	T	U	O	L
D	I	S	C	I	P	L	E	S

- Disciples
- Flame
- Pentecost
- Spirit
- Wind

Appendix 16d: Fill-the-gap activity

At _____ the

Church _____

the sending of the

_____ .

Use these words:

Celebrates

Holy Spirit

Pentecost

I Will Care for People

Background for the Catechist

Please take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

[Believing in God] means knowing the unity and true dignity of all: everyone is made in the image and likeness of God (CCC 1994, n. 225).

Faith in God's love encompasses the call and the obligation to respond with sincere love to divine charity. The first commandment enjoins us to love God above everything and all creatures for him and because of him (CCC 1994, n. 2093).

God's character can be summed up in the word love. God's love is out-flowing concern for others. It is the way of giving, serving, helping, sharing. God's law of love is not only a Christian standard to live by; it draws us into the life of God. As the first letter of John says, 'God is love' and whoever does not love, does not know God. When life is going well and families, friends and colleagues are happy and congenial, love is easy to give and receive. But when difficulties, misunderstandings, disappointments, division and abuse happen loving is not so straightforward. Yet Christians are called to rise above a purely human response to others based on emotion. Christians are called to love others simply because God loves them. We cannot claim to love God while rejecting others.

Student Focus

Students of this age recognise and understand love when they experience it. They are also aware that some people test the boundaries of love. They know the challenges of giving and receiving love in difficult situations at home, at school and in their social circles.

Teaching Point

We care for people because God loves them.

Remembering Point

I will care for people because God loves them.

Beginning

1. Prayer focus: to suit the lesson. Include a candle and the Bible.
2. Prayer Strip displayed so that students can see it. Point to the response as necessary.

God, thank you for your love and care.

Help me care for people because you love them.

3. Workbooks.
4. Copies of the 'My Weekly Diary' sheet from Appendix 17 on page 90.

(10 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Tell the students: Today we will be remembering that God loves all people and trusts us to care for them. Let us gather to pray.

Gather the students in a circle around the prayer focus and light the candle.

Catechist: Let's make the Sign of the Cross together.

All: In the name of the Father ...

Catechist: God, you show us your love always.

Students: God, thank you for your love and care.

Catechist: God, you have made each person special and unique.

Students: God, thank you for your love and care.

Catechist: God, you trust us to care for one another.

Students: God, thank you for your love and care.

Catechist: Teach us to care for people because you love everyone. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Ask the students to return to their seats.

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder what signs around you show that you are loved.
- Who loves and cares for you?

(Take all the answers offered and affirm the students and their responses.)

Tell the students: Open your workbook to page 41. Around the **outside** of the hand and fingers, write the names of the people who **love you**. *(Give the students time to complete this task. Some of the students will need help with their writing.)*

Invite the students to share one or two responses with the group. Select those students who do not speak up in class. Acknowledge the students' responses positively.

Ask the students: Who do you love and care for? *(Take a few answers from the group, allowing the breadth of examples and affirming the students.)*

Tell the students: Now, in your workbook on page 41, write the names of people whom **you love** on the **inside** of the hand and fingers.

Invite the students to share their responses with the group. Acknowledge the students' responses positively.

Middle

(35 minutes)

Tell the students: We are supposed to care for people because God loves them. Listen carefully to John's Gospel. Jesus gives his followers a new commandment. Turn to page 40 in your workbook and follow the words from St John's Gospel.

Jesus said, 'And now I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.'

Ask the students:

- What do you think the word commandment means? *(The students may not be able to tell you. Tell them: A commandment is like a rule or law. Rules help people stay happy and safe.)*
- Jesus is talking to his disciples after their meal. What does Jesus ask his followers to do? *(Love one another as Jesus has loved them.)*
- How do you show love and care for others?
- What are some of the signs of caring for each other? *(Take the answers that the students give you. Accept them all – unless they are very inappropriate.)*

Tell the students: Yes, we see many signs that people care for each other:

- when people smile at each other
- when families give each other hugs
- when we are being friends together and looking after one another
- the times we choose to do something to cheer someone up who is feeling sad
- when we choose to make friends with someone who is lonely
- when we choose to let another student into our game, especially when no one else will play with that student.

All these are signs that we are caring for others.

Tell the students: Jesus' new commandment teaches us to live as God wants. It reminds us to care for people because God loves them. When we follow Jesus' example, we can live good lives too!

Ask the students: How did Jesus show he cared for others? *(healing others, talking to people, being helpful, forgiving people, sharing meals, welcoming people, listening to others)*

(Take all answers and affirm the students. Record answers on a whiteboard or on sheets of paper.)

Direct the students to trace over the words – God loves everyone – in their workbooks on page 41.

End

(10 minutes)

Hand out the 'My Weekly Diary' sheet.

Invite the students to take the diary home and to fill it in for one week by writing, or drawing cartoon images (pictures), about how they have shown care for someone who really needed it. Suggest that they look to people in their family at home, at school, in the classroom, community of friends or world around them.

Ask the students to bring their completed diary home task, back the next week to see how everyone showed care for others!

Gather the students in a circle around the prayer focus (with the Bible opened at Jn 13: 1–4)

Catechist: Let's pray the Sign of the Cross.

God of Love and Compassion, help us to show care for others because you love them. When I choose to make friends with someone who is lonely,

Students: Help me care for people because you love them.

Catechist: When I choose to help someone in need,

Students: Help me care for people because you love them.

Catechist: When I choose to be patient with my younger brother or sister who is annoying me,

Students: Help me care for people because you love them.

Catechist: When I choose to be kind and generous to others,

Students: Help me care for people because you love them.

Catechist: When I choose to give money to the poor communities of the world,

Students: Help me care for people because you love them.

Catechist: When I choose to let someone into my game with whom other students won't play,

Students: Help me care for people because you love them.

Catechist: When we find it hard to show care for people, we ask for Your help, Loving God. Through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Dismiss the students as usual.

Appendix 17: My Weekly Diary

My Weekly Diary

DAY OF THE WEEK	I SHOW I CARE FOR SOMEONE IN THIS WAY...
<i>Write the day here</i>	<i>Draw a picture of or write about 'how I cared for others today'.</i>
<i>Write the day here</i>	<i>Draw a picture of or write about 'how I cared for others today'.</i>
<i>Write the day here</i>	<i>Draw a picture of or write about 'how I cared for others today'.</i>
<i>Write the day here</i>	<i>Draw a picture of or write about 'how I cared for others today'.</i>
<i>Write the day here</i>	<i>Draw a picture of or write about 'how I cared for others today'.</i>
<i>Write the day here</i>	<i>Draw a picture of or write about 'how I cared for others today'.</i>
<i>Write the day here</i>	<i>Draw a picture of or write about 'how I cared for others today'.</i>

We Give Thanks for God's Creation

Background for the Catechist

Please take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

God created the universe freely with wisdom and love. The world is not the result of any necessity, nor of blind fate, nor of chance. God created 'out of nothing' (ex nihilo) (2 Macc 7: 28) a world which is ordered and good and which he infinitely transcends. God preserves his creation in being and sustains it, giving it the capacity to act in leading it towards its fulfilment through his Son and the Holy Spirit (CCCC 2006, n. 55).

The beauty and variety of the natural world lead quite naturally to feelings of gratitude, love and respect. In fact, many people comment that their most vivid experiences of God and God's transcendent love and beauty happen during experiences of the natural world. The contemplation of the beauty of the created world leads to the contemplation of the beauty and goodness of the Creator. Prayers of praise and thanksgiving grow from this experience. Gifted people such as artists, poets and musicians can also help express the glory and goodness of God, the Creator.

Student Focus

Students of this age can name the beauty of the creation that they experience each day and, like us, they may take creation for granted. They are capable of enjoying and marvelling at various aspects of the natural world. Some students will be aware of the scientific theories of creation. These ideas do not contradict our faith in the origin of the world in God but show further the wonderful intricacy and detail of God's plan for the evolving world.

Teaching Point

We give thanks for God's creation.

Remembering Point

I can thank God for creation.

Beginning

(20 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Tell the students: Today we are going to go outside on a 'Wonder Walk' to see how wonderful is God's creation.

What I want you to do is to look closely at everything around you, thinking about how and why God created these things. We are going to collect pieces of God's creation: a leaf, a stone, a flower, feathers – things that God has created.

I am going to give each of you a stick. It is our 'journey stick' to record our Wonder Walk. When you have collected something, come to me and I will attach it to your stick. Then we will take these journey sticks back to class and think about what we have been doing.

Take the students out to the grounds of the parish or school (depending upon your location). Remember to keep in mind safety and care of gardens. This is to be a 'wonder' walk. Therefore encourage discovery and wonder. The students will be talkative and excited. This is fine, as they will be engaging in the discovery of God's creation.

Invite the students to process into the room after the walk and gather around the prayer focus, bringing their journey sticks with them. Have the students remain standing and make the Sign of the Cross together.

Invite the students to sit and begin the prayer.

Catechist: The response to our prayer is, Thank you, God, for creation.

Students: Thank you, God, for creation.

Catechist: We know that God has created everything.

Students: Thank you, God, for creation.

Catechist: God created all the things we have collected today.

Students: Thank you, God, for creation.

Catechist: God, help us to remember that everything is from you.

Students: Thank you, God, for creation.

1. Collect a stick (approximately 75 cm long and 1.5 cm in diameter) for each student.
2. Check out the location around your teaching area for safety and capacity to undertake this Wonder Walk. If you feel there isn't enough in the vicinity, then create your own 'walk' with collected items in a safe location outside.
3. Have sticky-tape, string, etc. for attaching the 'found' objects to the journey stick.
4. Prepare the prayer focus before you go out on the Wonder Walk: a large candle, cloths of green and blue or earth colours, a sandbox or a large vase in which to stand the journey sticks. Apply a decorative 'swirl' with soil onto the cloth.
5. Prepare strips of paper with the Remembering Point (see Appendix 18 on page 95).
6. Workbooks.

Middle

(20 minutes)

Ask the students to return to their places. The students will still have their Journey Stick with them.

Invite the students to look closely at each item they have on their journey stick.

Direct the students to think about where they found the item and why they selected it.

Invite the students to talk to the person beside them about what they have found.

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder why you chose that piece of God's creation.
- I wonder what that says to you about God.
- I wonder why God created that item.

(Allow the students to offer their reflections freely.)

Invite the students to share any of their own wonderings.

Invite the students to Think about their journey stick and what they have collected, as well as their own reflections on the statements above. The students can then **Pair** with the person beside them, telling each other about their reflections and their own 'wonderings'. Each pair is to then **Share** something from what they have talked about, with the whole group.

Tell the students: God has given us all of these wonderful things as part of creation. We can find them if we look closely for them. *(Use the responses from the students' reflection on the 'I wonder' statements above.)*

Tell the students: We are so lucky that God has created these items for ... *(this reason taken from the students answers)*. We can see that even in the things we have collected here, there is such a great difference and we can enjoy all of them. We are lucky to be one of God's creations sharing in this beauty. We can be grateful, we can love God and be respectful of all that God has created.

End

(10 minutes)

Invite the students to open their workbooks at page 42.

Direct them to draw their collected items onto the journey stick on this page.

Tell the students to answer the question and respond to the 'I wonder' prompt.

When they have finished, hand out the strips of paper with the Remembering Point (from Appendix 18).

Invite the students to trace over the words and decorate. Attach this to their Journey Stick to take home with them.

Gather the students – with their journey stick – around the prayer focus.

Catechist: The response to our prayer is, Thank you, God, for creation.

All: Thank you, God for creation.

Catechist: We can give thanks for God's creation,

Students: Thank you, God, for creation,

Catechist: For the stones, the ground and the soil of the earth,

Students: Thank you, God, for creation,

Catechist: For the feathers, the birds and the insects that fly,

Students: Thank you, God, for creation,

Catechist: For the flowers, the trees and all things that grow,

Students: Thank you, God, for creation,

Catechist: For the water that nourishes us,

Students: Thank you, God, for creation,

Catechist: For each one of us created as God wanted,

Students: Thank you, God, for creation.

Dismiss the students as usual.

Appendix 18: Remembering Point

Photocopy and cut into strips to distribute to students to attach to their journey stick.

*I can thank God for
creation*

The Gift of the Holy Spirit

Background for the Catechist

Please take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

By the power of the Spirit, God's children can bear much fruit. He who has grafted us onto the true vine will make us bear 'the fruit of the Spirit: ... love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control' (Gal 5: 22–23).

Through the Holy Spirit we are restored to paradise, led back to the Kingdom of heaven, and adopted as children, given confidence to call God 'Father' and to share in Christ's grace, called children of light and given a share in eternal glory (St Basil) (CCC 1994, n. 736).

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity, the One in whom we live and move and have our being. Without the Holy Spirit of God we could not live. The gift of the Holy Spirit is not an 'add-on' but really the wellspring of our lives. Through the Holy Spirit we are able to live unselfishly, to act with love, to live in peace, to be joyful, to hope for truth, to long for freedom, to work for justice, to acknowledge our shortcomings and to ask forgiveness – in short, be truly and fully human.

Student Focus

Students are not alone in having difficulty appreciating the specific role of the Holy Spirit in Christian life. Students of this age can, however, appreciate the concept of the spiritual and that which is beyond them. One approach is to emphasise that the Holy Spirit is behind every good impulse we have: whenever we are able to respond generously, speak kindly, forgive another, work well, act courageously, the Holy Spirit is at work in us.

Teaching Point

We share in the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Remembering Point

We share in the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Beginning

1. Prayer Focus: A candle, a red or white cloth and the Bible.
2. Caption Sheet to be pinned up after the students have been told about the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God.

