

**CATHOLIC
EDUCATION
MELBOURNE**

Seeking to Live the Good News

YEAR
4

CATECHIST BOOK

Seeking to Live the Good News Catechist Book Year 4

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Foreword

Seeking to Live the Good News, with the *Preparing to Receive the Sacrament* series, forms a Years 1–6 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 the students' growing relationship with Christ.

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Denis J. Hart DD
Archbishop of Melbourne

Belonging to God's Family

Background for the Catechist

Take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

The unity of the Mystical Body: the Eucharist makes the Church. Those who receive the Eucharist are united more closely to Christ. Through it Christ unites them to all the faithful in one body – the Church. Communion renews, strengthens, and deepens this incorporation into the Church, already achieved by Baptism (CCC, n. 1396).

Jesus gives us his new commandment, 'Love one another as I have loved you' (Jn 13: 34–35), and he tells us that this love demonstrates that we are his disciples. Our eucharistic celebration, given to us by Jesus, is a community celebration. Here we offer ourselves to become more visibly a community of love and service. We open ourselves to the action of Jesus who is present – in the gathered community, the celebrant, the Word and in the sacrament of the Eucharist – so that he may bring this about. It is through these elements, indicative of Jesus' presence, that we are enabled to belong.

At the Last Supper Jesus prayed, 'Father, may they be one in us, as you are in me, and I am in you' (Jn 17: 2). It is important, then, that we nurture a sense of belonging in all those who participate, particularly those who are being prepared for full eucharistic participation for the first time.

Student Focus

Students at this age are developing the ability to reflect on their actions and to recognise God's love in their lives. They are growing in their awareness of belonging to different groups in the community. We need to allow them opportunities to explore the links between belonging and participation/action in these groups. As members of God's family, in the Catholic community, they need to grow in understanding of Jesus' command to 'love one another'.

Teaching point

We belong to God's family, the Catholic community.

Remembering point

I belong to God's family, the Catholic community.

Beginning

(15 minutes)

Welcome the students and gather them around the prayer focus and introduce yourself.

Invite the students to pray. Make the Sign of the Cross together, and pray the Our Father.

Invite the students to find a partner and to introduce themselves to the other student.

Tell the students: We will now spend some time finding out something about our partner. When I say 'Go', each of you is to take a turn in telling your partner three things about yourself. You each have to remember what the other person has told you. Remember to listen to your partner carefully and don't interrupt them. When you have finished you will each have the opportunity to introduce your partner to the class.

After about three minutes **remind the students** to swap and listen to the other person. When the six minutes are up, **invite the students** of each pair to introduce their partner to the whole group.

Gather the students around you on the floor.

Invite the students to think about the various groups to which they belong, for example family, ethnic group, class, school, parish, sport club. **Have the students** keep one group in their mind.

Ask the students:

- What is special or unique about this group?
- How big is this group?
- Why does this group meet?
- Where does the group meet?
- How did you become part of this group?

Attach an A3 sheet to the blackboard or similar structure so that all the students can see the large sheet with its three-column table (see the Preparation column for an example). **Record** the students' responses on the sheet.

Middle

(30 minutes)

Ask the students:

- How do you show you belong to a group? *(By attending meetings, by joining in the activities of the group ...)*
- What are your responsibilities as a group member? *(To respect the other members, to obey the rules ...)*
- How do you treat other group members? *(Take an interest in other members, celebrate the successes of members ...)*

PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: A cloth, a candle, a Bible, a bowl of water, a small jug, a white cloth or garment. See Appendix 1a on page 5.
2. A3 sheet of paper with three columns. Each column is headed: Group Name, Special Features, Becoming a Member.

GROUP NAME	SPECIAL FEATURES	BECOMING A MEMBER

3. Plan the role-play before the lesson. An outline can be found in Appendix 1c on page 7.
4. Workbooks.

PREPARATION

Tell the students: All of us here belong to a special group, the Catholic Church. From the day of our baptism we became members of this community. For most of us, our parents asked for us to be baptised as very young children, and the community welcomed us into the Church family. Our family and friends gathered to celebrate our becoming a member.

Hand out the workbooks and **direct the students** to the picture on page 2.

Ask the students:

- Name some things you can see in the drawing. (*Baby, priest, parents ...*)
- What are the people doing? (*Having their baby baptised ...*)
- Who has been to a baptism? (*Invite one or two students to answer.*)

Invite the students to describe what happened. (*Record the responses on an A3 sheet so that students have a visual record of what happens. If no one has experienced a baptism you will have to give a brief outline of what happens during a baptism. A simplified outline of the Rite of Baptism is in Appendix 1b, page 6.*)

Invite the students to read together the words of Baptism which are under the picture on page 2 of their workbook.

Tell the students: I will now read a story to you about a baptism. Some of you may have heard it before. However, some of you may not.

Read the story 'Sienna is Baptised' in Appendix 1b, page 6.

Ask the students: What parts of the Rite of Baptism can we identify? (*Help the students to see that the Rite is made up of the welcome, the parents asking for baptism, the profession of faith, the pouring of water, anointing with chrism and lighting the baptismal candle.*)

Tell the students: We are now going to role-play a baptism. We don't have a script for a role-play, but we know what should be happening from our discussion about the picture. Remember, when you take part in a role-play you become that character and act and say things as if you were the person. You might think about how the person would feel and think.

Who would like to be the mother, the father ...?

Select students to take on the roles of parents, godparents, and family members and worshipping community. (You take the role of priest.)

It is important for the students to understand that Baptism is the way we become members of the Catholic faith community. At the end of the role-play, **invite the characters** to talk about what they felt and thought while they were being the particular character. **Invite the other students** to comment about what they saw and what they thought was significant.

Invite the students to return to their seats and turn to page 3 of the workbook. **Read through** the 'I belong to God's family, the Catholic community' activity with the students and have them complete the activity.

End

(10 minutes)

Ask the students:

- What do we do every time we enter a Catholic church?
(We bless ourselves with holy water.)
- Why might we do this? *(To help us to remember our baptism, to remind us that we belong ...)*

(You might have to help the students answer these questions, depending on their experience.)

Remind the students of the discussion about the responsibilities required of members of a group. Recall that there are certain ways of behaving when we are a member of a group, as well as certain responsibilities.

Ask the students: What are some responsibilities we have as members of God's family, the Catholic community? **Invite the students** to record their responses in the 'My Responsibilities' space on page 4 of the workbook.

Invite the students to bring their workbooks and gather round the prayer focus. Light the candle.

All: In the name of the Father ...

Catechist: Let's be still and silent as we remember that we are in God's presence.

Catechist: We gather here as a sign that we belong to God's family. We want to say 'thank you' for inviting us to be part of God's family.

Reader 1: Lord, help us to share with others the joy of belonging.
Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader 2: We thank you for all those people who have shown us many different signs of belonging. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Catechist: Father, we thank you for hearing our prayers. We ask you to fill us with your Spirit, so that we can live as members of your family.

All: Amen.

Take up the workbooks and dismiss the students as usual.

PREPARATION

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

- candle and candle holder, e.g. tea light in a container
- matches/safety gas lighter
- variety of coloured cloths for liturgical seasons
- 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

The prayer focus should be:

- simple and uncluttered
- connected to the lesson
- consistent, i.e. always have one
- varied, i.e. use a variety of items, locations, times.

Appendix 1a – Prayer Focus

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
- 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.



Appendix 1b – Sienna is Baptised

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.

Appendix 1c – Role-play

Before the lesson, the catechist needs to understand and plan the role-play. This is not 'acting out' a baptism. Rather it is entering into the characters and their role in the baptismal rite. Help the students explore the character's feelings and understanding of what is happening. The only props you will need will be a doll (reasonably large), a candle, a bowl, a jug and a cloth or towel.

Baptism, A Role-play

Characters: Mother, father, one or two godparents, priest

Have ready on a table or somewhere visible, a bowl, a jug, an un-lit candle. Invite volunteers for the roles or alternately select the students you believe will enter into the roles most effectively.

This is a simple outline of the Rite of Baptism. Detail of the rite is not essential. The students need to know the basic idea about baptism and that through baptism we become members of the Church. Elements need to include:

- Welcome of parents, godparents and child
- Parents asking for baptism
- Profession of faith
- Pouring of water
- Anointing with Chrism
- Lighting of the baptismal candle.

You might like to read through the Rite of Baptism of One Child. You are not going to use the Rite verbatim, but rather give the students a sense of what elements are in the rite and that through the sacrament of Baptism we become a member of the Church. The following might be useful:

- Have the parents, godparents and priests gathered around the bowl, the jug and the candle.
- Have the priest welcome the parents. (If the catechist takes the role of the priest, then it will be easier to take the lead.)
- Ask the parents what they are asking for this child (decide upon a name for the doll).
- Invite the parents and godparents to profess their faith.
- Pretend to pour the water over the doll's head and say the word: I baptise you (name) in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.
- Then go through the action of anointing with chrism.
- The priest then lights the baptismal candle and hands it to the parents and/or godparents.

I am Unique

Background for the Catechist

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 is capable of self-knowledge, of self-possession and of freely giving himself/herself and entering into communion with other persons. And he [or 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, n. 357).

Every person in the world, every person who has ever existed, is a unique creation because from all eternity God has loved each person into being. God equips everyone through their own special genetic blueprint and through the family and society they are born into, through their temperament and gifts and through their spiritual selves, to receive from and to contribute to the wealth of the human family and to play a role that no one else can.

Student Focus

Children are impressed by the realisation that they are both unique in themselves and uniquely equipped to do things that no one else is able to do. They are as surprised to find that they are as necessary in their particular sphere as others are in theirs.

Teaching Point

We are uniquely gifted.

Remembering Point

I am unique.

PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: A cloth, a candle, a Bible and a flower.
2. A sheet of A3 paper with the names of the four teams across the top. Use the paper in landscape format for more space.
3. *Who Am I?* sheets (see Appendix 2, page 12).
4. Workbooks.

Beginning

(15 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Gather the students around the prayer focus and invite them to make the Sign of the Cross with you.

All: In the name of the Father ...

Catechist: God of all goodness, you created each one of us in your image, yet each one of us is different. Help us to learn more about how we are each unique and specially gifted.

We make this prayer through Christ, our Lord.

All: Amen

Tell the students: Now we are going to play 'Who am I?'. (Refer to the four 'Who am I?' characters in Appendix 2, page 12.)

Divide the group into four. Gather each 'team' together. Give each team a name and put the name on the board or on a large sheet of paper.

Tell the students: Appoint a spokesperson in your group. After each clue is read out, confer with your team and put your hand up **if you think you know who it is**. The spokesperson will say who they think it is. If you get it wrong your team is out of the contest and the other teams get more clues.

Read the clues slowly, pausing for a few seconds to allow students to confer and have a guess. When a team guesses the correct character, score 'one' under their name on the board or sheet. If a team's response is incorrect, move on to the next clue for the other three teams. Continue in this way until all the clues are given. If no one guesses the character's name, then tell the students the answer.

When all four characters have been discovered, **invite the students** to return to their seats.

Middle

(40 minutes)

Ask the students:

- Who enjoyed that game?
- What made the game difficult? *(Not knowing the characters and the details about the characters, some of the characters had things in their life that were the same as for other characters.)*
- How were you able to guess who these characters were? *(By knowing the different things about them.)*

Tell the students: Each person had something different about their life or their ability that made them stand out. If you knew things about their life, or their ability, then you would be able to guess who they were. Each of them is unique, even though they might have things in their life that are the same as for other people. There is always something that makes each person unique, or individual, or different from everyone else.

Each one of us is unique. We are all different from each other. Let us now look at how we are unique and how we are uniquely gifted by God.

Distribute the workbooks and have the students turn to the 'This is Me' activity on page 5.

Invite the students to spend some time thinking about each question in relation to themselves and to answer truthfully in the space provided. (The 'This is Me' activity gives the students the opportunity to reflect on what they are like and what gifts they have. They can also reflect on how these gifts and uniqueness can be of service to others.)

Remind the students that this is a time for them to work on their own and in silence. Allow the students 15 minutes for this activity. While the students are working, walk around the group.

Invite the students to find a partner and share their responses to the 'White Hat' and 'Red Hat' questions. (Allow five minutes for this activity.) When they have completed the task, invite some of the students to share something about the sharing, not the things they have shared. For example: Did they find it easy to share? How did they feel when they shared with the other student?

10

Invite the pair of students to find another pair (making a foursome) and take turns sharing what they have written for the 'Yellow Hat' and 'Green Hat' questions. (Allow 10 minutes for this sharing.)

Gather the students around you at the front of the class.

Ask the students: Who would like to share something from their yellow hat question? (*Take a few answers, thanking the students and acknowledging their strengths.*)

Tell the students: All of you will have things that you can do very well. Some of you will be able to do things other people can do. However, there will be things that you can do that no one else can do in the same way. God made each one of us unique. Each one of us is an individual with special gifts. The way we use these gifts is also unique and important. When we used 'Green Hat' thinking to reflect on our gifts we thought about how we could make God's world a better place. This is very important. We are unique because God made us unique and gifted us in a special way. What we do with these gifts can make a difference.

Open your workbooks at page 6 and the 'I am Unique' activity. In the space provided write one gift from your 'Yellow Hat' answers and how you might use it for good. Then complete the 'Something to Remember' puzzle on page 7.

PREPARATION

PREPARATION

End

(5 minutes)

Invite the students to pray the prayer on page 7 of their workbook.

All: In the name of the Father ...
God, creator of all that is good,
you created me to be unique with special gifts.
Thank you for the gifts that allow me to serve you in
a special way like no one else can.
Help me to remember to always use my unique gifts
to do good.
We make this prayer, through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Take up the workbooks and dismiss the students as usual.

Appendix 2 – Who am I?

The following 'Who Am I?' puzzles are taken from the lives of four saints who were included in *Seeking to Live the Good News, Year 2* and *Year 3*. If you require further information about these saints you can find it in lesson 6 of *Year 2* and lesson 25 of *Year 3*.

A

1. I was born in Brunswick Street, Fitzroy.
2. I had three brothers and three sisters.
3. I started work at the age of 14 for a stationer in Melbourne.
4. I became a governess for my Aunt Margaret and Uncle Alexander's children.
5. While I was there I taught the poor children of the area as well as my aunt's children.
6. I met Father Julian Woods and together we founded a religious order of Sisters.
7. We were known as the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart.
8. Who am I? My name is ... (*St Mary of the Cross*).

12

B

1. I was born in England a long time ago.
2. When I was about 16 years of age I was kidnapped and taken to Ireland to work as a slave.
3. All the time I was in Ireland I worked hard as a slave and prayed to God.
4. I had a dream that I should go back home so I ran away to a sea port to take a boat to England.
5. After a while I became a priest.
6. Later I became a bishop and realised that God wanted me to go back to Ireland to teach the people about Jesus.
7. I went to Ireland and taught everyone about Jesus and how to live a good life.
8. My name is ... (*St Patrick*).

C

1. I was born in France in 1580 and died in 1660.
2. I was from a poor family but managed to have a good education that meant I could become a priest. I was ordained when I was 19 years old.
3. I was captured by pirates and sold as a slave far away from France. After two years I escaped.
4. After I finished my studies in Rome I was given charge of a parish in Paris and later educated the children of a wealthy French family.
5. I also taught poor children while I was working for the French family. Later when I was in Bresse I realised that something needed to be done to educate the poor as well as the rich children.
6. I founded a group to help the poor. As I went around preaching about helping the poor I set up special 'Conference of Charity' groups.
7. I also had a special concern for the prisoners in Paris, who were kept in ships on the river. I spoke with them, cleaned their sores and helped them to keep clean.
8. My name is ... (*St Vincent de Paul*).

D

1. I was born a Hungarian princess many years ago.
2. At the age of 14 I married Prince Louis.
3. I had three children.
4. When I went out of the castle I would often disguise myself as a poor woman to take bread to the poor.
5. I built a hospital below the castle.
6. I would often go down to the hospital to care for the sick, make their beds and give them food.
7. After Prince Louis was killed in the Crusades, I left the castle to care for the poor and sick just as Jesus did.
8. My name is ... (*St Elizabeth of Hungary*).

Lent

Background for the Catechist

Take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

The Gospels speak of a time of solitude for Jesus in the desert immediately after his baptism by John. Driven by the Spirit into the desert, Jesus remains there for forty days without eating; he lives among wild beasts, and angels minister to him (cf. Mk 1: 12–13). At the end of this time Satan tempts him three times, seeking to compromise his filial attitude toward God. Jesus rebuffs these attacks, which recapitulate the temptations of Adam in Paradise and of Israel in the desert, and the devil leaves him ‘until an opportune time’ (Lk 4: 13) (CCC, n. 538).

The forty days of Lent, directly modelled on Jesus’ forty days of fasting and prayer in the desert, invite Christians to spend a similar length of time in more intense prayer and penance in order to become closer to Christ. Jesus’ time in the desert reminds Christians of the humanity of Jesus: how he became hungry, how he was tempted in his weakness and how he struggled to overcome these temptations. He resisted temptation, he trusted God, he overcame evil and remained obedient to God’s will. Lent represents our efforts to get close to Jesus in exactly these ways. We try to put aside some of the props and comforts of life and depend more explicitly on God in order to be able to resist what is wrong and embrace what is right and to be more faithful. Adults take on some forms of the three great disciplines of Lent: fasting, prayer and almsgiving. It is good to help the children think of ways in which they can share in these disciplines of Lent, but especially to emphasise its purpose, which is to grow closer to Jesus, the faithful One.

Student Focus

The students, at this stage, can be guided to see that Lent is a time of special effort to be like Jesus in prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

Teaching Point

During Lent we try to do things that will help us grow closer to Jesus.

Remembering Point

I can work at growing closer to Jesus during Lent.

PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: A purple cloth, a candle, a small dead branch.
2. Workbooks.
3. If possible, a bare branch standing in a pot of sand, e.g.



4. Sticky tape or Blu-Tack, felt pens.
5. Make enough copies of the leaf template for each student and cut them out (see Appendix 3 on page 18). Cut strips of paper that can be made into paper chains (green if possible).
6. Final prayers written on whiteboard or large sheets of paper, e.g.

Lord, just as leaves show that a tree is alive and growing, so we bring our offerings on leaves to illustrate that we want to grow closer to Jesus during Lent.

Lord, we bring our prayers that we are going to say during Lent to help us grow closer to Jesus.

Beginning

(5 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual and gather them round the prayer focus with their workbooks open at page 8.

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

All: In the name of the Father ...

Catechist: The wilderness is a place where very little grows. Yet when Jesus spent time in the wilderness his love for his Father grew stronger. We remember this time during Lent and ask God to help us to grow closer to Jesus.

All: Jesus, our Lord, you spent time in the wilderness to help make you stronger. Please help us to find ways to grow closer to you during Lent. Amen.

All: In the name of the Father ...

Invite the students to sit around you on the mat. Tell them that during Lent adult Christians fast, pray and give in order to grow closer to Jesus. Children can also participate in these disciplines of Lent in their own way.

Tell the students: You can fast (go without something), you can pray, and you can give of yourself to others. Today we're going to explore some ways in which we can grow closer to Jesus.

Middle

(35 minutes)

Tell the students: Fasting is going without food or it can be accepting what we're given.

Ask the students to discuss with the person next to them the following questions:

- What is your favourite food?
- What food do you like the least?

Invite the students to go to their tables and to think about:

- What favourite treats might I sometimes fast from?
- How often might I fast?
- What action can I take on, e.g. eat my least favourite food without grumbling?

Invite them to record their responses in the *My Fasting* section of their workbook on page 8.

Gather the students around you on the mat.

Tell the students: Another Lenten practice is to pray more often. Luke tells us that Jesus encouraged people to pray always. How do you think we can pray always? (*Take their suggestions.*)

Ask the students to discuss with the person next to them:

- What prayers do you know?
- What is your favourite prayer?

Invite the students to go to their tables and to think about:

- When will I pray?
- What will I pray?
- How often will I pray?

Invite them to record their answers in the *My Prayer* section of their workbooks on page 9.

Gather the students around you on the mat.

Tell the students: The third way we can grow closer to Jesus during Lent is to give help to people in need.

Ask the students to discuss with the person next to them the following questions:

- What do people need? (*food, shelter, companionship, trust ...*)
- How can we help people in need?

Invite the students to go to their tables and to think about:

- What can I give? (*smile, greeting, some of their pocket money*)
- How often and how much can I give? (*smile at all members of the family every day, greet every person in their class each day...*)

Invite them to record their answers in the *My Giving* section of their workbooks on page 9.

Take up the workbooks.

Give to each student a strip of paper and a leaf. **Invite them** to write their prayer on the strip of paper. Use sticky tape to join the strips into a prayer chain.

Invite the students to write on the leaf one extra thing they will do during Lent.

PREPARATION

PREPARATION

End*(10 minutes)*

Invite the students to bring the chain and their leaves and gather round the branch standing in the pot.

Tell the students: Jesus taught us that we should make sure that we do not make a big fuss about the extra things we do like fast or pray or give to charity. Therefore we will just put our leaves on the branch without any discussion. This will make it symbolise a tree beginning to grow again.

Invite the students to stick their leaves on the branch as you pray together.

Catechist: Let's pray together the prayers on the whiteboard.

All: In the name of the Father ...

All: Lord, just as leaves show that a tree is alive and growing, so we bring our offerings on leaves to illustrate that we want to grow closer to Jesus during Lent.

The Catechist drapes the prayer chain over the branch.