3. A picture of a child being baptised.
4. The sheet with the Gifts of the Holy Spirit (see Appendix 19a on page 100).
5. Workbooks.
6. Prepare copies of the jigsaw puzzle for each student (see Appendix 19b, page 101). Ensure they are pasted onto card.
7. Holy Spirit song, to the tune of *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star*.
8. An envelope for each student, big enough for the pieces of the puzzle.

(15 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Invite the students to make the Sign of the Cross:

Catechist: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Repeat the prayers after me.

Holy Spirit, help us to love.

Students: Holy Spirit, help us to love.

Catechist: Holy Spirit, help us to be peacemakers.

Students: Holy Spirit, help us to be peacemakers.

Catechist: Holy Spirit, help us to pray.

Students: Holy Spirit, help us to pray.

Ask the students: Who is the Holy Spirit? (Take responses. You will get a variety, some close or correct, others not.)

Tell the students: The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God. (Pin up the Caption Sheet.)

Show a picture of a child being baptised.

Ask the students:

- What is happening in this picture?
- What do you think happens at Baptism? (If the students make this type of response: *pouring water on the baby's head, I baptise you... say 'Yes that happens at baptism'.*)

Tell the students: At Baptism we are welcomed into the family of God, we are blessed with the water of life, we are anointed with oil, we are given the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder what the gift of the Spirit is.

Middle

(25 minutes)

Ask the students:

- What are you good at doing? (*What is your gift/talent?*)
- What is it that people like about you? (*Drawing pictures, helping my dad, running fast, doing maths, reading, my big smile...*)

Direct the students to page 44 of their workbook. Tell them to write their gifts and talents in the space provided and draw a picture of themselves in the oval.

Gather the students around you and invite them to share what they have written. (*Encourage the students to read their responses. You might go round the class or select students who don't normally get a chance to say anything.*)

Tell the students: All these gifts you've written about are the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Hold before the students the sheet of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Tell the students: This is a list of some of the ways we see the gift of the Holy Spirit in people.

Ask the students to read them with you as you point to the words.

Tell the students: These are all gifts of the Holy Spirit. When we are baptised the Holy Spirit comes to live in us and to help us to be kind and patient, to control ourselves, to wonder, to help others, to learn ...

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder how we can use our gifts to help others.

Ask the students:

- How can we be patient with other people? (*take our time when we try to explain things, or teach someone how to do something*)
- How can we make good decisions with our friends? (*do what is right even when we think it's not cool; suggest good fun things to do together ...*)

Tell the students: The Holy Spirit is alive in us whenever we are generous, kind, forgiving, helpful, wise ...

End

(15 minutes)

Hand out a copy of the jigsaw puzzle sheet and an envelope to each student.

Invite the students to write in the shapes ways they show the Holy Spirit's gifts in their lives. Then ask them to decorate the puzzle, cut out the pieces and place them in the envelope.

Working in pairs, students mix up and sort each other's puzzle.

Invite the students to take their puzzles home and to choose a piece each day to help them think about how they are using the Holy Spirit's gifts.

Gather the students around the prayer focus and invite them to pray:

Catechist: Repeat after me: Come, Holy Spirit, and fill us with your love.

Students: Come, Holy Spirit, and fill us with your love.

Catechist: Help us to share our gifts with each other.

Students: Help us to share our gifts with each other.

Sing a song about or to the Holy Spirit. You might like to sing the song below (page 45 of the workbook) to the tune: *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star*.

Holy Spirit, you give us

Strength and joy and peace and love.

Holy Spirit, giving all

Learning, wonder, self-control.

Holy Spirit, you give us

Strength and joy and peace and love.

Catechist: Go and be Spirit-filled people and use your gifts for the good of everyone.

Dismiss the students as usual.

Appendix 19a: Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Use a photocopier to enlarge this onto A3 paper.

The Holy Spirit helps us:

to love

to be peaceful

to wonder

to be reverent

to understand

to be patient

to believe

to be gentle

to make good decisions

to be joyful (happy)

to control ourselves

to be strong

to know

to be kind

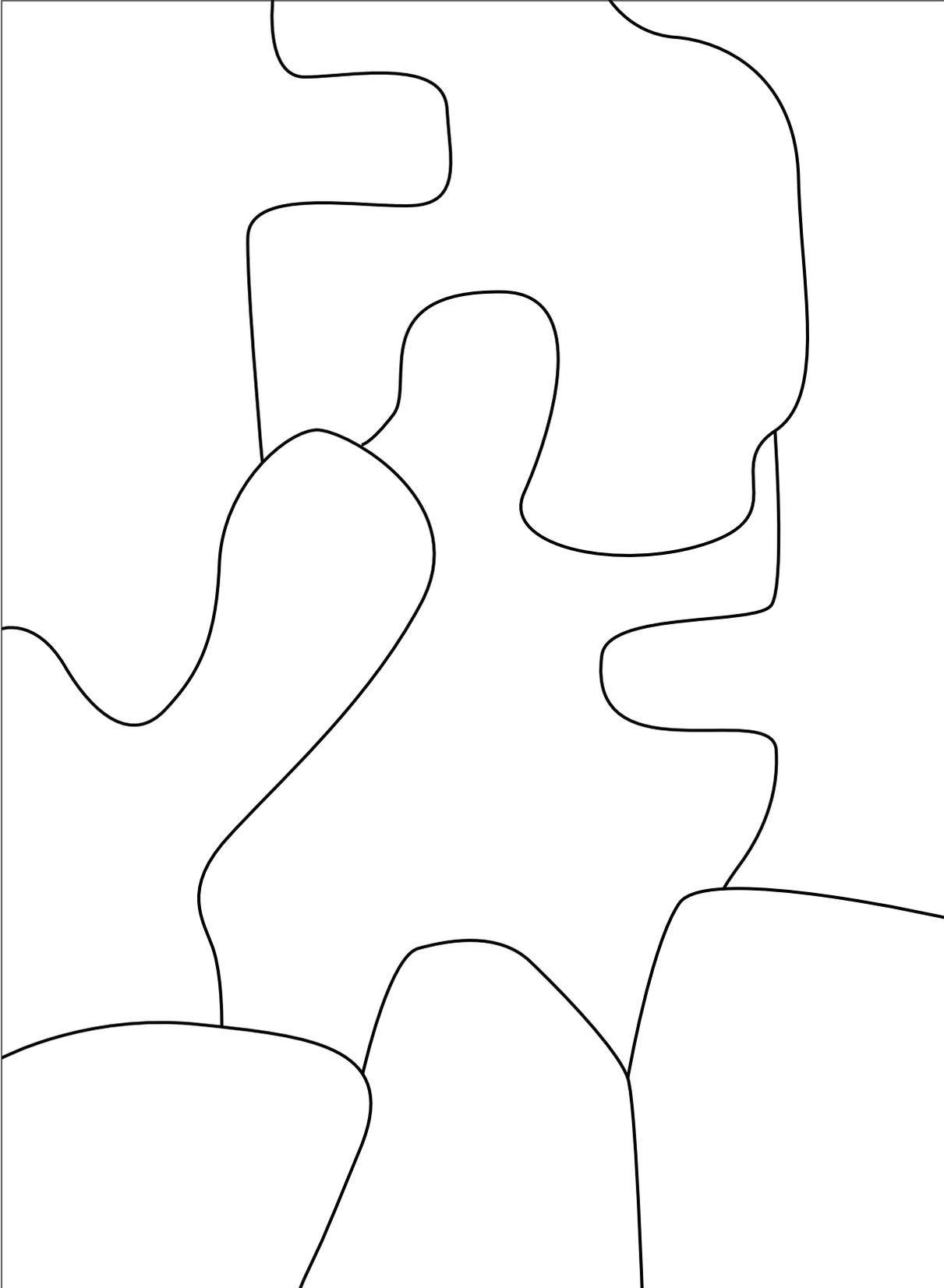
to learn

to be generous

to be wise

Appendix 19b: Jigsaw Puzzle

Photocopy one for every student directly onto card or paste the photocopy onto card. You might cut out the jigsaw before you give it to the students, if the students find cutting out difficult.



LESSON 20

Jesus Told Parables

Background for the Catechist

Please take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

Jesus' invitation to enter his kingdom comes in the form of parables, a characteristic feature of his teaching. Through his parables he invites people to the feast of the kingdom, but he also asks for a radical choice: to gain the kingdom, one must give everything. Words are not enough, deeds are required. The parables are like mirrors for man: will he be hard soil or good earth for the word? What use has he made of the talents he has received? Jesus and the presence of the kingdom in this world are secretly at the heart of the parables. One must enter the kingdom, that is, become a disciple of Christ, in order to 'know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven' (Mt 13: 11). For those who stay 'outside', everything remains enigmatic (Mk 4: 11; cf. Mt 13: 10–15) (CCC 1994, n. 546).

The gospel parables are stories told by Jesus to make or illustrate a point to his hearers. They are about human beings and their relationship to God and the reign of God. While they do make a point, their meaning is open. There can be no definitive 'once and for all' answer on the meaning of a particular parable because our human context is always changing and because each individual hears the parable in a unique way. The point of the parable must be reflected upon and absorbed by the person who hears it. Parables are not instructions, commands or propositions but stories that provide an experience of the mystery of God and the Kingdom of God. An especially valuable aspect of the parables is that they compel the listener to enter the story and they provoke a response.

Student Focus

Students of this age love stories – they love to hear them, to tell them, to enact them. Parables appeal to these students, for their meaning is open to reflection and application to many different life situations. These students love to wonder about the mysteries of life.

Teaching Point

Jesus told stories – parables – to teach us how to live.

Remembering Point

Jesus told parables to show us how to live.

Beginning

1. Prayer focus: A cloth, a candle, the Bible, a purse, a bandage/ bandaid/sling.
2. 'Parables Jesus Told' in the *To Know, Worship and Love Big Book* series (or prepare to tell the story from Appendix 20a page 106).
3. Make copies of the heart shapes for each student (see Appendix 20b page 106). Write or draw on one of the heart shapes an example of how you (catechist) can be neighbourly. (You will use this in the prayer.)
4. Prayer strips:

Jesus, help me to be neighbourly by ...

Jesus, help us to understand your people.

(10 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Gather the students around the prayer focus.

Invite the students to look at the items on the cloth.

Catechist: We light the candle to remind us that Jesus is the light of the world. Today we're going to have a story from the Bible. Let's get ready to pray.

All: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Catechist: Repeat after me: Jesus, you came to show us how to live.

Students: Jesus, you came to show us how to live.

Catechist: Jesus, you told stories to show us what you meant.

Students: Jesus, you told stories to show us what you meant.

Catechist: Jesus, help us to listen carefully to this story.

Students: Jesus, help us to listen carefully to this story.

Catechist: Jesus, help us to understand what you meant.

Students: Jesus, help us to understand what you meant.

Invite the students to gather on the mat around your chair.

Read the story, 'The Good Samaritan', in the *Parables Jesus Told* (in the *To Know, Worship and Love Big Book* series). (Or tell the story from the text in Appendix 20a on page 106.)

Middle

(35 minutes)

Ask the students: Who are the characters in this story? (*priest, Levite, Samaritan*)

Please remind me what the priest's job was. (*to serve in the Temple*)

Please remind me what the Levite's job was. (*to help in the Temple*)

Tell the students: Samaritans were a people who lived in the same land as Jesus. Jesus' people, the Jews, and Samaritans didn't like each other.

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder what the people expected of a priest.
- I wonder what the people expected of a Levite.
- I wonder what the people expected of a Samaritan

(Accept all the answers and allow the students to reflect.)

Tell the students that the people Jesus was telling the story to would not have expected a Samaritan to help a Jew.

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder why Jesus chose a Samaritan to be the 'good neighbour'.

Ask the students: If Jesus were telling this story today, who would he choose to be the characters?

(Allow the students to make their own suggestions. If they need help you might suggest a doctor and a policeman might pass by and a hoon or hoodie, or an enemy might stop to help.)

Invite the students to go to their tables and to open their workbooks at page 46 and complete the grid. Walk around the class and see how the students are managing.

Invite one or two students to retell the story using their characters

End

(15 minutes)

Hand out the heart shapes.

Ask the students: How can you be a neighbour? Think of a person you find it hard to be a neighbour to? What is one way you can be a neighbour to that person this week? In the heart shape, write or draw a picture showing you being neighbourly.

If there is time **invite the students** to trace over the Remembering Point: Jesus told parables to show us how to live.

Invite the students to bring their shapes and to gather round the prayer focus.

Tell the students: During the prayer we will take it in turns to share what we've put on our shapes.

Have the response prayer strip displayed for the students.

Catechist: Today we've been learning that Jesus told parables to show us how to live. Jesus told the parable about the man who was attacked by robbers to show us how to be neighbourly. Now we will share how we might be neighbourly. I will go first.

Jesus, help me to be neighbourly by... (place the shape on the cloth)

All: Jesus, help us to understand your parable.

(Invite each student to ask Jesus to help them be neighbourly by... and place their heart shape on the cloth.)

Catechist: Let us finish with the Sign of the Cross.

All: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Dismiss the students as usual.

Appendix 20a: Parable of the Good Samaritan

One day Jesus was teaching the people to love God and their neighbours. A man stood up and asked Jesus a question. 'And who is my neighbour?'

To answer him, Jesus told this story.

A man was going down a lonely road when he was attacked by robbers. They bashed him until he was half dead on the road.

Later, a priest who served in the Temple walked by. He saw the wounded man but crossed to the other side and passed by.

Next a Levite, a man who helped in the Temple, came along. He also crossed the road and hurried past.

But then a Samaritan came down the road. He saw the man and felt sorry for him.

He knelt down and cleaned his injuries with oil and wine. He bandaged him, lifted him on to his donkey and took him to a place where he could be looked after.

The next day the Samaritan gave the man in charge enough money to look after the injured traveller.

When Jesus had finished telling this story he asked, 'Which of these three was a true neighbour to the wounded man?'

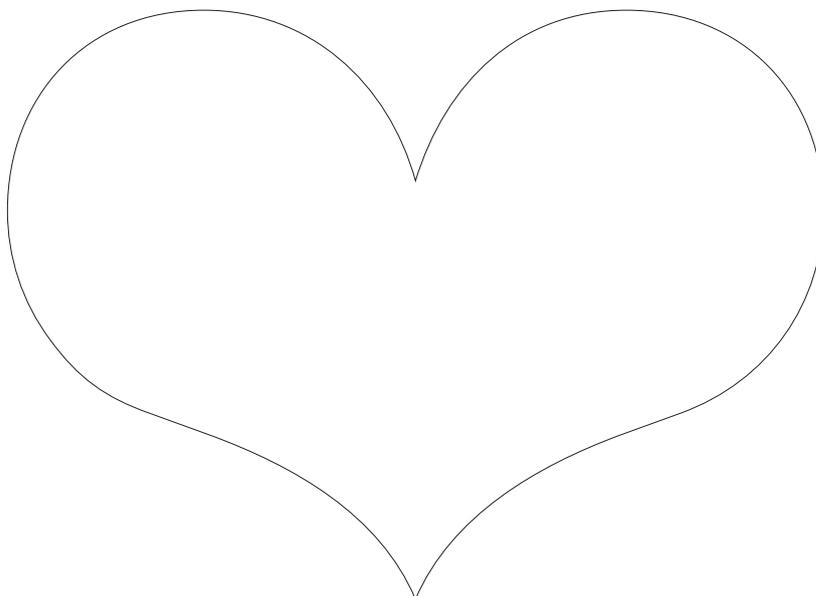
'The one who looked after him,' they said.

'Go, and do the same yourself,' said Jesus.

Blythe, C et al. 2005, *Parables Jesus Told*, (To Know Worship and Love Big Books series, James Goold House Publishing, Melbourne) (Lk 10: 29–37)

Appendix 20b: Heart Shape

Enlarge the heart shape on the photocopier and give one to each student.



LESSON 21

God's Chosen People

Background for the Catechist

Please take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

Christians venerate the Old Testament as the true word of God. All of the books of the Old Testament are divinely inspired and retain a permanent value. They bear witness to the divine pedagogy of God's saving love. They are written, above all, to prepare for the coming of Christ the Saviour of the universe (CCCC 2006, n. 21).

The Old Testament constitutes the first part of the Bible, the Sacred Scriptures of the Church. It describes the workings of God through and with his Chosen People the Jews. The New Testament is the 'flower issuing from the stem of the Patriarchs and the Prophets'. Without the stem the flower would not exist. Jesus grew up hearing the stories from the Old Testament. He listened to the stories from Genesis from his childhood, heard the prophets read each Sabbath in the synagogue, recited prayers from the Old Testament and sang the psalms daily. His whole religious imagination was formed by this collection of books. For this reason, and because it forms the moral and religious context in which Christianity was born, the Old Testament remains precious to Christians and is read from at most liturgical celebrations.

Student Focus

Students of this age have a great appreciation of story and of heroes. They love to hear stories and they love to imagine themselves in the story.

Teaching Point

The Old Testament tells us stories about God's chosen people.

Remembering Point

The story of David tells us about God's chosen people.

Beginning

(10 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Sit the students around you in preparation for storytelling.

Tell the students: Today I am going to tell you a special story from the Bible. This is from the first part of the Bible that we call the Old Testament. *(Show the students a Bible and identify the Old Testament.)*

This story tells us about someone special to God. I wonder if you will be able to guess who the story is about. *(Open the bag and pull out the crown and show it to the students. Pull out each item slowly, giving students the opportunity to guess who the story might be about.)*

As you are pulling the items out of the bag **ask the students:** Can anyone tell me which story I am going to tell? *(Take the answers and accept them, but encourage further options, e.g. if the students suggest it is a story about the Wise Men or the Three Kings, say, 'No, not this time, but who else has been a king in the stories before Jesus was born?')*

When you have all the items before you on a table or the floor, **tell the students:** Today our story is about a young boy named David, who became a king. I want you to listen carefully for each of these things *(point to the sheep and the oil)* in the story.

Tell the students the story of God choosing David, using the puppets.

1. Prayer focus.
2. Mystery bag – have a decorative bag with a cardboard crown, a picture or model of a sheep and some oil hidden inside.
3. A Bible.
4. Make puppets for the story of God choosing David. (Refer to Appendix 5a on page 27 for instructions for making puppets for the characters in the story.)
5. 'King David' in the *To Know, Worship and Love Big Book Series* (James Goold House Publishing, Melbourne 2005), or use the story 'God chooses David' in Appendix 21a on page 110.
6. Workbooks.

Middle

(30 minutes)

Ask the students: Can anyone tell me what the word 'anointing' means? *(This is a difficult word, but direct the answers to say anointing is the pouring of oil over the head of someone chosen to do a special task. People like the Queen of England or of other countries are anointed when they become rulers of their country. Priests and Bishops are anointed when they become Priests and Bishops.)*

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder why Samuel anointed David.
- I wonder what this would mean for David.
- I wonder what the other brothers might have felt when David was chosen instead of them.
- Why do you think God wanted David?

Tell the students: Remember in the story we heard God saying, 'while you see what people look like, I see what is in their heart'. God saw something special in David. God's chosen people needed a leader, a king, so God chose David.

Invite the students to open their workbook at page 49 and complete the story board activity, drawing each of the scenes from the story.

Tell the students: This story we have just heard is one of the Old Testament stories that tell us about God's chosen people. The stories in the Old Testament tell us about how God has a special friendship with the Hebrew people, who were God's chosen people. God chose special people for important jobs with these people. The earliest person chosen by God was Abraham. God called Abraham to follow him. God wanted Abraham to worship him and no one else. Another person God chose was Jacob. He was Abraham's grandson and made a special friendship with God.

Many of the stories in the Old Testament help us to understand about God and how we might follow God.

End

(15 minutes)

Tell the students: The Old Testament stories help us know more about God and how God chose people to do special things for him, to love and care for God's people and help them to follow God.

Direct the students to page 50 in their workbook and invite them to complete the fill-the-gap activity and the crossword.

When they have finished, gather the students around the prayer focus for prayer with their workbooks open at page 50.

Catechist: Let us make the Sign of the Cross together.

We know that God has chosen many people throughout history to help his chosen people. God has also chosen each one of us. Let us pray our special prayer of thanks together.

Students: Thank you, God, for loving me.

Thank you, God, for choosing me to be one of your chosen people.

Thank you, God.

Dismiss the students as usual.

Appendix 21a: God Chooses David

One day God spoke to the prophet Samuel, telling him to take his horn with oil and go to Jesse of Bethlehem because he had chosen one of Jesse's sons to be king and lead God's chosen people. God said, 'You are to anoint the one I will show you'.

Samuel did what God asked him to do, and called all the sons of Jesse together. As the first son came before Samuel, God said, 'God does not see as humans see, God looks at the heart'. Jesse called each of his sons to pass before Samuel, but Samuel said, 'The Lord has not chosen this one'. None of David's brothers was chosen.

Now when Jesse had presented his seven sons and not one of them was chosen, Samuel asked him, 'Are all of your sons here?' Jesse said, 'The youngest son is out in the fields caring for the sheep. Samuel said, 'Send and bring him in to me.'

Jesse sent for his youngest son, David, who was out in the fields caring for the sheep. He was a handsome young man with lovely eyes.

When David came in God spoke to Samuel, 'Get up and anoint him for he is the one'. Samuel then took the oil in his horn and anointed him in front of his brothers; and the spirit of God was with David from that day. (1 Sam 16: 1-13)

Appendix 21b: Solution to Crossword in Student Workbook (P50)

									5 T
									E
									S
									T
									A
1 G	O	2 D			3 J				
		4 A	B	R	A	H	A		M
		V			C				E
		I			O				N
		D			B				T

Priests Serve the Church Community

Background for the Catechist

Please take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

The anointing of the Spirit seals the priest with an indelible, spiritual character that configures him to Christ the priest and enables him to act in the name of Christ the Head. As a co-worker of the order of bishops he is consecrated to preach the Gospel, to celebrate divine worship especially the Eucharist from which his ministry draws its strength, and to be a shepherd of the faithful (CCCC 2006, n. 328).

Priests are servant leaders of the Church. They are called from among the community of the Church to preach the gospel of Christ and to lead the people of God in the celebration of the sacraments. As well as presiding over the liturgical celebrations of the Church, priests lead, guide and animate the communities they serve. Priests, ordained by the bishop, are also a sign of unity within the Church. While most priests are parish priests, there are also many who belong to religious orders who have different tasks in the Church. However, the main role of all priests is their sacramental role of offering praise and thanksgiving to God through the celebration of the Eucharist and building up the life of the Church through the other sacraments.

Student Focus

Students of this age understand the need for leaders and what leaders do. They experience this in the various groups to which they belong, e.g. Scouts, Netball.

Teaching Point

The priest serves the church community.

Remembering Point

The priest serves the church community.

Beginning

(10 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Gather around the prayer focus and make the Sign of the Cross.

Catechist: Let us pray the words Jesus taught us in the Our Father.

All: Our Father...

(If you have not been able to have the parish priest visit your class and talk about what he does and why he does it, then you can do the following activities.)

Tell the students: Today we are going to look at how Father
(Parish Priest's name) serves our parish community. We will look at how his work helps us and others in the parish.

Invite individual students to select the caption strips of appropriate activities that the parish priest engages in to serve the community and place them on the sheet provided, answering the question: 'What are the things that Father does to help us?' This makes a map of the priest's role.

1. You might like to invite your parish priest to talk to the students.
2. Prayer focus: A cloth, a candle, the Bible, a picture of a priest (possibly their own parish priest).
3. Caption Strips of the various activities that the local parish priest engages in to serve the community, e.g.

Father Peter says Mass on Sunday.

Father Peter teaches us in the homily.

Father Peter visits the local hospital.

Father Peter runs the soup kitchen.

Father Peter visits families in our Parish.

Father Peter visits the classroom in our local school.

Father Peter runs the youth group.

Father Peter organises help for families in need.



Middle

(35 minutes)

Talk about the results of the 'role map' of service to the community with students.

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder why Father does these things. *(Accept the students thoughts on this question. They will be varied and funny, but be positive about their reflections.)*
- I wonder who Father is like when he does these things for us. *(Accept a variety of answers. Affirm the students' reflections.)*

Tell the students: When Father does these things for us he is like all the people you suggest. He is also like Jesus. Father became a priest because he wanted to help people. He wanted to serve the church community. All the things we chose to put around his name on the poster are things that priests can do to help the community. They are not the only things, but these are some of the things Father does for us. Father wants to help us become like Jesus, so that we can serve others as well. We can serve each other in our families, and in our school, and in our friends.

Open your workbook to page 51 and copy the phrases we have put on the sheet into the bubbles around Father

Ask the students:

- Who are the people in our community who help us? *(doctor, tram driver, fire service, police, teacher, priest...)*

Ask the students to list these people on page 52 of their workbook.

Tell the students: The doctor and the tram driver help people for different reasons: to make them well and to take them to different places. The priest, however, through the things that he does, helps us to know Jesus and to know what Jesus wants us to do with our lives.

The priest is helping the community so that everyone will know about Jesus and his message. For the priest, Jesus and his message are the most important thing.

Ask the students to complete the box on page 52 in the workbook with the name of their parish priest and the parish name.

Invite the students to participate in the following activity.

Frozen Picture activity:

- Divide the group into groups of three.
- Choose one phrase from the 'role map' for each group.
- Explore with one group at a time what the phrase means about the service Father offers the community, and how it points to Christ's presence. Explore how this action reflects Christ in our community. *(Include the other members of the class in the discussion.)*

As you are exploring the phrase have the three students in that group select an action that will express the meaning. For example, if the group selects 'Father says Mass for us', the actions might cover: reading the Gospel, welcoming the people, praying etc. The three students might have three different actions.

- Have these students 'freeze' their actions.
- Repeat this for each of the groups of three.
- When you have practised with each group and explored the meaning of the phrases, invite the students to run through the 'Frozen Pictures' of 'the priest serves the church community'. With each group remaining in place and frozen until the last one has been completed. This will form a tableau of service. (Consider taking a photograph of the end result for future use and review.)

(Explanation of 'Frozen Pictures' is in Appendix 16b on page 84. If you feel less than comfortable with groups doing different things, you might consider having the whole class 'freeze' in response to the discussion.)

Ask the students to return to their seats and trace around the Remembering Point in the workbook on page 52.

End

(5 minutes)

Gather the students around the prayer focus. **Invite them** to be still, close their eyes and breathe gently.

Catechist: Today I will pray for us. At the end of the prayer simply say 'Amen'. Sit quietly and think about all the things Father does to serve our community. We can be very thankful for all that Father does and how our community supports us as well.

God, our Father,

Help Father to serve our community as you would want him to.

Help us to listen to the things Father says, knowing that his words help us know more about you.

We ask this prayer through Jesus, your Son.

All: Amen.

Dismiss the students as usual.

Celebrating Together at Mass

Background for the Catechist

Please take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

The Lord, having loved those who were his own, loved them to the end. Knowing that the hour had come to leave this world and return to the Father, in the course of a meal he washed their feet and gave them the commandment of love. In order to leave them a pledge of this love, in order never to depart from his own and to make them sharers in his Passover, he instituted the Eucharist as the memorial of his death and Resurrection, and commanded his apostles to celebrate it until his return (CCC 1994, n. 1337).