All: Lord, we bring our prayers that we are going to say during Lent to help us grow closer to Jesus.

All: Glory be to the Father ...

Dismiss the students as usual.

Appendix 3 – Leaf Template

Copy and cut out enough leaves for each student to have one.



God Is Our Father

Background for the Catechist

Take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

Jesus revealed that God is Father in an unheard-of sense: he is Father not only in being Creator; he is eternally Father in relation to his only Son, who is eternally Son only in relation to his Father: 'No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and any one to whom the Son chooses to reveal him' (Mt 11: 27) (CCC, n. 240).

The idea of God as Father has its origins in the Old Testament. The story of creation in Genesis, the first book of the Bible, reveals God as the benevolent creator of all, who walks with the first man and woman with ease and intimacy. The image of God as the father of Israel is also used from time to time in the books of the prophets and the wisdom writings. The understanding of God as Father reaches its fullness in Jesus' own relationship with God, whom he called Father. Jesus also taught his followers to call God 'Father' and invited them to relate to God as children, depending on God as simply and as trustingly as human children depend on their parents. It is only in and through Jesus we can call God our Father.

Student Focus

Students of this age group are quite able to understand the difference between reality and the ideal. Most fathers of the students will provide love and care to the fullest extent of their ability. Most students will understand and experience a loving and caring father, and will easily transfer this experience to a loving and caring God. There will, however, be some students whose father is not around or offers limited love and care. These students may experience fatherhood as an abusive relationship. We do not need to withhold the image of God's love as Father from these students. All fathers fall short of perfect fatherhood, but in God we can experience the fullness of God's love and care.

Teaching Point

Jesus taught us that God is our Father.

Remembering Point

Jesus told us that God is our Father.

Beginning

(15 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Gather the students around the prayer focus and recall the lesson from last week (Lesson 3 on Lent).

Tell the students: Last week we learnt about doing things during Lent to help us grow closer to Jesus.

Ask the students: What did you do during the last week that helped you grow closer to Jesus? *(Take all the answers from the students, encouraging them in their preparation for Easter.)*

Hand out the workbooks.

Invite the students to follow the prayer in their workbook on page 10. Remind them that they can continue to grow closer to Jesus each week, particularly through prayer.

Catechist: As I light the candle, we remember that this is a symbol of Jesus being with us. Let us remember that we can turn to Jesus in prayer, asking that he will lead us to the Father. Let us make the Sign of the Cross together.

All: In the name of the Father ...

Catechist: Let us pray:

All: Jesus, you revealed God, our Father, through the way that you lived, through the things that you said and through the people you healed.

Help us to reflect on your words and actions, so that we might come to know God, our Father, more personally.

We make this prayer through Jesus, our brother.

Amen.

In the name of the Father ...

Invite the students to choose a partner to sit beside.

Distribute the triangle shape, one to each pair. The shape is available in Appendix 4a on page 23.

Ask the students to discuss the question with their partner and then write inside the triangle the four main points from their discussion.

- If you could go to the local supermarket and select the perfect dad, what things would you look for? What would you expect the ideal father would be like?

Remind the students to listen to each other carefully; each person's contribution is valuable.

Allow the students 10 minutes to discuss and write. When the time is up, **invite the students** to gather around you at the front of the class with their triangle sheet.

PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: A coloured cloth, a white candle, the Bible.
2. A copy of the triangle shape, one between two students. Photocopy and cut-out the shape from Appendix 4a, page 23.
3. A sheet of A3 paper or space on a whiteboard to record the attributes of an ideal Father.
4. A copy of the Acrostic Poem sheet for each student (see Appendix 4b on page 24).
5. Workbooks.

PREPARATION

Middle*(25 minutes)***Tell the pairs:** You need to decide which of you will report.**Invite each reporter** to read out their four points. Record on an A3 sheet or the blackboard, all the attributes of an ideal father. (You should end up with a reasonably comprehensive outline of the positive attributes of fatherhood.)**Tell the students:** These things you have said you would look for in an ideal father are really important. Not all dads are able to be all these things, but they generally try hard to be the best dad that they can be.

Jesus wanted us to know God as our Father. God is this ideal father that we have identified. However, let's look at what Jesus tells us about God and how God is our Father.

Invite the students to open their workbooks at page 10 and the 'Jesus calls God, Father' activity. Select a student to read out one of the passages. When they have finished ask the question:

- What does this passage from the Gospel of , tell us about God, our Father? *(Take a variety of answers; there may not be a definite answer. The students should be allowed to offer what they learn about God, our Father, from the text. This is not the time for you to tell them what the text means.)*
- Why do you think Jesus wanted us to know this about God?

Direct the students to write their own answer in their workbook beside the text on page 10.

Work through each text in this way.

Take up the workbooks.

End

(12 minutes)

Tell the students: Today we have been looking at what Jesus has told us about God and how God is our Father. We will now reflect on what we know from the gospels that Jesus wanted us to understand about God and we will write an acrostic poem about God being our Father.

Hand out the Acrostic Poem sheet from the Appendix 4b, page 24, to each student and **invite them** to add their thoughts, using each letter of the word FATHER.

When the students are finished, **invite them** to bring their poem with them and gather around the prayer focus.

Catechist: Today we have explored how God is our Father. Let us now pray by beginning with the Sign of the Cross.

All: In the name of the Father ...

Catechist: We will go around the group and read one of our letters from our poem.

... (name) you might like to start with 'F' and ... (name), you can then follow with the next letter, 'A'.

(allow each student to take a turn with a letter. If you complete the word FATHER, start again.)

Catechist: God, you are our Father and so together we pray in the words Jesus gave us.

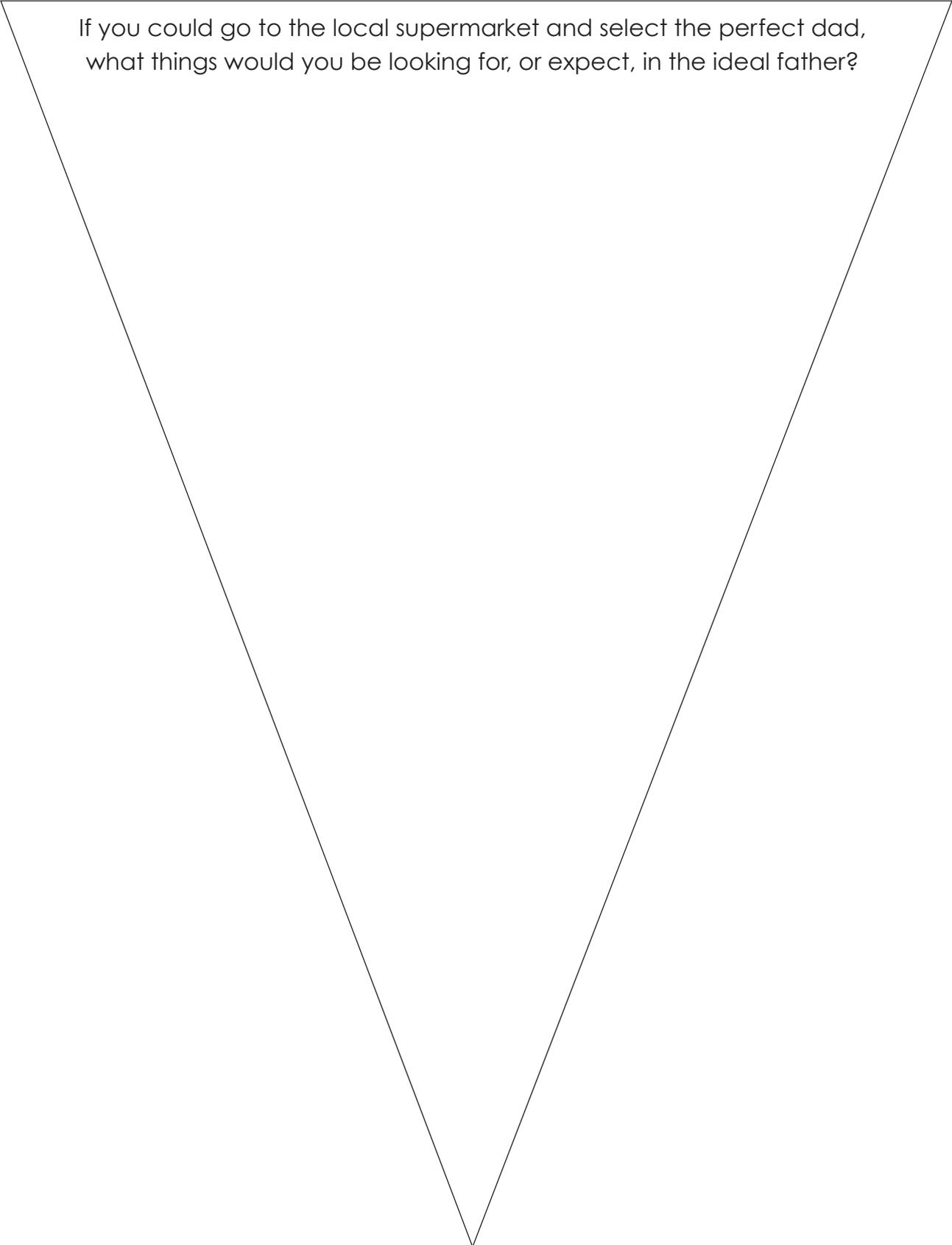
All: Our Father, who art in heaven ...

Dismiss the students as usual.

PREPARATION

Appendix 4a – Triangle Recording Sheet

Photocopy one of these triangles for each pair of students.



If you could go to the local supermarket and select the perfect dad, what things would you be looking for, or expect, in the ideal father?

Appendix 4b – Acrostic Poem

Create an acrostic poem that shows what you now know about God as Father.
Use each letter to begin each line of your poem.

F _____

A _____

T _____

H _____

E _____

R _____

Reconciliation

Background for the Catechist

Take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

Only God forgives sins. Since he is the Son of God, Jesus says of himself, 'The Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins' and exercises this divine power: 'Your sins are forgiven' (Mk 2: 5, 10; Lk 7: 48). Further, by virtue of his divine authority he gives this power to men to exercise in his name (CCC, n. 1441).

Reconciliation with God is ... the purpose and effect of this sacrament ... Indeed the sacrament of Reconciliation with God brings about a true spiritual resurrection, restoration of the dignity and blessings of the life of the children of God, of which the most precious is friendship with God (CCC, n. 1468).

Reconciliation is the sacrament which most explicitly extends God's mercy and forgiveness to those who are aware of falling short in their calling to love God, and to love others as themselves. God's mercy is always on offer. It is the great 'given'. We simply need to recognise our own sins and failings and ask for forgiveness. Of course it is sometimes hard to recognise and acknowledge our faults and failings. Denial and the projection of blame onto others are among the many strategies we employ to avoid acknowledging our own misdeeds. The assurance of the sacrament of Reconciliation is that once we acknowledge our sinfulness, God's mercy is freely given and absolutely unconditional. The sense of restored friendship with God is one of the great blessings of the sacrament, together with peace and a sense of starting afresh.

Student Focus

Students of this age are becoming more aware of how their actions and words can affect others. They are beginning to understand the concept of conscience. Students may recognise more readily the thoughts and feelings of others. Prayers and celebrations of forgiveness and healing are powerful ways of imbuing an appreciation of God's forgiveness.

Teaching Point

In the sacrament of Reconciliation we celebrate and receive God's forgiveness.

Remembering Point

When I go to the sacrament of Reconciliation I receive God's forgiveness.

Beginning

(10 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual and gather around the prayer focus.

Distribute the workbooks and open them at page 12.

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

All: In the name of the Father ...

Catechist: Loving friendships are at the centre of our lives. Sometimes we damage or destroy our friendships by the things we do.

Students: Lord, help us to change.

Catechist: Sometimes we damage or destroy our friendships by the things we say.

Students: Lord, help us to change.

Catechist: Sometimes we damage or destroy our friendships by the things we fail to do.

Students: Lord, help us to change.

Catechist: Sometimes we damage or destroy our friendships by the things we fail to say.

Students: Lord, help us to change.

All: In the name of the Father ...

Ask the students:

- How have you used any of the things on the table to mend a friendship? *(Encourage the students to answer and accept all their answers. They may share some very creative uses for the items – just accept them.)*
- How could you use any of them to build a friendship? *(This is a question without a specific answer, so accept the students' answers, encouraging them to think deeply about the possibilities for building friendships.)*

Tell the students: The friendships or relationships we have with other people are important and need to be nourished. Friendships don't just happen. They take work and commitment. When we give flowers or chocolates to our mum or dad just because we want to recognise how important they are to us, we are building our relationship with them. The same is true in any friendship that we have.

PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: A mobile phone, a wrapped lolly, a tennis ball, the Bible and a candle.
2. Prayer strip:

Lord, help us to change.
3. One set of cards from the Match the Cards activity. The cards are in Appendix 5, on page 29.
4. Workbooks.

PREPARATION

Middle*(30 minutes)***Tell the students:** We are now going to do a matching activity.**Distribute** the Match the Cards Activity, found in Appendix 5 on page 29.**Give each student** one of the cards. (There are three sets of four cards – 12 cards in all. Be sure that you distribute all the cards.)**Tell the students:** We are going to explore some ways of asking for forgiveness and healing, and celebrating forgiveness in three different situations.**Invite one student** with a card headed **The Wrong** to read their card.**Direct the rest** of the group to look at their cards.**Ask the students:** Who thinks they have the matching **Asking Forgiveness Card**? Could you read the apology out loud, please?When you have the correct apology for the scenario, **tell the students:** An apology should always be followed by forgiveness. If you think you have the **Forgiveness Given** card that matches the situation, read it to us.When you have the correct match for the scenario, **tell the students:** Forgiveness given should always be celebrated; so if you think you have the matching **Celebrating** card, please read it to us.**Invite the students** to reflect on the activity with you.**Ask the students:** What do you notice about this situation and the sequence of events (*the wrong, asking forgiveness, forgiveness given and celebrating*)? (*This will stimulate some interesting responses. Encourage the students to consider the seriousness of the wrong, and why it was important to apologise. Also make some connections with the earlier discussion regarding the need to build up friendships.*)**Repeat** the above sequence using the remaining scenarios.**Ask the students:** What does this sequence of actions remind you of? (*Reconciliation – many students may not be able to give you this answer. Do not labour the question. If there is no answer given, tell them and move on.*)**Tell the students:** Reconciliation is very important to us because it helps us restore our relationships. What we have just been doing is going through the process of being reconciled with others.

Jesus wanted us to be reconciled with God and with others. Jesus wanted us to know that God would always welcome us back. When we go to the sacrament of Reconciliation we are trying to restore our relationship with God and with those we have hurt.

When we go to Reconciliation we go through the same sequence as we did with our scenarios. We have missed the mark in some way – done something wrong. We ask for forgiveness from God. We are forgiven – God, through the priest, absolves us of our sins – and we go out, celebrating our renewed friendship with God in prayer.

When we go to the sacrament of Reconciliation we receive God's forgiveness for the wrongs we have committed. The more we seek forgiveness from those we have wronged, the stronger our relationship becomes. Just as our family and friendships are strengthened when we say sorry and ask for forgiveness, so God forgives us in the sacrament of Reconciliation. As a result, our relationship with God grows.

Hand out the workbooks and direct the students to page 12.

Invite the students to complete the statement: Reconciliation is ... in the space provided. Encourage the students to write what being reconciled is like for them and what the sacrament of Reconciliation is like.

Tell the students: We will now read the Something to Remember point out loud. You can find it on page 13 of your workbook.

End

(5 minutes)

Gather the students with their workbooks around the prayer focus.

Catechist: Let us sit for a few moments thinking about all the friendships and relationships we have with people. Think about your family members: brothers, sisters, mum and dad. Think about your friends, at school and at home.

Pause

Think about those times you have done something that has hurt your relationship with one of these people.

Pause

Think about how you made it better, how you restored the relationship.

Pause

So let us pray.

All: In the name of the Father ...

Catechist: God of all goodness, you are always ready to take us back.

Students: Thank you, God, for always forgiving us when we go to the sacrament of Reconciliation.

Catechist: When we return to you to make amends and restore our relationship you take us back.

Students: Thank you, God, for always forgiving us when we go to the sacrament of Reconciliation.

Catechist: When we approach you through the sacrament of Reconciliation we are certain that you will forgive us.

Students: Thank you, God, for always forgiving us when we go to the sacrament of Reconciliation.

All: In the name of the Father ...

Take up the workbooks and dismiss the students as usual.

PREPARATION

Appendix 5 – Match the Cards Activity

Photocopy these cards onto card or firm paper and cut out one set to distribute to the students.

The Wrong

Hey, Rose-Mary, that top is so wrong!
Where did you get it, at the op-shop?

Asking Forgiveness

Rose-Mary, I am so sorry for saying
that about your top. It was completely
out of line. Can you forgive me?

Forgiveness Given

Kay, thank you for saying sorry.
I was feeling hurt. I forgive you.

Celebrating

Let's go and play together
on the equipment.

The Wrong

We would have won if you hadn't
missed that easy catch.

You're such a try hard.

Asking Forgiveness

I am sorry, mate. It was not your fault
we didn't win. It was just hard luck
that you missed that catch.
You are a good player.

Forgiveness Given

It's OK, mate.

Celebrating

So how about you open the batting?

Appendix 5 – Match the Cards Activity (continued)

The Wrong

Pass me the bat, fatso.

Asking Forgiveness

What I said was very hurtful.

I'm sorry. Please, please,
forget that I ever said it.

Forgiveness Given

It did hurt when you said it, but I forgive
you. Just don't say it again.

It was mean.

Celebrating

Would you like to come round to my
place and watch some TV after school?

Jesus' Law of Love

Background for the Catechist

Take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

When someone asks him, 'Which commandment in the Law is the greatest?' Jesus replies: 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the prophets' (Mt 22: 36–40) (CCC, n. 2055).

The law of love is the basis of Jesus' teaching about how we should order our lives. Love of God with all our heart and soul and strength and love of each other are the basis of Christian life. We express the depth of our love for God in the way we respond to those around us. Love and care for each other is the truest test of love of God. Yet this love and care does not depend only on emotion. Loving others, especially those with whom we have no particular ties, is a decision we make – to relate to everyone else with kindness and respect, no matter who they are or what our relationship is to them. Our faith urges us to deal with others as we would have them deal with us. It is a decision based on our commitment to live as Jesus did. Love of neighbour requires that we respect others and ensure that they are treated justly.

Student Focus

Students of this age are developing the ability to reflect on their actions and to recognise God's love in their lives. Hopefully most students will have experienced love and security in a home environment where they have been nurtured and encouraged. This experience will assist students to explore and respond to God's love.

Teaching Point

We are faithful to Jesus' law of love when we show respect, kindness and honesty in our relationships with others.

Remembering Point

I can be faithful to Jesus' law of love in how I treat others.

Beginning

(15 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Gather the students around the prayer focus.

Catechist: Let us pray together:

All: In the name of the Father ...

Catechist: God, our Father, today we're going to learn more about Jesus' law of love. Help us to show respect, kindness and honesty in our relationships with others. We ask this through Jesus, our Lord.

All: Amen.

Invite the students to sit at their tables. **Ask the students:**

- How do you understand love? *(Take all their responses.)*
- How important is love to you?

Give out the workbooks and ask the students to open them at page 14.

Ask a student to read Mt 22: 36–39.

A lawyer asked him a question to test him. 'Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?' He said to him, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: "You shall love your neighbour as yourself".'

Invite the students to participate in a Chalk Talk activity about 'Who is my neighbour?'

Explain very briefly that Chalk Talk is a silent activity. No one may talk at all. Each person can write a response to the question. Anyone may add to the chalk talk as they please. They can add to other people's ideas simply by drawing a connecting line to the comment.

Tell the students: Yes, everything you've written here is correct. The term *neighbour* can also include the poor, the rich, those who are different, those who speak a different language, those we don't like very much.

PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: A cloth, a candle, a magazine photo of a group of friends, the Bible opened at 1 Cor 13: 4–7.
2. Whiteboard or large sheet of paper for Chalk Talk (see Appendix 6 page 34, for a sample).
3. Workbooks.

PREPARATION

Middle*(25 minutes)*

Tell the students: In the New Testament there are some letters from St Paul to the churches he started. In one of them he writes to the people of Corinth, who were having trouble getting on with each other. In this letter he explains what Jesus meant by his law of love that we read about in Matthew's Gospel.

Invite the students to read 1 Cor 13: 4–7 from their workbooks on page 15.

Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Invite the students to think about how they show their love for their neighbour. Invite them to look honestly at how they act towards people and put a tick in the appropriate column on the right of the worksheet on page 15 of their workbook.

Invite the students to answer the two questions on page 16.

End*(10 minutes)*

Tell the students: Now it is time to think about how you are going to put Jesus' law of love into practice.

Direct the students to the Palm Activity on page 17 of the workbook and invite them to record their reflections, understandings and actions in the spaces provided.

Invite the students to bring their workbooks as they gather for prayer.

Catechist: Let us pray,

All: Jesus, Lord of love, send your Spirit of love so that we can love as much as you do.