The Eucharist is a complex ritual in which many aspects of our faith are remembered and made present. The death and resurrection of Jesus is at the heart of each celebration. Through Jesus' death and resurrection we are brought into a relationship of love of God and trust in God. This mystery is celebrated in the light of the scripture readings of a particular Mass and leads to the act of communion. Here we share in the holy meal through which Jesus gives his whole self to us in the sacramental bread and wine of the Eucharist. The Mass enables every disciple of Jesus to share intimately in the experience of Jesus' Passover: his last supper with the first disciples and the events of his death and resurrection. By receiving Holy Communion we bind ourselves to Jesus and commit ourselves to living through him, with him and in him to the glory and honour of God.

Student Focus

Students of this age appreciate ritual. They are vitally interested in the rituals involved in birthday celebrations. They are open to exploring the Mass as a holy ritual meal where Christians gather to:

- hear Jesus' words
- speak to Jesus in prayer
- remember Jesus' last supper
- recall Jesus' death and resurrection
- receive Jesus as the Bread of Life in Holy Communion.

Teaching Point

At Mass we celebrate Jesus' last supper.

Remembering Point

At Mass we celebrate Jesus' last supper.

Beginning

(10 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Gather the students around you on the mat. Show them the picture.

Ask the students:

- What do you think is happening in this picture?
- Who comes when you have a celebration.

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder why so many people come. (*they like to celebrate, they like you ...*)

Invite the students to be still and get ready to pray.

Catechist: Let us begin with the Sign of the Cross.

Catechist: Repeat the prayer after me.

Thank you, God, for our families.

All: Thank you, God, for our families.

Catechist: Thank you, God, for our family celebrations.

All: Thank you God for our family celebrations.

Catechist: Now, let us say the Glory be

All: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Tell the students to return to their tables and to open their workbooks at page 53. **Ask them** to draw a picture of their family celebrating.

1. Picture of a special celebration.
2. Prayer Focus: A coloured cloth, a candle, wheat, grapes.
3. Workbooks .
4. Enlarge the hymn in Appendix 23a on page 118.
5. Answers for the Word Hunt (Appendix 23b, page 118).

Middle

(30 minutes)

Gather the students around you on the mat. **Tell** this story:

One day Jesus and his friends had a special meal called Passover. (Jewish people celebrated the Passover meal every year.) This particular Passover was the last one Jesus ever celebrated. That's why we call it the 'Last Supper'. Jesus said the blessing and they all began their meal. While they were eating, Jesus did something different. He blessed some bread and gave it to them. He said, 'Take, this is my body'. He took a cup of wine and gave thanks. Then he gave it to them and said, 'This is my blood'. He said, 'Do this in memory of me' (Lk 22: 22–25).

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder what Jesus and his friends talked about at this meal. (*things they had done together, their friends, their families, their wishes ...*)

- What food did Jesus and his friends share at the meal? (*bread, wine*)
- What did Jesus ask them to do? (*to do this in memory of him*)

Tell the students to return to their tables and to open their workbooks at page 54 and to complete the word-find.

Gather the students round you on the mat.

Ask the students: Does this story of Jesus' last supper remind you of anything? (*It will not matter if students do not associate this story with the Mass because this will be part of your teaching today.*)

Tell the students: Yes, every Sunday at Mass we do again what Jesus did at the Last Supper. We gather together to celebrate. We listen to stories from the Bible. We offer gifts of bread and wine. We give thanks to God. We do what Jesus did when he said, 'Do this in memory of me'. The bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Jesus. Then God's family shares a holy meal that we call 'Holy Communion'. At the end the priest tells us to go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

Ask the students:

- What sorts of things does God's family celebrate at Mass on Sunday? (*the Last Supper, Jesus ...*)
- What do you want to say thanks to God for at Mass? (*God is good, the beautiful world, giving us Jesus, God gave us our families ...*)
- How we can love and serve the Lord? (*help mum and dad, share toys, smile at people, play fairly ...*)

Invite the students to share their own wonderings. Accept them and facilitate the answers from the other students.

Tell the students to return to their tables and to open their workbooks at page 55. Invite them to write or draw their responses in the boxes.

Teach the students to sing *A Song of Thanks* to the tune of *London Bridge*.

End

(10 minutes)

Gather the students round the prayer focus.

Catechist: Let us be still as we get ready to pray. Let's say the Sign of the Cross.

All: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Catechist: We'll sing *A Song of Thanks* as our prayer.

All: For the world we thank you, God ...

Dismiss the students as usual.

Appendix 23a: A Song of Thanks

For the world, we thank you, God,
 Thank you, God, thank you, God.
 For the world, we thank you, God, with everyone at Mass.

For Jesus Christ, we thank you, God,
 Thank you, God, thank you, God,
 For Jesus Christ, we thank you, God, with everyone at Mass.

For Good News, we thank you, God,
 Thank you, God, thank you, God,
 For Good News, we thank you, God, with everyone at Mass.

To love and serve, please help us, God
 Help us God, help us, God,
 To love and serve, please help us, God, with everyone at Mass.

Appendix 23b: Solution to the Word Find

B	L	E	S	S	I	N	G
D	A	S	K	N	A	H	T
I	S	D	N	E	I	R	F
S	T	S	X	L	A	E	M
C	S	T	R	O	O	M	S
I	U	O	E	G	T	E	U
P	P	R	N	A	A	M	S
L	P	I	I	V	B	B	E
E	E	E	W	E	L	E	J
S	R	S	D	A	E	R	B

- Blessing
- Bread
- Disciples
- Friends
- Gave
- Jesus
- Last Supper
- Meal
- Remember
- Room
- Stories
- Table
- Thanks
- Wine

Joseph and God's Message of Love

Background for the Catechist

Please take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

Christians venerate the Old Testament as the true word of God. All of the books of the Old Testament are divinely inspired and retain a permanent value. They bear witness to the divine pedagogy of God's saving love. They are written, above all, to prepare for the coming of Christ the Saviour of the universe (CCCC 2006, n. 21).

Reading the stories of the great biblical figures is the way we begin to understand both the way God works in the world and also our own role in the world. The stories of Joseph from the Old Testament are a perfect example. Joseph, the favoured son, provokes jealousy in his brothers, and only just escapes his brothers' anger. He travels afar, establishes himself anew and is eventually able to reconcile with those brothers and his beloved father. God writes straight in the crooked lines of Joseph's fortunes and Joseph himself learns wisdom and to trust in God.

Student Focus

Students of this age love story. They relate easily to the characters and situations in stories. They enter into stories and wonder about the characters and draw meaning from their musings.

Teaching Point

Special people in the Bible tell us about God's message of love.

Remembering Point

The story of Joseph tells us about the love of God.

Beginning

(15 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Briefly recall lesson 21 (God's Chosen People).

Ask the students: Who can remember who David was in the Old Testament from the lesson we did a few weeks ago? *(Invite students' responses – King of God's chosen people, etc. Students might like to turn to page 48 in their workbook to recall the location of the text in the Old Testament and some other information.)*

Tell the students: Today we will be looking at another important figure, Joseph. He is also from the Old Testament. Joseph was born a long time before David and his story comes before the story of David. It shows us, just like David's story did, how God chose special people to show us God's love.

Now open your books to page 56 and let's have a look at the land where Joseph's family, his father, Jacob, and his eleven brothers lived.

Show the students the map of the world and locate the area of their workbook map (the Holy Land, with Canaan and Egypt marked) on the world map.

Gather the students around you for storytelling.

Tell the students the story of Joseph from Appendix 24b, page 124.

1. Prayer focus: A multi-coloured cloth or multi-coloured ribbons, wheat grains, a candle, the Bible.
2. Have a world map or a globe to locate the Holy Land for students. Appendix 24a on page 123 has a map you could use. Enlarge onto an A3 sheet.
3. (Optional) Consider Andrew Lloyd-Webber's *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat* as background music while the students are working.
4. Workbooks.

Middle

(30 minutes)

Ask the students to turn to page 57 of the workbook and look at the outline of Joseph.

Help the students to fill in the various parts of the activity in the following way:

Ask the students one question at a time. (Prompt the students in their discussion and be prepared to have some noise when they are talking about the story with others.)

- In this story what are the things that Joseph does? *(Students can record their answers beside the fingers of the outline, using some of the words found around the page.)*
- Where does Joseph go? *(Students can record their answers beside the feet of the outline, using some of the words found around the page.)*
- What does Joseph see and say in this story? *(Students can record their answers beside the eyes and the mouth of the outline, using some of the words found around the page.)*
- What do you think Joseph might have thought while the different things happened to him? *(Students can record their answers beside the head of the outline, using some of the words found around the page.)*
- What did Joseph feel: a) at the beginning when he got his coat, b) when his brothers tore it from him, c) when they threw him down the pit, d) when he was rescued and sold as a slave, e) when he became Governor of Egypt, f) when he saw his brothers, g) when they passed the test? *(Invite the students to respond to two or three of the points.)*

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder how Joseph would have felt when he saw his father again after so long. *(Students can record their answers beside the outline using some of the words found around the page.)*

Give the students some time to complete this activity and colour in the coat of many colours (if they have time).

Ask the students: What is God telling us about his friendship with his chosen people? *(Allow the students to explore this question. You will get a variety of answers but all are valuable.)*

Ask the students to share their answers with the person beside them.

Invite the students to share in the large group one thing they have talked about with their partner.

End

(5 minutes)

Gather the students around the prayer focus and recall the story of Joseph by picking up or pointing to the items on the focus and asking the students how they fit into the story (the ribbons, the wheat etc.)

Catechist: Let us make the Sign of the Cross together.

All: In the name of the Father ...

Catechist: God, you were faithful to Joseph and his family, always caring for them.

Thank you, God, for the story of Joseph that reminds us of your care for us and our families, too.

Catechist: Our response is, Thank you, God.

Students: Thank you, God.

Catechist: Help us to forgive, like Joseph.

Students: Thank you, God.

Catechist: Help us to help our family and friends, like Joseph.

Students: Thank you, God.

Catechist: Help us to use our gifts to help others, like Joseph.

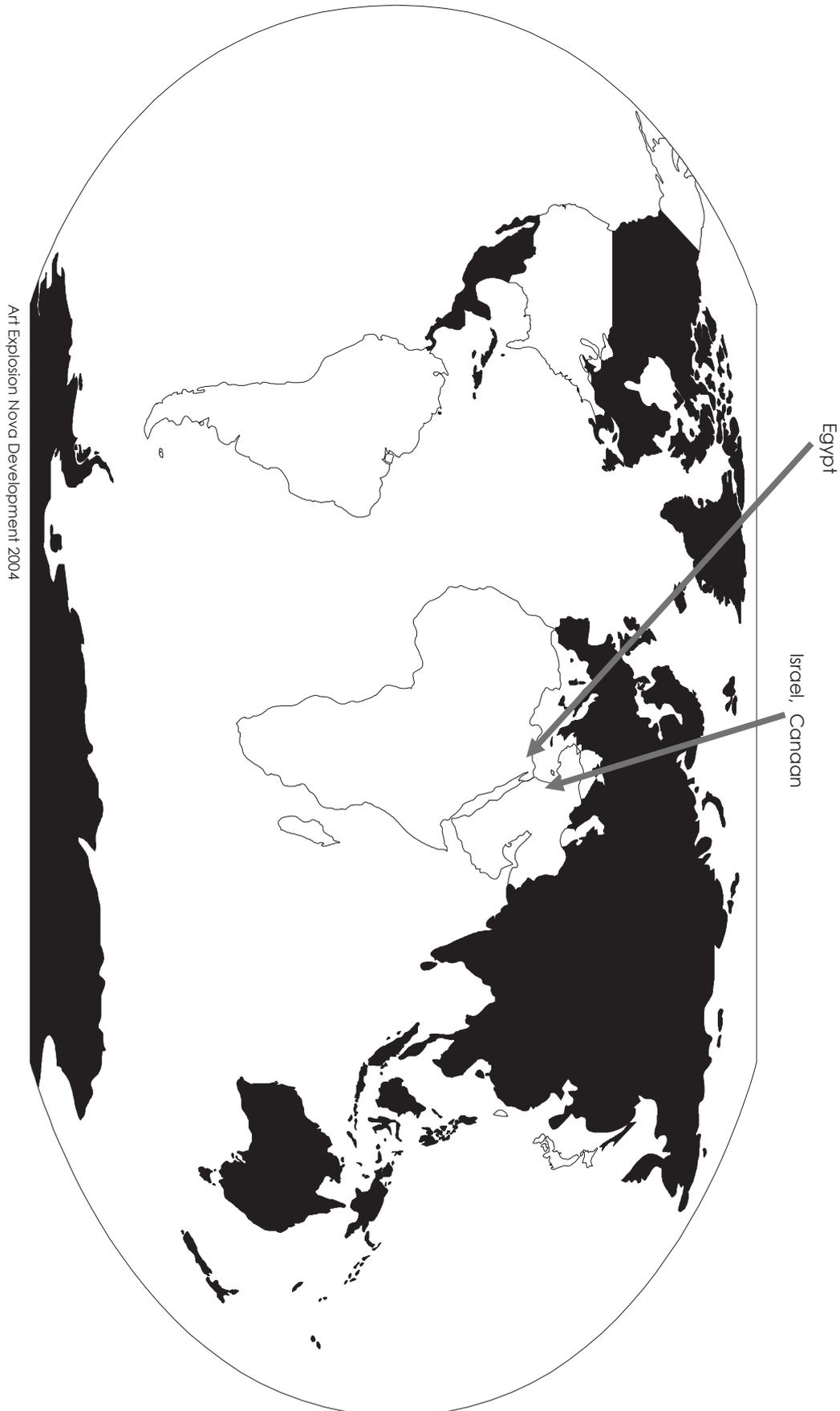
Students: Thank you, God.

Catechist: We ask this, God, in your name.

All: Amen.

Dismiss the students as usual.

Appendix 24a: World Map



Art Explosion Nova Development 2004

Egypt

Israel, Canaan

Appendix 24b: Joseph's Story

This is the story about the family of Jacob. Jacob was one of God's chosen people and he lived in the land of Canaan (point to the location on the map).

Jacob had twelve sons. He loved all his sons, but one of his sons was special – he was a dreamer.

One day Jacob gave Joseph a wonderful new coat. This coat was made of many coloured pieces of cloth and sparkled in the sun. When Joseph's brothers saw him wearing this wonderful coat, they became very jealous. They thought this meant that Jacob loved Joseph the most.

Now Joseph was a dreamer and he had a dream that he would be a great man and more successful than his brothers. Hearing this, the brothers became even more annoyed and jealous and plotted against him. One day when they were all out in the fields they attacked Joseph and tore the coat from him, bullied him and threw him into a pit. They went off and left him, intending to come back later and take him out of the pit. However, a group of people who were travelling through the area hauled him out of the pit and sold him to another caravan. So now Joseph was a slave.

Joseph's brothers were very upset when they discovered the pit was empty. They didn't know what to do, but decided to go home and tell their father that Joseph had been killed by a wild animal. Jacob was very sad.

Joseph worked very hard as a slave and was soon put in charge of a household. The wife of the owner of the house told lies about Joseph, which meant that Joseph ended up in prison.

While he was in prison Joseph explained the meaning of the dreams of some of the other prisoners. One of these prisoners was a servant for the Pharaoh. Pharaoh was having trouble understanding his dreams and his servant suggested Joseph might explain them to him. Pharaoh sent for Joseph to explain the unusual dreams he was having.

In one dream, seven fat cows came out of the River Nile, followed by seven thin cows. The thin cows ate the fat cows. In a second dream seven fat stalks of corn were eaten by seven thin ones. Joseph was able to explain all of this to Pharaoh.

He said, there would be seven years of good harvests in Egypt when there would be lots of food to eat. Then there would be seven years of drought when nothing would grow.

Joseph told Pharaoh to get ready by storing the extra corn in the barns so people wouldn't starve. Pharaoh was so impressed that he made Joseph the Governor of Egypt.

Meanwhile, back in Canaan, the drought was very hard. Jacob and his sons were starving. Jacob decided to send his sons to Egypt to buy corn from the Governor because he was the only one who had prepared for the drought and famine.

When the sons saw the Governor, they did not recognise their brother Joseph. Joseph, however knew immediately who they were. He gave them plenty of food but wanted to know if they had changed their ways. So he decided to test them.

Joseph placed his precious silver cup in the sack of Benjamin, his youngest brother. When the brothers tried to leave, Joseph stopped them and checked their bags to see who had stolen his cup. It was discovered to be in Benjamin's sack. The other brothers would not let Benjamin take the blame; they took the blame instead.

They passed the test! Joseph knew, now, that they had changed. He hugged them and said, 'I am your brother Joseph'.

He sent them to bring his father, Jacob, and all the family to live in Egypt to be with him. The family was now together again (Gen 37: 2 – 36; 39: 1 – 46: 34).

LESSON 25

Renew the World

Background for the Catechist

Please take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

[D]ominion over inanimate and other living beings granted by the Creator is not absolute; it is limited by concern for the quality of life of his neighbour, including generations to come; it requires a religious respect for the integrity of creation (CCC 1994, n. 2415).

God is all-holy and all-powerful and does not need the help of created beings to bring the world to fulfilment. Yet God wills that human beings, made in the divine image, will be the agents of renewal in the world. Part of this task relates to the natural world where we human beings have been charged with using its gifts and resources well to feed, clothe and nourish ourselves and the whole human race, not to destroy, disfigure and ruin what we have been given. So whenever we take action to conserve resources, recycle waste, preserve places of natural beauty on whatever scale, we are helping God to renew the world. The other part of the task relates to how we live our lives in the world, our social, political and economic systems. When we call on God to renew the face of the earth we commit ourselves, made in God's image, to work for social and economic structures that are just and fair and allow everyone to grow and flourish as God intended. So, when we make strangers welcome, when we campaign for marginalised people, when we keep everyone's well-being in mind as we vote, we are helping God renew the face of the earth.

Student Focus

Students of this age are aware that the world needs renewal. They can help to renew the earth in their own context by keeping things tidy, turning off taps, not breaking trees and plants, being kind to animals. In the social sphere, they can make the world a better place for family and friends who are sad, tired or cross by being kind, helpful, cheerful, and so on.

Teaching Point

I can help God to renew our world.

Remembering Point

I can help God to renew our world.

Beginning

(15 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Invite the students to gather around the prayer focus.

Catechist: Let us make the Sign of the Cross

All: In the name of the Father ...

Catechist: God created the world for all of us to live in.

Let us pray that we will always respect what God has made. May our actions help others to be happy in God's creation and may we take good care of the plants, animals and all that is from God.

Students: God, help me to care for and renew our world.

Ask the students to return to their desks and open their workbooks at page 58.

Explore the meaning of the word *renew*.

Ask the students: What words can we split this word into? (*RE and NEW*)

Tell the students: We all know what the word *NEW* means and when we add the word *RE* to it we are saying that we will make something new *AGAIN*. We are saying it will be like new again or we are going to *MEND* something or improve something. There are many words that mean *RENEW*.

Invite the students to complete the Word Find of the meanings for *RENEW*. (*You might have to assist the students with the message made with the left-over letters.*)

Middle

(30 minutes)

Lay out the pictures on the table or the floor and have the students gather around and talk about what is happening in the pictures. Point to the first image and **ask the students:**

- What does this picture tell us? (Repeat for each image.)

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder how these places got to look like this.
- I wonder how all of this is affecting the world we live in.

Ask the students:

- What could be done to change this and make this better?
- What can I do to help God renew our world?

(*Take time with this reflection. Accept the answers and help the students develop their understanding and deepen their awareness of the impact of the stresses on the earth.*)

1. Prayer focus: A green cloth, a candle and the Bible, images you have collected that depict the earth in need of renewal.

2. Prayer strip:

God, help me to care for and renew our world.

3. Collect no more than four images from *National Geographic* magazines, newspapers and other similar sources that depict the earth under stress and in need of renewal. (Garbage, trees cut down, mining etc.)
4. A large sheet of paper (optional).
5. Answers to the Word Find in Appendix 25 on page 128.

With the last question – What can I do to help God renew our world? – **select one of the pictures** and brainstorm possible ways that the students or others might RENEW the situation.

Record the answers on a large sheet or on the blackboard.

Invite the students to open their workbooks at page 59.

Tell the students that they can choose their home, their school or the parish area and provide ways that they might help God renew the world. The students are to record below the statement, 'I can help God renew our world', – as many ways that they can assist God in this renewal. Provide an example: *For instance I can help God renew our world when I walk through the garden carefully, so that I don't break the plants.*

When the students have finished, **invite each one** to share their first activity to help God renew the world. (*Affirm their answers and encourage them to try to fulfil their suggestions.*)

End

(5 minutes)

Gather the students around the prayer focus.

Invite them to pray the Sign of the Cross with you.

All: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Catechist: Let us pray that we will always respect what God has made. May our actions cause others to be happy in God's creation and may we take good care of the plants, animals and all that is from God.

Students: God, help me to care for and renew our world.

Dismiss the students as usual.

Appendix 25a: Websites

Some websites that might provide some background resources (pictures) for use in this lesson:

Yarra Water: www.yvw.com.au/Home/

Greening Australia: www.greeningaustralia.org.au/about-us/overview

Australia Conservation Foundation: www.acfonline.org.au/default.asp

Appendix 25b: Solution to Word Find

F	I	X	I	R	C	A
N	R	H	M	E	U	P
E	E	E	A	P	D	L
I	N	P	K	A	O	A
M	O	L	E	I	G	G
P	V	B	A	R	O	A
R	A	E	D	R	T	I
O	T	T	O	E	G	N
V	E	T	R	S	E	E
E	N	E	E	T	W	T
H	E	R	W	O	O	R
M	E	N	D	R	L	D
R	E	F	R	E	S	H

- Again
- Better
- Do
- Enlarge
- Fix
- Improve
- Make
- Mend
- Refresh
- Renovate
- Repair
- Restore
- Up

The message is:

I can help God to renew the world.

LESSON 26

Marriage

Background for the Catechist

Please take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

God who is love and who created man and woman for love has called them to love. By creating man and woman he called them to an intimate communion of life and of love in marriage: 'So that they are no longer two, but one flesh' (Mt 19: 6). God said to them in blessing 'Be fruitful and multiply' (Gen 1: 28) (CCCC 2006, n. 337).

In Genesis we see God making a companion, Eve, for Adam. The need for love and companionship is the basis of marriage. The commitment couples make to each other in marriage is a celebration of love. The mutual love of the couple for each other is a reflection of the love that each member of the Trinity has for the others. Such love brings contentment, happiness and fulfilment; it nurtures and strengthens the couple.

Student Focus

Students of this age rely on the love of their parents for their physical and spiritual wellbeing. They know, from experience, the effects of love: contentment, happiness, growth. They may also know from experience the harmful effects of conflict and disagreement.

Teaching Point

God blesses men and women in the sacrament of Marriage.

Remembering Point

God blesses men and women when they get married.

Beginning

(10 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Gather the students around the focus.

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder what this picture/statue is about.
- I wonder why people get married. (*they love each other, they want to be together*)

Ask the students:

- Who can get married? (*a man and a woman, adults*)
- Where do people get married? (*in a church or chapel, by the beach ...*)

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder what it means to be married. (*Live together, take care of each other, put the other person first. This is an open-ended question which allows the student to explore many possible answers. Accept all answers with affirmation.*)

Invite the students to share their wonderings. (*Be sensitive to the varied experiences of students when discussing this issue.*)

Invite the students to return to their places and to open their workbooks at page 62. Tell them to trace over the Remembering Point: God blesses men and women in the sacrament of Marriage.

1. Prayer focus: A white cloth, a wedding photo (or bride and groom statue), a cross.
2. Workbooks.

Middle

(30 minutes)

Tell the students: Remember our lesson about thanking God for creation? What did God create? (*light, water, birds, animals, plants and fish*)

Today we're going to look at what God said to the first man he created.

Read from Genesis: 'Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone. I will make him a helper to be his partner"' (Gen 2: 15).

Tell the students that God made people to live together and to care for each other. Remember that God made people to be like him. When a man and a woman love each other they reflect God's love.

Invite the students to return to their seats and open their workbooks at page 61.

Give the students the sheet with the outline of a man and a woman from Appendix 26a on page 132. Direct them to colour in and cut out the figures and then paste them onto the picture of creation.

Ask the students to read out the Remembering Point: *God blesses men and women in the sacrament of Marriage.*

Tell the students: A couple marry because they love each other and God blesses them. Marriage is a sacrament that celebrates a couple's love.

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder how we can tell that husbands and wives love each other. *(Help each other, share their belongings, work for each other, look after their children, look out for each other.)*

Direct the students to the word activity in their workbooks on page 60. The words will reinforce the types of answers that students may have given to the above question.

Tell the students: The wife and husband give each other support in good times and in bad times, in sickness and in health.

Invite the students to turn to page 62 and complete the sentence by filling in the missing letters.

The wife and husband give each other support in good times and in bad times, in sickness and in health.

End

(5 minutes)

Gather the students around the prayer focus.

Catechist: Let us be still as we get ready to pray.

All: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Catechist: The response to our prayer today is, 'God, bless our mums and dads'.

Students: God, bless our mums and dads.

Catechist: Creator God, you made men and women to love each other. Let us pray that God will bless our parents. Creator God, keep our parents fit and healthy.

Students: God, bless our mums and dads.

Catechist: Creator God, help our parents to keep us safe.

Students: God, bless our mums and dads.

Catechist: Creator God, give them patience and joy.

Students: God, bless our mums and dads.

Catechist: Creator God, help them work through all their problems.

Students: God, bless our mums and dads.

Catechist: Creator God, help them to care for one another at all times.

Students: God, bless our mums and dads.

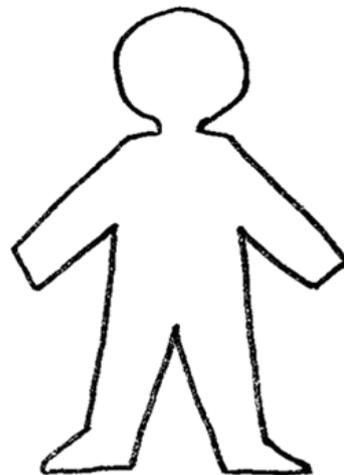
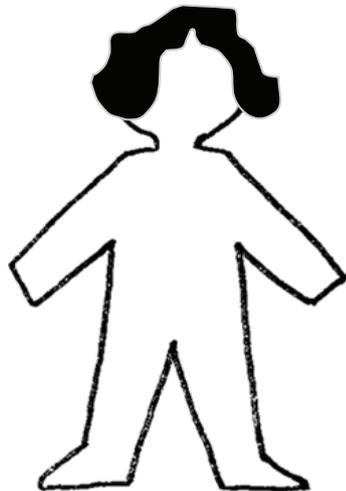
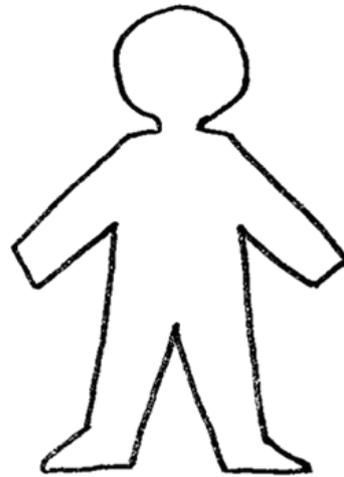
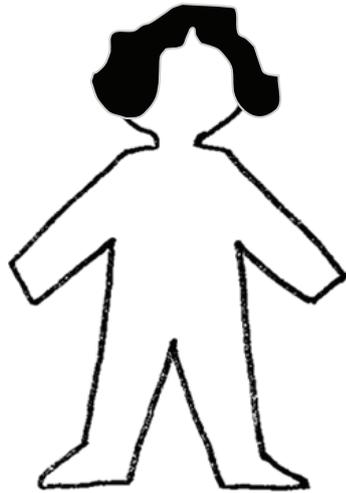
Catechist: Let us pray together the prayer that Jesus taught us.