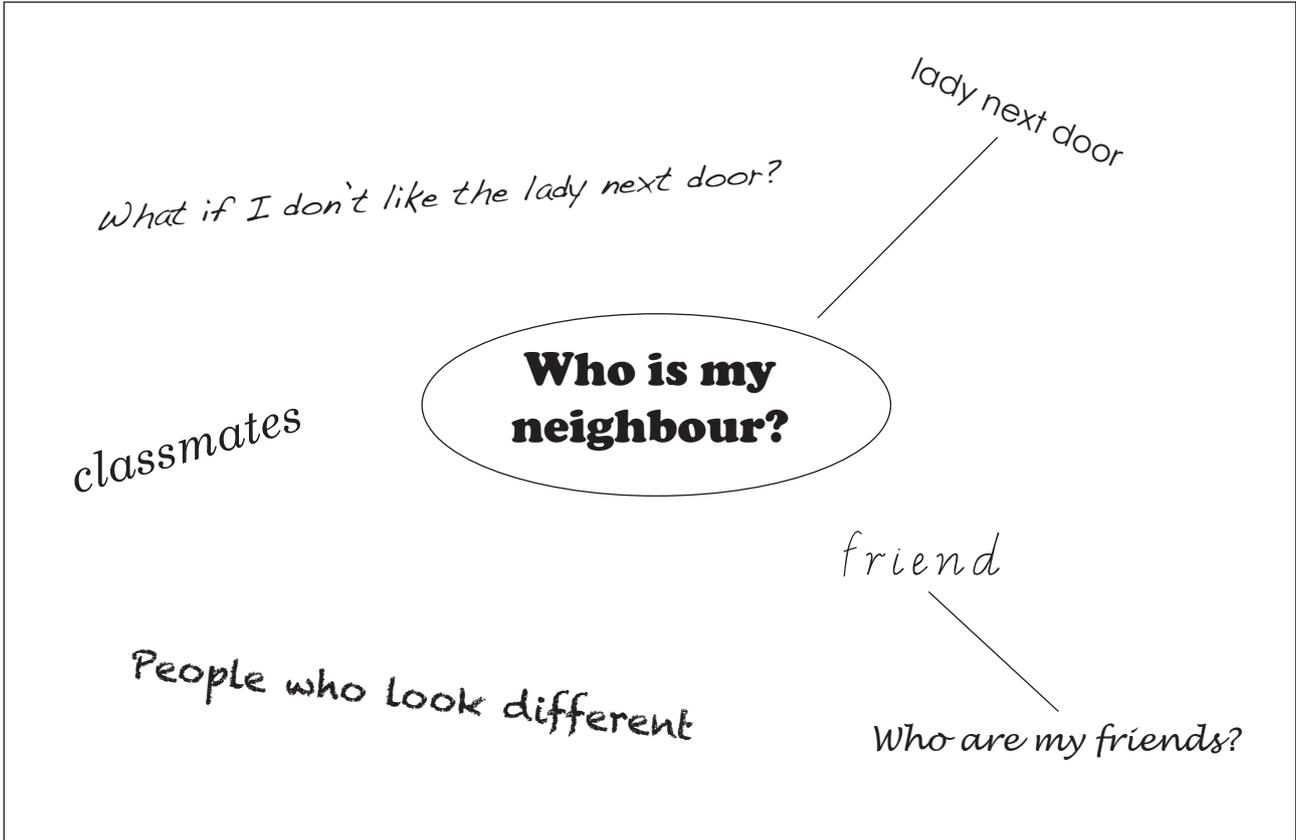
We make this prayer through Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

Take up the workbooks and dismiss the students as usual.

Appendix 6 – Chalk Talk Sample

This is an example of how a 'Chalk Talk' sheet will look. As students write their answers to the question, they or the catechist can write questions about the answers already there.



St Francis Xavier and St Monica

Background for the Catechist

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 recognizes as saints, share in the living tradition of prayer by the example of their lives, the transmission of their writings, and their prayer today. They contemplate God, praise him and constantly care for those whom they have left on earth. When they entered into the joy of their Master, they were put in charge of many things. Their intercession is their most exalted service to God's plan. We can and should ask them to intercede for us and for the whole world (CCC, n. 2683).

Among our brothers and sisters in the Church are those men and women and children who have led lives of great, even heroic, holiness. The Church acknowledges these people and holds them up as witnesses and models of faith. 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 Francis Xavier and St Monica. Francis Xavier's life is an example of a fully active Christian life lived with passion and full of adventure during the sixteenth century. He was a friend and companion of the founder of the Society of Jesus, Ignatius of Loyola, and a great missionary of the faith to Asia. Monica's life in the fourth century was much quieter and more domestic. Her holiness came from her patience and persistence in prayer for her son, Augustine, the brilliant and worldly scholar and teacher who became a Catholic in 385 and was the greatest theologian and teacher of his time.

Student Focus

Students respond to and interact with stories in a myriad of ways. Through this interaction with stories they learn more about themselves, others, the world and God. Stories of saints appeal to students' imagination. Through them they can find models to emulate in their efforts to live like Jesus.

Teaching Point

Saints show us how to live like Jesus did.

Remembering Point

St Francis Xavier and St Monica show me how to live like Jesus.

Beginning

(5 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Gather the students around the prayer focus and distribute the workbooks.

Tell the students: Today we are looking at the lives of two saints, St Monica and St Francis Xavier. Let us first prepare to pray. Open your workbooks at page 18.

All: In the name of the Father ...

Catechist: Jesus, son of God, you guided St Francis Xavier and St Monica to live their lives proclaiming God and working to make God known to those around them. Help us to find in the lives of St Francis and St Monica good examples for living your word.

Students: Jesus, thank you for the lives of St Monica and St Francis Xavier.

Catechist: Help us to become the best people we can be.

Students: Jesus, thank you for the lives of St Monica and St Francis Xavier.

Catechist: Help us to do the right thing by others.

Students: Jesus, thank you for the lives of St Monica and St Francis Xavier.

Catechist: Help us to become strong in our faith and belief in you.

Students: Jesus, thank you for the lives of St Monica and St Francis Xavier.

Catechist: May we follow in the footsteps of St Monica and St Francis Xavier as we seek to live our lives as you would want.

Students: Jesus, thank you for the lives of St Monica and St Francis Xavier.

All: Amen.

PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: A cloth, a candle, a Bible, a picture of St Monica and one of St Francis Xavier, if you have them.
2. A highlighter pen for each student.
3. Workbooks.

PREPARATION

Middle*(30 minutes)*

Direct the students to pages 19 and 20. **Divide the class** in half and **tell one half** to read the story of St Francis Xavier and the other half to read the story of St Monica. **Give each student** a highlighter pen.

Invite the students to read through the story and to highlight how these people lived like Jesus.

Ask the students:

- What did St Francis Xavier do that showed he lived like Jesus?
(Take the answers and ask for clarification as to why the student thinks a particular action shows that he lived like Jesus.)
- What did St Monica do that showed she lived like Jesus?
(Again, take the answers from the students, asking for clarification where necessary.)

Invite the students to read the story of the other saint.

Invite the students who have just read the story of St Francis Xavier to work with another student to write a conversation St Ignatius of Loyola might have had with St Francis regarding what he expected the members of the Society of Jesus to do to spread the Good News of Jesus. **Tell the students** to write their conversation on the scroll on page 21.

Invite the students who have just read the story of St Monica to work with another student to write a dialogue (a conversation) between St Monica and God in the praying hands on page 22 of their workbook.

Invite them to think how St Monica might have prayed for the things she really hoped would happen.

Tell the students: You each need to write your conversation in your workbook. *(Allow 10 to 15 minutes for this activity depending on the ability of the students. You might walk around the groups and assist where necessary.)*

When the students have completed the task, **invite four students** to share their conversation with the whole group. *(Take all their conversations positively, responding and affirming their work. You might add a few very short comments to what they say.)*

Tell the students: Thank you for your wonderful work. You have thought a lot about what St Francis Xavier and St Monica did in their lives to live like Jesus. Let us take some time to think about how what they did helps us live like Jesus.

In your workbook on page 23, I would like you to complete the 'these saints show us how to live like Jesus' activity. Simply complete the sentences: *St Francis shows us how to live like Jesus by ...* and *St Monica shows us how to live like Jesus by ...* in the space provided.

End

(5 minutes)

Invite a selection of students to read out one of their answers to the whole group.

Tell the students: Yes, the lives of these saints show us some ways that we can act in our lives so that we live the way Jesus wants us to live. Let us look at Something to Remember in our workbooks on page 23 and read it together.

Invite the students to bring their workbooks open at page 23 as they gather round the prayer focus.

Invite the students to be still and to think about the lives of St Monica and St Francis Xavier.

Catechist: Let us light our candle and remember that Jesus Christ is present with us.

Let us make the Sign of the Cross together.

All: In the name of the Father ...

Catechist: God, our heavenly Father, you gave us good people like St Monica and St Francis Xavier to show us how to live. Help us to look to the lives of the saints for good role models for living a good life.

Students: God, our Father, the lives of St Monica and St Francis remind us of how you want us to live. Help us to be more like them in our prayer and in our actions. We make our prayer through Jesus, our brother.

All: Amen.

Take up the workbooks and dismiss the students as usual.

PREPARATION

Easter

Background for the Catechist

Take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

Beginning with the Easter Triduum as its source of light, the new age of the resurrection fills the whole liturgical year with its brilliance. Gradually, on either side of this source, the year is transfigured by the liturgy. It really is a 'year of the Lord's favour' (Lk 4: 19). The economy of salvation is at work within the framework of time, but since its fulfilment in the passover of Jesus and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the culmination of history is anticipated 'as a foretaste,' and the kingdom of God enters into our time (CCC, n. 1168).

Therefore Easter is not simply one feast among others, but the 'Feast of feasts', the 'Solemnity of solemnities', just as the Eucharist is the 'Sacrament of sacraments' (the Great Sacrament). ... The mystery of the resurrection, in which Christ crushed death, permeates with its powerful energy our old time, until all is subjected to him (CCC, n. 1169).

Sometimes, the events of the death and resurrection of Jesus are spoken of as the 'turning point of the ages' because of the significance of these events for the life of the world and for each believer. Just as the Christmas feast celebrates the incarnation – the mystery that in Jesus, God is with us – the Easter feast celebrates our redemption in Jesus. The gospels are explicit about Jesus' agonising death on the cross and they all attest to the fact that the disciples, who were shattered and scattered at his death, experienced him soon after, alive among them. But no one witnessed the resurrection, no one can say exactly what happened or how Jesus' physical body was transformed into a 'spiritual body'. Nevertheless, through this event, in which Jesus manifests the life and glory of God, we know with the certainty of faith that death will not conquer and that all creation will be made new.

Student Focus

The students will be familiar with the symbols of Easter. They can be helped to understand the deeper meaning of these symbols. The students, at this stage, can be guided to see the events as part of the whole story of the journey of Jesus, from his birth to his death and resurrection.

Teaching Point

Easter is the most important feast for the Church; it celebrates the central message of our faith.

Remembering Point

Easter is the most important feast for the Church.

Beginning

(10 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Gather the students around the prayer focus and give out the prayer cards. Invite them to get ready to pray.

Catechist: As we prepare to celebrate the feast of feasts I light this candle to remind us that Jesus has risen and that he is indeed the light of the world.

Let us pray together:

All: Easter God, you gave us your son to show us how to live. Be close to us today as we think about the most important message of our faith.

Thank you for the birth of Jesus

Thank you for Jesus' life among us.

Thank you for all Jesus taught us.

Thank you for his example.

Thank you for Jesus' death and resurrection.

In the name of the Father ...

Tell the students: I am going to read to you a story from the Gospel of Luke. It is about two disciples who are travelling on the road from Jerusalem in Israel to a small town called Emmaus.

Read Lk 24: 13–31.

Middle

(35 minutes)

Invite the students to reflect on what was happening in the story.

Ask the students:

- How might the disciples have been foolish?
- Why do you think they did not stay with the other disciples?
- Why do you think they liked this man so much that they asked him to *join them for a meal*.

(Encourage the students to share their reflections and accept all answers. Allow the students to share their insights. There are no right or wrong answers.)

PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: A white cloth, a Bible, a cross, a towel, and a white candle.
2. A copy of the Easter prayer for each student (see Appendix 8a on page 43).
3. A copy of the fridge magnet template for each student – Appendix 8b, page 44.
4. Old fridge magnets or magnetic calendars cut into small pieces (1 cm x 2 cm) to be glued onto the back of the template.
5. Coloured felt pens.
6. Workbooks.

PREPARATION

Tell the students that Jesus explained to the disciples parts of his life that they had not understood.

Ask the students: If Jesus had dinner with you, what part of his life would you like him to explain to you? *(Invite responses from individual students.)*

Tell the students: The Church uses symbols to remind us of the special events in Jesus life. If Jesus was here today, I would ask him which of the Church's symbols is the most important.

Point out the symbols on the prayer focus: the Bible, the cross, the towel and the lit white candle.

Ask the students: What do each of these remind us of? *(Accept all the answers from the students. They may not be able to identify the symbols, which is not a problem – an explanation follows.)*

Tell the students: The Bible is the word of God – his teachings.

The cross reminds us that Jesus was crucified.

The towel reminds us that Jesus washed the disciples' feet at the Last Supper, and told us to care for and serve each other.

The lit candle reminds us that Jesus rose from the dead and is alive to us today. He is the light of the world because he helps us see things more clearly.

Direct the students to turn to page 24 in their workbooks.

Tell the students: These are traditional symbols for the three events of Easter. We have already talked about the towel and the cross. The empty tomb reminds us that Jesus was raised from the dead.

Direct the students to turn to the My Symbols for Easter activity on page 25 in their workbooks. **Invite the students** to create their own symbols for Easter to decorate the T-shirts. They are to create a symbol for Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Sunday and the journey to Emmaus.

Distribute to each student the fridge magnet template available in Appendix 8b page 44. Hand out the glue, coloured pencils and small magnetic strips. As the students complete the My Symbols for Easter activity, **invite them** to colour in the fridge magnet template and glue the magnetic strip onto the back.

End

(5 minutes)

Collect the pencils and glue and any leftover magnetic strips.

Invite the students to bring their workbooks with them as they gather round the prayer focus.

Catechist: Open your workbooks at page 26. Let us prepare to pray. Be still and remember what we have been talking about in our lesson today. Let us praise and thank God in our prayer.

All: The Lord has risen indeed.
The Lord is with us.
Alleluia.

Catechist: Lord God, during the great feast of Easter we remember that Jesus gave us the Eucharist. For this great gift, we give thanks.

All: The Lord has risen indeed.
The Lord is with us.
Alleluia.

Catechist: Lord God, during the great feast of Easter Jesus told us to serve each other. Help us to live out this Easter message each day.

All: The Lord has risen indeed.
The Lord is with us.
Alleluia.

Catechist: Lord God, during the great feast of Easter Jesus was crucified. May we take time to think about the importance of Jesus' actions in our lives.

All: The Lord has risen indeed.
The Lord is with us.
Alleluia.

Catechist: Lord God, during the great feast of Easter the women could not find Jesus. May we keep searching when we have to work hard to find Jesus.

All: The Lord has risen indeed.
The Lord is with us.
Alleluia.

Catechist: Lord God, during the great feast of Easter the disciples met Jesus on the road to Emmaus. Help us to understand the mysteries of Jesus' life, death and resurrection.

All: The Lord has risen indeed.
The Lord is with us.
Alleluia.

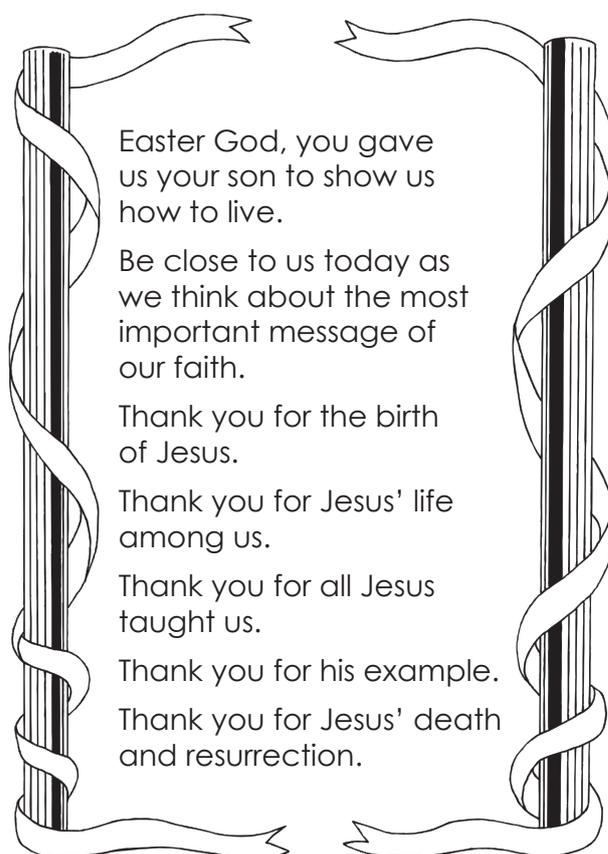
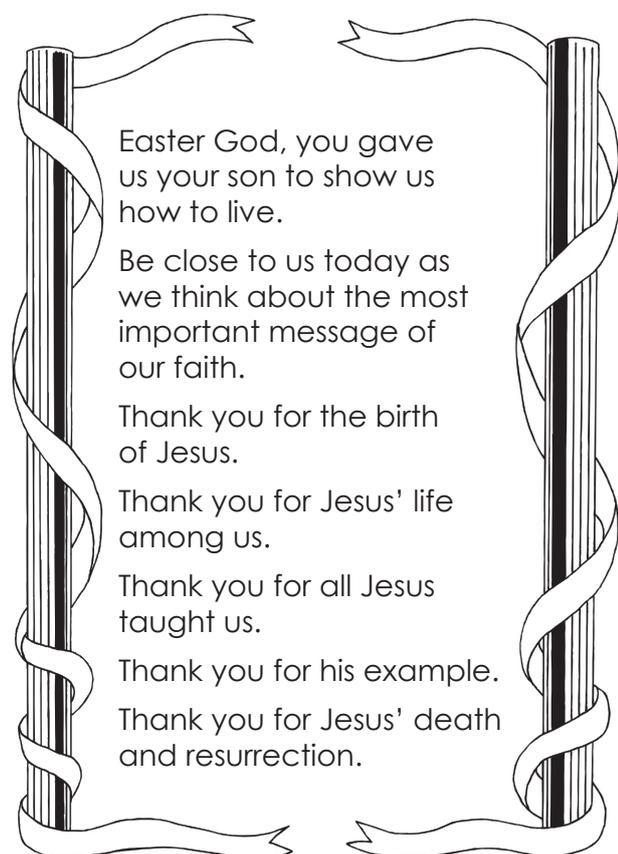
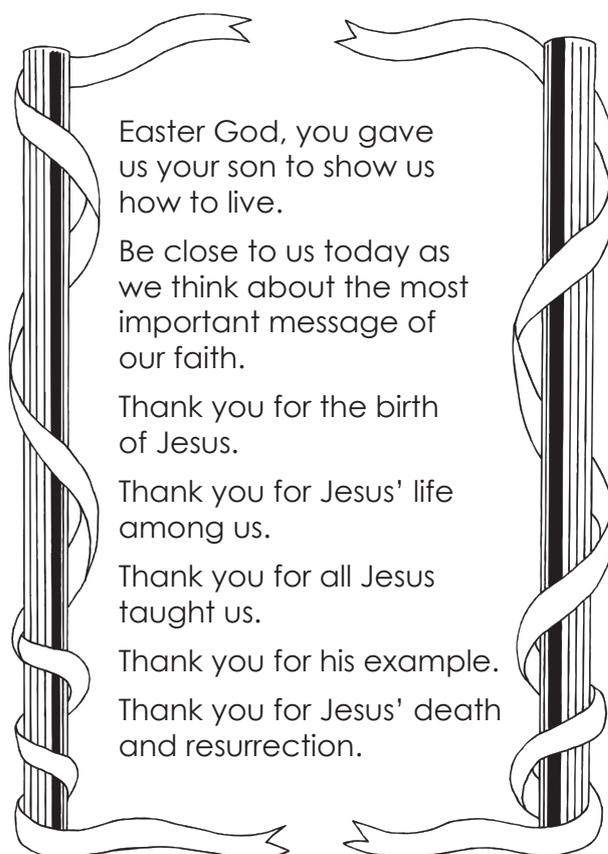
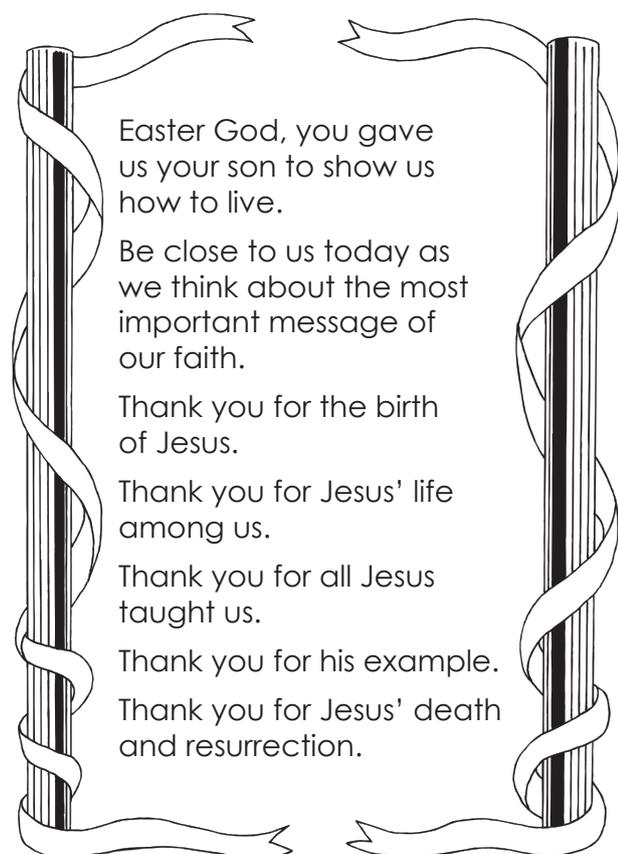
All: Amen.