All: Our Father ...

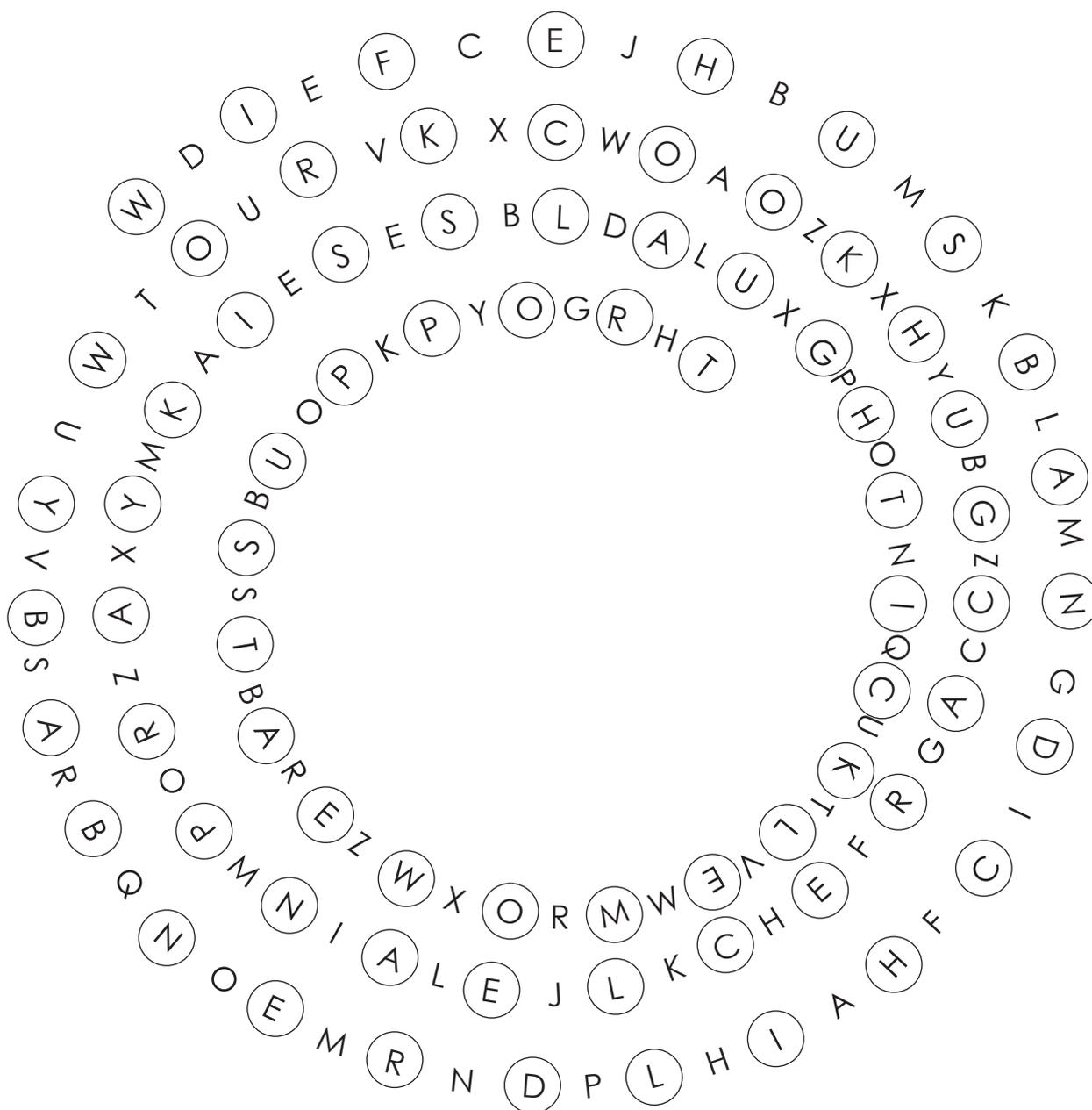
Dismiss the students as usual.

Appendix 26a: Outlines

Outline of a man and a woman. Make enough copies for each student.



Appendix 26b: Solutions to the Word Activities



These are the words in the circle puzzle on page 60 of the workbook:

Wife, husband, children, baby, work, cook, hug, care, clean, pray, kiss, laugh, tickle, mow, eat, support

This is the special message on page 62 of the workbook

The wife and husband give each other support in good times and in bad times, in sickness and in health.

Giving and Receiving Forgiveness

Background for the Catechist

Please take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

This outpouring of mercy cannot penetrate our hearts as long as we have not forgiven those who have trespassed against us. Love, like the Body of Christ, is indivisible; we cannot love the God we cannot see if we do not love the brother or sister we do see. In refusing to forgive our brothers and sisters, our hearts are closed and their hardness makes them impervious to the Father's merciful love; but in confessing our sins, our hearts are opened to his grace (CCC 1994, n. 2840).

Willingness to forgive others should be the hallmark of Christians because it is an expression of love to which all are called. Christians believe that God is merciful and compassionate. Forgiveness works two ways: it both relieves the person forgiven from guilt and shame and frees the person who has been wronged from bitterness and resentment.

Student Focus

Students of this age have experienced forgiving and being forgiven. They know it isn't always easy to do, yet they are usually remarkably generous in giving forgiveness.

Teaching Point

As God's people we need to forgive others, and be forgiven.

Remembering Point

I can forgive and be forgiven.

Beginning

1. Prayer focus: A cloth, the Bible and a candle.
2. A sheet of A3 paper.
3. Workbooks.
4. Prayer Strip:

Help me to remember that I can forgive and be forgiven.

5. The Bible (Lk 7: 33–50).

NB Luke the evangelist did not name the woman who anointed Jesus' feet. It is advisable to follow the Gospel version of the story.

(10 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Invite the students to gather round the prayer focus and get ready to pray.

All: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Catechist: God of love, you sent Jesus to teach us.

All: God of love, you sent Jesus to teach us.

Catechist: Help us to be like Jesus.

All: Help us to be like Jesus.

Catechist: We praise you, God of all forgiveness. Amen.

All: We praise you, God of all forgiveness. Amen.

Ask the students to go to their tables.

Invite the students to think of a time when someone was unkind to them. (Allow a few moments for the students to think.)

Ask the students: How did you make things right again? (shake hands, hug, smile, ...)

Write these responses on a large sheet of paper.

Tell the students: Think of a time when you were forgiven. (Allow a few moments for the students to think.)

Ask the students: How did it feel when you were forgiven? (happy, relieved, ...)

Write these responses on the sheet of paper.

Invite the students to open their workbooks at page 63 and to draw a picture of how they were forgiven.

Tell the students: We give and receive forgiveness in our words and in our actions.

Middle

(35 minutes)

Invite the students to gather round you on the mat.

Tell the students: Today's story is about a woman who asked for forgiveness through her actions. Luke wrote this story in his Gospel. Tell the story.

One day Simon the Pharisee asked Jesus to dinner. While Jesus was there a woman who was a sinner came in. She used her tears to bathe Jesus' feet and her hair to dry his feet. Then she kissed his feet and anointed them with a precious ointment. Simon thought that Jesus should not let a sinful woman touch him. But Jesus said to him, 'Simon, when I entered your house you did not give me water for my feet, but this woman has washed and dried my feet. You didn't greet me with a kiss but this woman has not stopped kissing my feet. You didn't anoint my head but she has anointed my feet'. Then Jesus looked at the woman and said, 'Your sins are forgiven. Go in peace'.

Ask the students:

- Who are the characters? (*Simon, Jesus, the woman*)
- Where did the story take place? (*in Simon's house*)
- When did the story happen? (*while Simon and Jesus were having dinner*)
- Why do you think the woman was crying? (*she was sad, sorry, worried, upset, ...*)

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder why the woman anointed (rubbed oil on) Jesus' feet. (*She admired Jesus, she wanted to follow Jesus, she wanted to show she was sorry, ...*)
- I wonder how the woman felt when Jesus said, 'Your sins are forgiven. Go in peace'. (*Happy, relieved, at peace, ...*)

(*These opened-ended questions do not have specific answers; therefore accept all responses.*)

Ask the students to return to their tables and to open their workbooks at page 64. Invite them to tell the story of Jesus and the woman in the cartoon strip.

End

(10 minutes)

Gather the students around you on the mat.

- What do you think Luke wanted us to learn from this story? (*Jesus always forgives, we can say sorry ...*)
- I wonder what you could say to Jesus when you've been hurt by someone? (*I feel sad, angry, hurt, puzzled ...*)
- I wonder what you could say to Jesus when you're sorry for a wrong thing you've done? (*I'm sorry, please forgive me ...*)

Tell the students: We can always talk to Jesus about the hurtful things we have done and about the hurtful things that have been done to us. Jesus is always ready to listen and to forgive.

Invite the students to stand around the prayer focus and to get ready to pray.

Catechist: Forgiving Jesus, when people say unkind things to me,

All: Help me to remember that I can forgive and be forgiven.

Catechist: Forgiving Jesus, when I hurt people,

All: Help me to remember that I can forgive and be forgiven.

Catechist: Forgiving Jesus, when people take my things,

All: Help me to remember that I can forgive and be forgiven.

Catechist: Forgiving Jesus, when I refuse to help,

All: Help me to remember that I can forgive and be forgiven.

Dismiss the students as usual.

Anointing of the Sick

Background for the Catechist

Please take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

Christ's compassion toward the sick and his many healings of every kind of infirmity are a resplendent sign that 'God has visited his people' and that the Kingdom of God is close at hand. Jesus has the power not only to heal, but also to forgive sins; he has come to heal the whole man, soul and body; he is the physician the sick have need of (CCC 1994, n. 1503).

The Church believes and confesses that among the seven sacraments there is one especially intended to strengthen those who are being tried by illness, the Anointing of the Sick (CCC 1994, n. 1511).

The sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is one of the healing sacraments of the Church. It extends the touch of Jesus to anyone in the community who is sick or suffering. It invites them to find meaning in their pain and difficulty by joining themselves to him and sharing his willingness to undergo suffering and death in a spirit of love for God and others. It is also meant to strengthen and comfort the sick person and to reassure them of the love and concern of the whole Christian community.

Student Focus

A place to begin speaking about this sacrament with the students might be to invite them to talk about how their parents look after them when they are ill or hurt, and reflect on how important it is to be hugged and comforted and reassured. In this sacrament it is as if the Church comes to its sick members to touch them gently with oils, to pray with them, to comfort and reassure them.

Teaching Point

Anointing of the Sick celebrates Jesus' healing power.

Remembering Point

Anointing of the Sick celebrates Jesus' healing power.

Beginning

1. Prayer focus: A coloured cloth of choice, a candle, oil, a bandage, ointment.
2. Prayer strip:

Jesus, hear our prayer and be with the sick.
3. Workbooks.
4. Copies of the card found in Appendix 28 at the end of the lesson.

(15 minutes)

Gather the students as usual and welcome them. Have the students gathered around the prayer focus. Point to each of the items on the focus and **tell the students:** I put these things on the prayer focus for today because we will be looking at a special sacrament that people can share in when they are unwell or needing to share in Jesus' healing power. The sacrament is called the Anointing of the Sick.

Catechist: Let us begin with a prayer for all those who are sick and unwell in our families, in our schools and parish and in the world.

All: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Catechist: Jesus, we ask you to care for those who are unwell in our homes, schools, parish and our world. May all these people know that you are with them in their illness, helping them to get through the hard times.

Students: Jesus, hear our prayer and be with the sick.

All: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Invite the students to turn to page 66 in their workbook.

Tell the students: In pairs talk about the times your Mum or Dad has cared for you when you were sick or unwell. In your books write down the time you were sick and what your Mum or Dad did to care for you.

Ask the students when they have finished: Who would like to share with the group a time when you were sick and how your Mum or Dad cared for you? *(Take answers from a few of the students, as time permits.)*

Middle

(25 minutes)

Tell the students: When you get sick your Mum or Dad look after you and make sure you are comfortable. They take you to the doctor if you need to go, and make all sorts of lovely treats for you to help you feel better, or happier when you are feeling miserable.

Invite the students to turn to page 67 in the workbook.

Read the following story:

One day Suki and Pol were walking home from school talking together. Suddenly a boy ran past them and knocked them both over and they fell heavily on the footpath. Pol got up quickly, dusted himself down and saw that Suki was still on the ground. As Pol went to her, he saw that Suki's leg was bleeding quite badly. Luckily, a

teacher saw what happened and went to help Pol and Suki. The teacher took Suki to the doctor and made sure Pol got home.

The next day Pol went to visit Suki at her house. Suki was in bed, resting her leg. Pol sat with Suki, talking and laughing. Then Suki asked Pol if he would like to play a Nintendo game. They played until it was time for Pol to go home.

The next day Suki was feeling much better and was able to get up and hobble around the house. When Pol came to visit, Suki was so pleased to see him because he made her feel so much better.

Direct the students to page 68 in their workbook and step them through the 'Thinking Hats' activity.

White hat: What happened in the story? Why did Suki fall? When have you fallen? Why did Pol visit Suki at home? *(Encourage the students to complete this part for themselves.)*

Yellow hat: What were the positive or good things that happened in the story?