Take up the workbooks and dismiss the students as usual.

PREPARATION

Appendix 8a – Easter Prayer

Photocopy onto card or firm paper and cut to distribute to the students.



Appendix 8b – Fridge Magnet

Photocopy this page onto firm card and cut out enough for one per student. Invite the students to colour in and cut out the strip and glue a magnet onto the back. (Old magnetic calendars and fridge magnets can be cut up and glued onto the back of the card.)

Easter, the feast of feasts

Jesus' Life, Death and Resurrection

Background for the Catechist

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 (DV, n. 96). 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, n. 124).

The Gospels are the heart of all the Scriptures 'because they are our principal source for the life and teaching of the Incarnate Word, our Saviour' (DV, n. 18) (CCC 1994, n. 125).

The New Testament writings, especially the gospels, are the most vivid way in which human beings are brought into contact with Jesus Christ, the fullness of revelation. In the pages of the gospels we encounter the narrative of Jesus' life, death and resurrection and experience something of the personality of Jesus, his passion and conviction, his compassion and integrity and his values. His teachings are both described and exemplified in the way in which he lived his life. Though the gospel texts are relatively simple in structure and vocabulary, they are inexhaustible in their potential to hold meaning for those who read them with faith. Even more than that, the Church affirms that the gospels, along with the whole of sacred Scripture, are the inspired word of God. When we read or listen to the Scriptures we can be sure that God is speaking to us through those words. We are not reading only to be informed about Jesus in the first century but to allow ourselves to be formed by what God wants to say to us in the present time, through the life, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus.

Student Focus

Students respond to and interact with stories in a myriad of ways. The gospel stories of Jesus' life, death and resurrection are a simple yet powerful means of helping students to an appreciation of Jesus. Through their interaction with these stories they will come to understand what Jesus did during his life and why.

Teaching Point

The stories of the New Testament teach us about the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

Remembering Point

I know about Jesus' life, death and resurrection through the stories in the New Testament.

Beginning

(5 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual and gather them round the prayer focus with their workbooks open at page 27.

Catechist: Let's be still and prepare ourselves for prayer. *(Pause)*

All: In the name of the Father ...

Catechist: Let us pray together the prayer in our workbooks:

All: Risen Jesus, be with us as we begin our class today. Help us to learn about your life, death and resurrection. Amen.

In the name of the Father ...

Tell the students: Today we're going to do our own investigations into some scripture stories of Jesus' life, death and resurrection. We will be working in groups to summarise what the gospel writers told us about how Jesus lived, died and rose from the dead.

Middle

(35 minutes)

Divide the students into four groups. Direct the students to pages 28–29 in the workbook, and assign a text to each group. Distribute a jigsaw sheet, available in Appendix 9 on page 48, to each student, and an envelope (or bag) to each group.

Tell the students: There are three parts to today's activity. **First**, each student is to carefully read the scripture story to find the main six points. When you have identified the points, write or draw each point on one piece of the blank jigsaw. **Second**, in your groups, share your points and work out which pieces of the jigsaw in your group make a 'best of' jigsaw (*selecting the best six points from the whole group*). Make sure that the points are recorded in sequence (in the right order). **Third**, place the 'best of' jigsaw pieces in an envelope (*or bag*) and pass it to the next group. The next group will put the jigsaw together and reflect on what the scripture story is about. I will give you the instructions as we move through the task.

(This is an activity in which learning takes place by students doing the work, not by being taught. There will be both times of silence (reading, recording) and times of conversation (deciding on the points). Throughout the lesson, move around to each group, looking at the work, listening to the discussion, asking questions to extend student thinking and offering help when required.)

Tell the students: Each person is to read the passage from Scripture that is allocated to your group. Spend some time thinking about the main six points the gospel writer makes and then write or draw each point on to one of your jigsaw pieces.

When the students have completed this first task **invite them** to cut out their jigsaw.

Invite each student to share their six points in turn with the other members of the group.

PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: a cloth, a crucifix, a Bible.
2. A copy of the Jigsaw Sheet, available in Appendix 9, page 48, for each student.
3. Scissors.
4. An envelope (or bag) for each student as well as one for each group for their jigsaw pieces.
5. Prayer strip:

We thank you, Lord, for revealing Jesus to us.
6. Workbooks.

PREPARATION

Tell the students: Together decide which six points make the 'best of' jigsaw. All the jigsaw pieces must fit together and there should be at least one piece by each student.

(Move around the groups as they do this, offering help and assistance as necessary.)

Tell the students: Place the 'best of' jigsaw in the envelope (or bag). Then pass your envelope onto the next group. Each group will put the jigsaw together and reflect on the message of the story. *(What do you think this is telling us about Jesus?)*

Repeat this process until each group has worked with all four jigsaws.

End

(10 minutes)

Invite the students to pass the jigsaws back to the groups that made them. Each student retrieves their pieces of the jigsaw and takes them and their workbooks back to their seats.

Tell the students: Assemble your own jigsaw, then turn to page 29 in your workbook and write your response to the 'Complete the sentence' activity: The most important thing I learnt today is ...

Invite the students to put their jigsaws in the envelope (or bag) to take home and show their families.

Gather the students around the prayer focus with their workbooks.

Catechist: Let's be still as we prepare to pray. (pause)

All: In the name of the Father ...

Catechist: Jesus promised his disciples that he would send the Holy Spirit to them to help them to understand, remember and pass on everything that he had taught them. The gospels are one of the results of the Holy Spirit's coming, for they reveal Jesus to us. Let's thank the Lord for revealing Jesus to us.

All: We thank you, Lord, for revealing Jesus to us.

Catechist: We read some stories about Jesus' life, death and resurrection. We've thought about these stories and what they mean. We've learnt lots of things. I invite you to read out loud the ending of the sentence: The most important thing I learnt today is ... After each person has shared their learning we will respond:

All: We thank you, Lord, for revealing Jesus to us.

(Allow time for students to read their learnings. You might ask for a volunteer to start the process. There may be some silent pauses.) When you judge that all who want to have read their learning, close the session by saying:

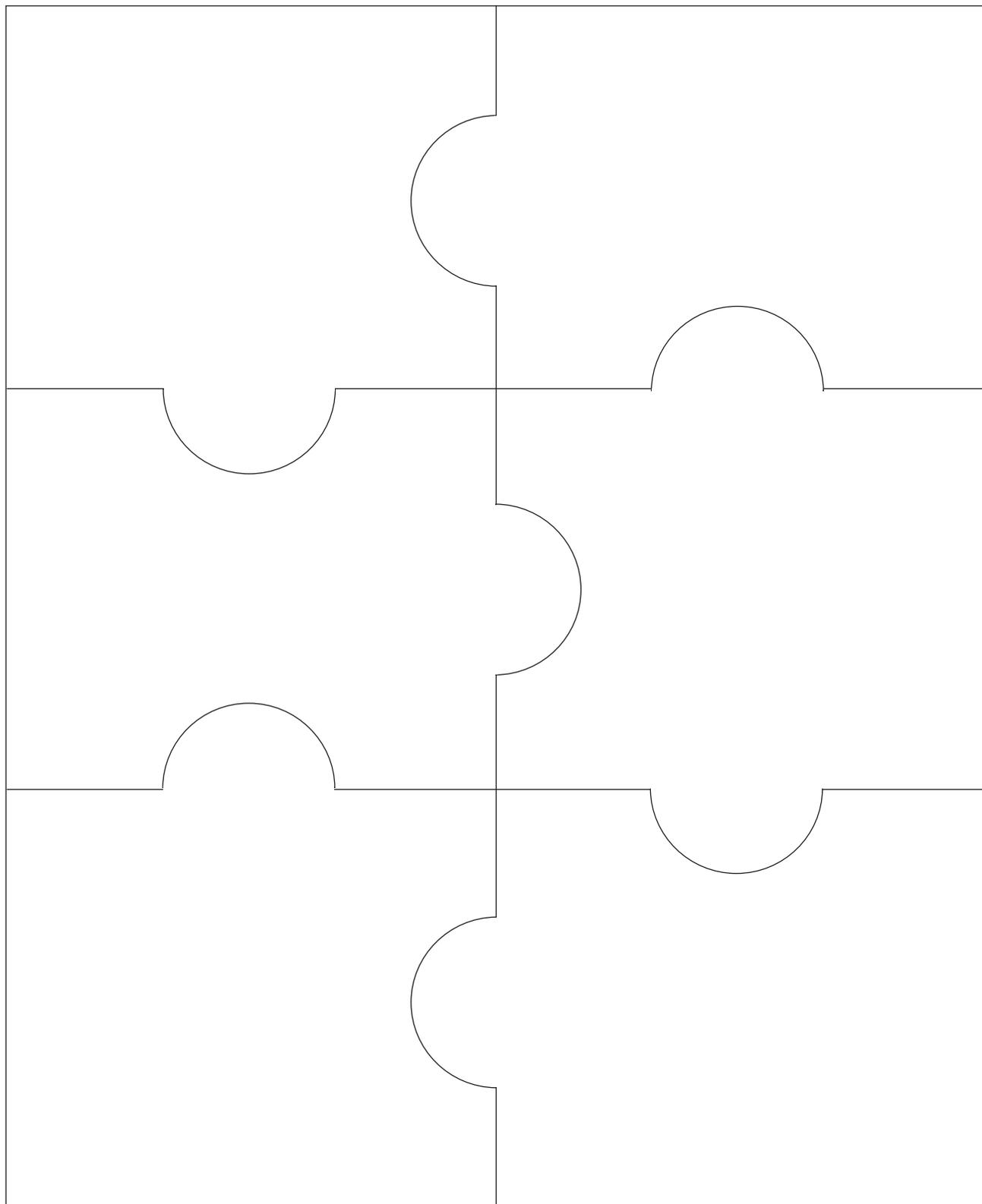
Catechist: Lord, Father of Jesus, and our Father, thank you for revealing Jesus to us.

All: In the name of the Father ...

Take up the workbooks and dismiss the students as usual.

Appendix 9 – Jigsaw Sheet

Photocopy enough for one per student.



LESSON 10

Stories from the Old Testament

Background for the Catechist

Take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

Christians read the Old Testament in the light of Christ crucified and risen. Such typological reading discloses the inexhaustible content of the Old Testament; but it must not make us forget that the Old Testament retains its own intrinsic value as Revelation reaffirmed by our Lord himself. Besides, the New Testament has to be read in the light of the Old. Early Christian catechesis made constant use of the Old Testament. As an old saying put it, the New Testament lies hidden in the Old and the Old Testament is unveiled in the New (CCC 1994, n. 129).

Jesus Christ is the focus of Christianity. Many people wonder why it is that Christians still read, honour and reverence the Old Testament. One good reason surely must be that Jesus himself was a Jew whose whole mission was dedicated to helping people know and love the God revealed in the Scriptures of Israel: the Old Testament. Jesus' own teaching arose from the Jewish tradition in which he was formed. His faith in God was based on the faith of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. His image of God was formed by the stories of God as creator and redeemer as recorded in Genesis and Exodus. His moral teaching was based in the Mosaic law. He praised God in the words of the psalms and prayers of Israel. He celebrated God's goodness, year by year, in the annual round of feasts and festivals of Judaism. He knew the words of the prophets and the wisdom contained in the pages of the writings. He was immersed in the religious tradition expressed in the pages of the Old Testament. His ministry, his message and the events of his passing over from death to life are the fulfilment of God's revelation in the Old Testament. As Jesus said, 'Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfil' (Mt 5: 17).

Student Focus

Students' love of story leads them to be tellers of story, not simply listeners. Catechists can assist students to read a variety of scripture stories critically and reflectively through the use of analytical and personalised questions. Such strategies assist students to engage with the Scriptures, to discern their meaning and to begin to practise the Christian way of life.

Teaching Point

The stories of the Old Testament help us to understand Jesus' life.

Remembering Point

I can better understand Jesus' life when I read stories from the Old Testament.

Beginning

(10 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Gather the students around the prayer focus. Have all the items for the prayer focus, except the cloth, the candle and the Bible, beside you on a tray covered with a cloth.

Tell the students: Today we are going to hear a story from the Old Testament of the Bible.

Bring out each item and talk about how it might be used today. Place the items on the prayer focus. **Invite the students** to pray.

Catechist: Let us pray to God that we will hear the message God wants us to hear, that we will understand more about the life of Jesus and his message through this story.

We make our prayer through Jesus, God's Son.

All: Amen.

Tell the students: The story we will be hearing today includes all of these items that I have put on the prayer focus. God sends his messenger, Elijah, to speak to a widow (a woman whose husband has died) and her son. We learn a lot about the message of Jesus by listening to this story. Two of the books in the Old Testament of the Bible are called Kings, and our story is from the first book of Kings.

Middle

(30 minutes)

Tell the story of The Widow of Zarephath, keeping to the text. A copy is in Appendix 10 on page 53.

Invite two volunteers to come forward and take on the character of Elijah and the widow. These students are **not** to act out the story but simply to think of themselves as the character, so that they might answer the questions they are asked.

Tell the story a second time to allow the volunteers to concentrate on the character they represent.

(After you have asked your first question of a character, flow with the conversation if appropriate. Have the backup questions ready to keep the conversation going. If you are asking a question, remember to ask open questions that do not just have a 'yes' or 'no' answer.)

Ask the students the following questions and allow 15 minutes for the total conversation:

PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: a candle, a stone-coloured cloth, a few sticks, a small glass jug containing oil, a glass of water, some flour in a jar, the Bible.
2. Prepare the story of the Widow of Zarephath before the lesson. Learn it by heart, as this gives the story more power. A copy of the story is in Appendix 10, page 53, with recommended pauses.
3. Workbooks.
4. Coloured pencils or felt pens.
5. Write the concluding prayer on the whiteboard or on a sheet of A3 paper for students to read clearly. E.g.

Loving God, we thank you for the many gifts you give us. May we always trust that you will provide for what we need.

We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

PREPARATION

The widow:

- How were you feeling when you were picking up sticks at the gate?
- What did you think of Elijah when he asked you to give him food?

Elijah:

- How were you feeling when you heard the widow's story?
- What was God wanting you to learn?

Tell the students: We have heard from the widow and from Elijah in this story. We can see on our prayer focus just how little the widow had to offer. Does anyone have any questions to ask the characters? Remember to ask open questions, so that you learn something new from them.

(Allow a few minutes for this involvement by the students.)

Invite the students to return to their places and **hand out** the workbooks.

Direct the students to turn to page 31.

Tell the students: In this activity entitled 'My Response' you will see three boxes. You are invited to respond to the story by writing or drawing something in one or more of the boxes. You might like to create a cartoon or a series of drawings. You might like to write a poem in one of the boxes. You might find that writing some sentences about what you have heard and learnt from this story is the best way to respond. You respond in whatever way you would like on that page.

(Move around the room, asking the students questions about their response, or commenting about the choice of response. Remember there are no right or wrong answers for their responses. Allow the students 10–15 minutes for this activity.)

When the students have finished, **have them close** their workbooks.

Tell the students: The stories we hear in the Old Testament will often help us understand more about what Jesus was doing and the message about God he wanted us to understand.

Ask the students: What stories from Jesus' life sound a little like this story today? *(Take the responses from the students, clarifying as necessary how each student's story links with this story. Students might suggest stories like the Feeding of the 5000. Remember that this is a time for the students to share their understanding. Accept their responses with encouragement.)*

Tell the students: We will often find that the stories in Jesus' life have a connection with the stories of the Old Testament. When we read the Old Testament stories we are frequently helped to understand the message and life of Jesus. That is why we reflect on and think carefully about the stories in the Old Testament.

End

(10 minutes)

Tell the students to open their workbooks to page 31.

Invite the students to write the following in the space entitled 'Something to Remember': I can better understand Jesus' life when I read stories from the Old Testament.

Take up the workbooks and **gather the students** around the prayer focus with the following prayer written on a A3 sheet of paper or on the whiteboard for the students to see clearly.

All: In the name of the Father ...

All: Loving God, we thank you for the many gifts you give us. May we always trust that you will provide for what we need.

We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

Dismiss the students as usual.

PREPARATION

Appendix 10 – The Widow of Zarephath

Learn the story by heart and practise before your lesson. Pause momentarily after each phrase.

Then the word of the Lord came to him, saying,

‘Go now to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and live there; for I have commanded a widow there to feed you.’

So he set out and went to Zarephath. When he came to the gate of the town, a widow was there gathering sticks;

he called to her and said, ‘Bring me a little water in a vessel, so that I may drink.’

As she was going to bring it, he called to her and said, ‘Bring me a morsel of bread in your hand.’

But she said, ‘As the Lord, your God, lives, I have nothing baked, only a handful of meal in a jar, and a little oil in a jug; I am now gathering a couple of sticks, so that I may go home and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it, and die.’

Elijah said to her,

‘Do not be afraid; go and do as you have said;

but first make me a little cake of it and bring it to me, and afterwards make something for yourself and your son.

For thus says the Lord, the God of Israel:

The jar of meal will not be emptied and the jug of oil will not fail until the day that the Lord sends rain on the earth.’

She went and did as Elijah said, so that she as well as he and her household, ate for many days.

The jar of meal was not emptied,

neither did the jug of oil fail,

according to the word of the Lord that he spoke by Elijah.

(1 Kgs 17: 8–15)

Jesus Told Parables

Background for the Catechist

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'. For those who stay 'outside', everything remains enigmatic (Mt 4:11) (CCC 1994, n. 546).

Parables, brief stories which use images and situations familiar to those hearing them, were a popular mode of teaching in the Semitic world in Jesus' time. Jesus made full use of the familiar experiences of his hearers to make them aware of deeper truths and realities. Jesus, as a master teacher, was well aware of the power of a story. Stories are much more enduring than instructions and rules about behaviour. If a situation changes, specific instructions may well become irrelevant, but a good story never loses its power and can be applied in many different contexts. Stories are easy to listen to and easier to retain than abstract ideas but they are also capable of multi-level interpretation. Jesus' parables plant thoughts, ideas and emotions that may later influence the understanding and responses of the people who hear them. They challenge human assumptions and/or misconceptions about God and the Kingdom of God. They invite hearers to make their own connections to the story. The literal meaning of the word 'parable' is to throw alongside. Jesus' parables are stories he throws alongside our own stories so we can understand ourselves and God better.

Student Focus

Students of this age love stories; therefore they relate easily to parables. They can listen to and absorb the meaning of parables. They, like us, make meaning from what they hear. They like to work out what stories mean, to wonder, and to think about them.

Teaching Point

Jesus' parables tell us about God and God's care for us.

Remembering Point

The parables tell me how much God cares for me.

PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: a cloth, a candle and a Bible.
2. Word Find activity, in Appendix 11a, page 57, enlarged to A3 size.
3. Workbooks.

Beginning

(10 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Gather the students around the prayer focus and pray the Our Father together.

Tell the students: Today we will explore some parables that Jesus told.

Have the enlarged Word Find activity displayed for all to see. Invite the students to find the parables in the puzzle. (Answers: Good Samaritan, Lost Coin, Lost Sheep, Prodigal Father, Hidden Treasure, Sower, Mustard Seed. A copy of the answer grid is in Appendix 11b, page 58.)

Ask the students to return to their seats and **distribute** the workbooks.

Middle

(35 minutes)

Tell the students: There is one parable that is not included in the Word Find that we are going to look at more closely. It is called The Parable of the Widow and the Unjust Judge.

Invite one of the students to read the parable from their workbook, page 32.

Then Jesus told them a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart. He said, 'In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor had respect for people. In that city there was a widow who kept coming to him and saying, "Grant me justice against my opponent." For a while he refused; but later he said to himself, "Though I have no fear of God and no respect for anyone, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice, so that she may not wear me out by continually coming."' And the Lord said, 'Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long in helping them? I tell you, he will quickly grant justice to them. And yet, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?' (Lk 18: 1–8)

Tell the students: Think about this parable for a few moments. Think about the questions you could ask about it that would help us understand this parable better. *(Remind the students that the questions should not be just factual questions but questions that make us think more deeply about its meaning.)*

Invite the students to find a partner, decide on two questions, and record them in their workbooks on page 32 in the 'Questions I have about this parable ...' space. *(If there is an odd number of students, the catechist will need to sit with one student and allow the student to formulate their questions.)*

After approximately eight minutes **invite someone** from each pair to ask their questions. If their questions have already been asked then they pass to the next pair. As each question is being asked **invite the other students** to provide the answers. *(These questions and answers may not be ones that you would ask. Take all questions and their answers, as this is where the students will engage in their learning.)*

Tell the students: After listening to all of our answers to these great questions, I now have a question for you. What does this parable tell us about God and God's care for us? I would like you to sit for a few minutes and think about that question.

Invite the students to express their response to this question in one of the following ways:

- Write a story from today that captures this response.
- Create a cartoon strip.
- Write a letter to a friend that shares the experience of hearing this parable and your understanding of what it says about God.

Direct the students to record their responses on the 'God Cares for Us' activity on pages 33–34.

End

(5 minutes)

Invite the students to bring their workbooks open at page 34, and gather round you at the front.

Invite the students to brainstorm what they have learned. Remind the students to be respectful of each other by listening when someone is talking and taking turns to speak. *(The answers the students give are all valuable and will give you an insight into their learning. Accept all answers.)*

Invite a student to read the parable of the widow and the unjust judge on page 32 of their workbook. **Ask them** to prepare for prayer by being still.

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

All: In the name of the Father...

Student: The parable of the widow and the unjust judge .

(Student reads the parable.)

All: God, we know that you will always care for us and be there for us. Help us to remember to pray to you and seek you out in our good times and in our bad times.

We make this prayer through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Collect the workbooks and dismiss the students as usual.

PREPARATION

Appendix 11a – Word Find

Enlarge this word find onto an A3 sheet. The parable names can be found forwards, backwards, horizontally and vertically.

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

Appendix 11b – Word Find Answers

Good Samaritan, Lost Sheep, Lost Coin, Prodigal Father, Hidden Treasure, Mustard Seed, Sower.

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

Miracles Teach Us About Jesus and God

Background for the Catechist

Take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

Jesus accompanies his words with many 'mighty works and wonders and signs', which manifest that the kingdom is present in him and attest that he was the promised Messiah (Acts 2: 22) (CCC 1994, n. 547).

The signs worked by Jesus attest that the Father has sent him. They invite belief in him. To those who turn to him in faith, he grants what they ask. So miracles strengthen faith in the One who does his Father's works; they bear witness that he is the Son of God. But his miracles can also be occasions for 'offence' (Mt 11: 6); they are not intended to satisfy people's curiosity or desire for magic. Despite his evident miracles some people reject Jesus; he is even accused of acting by the power of demons (CCC 1994, n. 548).

Jesus' actions reflected the truth about God and the Kingdom and showed that the Kingdom of God was very near, especially to those who had faith. An outstanding feature of his ministry was his miracles. The signs and wonders that he gave express the hallmarks of the Kingdom: human wholeness and freedom, health, clear sight, the opened ear, the firm limb. Jesus' ministry begins the restoration of the world to God's original design. His healing miracles are motivated by compassion and love and are never mere stunts to impress others. It is learning to understand the meaning of the miracles that is significant for us because it is the meaning, not the miraculous event itself, that relates through faith to our own lives and experience. When we read of Jesus' curing of the leper, for example, we not only marvel at the power of God in Jesus but ask ourselves, 'How are we like this leper? What cuts us off from others and makes us suffer? Are we willing to be like the leper and approach Jesus with faith that he will act in our favour?' The miracle stories not only show us who Christ is, but challenge us to put our faith in him.

Student Focus

Students of this age are beginning to articulate and apply meaning to the actions of others. They readily recognise love and compassion. They are beginning to make conscious choices to be kind, just and compassionate people themselves.

Teaching Point

Jesus' miracles tell us about himself and about God.

Remembering Point

Miracles tell me about Jesus and about God.

Beginning

(12 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual and gather them around the prayer focus.

Catechist: As we gather round the prayer focus let us be still as we get ready to pray.

All: In the name of the Father ...

Catechist: In today's gospel story a sick man asks Jesus to heal him. Let us ask Jesus to help us to understand this story.

All: Lord Jesus, help us to understand this story and to learn to be more like you.

Catechist: Let's pray together the prayer that Jesus gave us.

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

Middle

(30 minutes)

Invite the students to go to their seats. Hand out the workbook and ask students to open their workbooks at page 35. Point out to them the Word Meanings section.

Tell the students: Knowing what these words mean will help us to understand the gospel story.

Read these meanings while the students follow the text in their books.

Invite two students to read the gospel story out loud while the others follow it in their books. Before they start reading **tell the students** that this story comes straight after a report of Jesus going all round Galilee telling everyone his message and curing people.

Ask the students to complete the Who, Where, When, and What activity on page 36 of their workbooks. (The text contains all the information they require except for the 'when', which you provided before they started reading the story.)

Place the students in pairs. **Give each student** one of the two character map sheets (see Appendices 12a and 12b on pages 62 and 63).

Invite the students to work together to imagine how the character felt, what he did, heard, said, thought and saw, and where he went. They record their answers on the sheets.

Gather the students around you on the mat.

- Who do you think are like the leper today? (*Children we won't let play with us, people we don't talk to or mix with ...*)
- How can you be like Jesus towards these people? (*Let everyone play, pick unpopular people for our team, invite the lonely to join us ...*)

PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: A mobile phone, a wrapped lolly, a tennis ball, the Bible and a candle.

2. Prayer strip:

Lord Jesus, help us to understand this story and to learn to be more like you.

3. One set of cards from the Match the Cards activity. The cards are in Appendix 5, on pages 29–30.

4. Workbooks.

PREPARATION

Tell the students: God gave Jesus a special job. It was to show us what God is like. Jesus did this in everything he did and said. So, if we know Jesus, we know God.

Ask the students: What does this story tell us about Jesus? *(Take all the students' answers, e.g. kind, strong, loving, compassionate.)*

Ask the students: If Jesus is like God, what is God like?

Invite the students to return to their tables and to make a list of words that describe what God is like. **Direct the students** to page 37 in their workbook.

Ask the students: Based on your list of words, how would you draw God?

Invite the students to draw God in the space provided in their workbook, page 37.

End

(15 minutes)

Ask some students to share some of the words they used and ask others to share their picture.

Invite the students to complete the sentence.

When they have completed that task, **invite the students** to choose a word from their list on page 37 – a quality they would like God's help in developing so that they become more like God – and write it in the space in the prayer on page 38 of their workbook.

Ask the students to bring their workbooks and to stand round the prayer focus. **Pick six students** to read their prayer.

All: In the name of the Father ...

Catechist: God, our Father, today we have learnt a little bit about what you are like. We ask that you help us to become more like you. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Student 1: God, our Father, help me to be like you.
Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

(continue in this way for the remaining five students)

Catechist: God, our Father, we place all our prayers before you in believing that you will hear them.

All: Amen.

All: In the name of the Father ...

Take up the workbooks and dismiss the students as usual.

Appendix 12a – Leper Character Map

Imagine yourself as the leper. What might he be feeling? What might he see? What might he say? What might he hear? What might he do? Where might he go?

hears

thinks

sees

feels

says



goes

does

Appendix 12b – Jesus Character Map

Imagine yourself as Jesus. What might he be feeling? What might he see? What might he say? What might he hear? What might he do? Where might he go?

hears

thinks

sees

feels

says



goes

does

The Holy Spirit Lives in the Church

Background for the Catechist

Take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

'To this Spirit of Christ, as an invisible principle, is to be ascribed the fact that all the parts of the body are joined one with the other and with their exalted head; for the whole Spirit of Christ is in the head, the whole Spirit is in the body, and the whole Spirit is in each of the members' (MC 1943, n. 57). The Holy Spirit makes the Church 'the temple of the living God' (2 Cor 6:16) (CCC, n. 797).

The Church would not exist apart from the pulse of the Holy Spirit within it, since it is through the Spirit that the presence of Jesus remains alive and active in the community of believers. The Holy Spirit is the source of the Church's life, growth and joy and it is good to reflect on what immense good members of the Church, the Body of Christ, under the inspiration of the Spirit, have brought about in history. The Church is a society of men and women with limitations and tendencies to sin. The Church has always fallen short of (though never abandoned) its ideals and mission. The Holy Spirit has constantly called the Church to repentance and renewal. The presence of the Holy Spirit within the Church is its guarantee of remaining true to its mission despite the weakness of its members.

Student Focus

Story is a powerful means of students' learning about the Spirit. Students tend to interpret ideas literally. The use of sign and symbol will encourage growth in an understanding of the presence of God's Spirit.

Teaching Point

The growth, joy and life of the Church comes from the Holy Spirit.

Remembering Point

The growth, joy and life of the Church comes from the Holy Spirit.

PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: a red or white cloth, a red or white candle, the Bible.
2. Write the words of the song on a large sheet or card for the students to read from, e.g.

The Church's life,
Its growth and joy,
Comes from the Holy Spirit.
The Spirit's presence in our lives
Means we bring Christ to others.
3. Practise the song in the prayer to the tune of *Amazing Grace*. You might need to practise once with the students before you pray.
4. A large poster-size outline of a ring of people. Appendix 13 on page 68 can be enlarged to A3 size for this purpose.
5. Felt pens.
6. Workbooks.

Beginning

(8 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual and gather them around the prayer focus. Distribute the workbooks and **invite the students** to open them at page 39.

Invite the students to make the Sign of the Cross.

Catechist: As we pray today, think about how you allow Jesus to be part of your life. Do you speak to Jesus in prayer? Do you take to heart the message of Jesus that you hear at Mass on Sunday or hear in our lessons? Do you try to live the message of Jesus?

Just spend a few moments thinking about this.

Catechist: Let us sing the following to the tune of *Amazing Grace*.

All: The Church's life,
Its growth and joy, comes from the Holy Spirit.
The Spirit's presence in our lives
Means we bring Christ to others.

Reader: A reading from the Gospel of John (Jn 14: 25–26)

I have said these things to you while I am still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you. The word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Catechist: Our response is: Be in us, Holy Spirit.

All: Be in us, Holy Spirit.

Catechist: That we may be willing to grow:

All: Be in us, Holy Spirit.

Catechist: That we acknowledge that the joys of life are important:

All: Be in us, Holy Spirit.

Catechist: We make this prayer through Christ, our Lord.

All: Amen.

Middle

(30 minutes)

Tell the students: Today we are going to explore how the Holy Spirit lives in the Church and what this might mean for us today.

Invite the students to form into groups of three or allocate the students to a group, whichever suits your particular needs. **Ask the students** to return to their seats in their groups.

Tell the students: In your groups you are to discuss the questions on page 40 of your workbook – What is the Church? Who is the Holy Spirit? – and record your answers in the spaces provided.

Allow the students five to seven minutes for discussion, **then gather** them around a table at the front of the class. Have the students bring their workbooks with them.

Have the large sheet of poster paper on the table, so that it is visible to all students.

Ask the students the following questions:

- Why is there a picture of a ring of people on our poster? *(Accept all answers, don't provide an answer.)*
- What is the Church? *(Accept all answers, don't provide an answer)*
- Who is the Holy Spirit? *(Accept all answers, don't provide an answer)*

Invite selected students to record the answers **outside** the ring of people as they are given.

Read Acts 2: 43–47 to the students.

Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the good will of all people.

Ask the students:

- What does this passage tell us about the Church at the time of the apostles? *(Accept the students' answers. This passage comes soon after the coming of the Holy Spirit to the apostles. It offers us an insight into how the early Church organised itself and responded to the coming of the Holy Spirit into the Church. Assist the students in exploring this understanding.)*
- What message does it offer the Church today? *(This is an open-ended question, which will encourage a variety of answers. Accept and affirm the students' responses.)*

PREPARATION

PREPARATION

Tell the students: The apostles were strengthened by the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Receiving the Holy Spirit enabled them to bring together all those who believed in Jesus and his message. The Holy Spirit remained within this community as each believer was baptised.

The presence of the Holy Spirit in the early Church meant that the community lived together, prayed together and helped one another live the message of Jesus. We too have received the Holy Spirit at baptism and contribute to the Church because we are members of the Church today.

Ask the students: How do we recognise and know that the Holy Spirit is present in our Church community today?

Invite the students to respond to this question by writing their answers inside the ring of people on the poster. Ensure that every student has the opportunity to record their answers on the poster. When students have finished writing, **send students back** to their seats with workbooks open at page 41.

End

(15 minutes)

Tell the students: In the 'Spirit in the Church' activity you are to decide what colour and what shape represent the Spirit in the Church; and what symbol you would give it. Draw or write your responses in the spaces provided.

(Allow 10 minutes for this activity.) When the students have completed the activity, **collect the workbooks** and **ask them:**

- What is one thing you have learned about the Holy Spirit in this lesson?

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

All: In the name of the Father...

Catechist: Let us sing our remembering point to the tune of Amazing Grace.

All: The Church's life, its growth and joy,
Come from the Holy Spirit.
The Spirit's presence in our lives
Means we bring Christ to others.

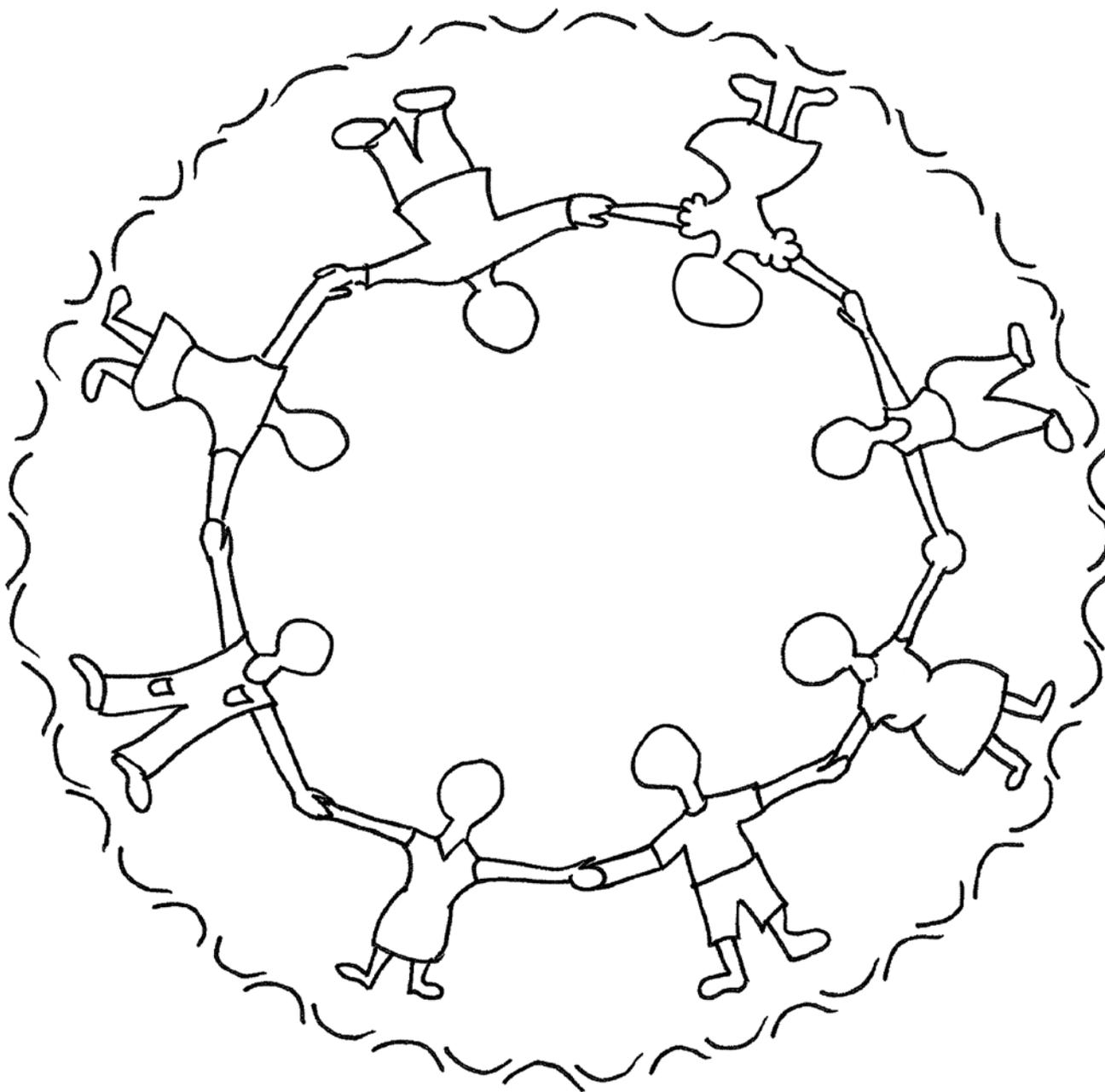
Catechist: Lord, help us to grow in the joy of the Holy Spirit so that we may bring your message to all those we meet. We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

All: Amen.

Dismiss the students as usual.

Appendix 13 – A Ring of People

Enlarge this diagram onto an A3 sheet.



The Holy Spirit and the Sacraments

Background for the Catechist

Take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

In the liturgy the Holy Spirit is teacher of the faith of the People of God and artisan of God's masterpieces, the sacraments of the New Covenant. The desire and work of the Spirit in the heart of the Church is that we may live from the life of the risen Christ. When the Spirit encounters in us the response of faith which he has aroused in us, he brings about genuine cooperation. Through it, the liturgy becomes the common work of the Holy Spirit and the Church (CCC, n. 1091).

The sacraments are the chief means through which the Holy Spirit touches the lives of the members of the Church. At the sacramental celebrations, the Church calls on God to send the Holy Spirit on the participants that, through their experience of the sacraments, they will be drawn more deeply into the life of Christ. At Baptism, the priest prays that the Father and the Son send the Holy Spirit upon the water. At Confirmation, the bishop invites the people to pray that God, our Father, will pour out the Holy Spirit on those to be confirmed. At Mass the priest prays, 'Let your Spirit come upon these gifts to make them holy, so that they may become for us the Body and Blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ'. Through the Scriptures read at sacramental celebrations, the Holy Spirit works in the hearts and minds of all participants to help them live as Christ in their everyday lives.

Student Focus

Students of this age find meaning in various ways, through story, through play, through observation of people and the world. They are keen observers of the things people do and say. Therefore they can readily come to recognise the action of the Holy Spirit in the sacraments.

Teaching Point

We celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit in the sacraments.

Remembering Point

We celebrate the Holy Spirit when we receive the sacraments.

Beginning

(5 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual and gather them round the prayer focus.

Invite the students to pray and build the prayer focus by bringing out each item and asking the students why it might be on the focus.

Catechist: Let us make the Sign of the Cross.

All: In the name of the Father ...

Catechist: Today we will be thinking about the Holy Spirit. In particular, we will look at how we celebrate the Holy Spirit when we receive the sacraments. So let us begin with a prayer to the Holy Spirit.

Catechist: Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful,

Students: And kindle in them the fire of your love.

Catechist: Send forth your spirit and they shall be created,

Students: And you will renew the face of the earth.

Catechist: Lord, by the light of the Holy Spirit you have taught the hearts of your faithful. In the same Spirit, help us to love what is right and be happy in your loving care. We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

All: Amen.

Middle

(30 minutes)

Invite the students to return to their seats. Display the large Holy Spirit and the Sacraments blank grid where the students can see it clearly.

Tell the students: Today we are going to look at how the Holy Spirit is present in the sacraments.

Ask the students: What do you remember about the sacraments?
(Attempt to complete the grid with the students by asking the questions that go across the top of the grid. Fill in as much as possible. There will be gaps where the students are unable to give you an answer. This is fine, leave them blank as you will be looking at the completed grid in the students' workbook on page 43.)

Distribute the workbooks and **tell the students** to turn to the Holy Spirit and the Sacraments grid on page 43. (A copy of the grid is in Appendix 14b, page 74.)

Tell the students: When you look at the grid in front of you, you will see the name of the sacrament, who is involved, how the Holy Spirit is present and what is celebrated. Let's check what we filled out on our grid at the front.

(Spend some time exploring each sacrament.)

PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: A white cloth, a candle, a selection of ribbons – yellow, purple, red, white – a Bible and a cut-out shape of a dove.
2. Photocopy and cut out enough dove shapes for one per student and one for the prayer focus. The dove shape is in Appendix 14c, page 75.
3. Enlarge the Holy Spirit and the Sacraments blank grid in Appendix 14a, page 73, onto an A3 sheet.
4. Responses to the opening and closing prayers on large sheets of paper.
5. Workbooks.

PREPARATION

Ask the students:

- Are there any words that are new to you and you don't know what they mean?

(Answer the students' questions as they ask them.)

Invite the students to find a partner and select a sacrament from the grid. Students are to work on the following activities together and record their answer in both of their books. **Divide the room** in half so that half the students are doing one task and the other half the second task.

Tell the students: You will be completing one of two tasks.

This half of the room *(indicate with your hand)* will complete the following task:

- An alien from another planet has arrived at your church while the celebration of a sacrament is under way. The alien has asked you to explain what is happening. You are to discuss with your partner what you might tell the alien, and then record your joint answer in both of your books in the space provided.

This other half *(again indicate with your hand)* will complete the following task:

- A friend who lives in another city has asked you what the sacrament is all about. You are to write a letter explaining what the sacrament is about, who is involved and in what way the Holy Spirit is involved. You are to comment on how you think the Holy Spirit is important to the celebration of that particular sacrament. You are to discuss this with your partner and to write your letter together. Record it in both your books.

You all have 15 minutes to discuss and write and complete your task. You can use the Holy Spirit and the Sacraments grid on page 43 of your workbook to help you but it is important that you do not just copy the lists of items from the grid.

(Walk among the students and comment, ask questions and assist as necessary.)

After 15 minutes **invite the students** to put their pens down and look and listen to hear the next instruction.

Distribute the dove shapes, one per student.

Tell the students: Now you will work on your own. Choose a different sacrament to the one you have been working on. Write the name of the sacrament on the dove. On the dove draw a symbol for the sacrament that reflects how the gift of the Holy Spirit is celebrated in that sacrament. You will have five minutes for this activity.

After the allocated time, **invite the students** to put their pens and pencils down and face you.

Invite selected students to share their work from the three tasks. Select two pairs to share what they have written to the alien, two pairs to share what they have written to their friend and two students to share their symbol for the celebration of the Holy Spirit in the sacrament.

(Affirm the students in their work and thank them for their participation.)

Collect the workbooks.

End

(5 minutes)

Gather the students around the prayer focus and invite the students to place their doves on the focus as they come out.