Red hat: How did Suki feel after she had fallen? How did she feel when Pol came and sat with her while she was sick? How did Pol feel when he left Suki? *(This is the important part of the lesson. Allow the students to talk amongst themselves to answer these questions.)*

When the students have finished this part, have them share some of their answers with everyone. Then ask:

- Do you think Pol could heal Suki's leg? *(After you receive the negative answer, ask if this meant that Pol wouldn't go around to Suki to talk and play? Or that Suki wouldn't want Pol to visit her? This is an important part of understanding the what and why of participating in the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick.)*

Tell the students: All people like to have someone care for them when they are sick. People show their love for the sick when they visit. Visits comfort and strengthen the sick and help them to feel better, even if they are not healed or made well again. If you were ill or in hospital, you would like your family to spend time with you and care for you in a special way.

We are also members of another family, the Church. In God's family of the Church there is a special way of showing how God loves the sick and gives them comfort and strength. This is the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick, where the priest anoints the sick person with oil and gives them God's blessing.

Recall with the students the lesson about the sacraments (Lesson 13). Remind them that when we receive the sacraments we are sharing in the love of God in a very special way. Tell them that through the sacraments we can draw on God's love to help us live our lives. So when we draw on God's love through the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick we know that Jesus is with us, caring for us, giving us comfort and strength and helping us to feel better, even if we are not healed or made well again.

Tell the students: Open your workbook on page 69. Read the definition of anointing.

We anoint people to show that they are being blessed in a special way. The Queen of England was anointed when she became Queen. When a man becomes a bishop or a priest, he is anointed.

When we are anointed during this sacrament we are able to share in Jesus' healing power. We receive Jesus' special love and blessing to show us that he is with us, giving us his love and strength and comfort. This can help us feel better.

When people are anointed, the priest uses a special oil and places it on the person's hands, feet, ears, eyes and mouth, which reminds them again, that Jesus is with them in what they see, hear, say and do.

Direct the students to page 69 of their workbooks and have them complete the sentence by filling in the gaps: In the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick we celebrate Jesus' healing power.

End

(10 minutes)

When the students have completed their work, hand out the cards (an A4 page folded in half). **Invite the students** to write a short prayer on the inside that asks Jesus to be with them and to help them when they are sick or unwell and need his special care.

Give the students the following start and end to help them write their prayer: (Start) Jesus, our brother ... (end) We thank you, Jesus, now and always. Amen.

Gather the students around the focus, light the candle and invite the students to read out their prayers (if time allows, or select three or four to read).

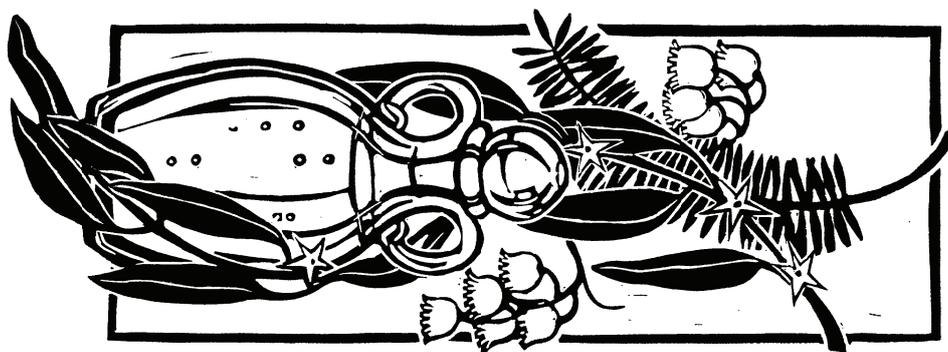
Catechist: Jesus, we celebrate your healing power.

All: Amen.

Dismiss the students as usual.

Appendix 28: Card

Enlarge this to an A4 size and photocopy one for each student.



**WE
CELEBRATE
JESUS'
HEALING
POWER IN
THE
ANOINTING
OF THE
SICK**

LESSON 29

Holy Spirit

Background for the Catechist

Please take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

'God is Love' (1 Jn 4: 8, 16) and love is his first gift, containing all others. 'God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us' (Rm 5: 5) (CCC 1994, n. 733).

The Holy Spirit, the Breath of God, keeps all of creation in life, including every man and woman. No one is ever abandoned or cut off from God, no matter how forsaken they might actually feel. Made in the image of God, each human being carries the Holy Spirit within them. It is the Spirit which makes them yearn for meaning and truth, wholeness and belonging and union. The Holy Spirit draws the baptised into the life of the Church through grace and forgiveness. In the other sacraments the Holy Spirit guides, strengthens and supports Christians in their ordinary lives. Every impulse toward goodness, compassion, courage, kindness, self-forgetfulness is an impulse from the Holy Spirit. Every prayer of praise, thanksgiving, contrition or intercession that we make originates in the indwelling Holy Spirit.

Student Focus

Students of this age are open to the world of imagination and mystery. They can listen to the Holy Spirit by remembering often that God is with them and within them, by being attentive to the little voice within them that suggests what it is best to do, by praying and speaking to the Holy Spirit.

Teaching Point

The Holy Spirit is with us at all times.

Remembering Point

The Holy Spirit is always with us.

Beginning

(10 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Gather the students around the prayer focus.

Catechist: Let's be still as we get ready to pray. Let's start with the Glory Be, and repeat it after each prayer.

All: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Catechist: God, our Father, created us in love.

All: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Catechist: Jesus came to teach us about God.

All: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Catechist: The Holy Spirit is with us always.

All: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Invite the students to return to their tables and to open their workbooks at page 70. Tell them to take turns to read the story, Holy Spirit, to each other.

1. Prayer focus: A red cloth, a candle, the Bible.
2. Workbooks.
3. Jn 14: 16, 26.

Middle

(25 minutes)

Gather the students around you on the mat.

Ask the students: How do you think Jesus' friends felt when Jesus made this promise? (*reassured, happier, puzzled ...*)

Tell the students: Let's read about how Jesus kept his promise to send the Holy Spirit:

At Pentecost Jesus' disciples were all together. Suddenly they heard a noise like a strong wind blowing. Then they saw what looked like small flames above each other's heads. The Holy Spirit had come. They knew the Holy Spirit had come because they didn't feel afraid anymore. They started to teach the crowd about Jesus. They lived in kind, loving, gentle and joyful ways.

Ask the students: How did the disciples know that the Holy Spirit had come to them? (*they remembered things, they started to teach about Jesus, were brave, kind, caring ...*)

Ask the students to return to their tables and to open their workbooks at page 71 and to do the crossword. Most of the answers are in the story of the coming of the Holy Spirit. *(You may need to help them.)*

Invite the students to gather round you on the mat. **Tell them:** Jesus promised the Holy Spirit to us too. The Holy Spirit has come to us when we are baptised. The Holy Spirit is always with us. The Holy Spirit helps us to know what is the right thing to do. The Holy Spirit helps us to make good decisions.

Ask the students: When does the Holy Spirit come to us? (at baptism, when we pray, all the time ...)

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder how the Holy Spirit helps us. (helps us to be strong, reminds us, helps us to choose ...)

Tell the students to return to their tables and open their workbook at page 72 and to write in the shapes how the Holy Spirit helps them.

End

(5 minutes)

Gather the students around the prayer focus. Invite them to be still as they get ready to pray.

Catechist: Let's begin with the Glory be.

All: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Catechist: Repeat the prayers after me.

Come, Holy Spirit, fill our hearts.

All: Come, Holy Spirit, fill our hearts.

Catechist: Light in us the fire of your love.

All: Light in us the fire of your love.

Catechist: Amen.

All: Amen.

Dismiss the students as usual.

People in Need

Background for the Catechist

Please take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

'The Church's love for the poor ... is a part of her constant tradition' (Centesimus Annus 1991, n. 57). This love is inspired by the Gospel of the Beatitudes, of the poverty of Jesus, and of his concern for the poor. Love for the poor is even one of the motives for the duty of working so as to 'be able to give to those in need' (Eph 4: 28). It extends not only to material poverty but also to the many forms of cultural and religious poverty (CCC 1994, n. 2444).

Among the clearest signs Jesus gave of the kingdom of God coming to light among people was his care for persons most in need. Whether it was the lepers on the fringes of society, people who had lost beloved children, public sinners, people who fulfilled despised roles in society, they were all the foremost recipients of his love and concern. In his teaching, too, he constantly reiterated the need to reach out to the poor and those who have nothing. He made practical concern for the suffering of others the touchstone of how Christians will be judged at the end of time. (Mt 25: 3–46). It is for this reason that the Church has always had at the heart of its mission love and service of those in need. Hospitals and schools, the legal system and all the various networks of support that we take for granted now and which are often run by governments originated in the Church's efforts to imitate Jesus in his concern for those most in need. The social teaching of the Church is built upon the idea of solidarity with the poor.

Student Focus

Students of this age love story. They can easily empathise with the characters portrayed in the gospel stories of Jesus caring for the sick, poor and the vulnerable.

Teaching Point

The Family of God care for people in need.

Remembering Point

I can care for people in need.

Beginning

1. Prayer focus: A green cloth, a candle and the Bible.

2. Prayer strip:

Help us Jesus to care for people in need.

3. A large sheet of paper with the question, 'Who cares for you?', written on it. (Alternately write it on the blackboard/whiteboard.)

4. Sheets of A3 paper with a grid as below.

Who might I care for?	Why?

5. Blu-Tack for display.

(15 minutes)

Gather and welcome the students as usual.

Have the students sit around the prayer focus. Talk to the students about what is on the focus and what each item means. The candle reminds us that Christ is present, the Bible contains the stories of Jesus and the green cloth reminds us that it is Ordinary time in the Church's year.

Catechist: First let us pray together:

Catechist: There are people we know who need help.

Students: Help us, Jesus, to care for people in need.

Catechist: There are people in our community who are in need.

Students: Help us, Jesus, to care for people in need.

Catechist: As we work through our lesson may we learn how we can care for people in need.

Students: Help us, Jesus, to care for people in need.

Catechist: We make this prayer through Christ, our Lord.

All: Amen.

Remind the students of the earlier lesson that explored caring for people because God loves them. **Direct the students** to the question, 'Who cares for you?' (on a sheet of paper or the blackboard/whiteboard).

Quickly **brainstorm with the students** possible answers and record them under the question.

Ask the students: How do these people care for you?

Quickly **brainstorm possible answers** and record them under the question.

Tell the students: There are many stories in the New Testament that tell us how Jesus cared for people. Does anyone know of any? (Take some examples from the students.)

Tell the students: I have a story here that shows how Jesus cared for those people whom many other people ignored or avoided. This story is about a leper. A leper in the time of Jesus was someone with a skin disease. People tended to avoid them because they didn't know what it was.

Tell the story 'Jesus cleanses the leper' (Lk 5: 12-14).

Middle

(30 minutes)

Tell the students:

One day when Jesus was travelling through some cities, he came upon a man with leprosy. When this man saw Jesus he fell to the ground with his face hidden and begged Jesus, 'Lord if you choose, you can make me clean'. Then Jesus got down on his knees and stretched out his hand and touched the man. He said, 'I do choose. Be made clean'. Straight away, the leprosy left the man and he was cured. Jesus said to him, 'Don't tell anyone about this, but show yourself to the priest and make an offering as Moses commanded'. The man went and did as Jesus told him.

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder why the man thought Jesus would help.
- I wonder why Jesus chose to help.
- I wonder what the man was feeling when his skin disease was healed.

Invite the students to share their own wonderings.

Ask the students:

- What would Jesus want us to do today? (Talk to new students at school, help someone with their work, listen to the teacher ...)

(Take all the answers that the students offer. These are open-ended questions that allow for exploration of many possible answers.)

With the last question in mind, **tell the students:** We are not Jesus, able to heal by touching people, but we can follow what Jesus wants and care for people in need in our community. So how do we care for people in need?

Tell the students: Earlier we talked about how we are cared for by different people, our family and teachers. Just as they care for us, we can care for others. When we care for others, we must think more like Jesus and how he cared for people and who he cared for.

In our story from the New Testament we heard that Jesus cared for a man who would have looked horrible and was not allowed to be a part of the community. He would have been told to live outside the city. Yet Jesus still cared for him. Jesus chose to heal him.

We can be like Jesus when we care for those in need who might look horrible, strange, dirty, sick, disabled. Since we are members of God's family, then we must care for everyone because they are made in the image of God, just like we are.

Let's think about what you can do to help people. Remember that you have to be careful, following what Mum and Dad tell you to do. However, there are things that you can do to help people in need.

Let's make a list of the things that you can do.

Divide the students into groups of four and give each group a large sheet of paper and a felt pen.

Invite the students: Write the people you might care for and why you would care for them. For example, you can greet your neighbours when you see them (being sure you have Mum or Dad's permission). You could help a neighbour in the garden when they are unable to do these things for themselves. You might welcome new students to your class.

Give the students 10 minutes to complete their lists and then invite each group to bring their paper out the front and to tell everyone what they have written.

Comment upon the similarities across the groups and caution against anything that is inappropriate for the age level. Look for the opportunity to stretch the students beyond the 'easy' options. Many of the difficult tasks will need to include parents, but this offers the possibility for greater response to those in need.

Direct the students to open their workbooks at page 75.

Tell the students to select one of the suggestions in the list just discussed and draw how they would help the person in need.

End

(5 minutes)

Gather the students around the prayer focus with their workbooks open at page 75.

Tell the students: Let us look at what we have on the focus. What else could we have put on the focus?

Now let us pray together.

Catechist: Jesus chose to heal the leper.

Students: Help us, Jesus, to care for people in need.

Catechist: Jesus wants us to help people in need.

Students: Help us, Jesus, to care for people in need.