Invite the students to be quiet and prepare for prayer.

Catechist: Let us think about all the things we have been doing today. Let us think about how the Holy Spirit is present in each sacrament.

Let us make the Sign of the Cross.

All: In the name of the Father ...

Catechist: Let us say again the prayer to the Holy Spirit.

Catechist: Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful,

Students: And kindle in them the fire of your love.

Catechist: Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created,

Students: And you will renew the face of the earth.

Catechist: Lord, by the light of the Holy Spirit you have taught the hearts of your faithful. In the same Spirit, help us to love what is right and be happy in your loving care. We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

All: Amen.

In the name of the Father ...

Invite the students to collect their doves to take home.

Dismiss the students as usual.

PREPARATION

Appendix 14a – The Holy Spirit and the Sacraments Blank Grid

Enlarge the grid onto an A3 sheet.

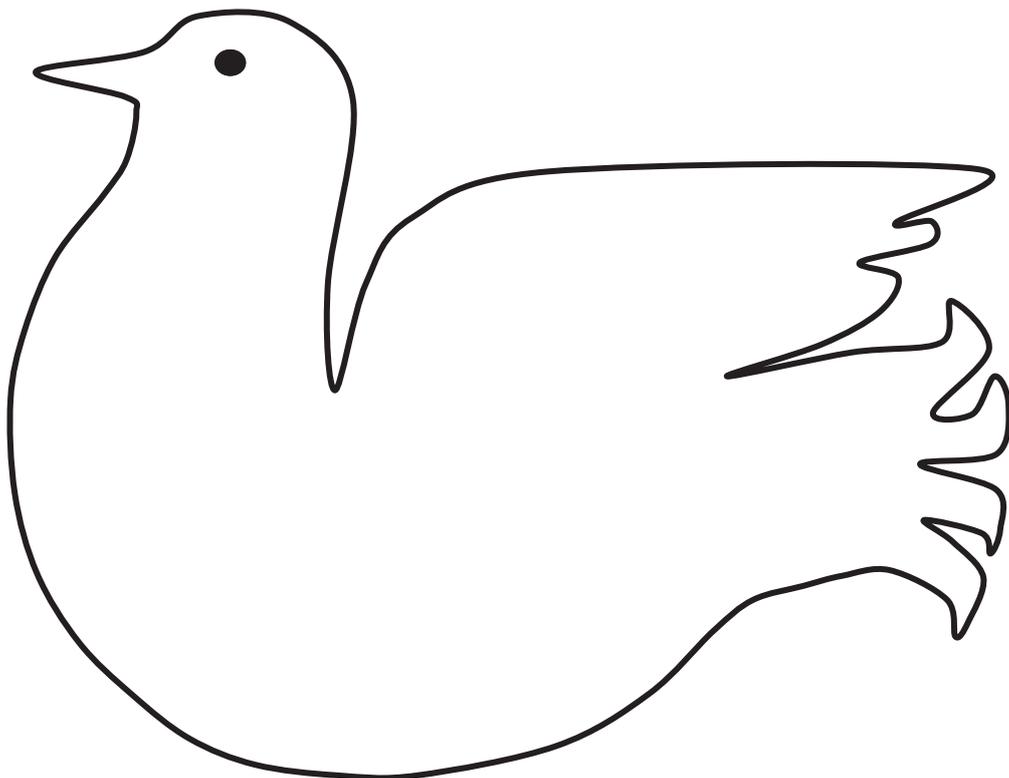
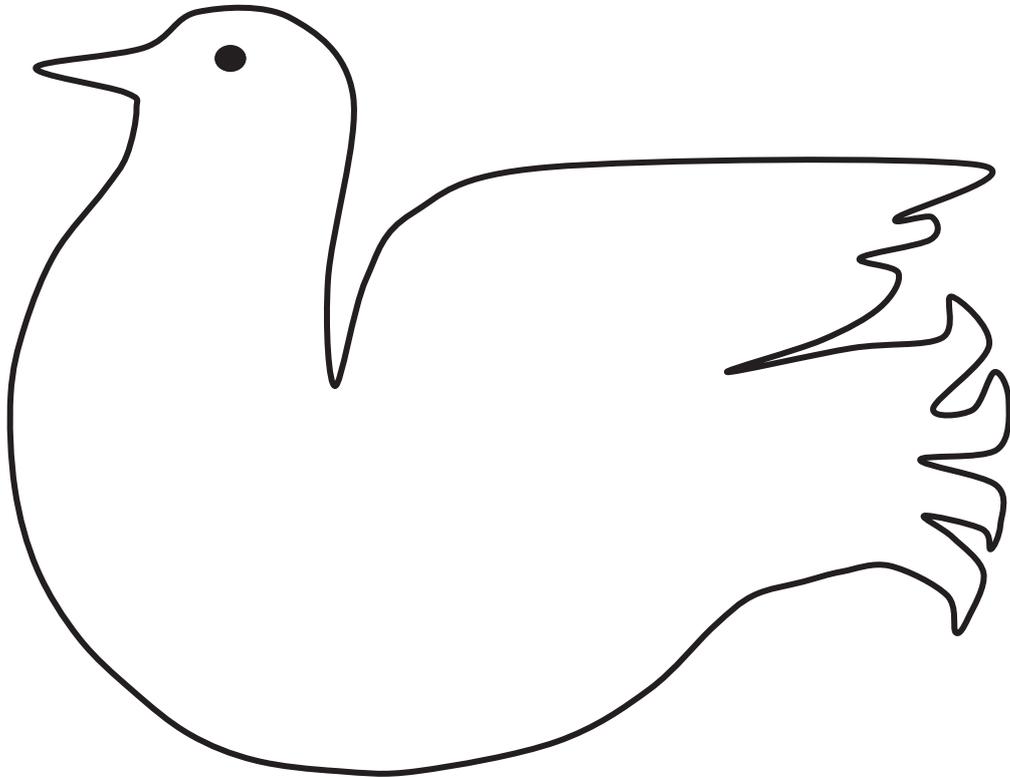
The name of the sacrament	Who is involved in the sacrament?	How is the Holy Spirit present?	What is celebrated?
BAPTISM			
RECONCILIATION			
EUCCHARIST			
CONFIRMATION			
MARRIAGE			
HOLY ORDERS			
ANOINTING OF THE SICK			

Appendix 14b – The Holy Spirit and the Sacraments Grid

The name of the sacrament	Who is involved in the sacrament?	How is the Holy Spirit present?	What is celebrated?
BAPTISM	Person to be baptised Parents Godparents Priest Community (sometimes)	In the pouring of the water In the anointing with oil In the presence of the priest In the belief of the parents and godparents In the welcome by the community ...	Belonging Becoming a follower of Jesus Becoming a member of the parish community (faith community) ...
RECONCILIATION	Priest Penitent Community (sometimes)	In the seeking and receiving of forgiveness In the priest In the penitent In the community (If 2nd Rite) welcoming the person back ...	Forgiveness Returning to God The healing action of the Holy Spirit Being welcomed back into the community ...
EUCCHARIST	Priest Community	When the priest calls upon the Holy Spirit to bless the gifts In the prayers calling on the Holy Spirit In the lives of those present, the community ...	The life, death and resurrection of Jesus The Body and Blood of Jesus The promise of the Holy Spirit The gift of the Holy Spirit ...
CONFIRMATION	Bishop Candidate Community	Through the bishop Through the anointing with chrism Through the words spoken by the bishop ...	The gifts of the Holy Spirit The confirmation of faith The gift of the Spirit given at baptism ...
MARRIAGE	Bride Groom Priest Community	In the love expressed between the man and the woman The acknowledgment of the marriage by the community ...	The love the couple have for each other The couple's love is from God and of the Holy Spirit ...
HOLY ORDERS	Bishop Candidates Priests from the diocese Community	In the bishop In the welcome by fellow priests Through the anointing with oil Through the acceptance within the community ...	The presence of the Holy Spirit in the life of the priest The service offered to the community The commitment to ministry...
ANOINTING OF THE SICK	Priest Person seeking healing Community (if conducted as a community celebration)	In the anointing of the person seeking healing Through the prayers and actions of the priest Through the faith and belief of the person Through the faith and belief of the community ...	The healing of those who are sick (in body, mind or spirit) The healing action of the Holy Spirit in the life of the individual The healing action of the Holy Spirit in the life of the community ...

Appendix 14c – Dove Templates

Photocopy and cut out enough for one dove per student and one for the prayer focus.



Sunday Is the Lord's Day

Background for the Catechist

Take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

This is the day which the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it (Ps 118: 24).

Jesus rose from the dead 'on the first day of the week' (Mt 28: 1; Mk 16: 2; Lk 24: 1; Jn 20: 1). Because it is the 'first day', the day of Christ's Resurrection recalls the first creation. Because it is the 'eighth day' following the Sabbath (Mk 16: 1; Mt 28: 1), it symbolises the new creation ushered in by Christ's Resurrection. For Christians it has become the first of all days, the first of all feasts, the Lord's Day – Sunday: 'We all gather on the day of the sun, for it is the first day ... when God, separating matter from darkness, made the world; and on this same day Jesus Christ our Saviour rose from the dead' (St Justin) (CCC, n. 2174).

The Sunday celebration of the Lord's Day and his Eucharist is at the heart of the Church's life (CCC, n. 2177).

Sunday is the usual day when the people of God gather to celebrate the Eucharist. When we gather on this day we recall that Christ died for us and rose again so that we might be one with the Father.

Student focus

Students at this age may have no memory of the time when Sundays were set aside as a day of rest and worship. For some of them Sundays may mean having time to go to the football or a family outing. Other students may already have a family routine of attending Mass on Sundays.

Teaching point

The People of God gather to celebrate on Sundays, the day of Christ's Resurrection.

Remembering point

Sunday is the day we celebrate Christ's Resurrection.

PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: a cloth, a candle and the Bible.
2. A children's Mass book. If at all possible purchase a class set, or one between two. Four possible Mass book options are in Appendix 15 on page 80.
3. Hymn by Bernadette Farrell, 'Jesus, We Remember You', or a similar Eucharistic hymn. Try to use the hymns that will be used during the First Communion Mass. Provide words of the hymn for the students.
4. CD player.
5. Workbooks.

Beginning

(10 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Gather the students around the prayer focus with their workbooks open at page 46.

All: In the name of the Father ...

Catechist: Jesus, you rose from the dead on the first day of the week.

All: Help us to remember you and be with you each Sunday.

Catechist: Jesus, you promised that you would be with us always and especially in the 'breaking of bread'.

All: Help us to remember that you are with us every day and especially in the Eucharist.

Catechist: Jesus, be with us, teach us about the great love you have for us and bring us closer to you each time we celebrate the Eucharist. We ask this, knowing that you will hear us.

All: Amen.

Invite the students to go to their places. **Tell the students:** In pairs read the Scripture from Mark (under the prayer we've just said). Then you will write your answers to the two questions.

And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. They had been saying to one another, 'Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?' When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back. As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. But he said to them, 'Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him (Mk 16: 2-6).

Invite a student to give you the answers to the questions (*Resurrection or discovering the empty tomb or Jesus rising from the dead ... and the first day of the week*).

Middle

(25 minutes)

Tell the students: After Jesus' resurrection, the followers of Jesus began to call the first day of the week, or Sunday, 'the Lord's day'. On this day they came together in a house for what they called 'the breaking of the bread'. They read aloud from the books of Scripture and prayed to God. They brought home-made bread and wine and placed it on the table. They also brought money and gifts for the poor. The leader of the community led the people in giving thanks and praise to God. They sang together and remembered the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Then, in memory of him, they shared in the Body and Blood of Christ.

Tell the students: Turn to page 47 of your workbook. There you will see a 'mind map' around *Sunday: the day of the Lord*. Take a few moments to think about your own experience of Sunday, what you do, where you go and who you see.

Ask the students: How can we turn Sunday into 'the Lord's day' in our own lives?

Tell the students: With the person beside you, share some of the things we can do to make Sunday a holy day in our week? Think about places, people and how we might spend our time. (*Celebrate Mass with our parish community, spend time praying, resting, reading, enjoying the sunshine and the company of family and friends ...*)

In the spaces at the end of the arrows around the title '*Sunday: the day of the Lord*', write your responses. You might like to use different colours for each suggestion. Remember, each of you is to record your answers in your own workbook.

(Allow 10 minutes for this activity.)

Invite the pairs of students to join with another pair to make a foursome and share their suggestions for making Sunday the day of the Lord.

Invite one person from each foursome to share with the whole group two suggestions they made, ensuring that there is no repetition of ideas.

Tell the students: Thank you for your suggestions. We can make Sunday a very special day and remember that it is the day Jesus was raised from the dead. However, when the Christian community gathers on a Sunday to celebrate the Mass, we are not just remembering a past event: we are celebrating the real presence of the risen Jesus, here among us, today. This is why the Eucharist is so special to the Christian community. Jesus Christ is really with us and we can be happy because he is, and celebrate.

In the space titled *Something to Remember* write: Sunday is the day we celebrate Christ's Resurrection.

PREPARATION

PREPARATION

End*(10 minutes)***Gather the students** around the prayer focus with their workbooks.**Tell the students:** Today for our prayer, we are going to listen to the scripture reading we had earlier and then we will sit silently thinking about what the scripture message might be for each of us. Then we will follow the prayer in your workbook on page 48 and sing the hymn to conclude.**Catechist:** Let us pray by making the Sign of the Cross together.**All:** In the name of the Father ...**Catechist:** And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. They had been saying to one another, 'Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?' When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back. As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. But he said to them, 'Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him (Mk 16: 2–6).**Catechist:** Let us take a few moments of silence to reflect on the reading *(at least 20 seconds of silence)*.**Catechist:** On Sunday, the day of resurrection, we celebrate Jesus' rising from the dead.

Students: Lord, help us to remember to keep this day special.

Catechist: On Sunday, the first day of the week, the Christian community gathers to give thanks.

Students: Lord, may we give thanks on this day for all the good things that happen to us during the week.

Catechist: Sunday is the Lord's day.

Students: Lord, help us to always rejoice in and celebrate the day of Jesus Christ's resurrection.

*Invite the students to pray for any of their own particular needs.***Catechist:** On Sundays we gather to remember the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. With this in mind, let us join together in song:**All sing:** 'Jesus, we remember you' by Bernadette Farrell (or something similar that will be used during the First Communion Mass).

Collect the workbooks and dismiss the students as usual.

Appendix 15 – Children's Mass Books

This list is not in any particular order. The books each have different merits.

Pauline Books & Media UK 2011, *My Mass Book*, Pauline Books & Media UK, Slough, UK.

St Pauls Publications Australia 2011, *My Missal*, St Pauls Publications, Strathfield, NSW, Australia.

John Garratt Publishing 2011, *The Australian Children's Mass Book*, John Garratt Publishing, Mulgrave, Vic., Australia.

Mirraboona Press 2011, *The Southern Cross Mass Book*, Mirraboona Press, St Mary's, SA, Australia.

Jesus Is With Us in the Eucharist

Background for the Catechist

Take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised from the dead ... is present in many ways to his Church (Rom 8: 34; LG 48): in his word, in his Church's prayer ... in the sacraments of which he is the author, in the sacrifice of the Mass, and in the person of the minister. But 'he is present ... most especially in the Eucharistic species' (SC, n. 7).

The documents of Vatican II tell us that Christ is present in the liturgy in four unique ways. These ways are: in the assembled people of God, in the person of the celebrant, in the Word of God, and above all, in the sacrament of the Eucharist (cf. SC, n. 7).

The Church continues to remind us that Christ is present in these different and unique ways whenever we celebrate the Eucharist. The first way in which Christ is present is in the assembled people of God. Christ is present when we gather in his name, just as he promised: 'Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them' (Mt 18: 20). The second way in which Christ is present with us in the liturgy is in the person of the priest, who is called the celebrant. The priest acts in the person of Christ. The third form of Christ's four-fold presence with us in the liturgy is in the proclaimed Word of God. At the beginning of St John's Gospel, we hear that Christ is the Word of God. The fourth and supreme way Christ is present to us in the liturgy is in the sacrament of the Eucharist. By the power of the Holy Spirit, the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ, 'given up for you'. In the breaking of the bread the disciples at Emmaus recognised Jesus present with them.

Student Focus

Students of this age are familiar with the idea of 'being present' to others. They might find the idea of Christ being present in the four ways quite a challenge. These students are capable of deeper theological reflection and understanding.

Teaching Point

In the celebration of the Eucharist, we remember and celebrate Jesus' presence in the assembled people, in the word, in the priest and especially when the bread and wine have been changed into the Body and Blood of Christ.

Remembering Point

In the celebration of the Eucharist Jesus is present in the people, the word, the priest and especially when the bread and wine are changed into the Body and Blood of Christ.

Beginning

(10 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual and begin with the Lord's Prayer.

Ask the students: Who has seen white light filtered through a prism?
(It would be useful to have a prism on hand to show the students what you mean.)

Demonstrate the effect of the prism or show a picture of a prism with light passing through it and separating into rainbow colours. **Ask the students:**

- What happens? (Yes, the white light splits into a variety of colours as it passes through the prism. The colours match those of a rainbow.)

Hand out the workbooks.

Invite the students to open their workbooks at page 49 and complete the drawing of the prism by adding the colours to the rays. Remind the students that the colours are the colours of the rainbow (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet).

Tell the students: Look at the picture of the prism with 'In the Mass'. In the ray entering the prism write the words 'Jesus Christ'.

Tell the students: Just as light passing through a prism splits into a variety of colours so, in the Mass, we see Jesus Christ present in four very particular ways. Jesus is present in the priest, the word, the people and the bread and wine changed into the Body and Blood of Jesus.

Invite the students to write the four ways Christ is present (priest, word, people, Body and Blood of Christ) inside the rays coming out the other side of the prism.

Middle

(20 minutes)

Tell the students: We will now take a closer look at each of these ways that Jesus Christ is present to us in the Eucharist.

Take the sheet of A3 paper divided into four and the set of the pictures of the four presences of Christ.

Gather the students around you on the floor and place the sheet of paper on the floor in the middle. Select one student to be scribe to record the students' answers in the appropriate places.

Show the students each picture in turn, asking them the questions below. (Keep any additional questions open-ended and encourage the students to share what they think. Try not to give them assistance too early.)

PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: a cloth, a candle, a Bible and a prism or picture of a prism.
2. A prism and a torch if possible; if not, a picture of a prism with light passing through.
3. Pictures of a priest, a Bible, the bread and wine and an assembly of the people at Mass (see Appendix 16, page 85).
4. An A3 sheet of paper divided into four sections, e.g.

Jesus is present in the Eucharist	

5. A large marker pen to write on the A3 sheet.
6. Blu-Tack.
7. Workbooks.

PREPARATION

Ask the students:

- How do you think Christ is present in the priest during the Eucharist? *(If they need help, ask questions that help the students see that it is the priest who leads the celebration of Mass, proclaims the gospel, and helps us understand God's word during the homily. He leads the Eucharistic prayer and does what Jesus did at the last supper.)* Have the scribe record the answers and ask a student to stick the picture with Blu-Tack onto the paper in the corner of the appropriate box.
- How is Jesus Christ present in the word of God? *(If the students need help, ask questions that will assist them to see that Jesus Christ is present in the readings from Scripture proclaimed at Mass. Remind the students that the Scripture is often called 'the word of God'. When the Scripture is proclaimed it is God's Spirit who speaks to us through those words.)* Have the scribe record the answers and ask a student to stick the picture in the appropriate place.
- How do you think Jesus Christ is present in the people who attend Mass? *(If they need assistance, ask questions that encourage them to think how Jesus Christ is present in each person and how everyone who comes to Mass comes with the intention of celebrating Jesus. You might like to remind the students that as members of the Church, we are also called 'the People of God'. All baptised Christians are called to be Jesus' continuing presence in the world.)* Have the scribe record the answers and ask a student to stick the picture in the appropriate place.
- How do you think Jesus Christ is present in the bread and wine changed into Jesus' Body and Blood? *(This is a very deep theological question. It is central to our belief about Jesus Christ present in the Eucharist. It will not be unusual if the students find this difficult to comprehend. Go slowly and try not to over-explain. This is deeply spiritual and is central to our understanding. Remember, greater understanding will come with maturity. Help the students to understand that the bread and wine become the **risen Jesus'** Body and Blood, the physical reality of Christ's humanity now in glory. This is a powerful way that Christ is present in the Eucharist.)* Have the scribe record the answers and ask a student to stick the picture in the appropriate place.

Share with the students a summary of the answers that makes clear how Jesus Christ is present in the Eucharist.

Send the students back to their seats and **invite them** to open their workbooks at page 50.

Tell the students: In the box titled 'Something to Remember' write the following: 'In the celebration of the Eucharist Jesus is present in the people, the word, the priest and especially when the bread and wine have been changed into the Body and Blood of Christ'. *(You might like to write this on the board or have it written on a sheet of paper in large, clear writing. Alternately you might be able to dictate the sentence if you know your students are able. Be prepared for some students being unable to spell the words correctly.)*

End

(5 minutes)

Gather the students in a circle around the prayer focus.

Light the candle, reminding the students that the candle is a sign that Christ is present with us when we pray. Place the A3 poster of the four presences of Christ beside the candle on the prayer focus.

Catechist: Let us make the Sign of the Cross.

All: In the name of the Father ...

Catechist: God, our Father, may we always remember that Jesus, your son, died and was raised and that he is present each time we go to Mass.

Students: Glory to you, Lord God.

Catechist: May we always remember that Jesus Christ is present in the priest, the word and the people who gather and when the bread and wine are changed into his Body and Blood during the celebration of the Eucharist.

Students: Glory to you, Lord God.

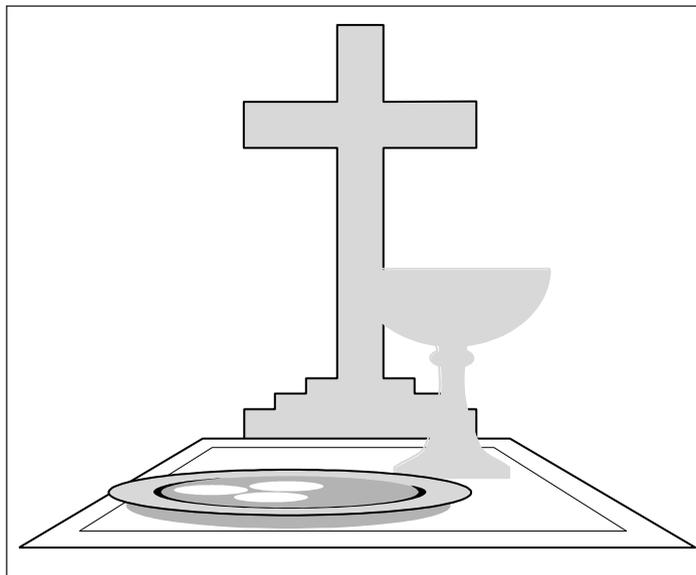
All: We make this prayer through Christ, who is Lord forever and ever. Amen.

Collect the workbooks and dismiss the students as usual.

PREPARATION

Appendix 16 – The Four Presences of Christ in the Eucharist

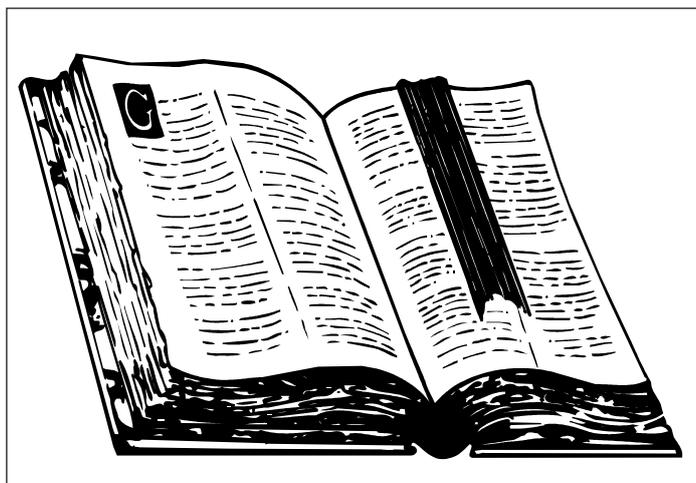
Copy, laminate and cut out the images below and use with the activity in the lesson.



The bread and wine changed into Jesus' Body and Blood



The Priest



The word



The people who gather to celebrate the Eucharist

We Gather to Prepare for Mass

Background for the Catechist

Take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

The liturgy of the Eucharist unfolds according to a fundamental structure which has been preserved throughout the centuries down to our own day. It displays two great parts that form a fundamental unity:

- the gathering, the liturgy of the Word, with readings, homily and general intercessions;
- the liturgy of the Eucharist ...

... together [they] form 'one single act of worship' (SC, n. 56) (CCC, n. 1346).

The Introductory Rites seek to gather all the people who enter the assembly and form them into a community that is the body of Christ. The Penitential Rite is not essentially about our sinfulness as it is our praise of God's mercy. In it we seek God's help, all the while praising God's mercy. The Collect is a prayer that both 'collects' the silent petitions of the assembly and collects us together into a community that is ready to hear the word of God and celebrate the Eucharist.

Student Focus

Students understand the need for a beginning for anything that they undertake. They appreciate the necessity to be prepared before they embark on an important event. Students will have no difficulty understanding the gathering rites of the Eucharistic liturgy, the need to be 'collected' together and prepare to listen to the word of God.

Teaching Point

The Introductory Rites prepare the Catholic community to celebrate the Eucharist.

Remembering Point

The Introductory Rites prepare us to listen to the word of God and celebrate the Eucharist.

PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: a cloth, a candle, a Missal.
2. Sheets of A4 paper.
3. Strips of coloured paper to make a paper chain, e.g.



4. Coloured pencils.
5. A large sheet of paper with the words, 'Lord, have mercy' and 'Christ, have mercy', written clearly.
6. Cards (see Appendix 17 on page 91).
7. Workbooks.

Beginning

(15 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Invite the students to stand around the prayer focus and be silent for a few moments.

All: In the name of the Father ...

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Ask the students: What did we learn last week about when Jesus is present in the Mass? (*Jesus Christ is present in the priest, the word and the assembled people and when the bread and wine are changed into Jesus' Body and Blood.*)

Tell the students: That's very good. Today we will be looking closely at the beginning of the Mass. We will find out how the Mass starts when we gather together as God's people.

Have the students form into groups of four and hand out a sheet of A4 paper to each group.

Tell the groups: List the things that happen when you are having your school assembly and how they happen. (*We gather in the hall, we sing our opening song, the principal speaks ...*)

Invite one person from each group to share their answers, recording them on the whiteboard or a large sheet of paper.

Tell the students: We can see that at our assemblies, no matter what the topic is, no matter which school, there is a pattern. There is always a gathering, a beginning of some sort. The principal or their representative, always speaks and a class group or person does something special, which is followed by a conclusion, of singing or something similar.

Whenever you gather for an assembly you usually know that there is a particular way that things are going to happen. The same thing happens when we gather for Mass – we begin with what is called **The Introductory Rites**. This is the beginning of Mass and it is the time when we prepare to hear the word of God and to celebrate the Eucharist.

Ask the students to return to their desks, keeping together in the same group of four. **Hand out a set of cards** to each group. (The template for the cards is in Appendix 17).

Tell the students: The set of cards has all the Introductory Rites printed on separate cards. In your group you have two minutes to arrange them in the correct order. When this has been done, I'd like you to check against the correct list in your workbooks on page 51 and re-arrange your list if necessary.

1. Entrance Song and Procession
2. Veneration of the Altar
3. Sign of the Cross
4. Greeting
5. Penitential Act
6. Lord, Have Mercy
7. Gloria
8. Collect (Prayer of the day)

Middle

(35 minutes)

Tell the students: Now we are going to look at what happens in each of these moments. We will 'act out' some of what the priest does and how the people act.

Select a student to be the priest, another the reader, and two students to be the altar servers. Have a table with a white cloth set up opposite the door to the room.

Tell the students: When we go to Mass on Sundays the first thing that usually happens is the priest, the altar servers and usually the reader will process (walk) from the back of the church, down the aisle towards the altar at the front. While they are processing, the congregation (all the people gathered for Mass) sing a hymn (song) that gathers people together.

Invite the students to stand. **Direct the students** playing the priest, the reader and the altar servers to go to the door and wait for your signal, and have the remaining students stand facing the table (altar). Remember to leave an aisle between the students so that the procession can occur from the door to the altar. If you know a short, simple gathering song such as Monica Brown's 'Gather Us', have the students sing that with you while the procession occurs.

Tell the students: When the priest gets to the altar – for us, this table – he does three things; he venerates the altar, which means he shows how important the altar is to us, by making a low bow – like so (show how to bow low) – and then he kisses the altar. Finally he makes the Sign of the Cross. All of these actions are ways of showing reverence (which is another word for showing respect and honour) to the altar, which is a sign of Christ himself.

When the priest finishes this veneration, he greets the people by saying, 'The Lord be with you' and the people respond, 'And with your spirit.'

Invite the student actors to show us how this is done: the veneration, the kissing of the altar, the Sign of the Cross, then turning and welcoming the people and the people responding.

Gather the students around you on the floor. Hold up the card with, 'Penitential Act'.

Ask the students: Who can tell me what the first word means? (*To seek forgiveness, to seek to be reconciled, to ask God for forgiveness and mercy.*)

PREPARATION

PREPARATION

Tell the students: Whenever we gather for Mass, we need to be at peace with God and one another if we are going to celebrate the Eucharist well. It is at this part of the Mass that we ask God for mercy and acknowledge the mercy and forgiveness of God.

One way we can understand this is to think of a chain that has been broken. When a link in a chain is damaged it breaks the chain and needs to be repaired. When we think of God's mercy and forgiveness it is similar to us mending the link in the chain. We are brought back together through God's mercy.

I am going to give each of you a strip of coloured paper. On it I would like you to write the words that are used at this part of the Mass: 'Lord, have mercy, Christ, have mercy, Lord, have mercy. *(Have the words written on the whiteboard or on a large sheet of paper and displayed where the students can see them.)*

Tell the students: When you have written on the strips of paper, bring them to me so that I can staple and loop each of them into a long chain. (See the picture in the preparation section.)

Now we will place the chain at the foot of the altar or table. These words are the words that we, the congregation, pray, knowing that we are loved by God. We ask for God's mercy so that we might be prepared to hear God's word in the Scriptures and share in the Body and Blood of Christ later in the Mass. The priest says the phrase first, then the congregation repeats the phrase.

Invite the students to open their workbooks at page 52 at the section with the 'Gloria' prayer.

Tell the students: The 'Gloria' is a special prayer of praise that is often sung at Mass. When we gather for Mass we praise and thank God for all the things God has provided, but especially for giving us Jesus, his son.

I now invite you to select three different coloured pencils. With one colour underline all the words of 'praise' that you can find. With the next colour circle the different titles given for God and Jesus, and with the final colour underline where the three Persons of the holy Trinity (Father, Son and Spirit) are written.

Select a number of students to share with the whole group which were the words for praise, which were the titles for God and Jesus and where is written the three Persons of the holy Trinity. Affirm the students' answers.

Tell the students: Now I would like you to complete the sentence in the 'Something to Remember' space in your workbook on page 53: The Introductory Rites 'prepare us to listen to the word of God and celebrate the Eucharist'.

End

(5 minutes)

Tell the students: We have looked at seven of the eight Introductory Rites of the Mass. The eighth rite is a special prayer of the day. The prayer is called the 'Collect' because it prays for things related specifically to the day's readings and celebration. The Sunday Mass might be celebrating a particular feast day such as Easter Sunday, and the 'Collect' prays particularly about Jesus rising from the dead. This prayer helps us prepare for what we are celebrating.

Recall with the students the eight 'moments' of the Introductory Rites of the Mass and **explain to them** that they have briefly enacted each of them.

Invite the students to sit in a circle around the prayer focus. Light the candle (if it isn't already lit).

All: In the name of the Father ...

Catechist: Turn to page 53 in your workbook. We will use the 'Lord, have mercy' and the 'collect' prayer from Easter Sunday Mass for prayer this afternoon. Just as the priest says the first line of the 'Lord, have mercy', which we all repeat, I invite you to repeat after me.

Catechist: Lord, have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Catechist: Christ, have mercy.

All: Christ, have mercy.

Catechist: Lord, have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Catechist: O God, who on this day,
through your Only Begotten Son,
have conquered death
and unlocked for us the path to eternity,
grant, we pray, that we who keep
the solemnity of the Lord's Resurrection
may, through the renewal brought by your Spirit,
rise up in the light of life.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and
reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God,
for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

Collect the workbooks and dismiss the students as usual.

PREPARATION

Appendix 17 – The Introductory Rites

Copy, and laminate if possible, enough of these strips to have one set per group. Mix them up when you give them to the students.

Entrance Song and Procession

Veneration of the Altar

Sign of the Cross

Greeting

Penitential Act

Lord, Have Mercy

Gloria

Collect (Prayer of the day)

The Liturgy of the Word

Background for the Catechist

Take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

The *liturgy of the Word* is an integral part of sacramental celebrations.

To nourish the faith of believers, the signs which accompany the Word of God should be emphasized: the book of the Word (a lectionary or a book of the Gospels), its veneration (procession, incense, candles), the place of its proclamation (lectern or ambo), its audible and intelligible reading, the minister's homily which extends its proclamation, and the responses of the assembly (acclamations, psalms, litanies, and profession of faith). The liturgical word and action are inseparable both insofar as they are signs and instruction and insofar as they accomplish what they signify. When the Holy Spirit awakens faith, he not only gives an understanding of the Word of God, but through the sacraments also makes present the 'wonders' of God which it proclaims. The Spirit makes present and communicates the Father's work, fulfilled by the beloved Son (CCC, nn. 1154–1155).

The Liturgy of the Word provides us with the opportunity to learn more about God through the stories of Jesus and the early Christian community in the gospels and letters of the New Testament. We can also learn about God's plan of salvation through the stories of the Old Testament, the Hebrew Scriptures. When we open ourselves to these stories and teachings we can discover anew 'the "wonders" of God which it proclaims'. Not only do we find insight into our faith in the text of the Scriptures, but we are also offered nourishment through the homily given by the priest. Listening for words that resonate, or reflections in the homily that speak to our life situation, is an important part of participation in the Eucharist, enabling us to return to daily life renewed.

Student Focus

Students love listening to stories. However, many biblical stories are difficult for young people to grasp. It may be helpful to instruct the students to listen for a few words or a phrase from the readings that they find inspiring. Students are given the opportunity to grasp and remember what Jesus did and taught through listening to the word of God.

Teaching Point

The Liturgy of the Word at Mass helps us to remember about God, our Father, about Jesus, and about ourselves.

Remembering Point

During Mass, the Liturgy of the Word helps us to remember more about God.

PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: a cloth, a candle, the Bible opened at Mark 1: 1.
2. Enough sheets of A4 paper for one per group of four students.
3. Workbooks.

Beginning

(5 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 ...

Catechist: Lord God, you gave us Jesus to help us understand more about you.

Students: Help us to hear your word.

Catechist: Lord God, the stories in the gospels help us get to know you better.

Students: Help us to hear your word.

Catechist: Lord God, Jesus tells us about you in the things he said and did, and his disciples wrote these stories for us to hear and learn more about you.

Students: Help us to hear your word.

Catechist: Lord God, we make these prayers through Christ, your Son.

All: Amen.

Ask the students: Who can remember the special 'rites' used when we gather at Mass? (*Review briefly the Introductory Rites covered last week.*)

Tell the students: When you next go to Mass, look for the four key moments. Every Mass has the same 'order' or way of progressing and we call it the Order of Mass. When we notice the Order and the four key moments we will see that at Mass we 'gather', we 'listen', we 'give thanks' and we 'go out'. Last week we looked at how we 'gather', by looking at the Introductory Rites of the Mass. Today we will look at how we 'listen'.

Invite the students to share with the person beside them some good news they have heard during the week. The good news could be from any aspect of their lives: school, family, neighbourhood, the newspaper or anywhere in the world.

Invite three or four students to share their good news with the whole group.

Tell the students: When we are hearing good news, we listen attentively to what the person is saying, and not only do we listen but we also respond with enthusiasm. We might clap the person, or we might say thank you or comment positively about the piece of news.

Middle

(35 minutes)

Invite the students to form into groups of four and give each group a sheet of paper.

Tell the students: In the next 40 seconds I want you to write as much as you can about what you know about the Bible, the Old and the New Testaments. Each person will have 10 seconds to write down what you can remember and when the bell (or clap or buzzer) sounds you are to pass the sheet of paper on to the next person. That person is to write down what they know, but they are not to repeat anything that is already written down. At the end of the 40 seconds each group will read out what they have written and we will see what we know. *(Allow five minutes for this whole activity.)*

Gather the students around you. Take this time to fill in any gaps the students might have about the Old and New Testaments. Do not repeat what they already know. Simply remind them of the following if they were unable to come up with anything.

Tell the students: You may remember seeing this in other lessons. *(Show them where the Old Testament and New Testament are found in the Bible.)*

Make the following points:

- The Old Testament was written during the centuries before the birth of Jesus Christ.
- It is sometimes called the First Testament, since it came first, but it is more traditionally known as the Old Testament.
- The New Testament was written after Jesus' lifetime.
- It is sometimes called the Christian Scriptures because it tells us about the life of Jesus Christ, his message about God and how the first Christians lived. Traditionally it is known as the New Testament.
- Both of these testaments are made up of different books and letters written by different people.
- In the New Testament there are four Gospels that are different accounts of Jesus' life and there are a number of letters written by St Paul and other disciples to the early Christian churches.
- The books of the Old Testament tell the story of God's love and care for God's people, the Hebrew people. There are books about the Hebrew law, about the prophets and about Hebrew history. There is a book of psalms, which are part of the Hebrew people's prayers.
- Jesus would have known and read many of the books in the Old Testament.
- When we go to Mass we listen to many of the stories, letters and psalms from the Old and New Testaments.

PREPARATION

PREPARATION

Tell the students: We will now look more closely at when we hear these stories and psalms and see what we have to do. Open your workbooks at page 54, at the 'My definition of dialogue' activity.

Ask the students: What does the word 'dialogue' mean? *(A conversation between two or more people, where each listens carefully to what is said by the other and responds appropriately. It is not an argument, or a conversation, because in these two forms of communication with other people, you are trying to either change the other person's view or understanding, or there is nothing really at conflict or issue about what you are both sharing. When you dialogue with another person, you are willing to consider their contribution to your learning and you might ask more questions because of what you heard, or you might offer another perspective.)*

Invite the students to write their definition for the word 'dialogue' in the space provided in their workbook.

Ask the students: What do you notice about the structure of the Liturgy of the Word? *(There is the pattern of a reading then a response.)*

Tell the students: When we look at the Liturgy of the Word we can see that there is a pattern of listening and responding. Just like any dialogue: God speaks through the word in Scripture; we listen and respond. There is a pattern. We listen to the First Reading, which comes from the Old Testament, and then we respond. Our response is in the form of the Responsorial Psalm, which comes from the book of Psalms in the Old Testament. Then we listen to the Second Reading, which comes from the New Testament, usually the letters written to the early Church, often by St Paul. Our response to this is an acclamation to welcome the gospel. Finally, we listen to a story about Jesus or told by Jesus in the gospel. Each year we listen to a different gospel and this year it is the Gospel according to St (fill in appropriate gospel author).

In your workbooks you will see the 'Liturgy of the Word' activity. In the box titled 'First Reading', write what God does and what we do (God speaks, we listen). Then follow the arrow to the 'Responsorial Psalm' and write what we do and what God does (We respond, God listens). Continue in this way, finishing with the Gospel.

Invite the students to listen to the word.

Select a student to read Mark 1: 1.

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Tell the students: We all know what 'good news' means, we shared some 'good news' at the beginning of the lesson. What we have just listened to is from the New Testament and the author, Mark, writes in the Greek language and uses the word *gospel*. When it is translated into English we find that 'gospel' means 'good news'. When we listen to the 'gospel' at Mass, we are listening to the 'good news'. We will hear the stories Jesus told to tell us the good news about God.

Although the Liturgy of the Word is about listening to the readings from Scripture, it is also more than that *(invite the students to go back to the outline of the Liturgy of the Word on page 55 to follow you as you*

explain the next part). The Liturgy of the Word includes: listening to the priest when he gives his homily; telling everyone what we believe in – which is called our Profession of Faith; and then praying for the things that are important to us in the General Intercessions. We pray for the Church, the world, leaders of our country and the sick of our parish, and we also pray for those who have died.

Invite the students to return to their seats and open their workbooks at page 56.

Tell the students: In the space titled 'I have learned today ...' I would like you to write what you understand about the Liturgy of the Word, not just a copy of the list, but things that you have learned about the Liturgy of the Word. When you have finished you can complete the crossword on the same page. *(The answers to the crossword are provided in Appendix 18b, page 98.)*

End

(10 minutes)

Gather the students around the prayer focus.

Light the candle and **invite the students** to pray with you.

Tell the students: Today we will use the structure used in the Liturgy of the Word for our prayer.

Invite one of the students to read the gospel from the Mass of the Day or you could use Mark 1: 14–20.

All: In the name of the Father ...

Catechist: Let us listen carefully to the word of God as (name) reads it for us.

Reader: A reading from the Gospel of Mark

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.' This is the word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Catechist: Now let us think about all the things we have learned today. This reading tells us clearly that the message we listen to at Mass, the readings and the homily, are the good news of God. Take a few moments in silence to think about this.

Catechist: Let us pray to God, our Father, who made us and wants us to know all about him.

Reader 1: We pray for the Church community, that all the members will support each other as they work at following God's word. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

PREPARATION

PREPARATION

Reader 2: We pray for our leaders, our Prime Minister, our principals, our school leaders and all those who are in a leadership role. May they always consider how they can best help and care for others. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader 3: We pray for the Pope, our leader in faith. May he keep good health and continue to turn to God for direction. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader 4: We pray for the sick, especially those we know (*place names in here if you have time and wish to do so*). May they know that God is always with them, particularly in their pain and distress. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Catechist: Let us pray together:

All: Grant, we pray, almighty God, that we might be aware of your gift of grace available to us each day. Assist us in hearing your word and listening to the good news you share with us in our lives, through each other and especially in the Liturgy of the Word. We make this prayer through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Collect the workbooks and dismiss the students as usual.

Appendix 18a – The Components of the Liturgy of the Word

The following are components of the Liturgy of the Word.

First Reading

Responsorial Psalm

Second Reading

Gospel Acclamation

Homily

Profession of Faith

General Intercessions

Appendix 18b – Crossword Answers

Below find the answers to the crossword in the student workbook, page 56.