Catechist: Jesus, help us to think about others and their needs so that we can be more like you.

Students: Help us, Jesus, to care for people in need.

Dismiss the students as usual.

Give Praise and Thanks to God

Background for the Catechist

Please take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

The Church gives thanks to God unceasingly, above all in celebrating the Eucharist in which Christ allows her to participate in his own thanksgiving to the Father. For the Christian every event becomes a reason for giving thanks. Praise is that form of prayer which recognises most immediately that God is God. It is a completely disinterested prayer: it sings God's praise for his own sake and gives him glory simply because he is (CCCC 2006, nn. 555–556).

It is the Christian's duty and joy to thank and praise God every day on behalf of themselves and giving voice to the whole of creation. We can pray anywhere and at any time and the Scriptures invite us to do just that. Without prayer, the life of faith slips away and we find ourselves empty.

Student Focus

Students of this age know how to thank their parents, siblings and friends. They also like to be thanked and praised for their achievements. They can easily transfer this knowledge to their relationship with God and be led into prayer of thanks and praise.

Teaching Point

I can thank and praise God every day.

Remembering Point

I can thank and praise God every day.

Beginning

1. Prayer focus: A candle, a cloth, a crucifix.
2. Familiarise yourself with the script opposite.
3. Have a set of puppets or stick figures (refer to Appendix 31a on page 154 for suggestions for making puppets).
4. Workbooks.
5. Sheets of A3 or larger paper with pens to record.
6. Strips of A3 paper, 10cm wide, enough for one per student.
7. Prayer strips: Place these either side of the candle on the prayer focus.

We praise you, God.

We thank you, God.

8. Learn a Prayer of Praise (with actions). See Appendix 31b on page 155).

(15 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Gather the students around your table and dramatise the scenario below using the puppets you have prepared.

Scenario Characters: Father and Bruno

Scene: *At home in the lounge or kitchen.*

Father: Bruno! (no answer)

Bruno, come here, please. (still no answer)

Bruno, come here, I need to talk to you.

Bruno slinks in from behind something.

Bruno: Yes, Dad? Have I done something wrong?

Father: No ... not this time!

Did you water the plants yesterday?

Bruno: Yeeee ...ss. Wasn't I supposed to? I'm sorry if I wasn't.

Father: No! No! Bruno, that was excellent. You did the right thing... and without having to be told.

Thank you very much – I am so proud of you!

Ask the students:

- How many of you have done things for someone and they have thanked you for it?

Yes, most of you have.

- Who felt good when Mum or Dad thanked you in a special way for doing something?

Direct the students to page 76 in their workbooks.

Invite the students: Draw the times you have been praised and thanked and write when you have been praised by your mum or dad.

Tell the students: Saying thank you is very important. It is important to say thank you to each other, to our family and our friends.

It is very important to say thank you to God.

We can say thank you to God every day.

Ask the students:

- What else was good about what 'Dad' said to Bruno?
- What did Dad say besides 'thank you'? (*Dad said that what Bruno did was excellent and that he was so proud of him. Tell this to students if they are unsure.*)

Tell the students: Dad was 'praising' Bruno, telling Bruno how wonderful he was for watering the plants without being asked. We feel good when we give and receive praise. We must also give praise to God. We can also praise God every day.

Middle

(25 minutes)

Tell the students: Let's look at how we can thank and praise God.

Tell the students: Let us **brainstorm** what we can say thank you to God for (*for parents, family, friends, Jesus, our life ...*).

(Accept all these and record them on a sheet of paper or the blackboard or whiteboard.)

Tell the students: Now let us **brainstorm** what we can praise God for (*creation, God, Jesus, gifts, people, animals, family ...*).

(Again, accept all contributions and record them.)

Divide the group into half and distribute a strip of paper to each student.

Direct the students: *Group one:* each student will write one thing they would **thank** God for on their strip of paper. *Group two:* each student will write one thing they would **praise** God for on their strip of paper.

Ask the students: How might we praise and thank God?

Students feed back their answers. Make a list on the blackboard or paper. Underline suggestions that can be done by the students (*saying prayers, going to church, going to Mass ...*). *(Encourage the students to think of things that they can do, practical things for them.)*

Invite the students to open their workbooks at page 77 and write one thing they would thank God for and one thing they would praise God for – taken from the discussion and list created earlier.

Say to the students: Let's look at how we can offer praise and thanks to God in our prayers.

Praying is something we can do every day. We can offer special prayers of thanks and praise at any time of the day or night. We can say prayers, sing our prayers or even dance our prayers. Let's learn a song of thanks and a prayer of praise with actions.

Ask the students to open their workbook at page 77.

Teach the students the *Song of Thanks* (To the tune of *Amazing Grace*)

We thank you, God, for all the things
 You give us every day.
 For family, friends, the gift of life
 We sing and offer thanks.

Teach the students the *Prayer of Praise* (with actions). Practise the actions a few times until the students are familiar with them.

End

(5 minutes)

Gather the students around the prayer focus.

Invite the students to bring their strip of paper from the activity earlier in the lesson and put it underneath or beside the Thanks or Praise strip.

Catechist: Let us praise God for all the wonderful things God is for us as we pray our prayer of praise with actions:

Students: Praise God... etc.

Catechist: As you go home this afternoon, look for all the things you can thank God for. Tonight as you say your prayers, say a special 'thank you' and a 'praise' prayer for something you have seen or done today.

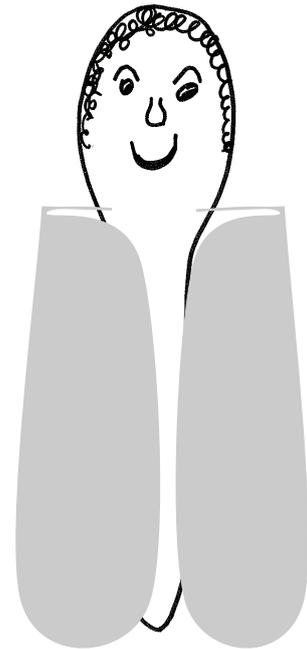
Dismiss the students as usual.

Appendix 31a: Puppets

Use the puppets made for the earlier lesson on page 27 or use Spoon Puppets using Chinese Soup Spoons:

Spoon Puppets

- Get enough wooden or plastic spoons for each character (a pack of 3 would be enough for this lesson).
- Draw faces on the back of the spoon; add hair if you wish.
- Wrap a cloth around the stick to differentiate between parent and child.
- Students could make a set for themselves if you were able to get enough spoons.
- If you use plastic spoons, you will need to use oil-based pens and strong glue.



Appendix 31b: Prayer of Praise with Actions



Praise God



Praise God, our Creator



Praise God, our Father



Praise God, who gives to us



Praise God, who cares for us



Praise God.

Christmas

Background for the Catechist

Please take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

The Church confesses that Jesus Christ is true God and true man, with two natures, a divine nature and a human nature, not confused with each other but united in the Person of the Word. Therefore, in the humanity of Jesus all things – his miracles, his suffering and his death – must be attributed to his divine Person which acts by means of his assumed human nature (CCCC 2006, n.89).

While the whole Church proclaims that in Jesus of Nazareth the Word was made flesh and God became one of us, it also affirms that the child Jesus, born of Mary, is really a human being in every way but sin. Christmas celebrates this great truth. In learning to love and imitate Jesus of Nazareth we are also being formed by the second person of the Trinity. Jesus Christ expressed in his humanity the divine life and love of God. He is the human revelation of God.

Student Focus

The story of the birth of Jesus has enduring appeal for both children and adults. Emphasise that Jesus was a human baby like others and needed the love and attention of his parents just like they do. He would have grown up like them unremarked and unremarkable, except that he was without sin.

Teaching Point

When we celebrate Christmas, we recall that Jesus was fully human.

Remembering Point

When Jesus was born on Christmas day he was just like us.

Beginning

(10 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Gather the students around the prayer focus.

Catechist: Let us make the Sign of the Cross together.

All: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Catechist: Let us pray the prayer we learnt last week with the actions.

All:



Praise God



Praise God, our Creator



Praise God, our Father



Praise God, who gives to us



Praise God, who cares for us



Praise God.

1. Prayer focus: A candle, the Bible, purple cloth and Advent wreath if you have a small one.
2. A Prayer of Praise (with actions). (See Appendix 31b, page 154.)
3. Workbooks.
4. Have four large sheets of greaseproof paper. Each page has the title of one of the scenes from the Christmas story. Have coloured pencils, felt pens, sticky tape or glue. (Optional: coloured paper, cloth, stars, glitter etc.)
5. Have a strip of paper with the Remembering Point on it: When Jesus was born on Christmas day he was just like us.

Invite the students to sit in a circle around the prayer focus. Point to the Advent wreath and ask the students if anyone knows what it represents. *(Explain the reason that we have the four candles and light each one on a different Sunday in Advent. Explain quickly why they are different colours. Remember that these students will hear about Advent in future lessons, so you do not have to go into great detail in this lesson.)*

Tell the students: This wreath reminds us that soon it will be Christmas. It helps us prepare for this special time.

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder what Christmas is about.
- I wonder why we need to prepare for Christmas. *(Let the students respond to these questions, accepting their thoughts and reflections. This will help you appreciate what they know about Christmas and where their emphasis lies.)*

Tell the students: Today we will look at what Christmas is really about and why we celebrate the day.

Middle

(40 minutes)

Tell the story from Luke of Jesus' birth (see Appendix 32 on page 159.)

Ask the students to reflect on the following:

- I wonder how Mary felt when she saw the angel?
- I wonder what Mary thought when the shepherds came to visit?
- I wonder what the shepherds did when they went back to the fields after seeing Jesus, Mary and Joseph?
- What do we know about Jesus from this story? *(Encourage the students to tell you things about Jesus, who his mother is, who his father is, and remind them that Jesus really did exist and was alive like them and was a baby like any other human baby.)*

(These reflections will challenge the student's thinking. Be affirming of their answers; there isn't one answer.)

Send the students back to their seats with their workbooks and invite them to open to page 78 and draw the four scenes from the story. When they have finished, **invite the students** to complete the 'Remembering Point' outline in their book.

Tell the students: Now we are going to make a mural – which is a large picture – of the story of Jesus' birth. Each group will create one scene. The pictures you have just drawn about the story will help you in your group.

Divide the large group into four smaller groups and give each group one of the sheets of greaseproof paper.

Have the students briefly tell you the story. Then give each group one scene. Run through with each group what their scene is about. Ask them to tell you what the scene of the story is about.

Students can then complete their scene, drawing, colouring in and decorating (if you have coloured paper, cloth, stars, glitter etc.)

When the students have completed their scene **invite them** to return to their seat and complete the questions in their workbook on page 80 until everyone has finished their scene.

When everyone has finished, **ask the students:** Who can tell me which scene goes first? Which one goes next? *(Continue like this for the last two. Stick the scenes together.)*

End

(10 minutes)

Ask the students: Which of these scenes of the story of Jesus' birth show us that Jesus was a human being just like us?

Invite the students to decorate the scene to show that it is a special scene for our lesson. Place the strip of paper with the Remembering Point above the scene and attach with sticky tape.

Place the mural around the prayer focus.

Invite the students to sit around the prayer focus with their workbooks open at page 81. Choose one student to retell the story from the mural at the time you designate in the prayer.

Catechist: Let us sit quietly now and think about the story we have heard. It is a special story about Jesus that we celebrate every year at Christmas.

Let us sit quietly. (pause)

Let's make the Sign of the Cross.

All: In the name of the Father ...

Catechist: Christmas is a special time. Lord, help us to remember why we celebrate Christmas.

Students: Jesus was born at Christmas. Lord, be with us.

Catechist: At Christmas we share with our family. Lord, help us to remember to think of others before ourselves.

Students: Jesus' family cared for him. Lord, be with us.

Catechist: At Christmas we often receive gifts. Lord, help us to remember to share gifts with others, simple gifts of help and care and not always things that cost money

Students: Jesus gave us the gift of himself. Lord, be with us.

All: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Dismiss the students as usual.

Appendix 32: The Story of the Birth of Jesus

(Lk 2: 1–20)

A long time ago in Israel, in a town called Nazareth, there lived a young girl named Mary. One day an angel visited Mary to tell her what God wanted her to do.

The angel said, 'Greetings, Mary, you are special to God and the Lord is with you'. Mary thought this was very unusual and wondered what it could mean. Then the angel said, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And now you are going to have a baby, a son, and you will call him Jesus. He will be a great person and will be called Son of the Most High and will reign over the house of Jacob forever and his kingdom will be forever'.

Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?' and the angel said 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the baby will be holy, he will be called Son of God. Your cousin Elizabeth is also having a baby, even though she is old, because nothing is impossible to God'. Then Mary said, 'Here am I, Lord, let it be as you say, I will do as you ask'. Then the angel left her.

After visiting her cousin Elizabeth, Mary got ready to have her own baby. Not long before she was to give birth, a census was called and she and her husband Joseph had to go to Bethlehem to be counted.

They set off and travelled to Bethlehem in Judea because Joseph was part of the family of David. While they were there, the time came for Mary to have her baby. She gave birth to her son, wrapped him in bands of cloth and laid him in the animal feeding trough or manger. They were in the same place as the animals because there was no room for them in the inn.

Now on the hills around Bethlehem there were many shepherds living in the fields looking after their flocks of sheep. An angel of the Lord stood among them and said, 'Don't be afraid, I have good news of great joy for all people. To you is born in Bethlehem a Saviour, the Lord. This is the sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger'. Then suddenly there were angels everywhere singing and praising God saying, 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours'. When the angels had left them the shepherds said to one another, 'Let's go to Bethlehem and see what the angels were talking about'. When they went quickly to Bethlehem they found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this they told them what they had seen and been told by the angels. Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, praising God for all they had heard and seen and been told.

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