		¹ W			² R		
³ G	O	O	D	N	E	W	S
O		R			S		
S		D			P		
P					O		
E					⁴ N	E	W
L			⁵ O	L	D		

LESSON 19

The Last Supper

Background for the Catechist

Take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

Then came the day of Unleavened Bread, on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. So Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, 'Go and prepare the Passover meal for us that we may eat it. [They went and prepared the Passover and] when the hour came, he took his place at the table, and the apostles with him. He said to them, 'I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I tell you I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God' ... Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' And he did the same with the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood' (Luke 22: 7-8, 14-16, 19-20).

The command of Jesus to repeat his actions and words 'until he comes' does not only ask us to remember Jesus and what he did. It is directed at the liturgical celebration, by the apostles and their successors, of the memorial of Christ, of his life, of his death, of his Resurrection, and of his intercession in the presence of the Father. From the beginning the Church has been faithful to the Lord's command (CCC, nn. 1341-1342).

Student Focus

Students at this age know the significance of remembering and celebrating. They enjoy recalling things from their past and, in particular, stories about their family's traditions.

Teaching Point

At the Last Supper, Jesus said to his disciples to 'do this in memory of me'.

Remembering Point

In the Mass we do what Jesus did at the Last Supper.

Beginning

(10 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Gather the students around the table. Prepare a table with a cloth, a plate of flat bread and a cup of dark grape juice.

Distribute the workbooks and direct the students to turn to page 56 and the 'Let us pray' section.

Tell the students: The prayers written in your workbooks were originally from the ancient Jewish blessing prayers of the Passover or Seder meal. The Jewish Passover meal, you might remember, celebrates the Hebrew people's escape from slavery and oppression in Egypt. It recalls the night the Hebrews ate a quick meal and left Egypt for freedom and to begin their journey to the promised land, Israel.

Invite the students to pray.

Catechist: As I light this candle, we remember that Jesus Christ is with us as we pray. We remember that Jesus promised that he would be with us always. Let us now prepare to pray.

Jesus would have celebrated the Passover Seder meal many times during his life. On the night before he died, he celebrated a Seder meal with his disciples. We always refer to this meal as Jesus' Last Supper.

Invite one student to hold up the bread.

Catechist: Let us pray the blessing for the bread:

All: Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation, for through your goodness we have received the bread we offer you: fruit of the earth and work of human hands, it will become for us the bread of life.

Blessed be God for ever.

Invite one student to hold up the grape juice.

Catechist: Let us pray the blessing for the wine:

All: Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation, for through your goodness we have received the wine we offer you: fruit of the vine and work of human hands, it will become our spiritual drink.

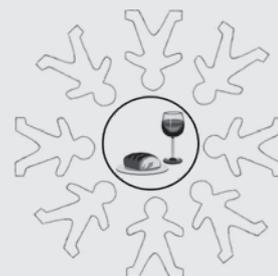
Blessed be God for ever.

Catechist: God of all goodness, we thank you for your gifts to us. We thank you especially for Jesus, your Son, who gave his life so that we might live with you forever. We make our prayer through Christ, our Lord.

All: Amen.

PREPARATION

1. Prayer Focus set on a table: a cloth, a candle, a plate of flat bread, a cup of dark grape juice, the Bible.
2. Workbooks.
3. Images of a Seder meal and the Last Supper, available in Appendix 19a, page 104.
4. Comparison Grid, enough for each pair of students. Available in Appendix 19b, page 105.
5. Enough cut-out person shapes for one per student. (See template in Appendix 19c, page 105.) These shapes are to be placed around the image of bread and wine (in Appendix 19a, page 104). E.g.



PREPARATION

Middle*(35 minutes)*

Invite the students to gather around the display of pictures of a Jewish Seder meal and the Last Supper. Give each pair of students the Comparison Grid and invite them to record their answers to the questions below:

Ask the students:

- When you look at these pictures, what do you see? *(Invite the students to record everything they notice about the two pictures and to list them.)*
- What things do you notice are the same?
- What stands out as different?

Invite each pair to share their answers with the whole group.

Draw attention to the actions shown and **ask the students:**

- Why might the person be doing that? *(Allow for a diverse range of answers and accept them unless they are completely inappropriate.)*

Give the students the opportunity to share their thoughts about what is happening and what it might mean.

Pick up the pictures of the Seder meal and the Last Supper.

Tell the students: In this picture (the Last Supper) Jesus and the apostles are celebrating a special meal that would be almost identical to this meal (show the picture of the Seder meal). The Jewish people in Jesus' time, and we must remember that Jesus was a Jew, celebrated the Seder meal during the Passover festival. They shared their meal in a special way so that they might remember the time, many years before, when they were freed from slavery in Egypt and began their long journey to the promised land. Jews celebrate the same meal so that they too will remember their escape from Egypt.

Invite the students to turn to page 59 in their workbook and to find the story of the Last Supper (Lk 22: 7–23).

Tell the students: Read the story out loud to your partner, then work together on the Last Supper Story Grid on page 60. You will need to record your answers in both of your workbooks.

(Allow the students time to answer the questions and record their answers.)

Invite a few students to share their answers. (Try to ensure that you select those who haven't been asked before.)

Tell the students: We will listen to the story again now that you know a little more about Jesus' Last Supper and listen for the important words.

Invite the students to follow the text as you read the scripture passage.

Read Lk 22: 7–23.

Then came the day of Unleavened Bread, on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. So Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, 'Go and prepare the Passover meal for us that we may eat it.' They asked him, 'Where do you want us to make preparations for it?' 'Listen,' he said to them, 'when you have entered the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you; follow him into the house he enters and say to the owner of the house, "The teacher asks you, 'Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?'" He will show you a large room upstairs, already furnished. Make preparations for us there.' So they went and found everything as he had told them; and they prepared the Passover meal.

When the hour came, he took his place at the table, and the apostles with him. He said to them, 'I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I tell you, I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.' Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he said, 'Take this and divide it among yourselves; for I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.' Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' And he did the same with the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood. But see, the one who betrays me is with me, and his hand is on the table. For the Son of Man is going as it has been determined, but woe to that one by whom he is betrayed!' Then they began to ask one another which one of them it could be who would do this (Lk 22: 7–23).

Tell the students: There are a few words that it is very important for us to understand. When Jesus took the bread, he gave thanks and broke it and handed it to the apostles telling them to 'do this in remembrance of me'. Jesus wants us to remember what he did for us. Jesus especially asks that we give thanks and praise to God for this special gift of Jesus that we share.

On page 61 of your workbooks, in the space marked 'Jesus wants us to remember ...' complete the sentence: Jesus wants us to remember ...

(Allow the students to answer this for themselves. There can be a variety of answers and accepting the students' reflections allows for their own growth in faith reflection to occur.)

Invite two or three students to share their answers.

Tell the students: When we go to Mass we are 'remembering Jesus'. We are fulfilling what Jesus asked the apostles when he said 'do this in remembrance of me'. When we do that we are helping to make Jesus Christ present to each of us. We remember the story of the Last Supper and how Jesus wanted to celebrate this special time with his apostles, just as he wants us to celebrate the special time with him when we attend Mass.

Collect the workbooks.

PREPARATION

PREPARATION

End*(15 minutes)*

Place the poster with the cut-out chalice and bread on the floor and invite the students to sit around it. **Hand out** the 'person' cut-out shapes.

Tell the students: I invite you to write your name on the 'person' shape and when I invite you, paste it in a circle around the chalice and bread, which are in the centre of the sheet of cardboard.

Invite the students to stick the cut-out shapes in a circle around the chalice and bread. (An example is in the preparation column on page 100.)

Tell the students: We will now write a title for this poster. Can anyone give me a good title? (*You could use 'Do this in Remembrance of Me' or 'Jesus' Last Supper', or something similar.*)

Gather the students around the prayer focus.

Catechist: Let us sit quietly for a few moments and remember what we have been learning today. Remember what Jesus said to his apostles, and remember what Jesus wants us to do.

Pause

All: In the name of the Father ...

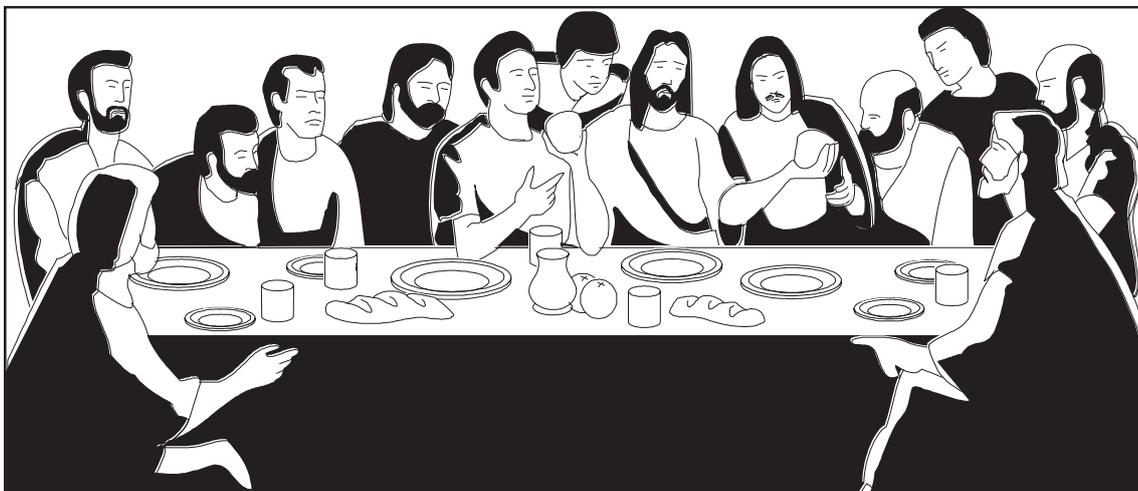
Catechist: Let us say the words that Jesus taught us ...

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

Dismiss the students as usual.

Appendix 19a – Pictures

Photocopy, laminate and enlarge if necessary.



Jesus' Last Supper



A Seder Meal during Passover



Bread and wine for the centre of the poster to be created at the end of the lesson.

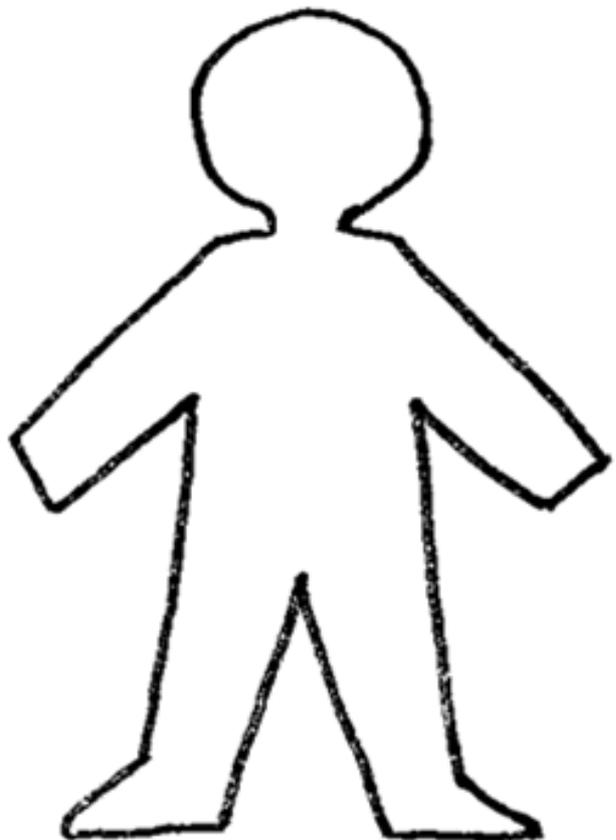
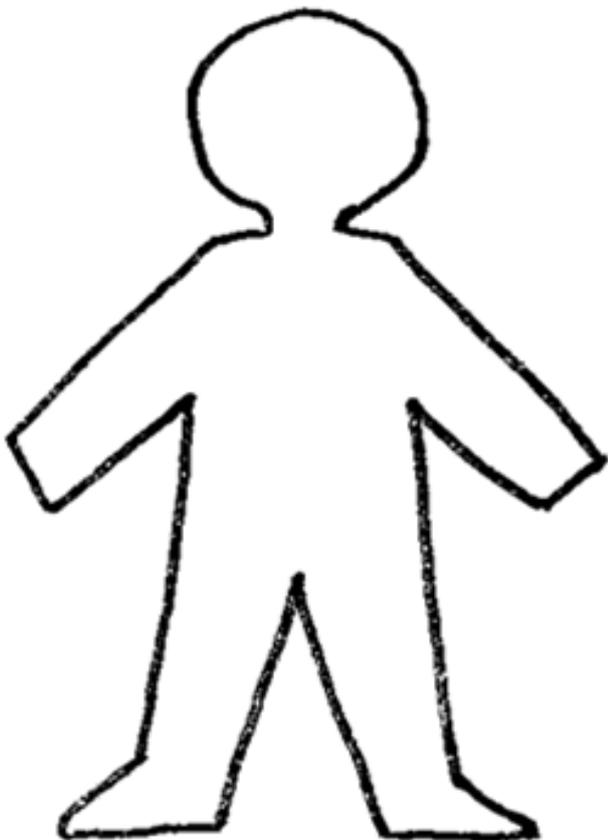
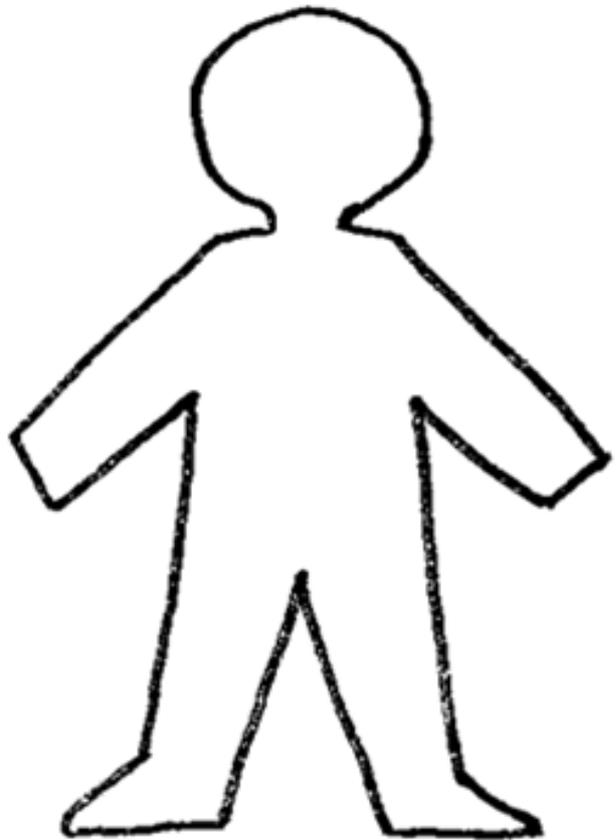
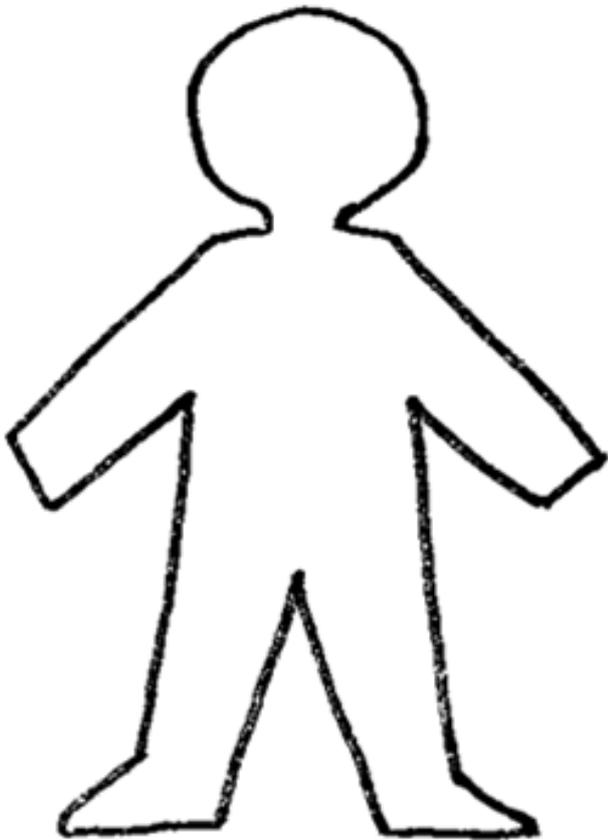
Appendix 19b – Comparison Grid

Make enough copies of this grid for one per pair of students. Invite the students to answer the question in each column.

When you look at these pictures, what do you see?	What things are the same?	What things are different?

Appendix 19c – Person Template

Make enough copies for one per student.



LESSON 20

Our Gifts of Bread and Wine

Background for the Catechist

Take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

At the heart of the Eucharistic celebration are the bread and wine that, by the words of Christ and the invocation of the Holy Spirit, become Christ's Body and Blood. Faithful to the Lord's command the Church continues to do, in his memory and until his glorious return, what he did on the eve of his Passion: 'He took bread.' 'He took the cup filled with wine.' The signs of bread and wine become, in a way surpassing understanding, the Body and Blood of Christ; they continue also to signify the goodness of creation. Thus in the Offertory we give thanks to the Creator for bread and wine, fruit of the 'work of human hands,' but above all as 'fruit of the earth' and 'of the vine' – gifts of the Creator (CCC, n. 1333).

Both grapes and grains of wheat are crushed in order to be transformed into wine and bread. In the Eucharist, we see the body of Christ broken for us and the blood of Christ poured out for us to transform us who eat and drink the Body and Blood of Christ.

Student Focus

Students are generally familiar with the bread and wine they would have at home. However, not all students will be familiar with the way bread and wine are made. Understanding the origin of these simple yet profound elements of the Eucharist is essential to understanding the transforming effect of the Body and Blood of Jesus.

Teaching point

Our gifts of bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Jesus.

Remembering point

Our gifts of bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Jesus.

Beginning

(15 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual. Have the students gather around a table.

Invite the students to make the Sign of the Cross with you and to pray the Lord's Prayer together.

Tell the students: Last week we looked at how the Holy Spirit is active in all the sacraments celebrated in the Church. Over the next few weeks we are going to look more closely at the sacrament of the Eucharist as you prepare to receive the sacrament for the first time. Today we are going to start by looking more closely at the meaning of bread and wine as they are used in the Eucharist.

Put the cloth on the table, then place on it the large bowl of wheat seeds, the large bunch of grapes, some pita bread and the bottle of altar wine.

Invite the students to identify each item as you place it on the cloth.

Respond to the students' answers, elaborating on the use of these items in daily life.

Divide the students into groups of three. Give a mortar and pestle to half the groups of three and to the remaining groups give a strainer, a bowl and a spoon. (You might have to demonstrate how to use the mortar and pestle and the strainer, bowl and spoon to grind and crush the wheat and grapes.)

Tell the students: I am going to give grains of wheat to some groups, and to other groups I will give some grapes. Each group is either to grind the grains of wheat in the mortar and pestle until they begin to produce flour (*like so ... if you want to demonstrate the action*), or to crush the grapes against the strainer until they produce juice (*like so ... if you want to demonstrate the action*). Each member of the group is to have a turn at crushing grapes or grinding wheat.

After a short time, allowing for each student in the group to have a turn at grinding wheat seeds or crushing grapes, **invite the students** from each group to pour their juice into the glass and to put their flour onto the plate. Place the glass and plate between the bread and wine and the wheat and grapes.

Middle

(25 minutes)

Gather the students around the table. Distribute the workbooks and ask the students to open at page 62.

Tell the students: Could all those who ground the wheat please read the first prayer, which is said during Mass, and the rest of us will pray the response.

PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: A cloth, a table, a candle and the Bible.
2. Plan to divide the class into half and then into groups of three.
3. A large bunch of grapes for the table and a small bunch each for half the groups of students – to be set aside.
4. A bag of wheat seeds.
5. A larger bowl of the wheat seeds for the table, and a smaller bowl each for half the groups – to be set aside.
6. A mortar and pestle for each group in one half of the class.
7. A strainer, a bowl and a spoon for each group in the other half of the class.
8. A large glass for the juice and a plate for the flour.
9. Pita bread.
10. A bottle of altar wine.
11. A plate with damp cotton wool for planting wheat seeds.
12. Workbooks.

PREPARATION

'Wheat' students:

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation,
for through your goodness we have received
the bread we offer you:
fruit of the earth and work of human hands,
it will become for us the bread of life.

All: Blessed be God for ever.

Tell the students: Now, could all those who crushed the grapes please read the second prayer, which is also said during Mass. The rest of us will pray the response.

'Grape' Students:

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation,
for through your goodness we have received
the wine we offer you:
fruit of the vine and work of human hands,
it will become our spiritual drink.

All: Blessed be God for ever.

Tell the students: Whenever you go to Mass, you will hear these two prayers said when the priest raises the plate – called a paten – with the bread on it and the chalice with the wine. The next time you go, listen out for these special prayers and watch closely what Father does while he is praying.

Bread and wine are a part of our daily life. We might eat bread each day and your parents might enjoy a glass of wine with their meal. What is important about these two significant elements of the Eucharist is, as the prayer said, they both come from the earth and are work of human hands. Jesus used this normal, everyday food and drink and turned them into his Body and Blood, so that we might remember what he did for us.

Ask the students:

- How does the grain of wheat change to become bread? *(Take the students' answers and order the responses chronologically.)*
- How might the grapes on the vine become a glass of wine? *(Again take their answers and order the responses chronologically.)*

Tell the students: Bread and wine are everyday items that are part of our lives. We take them for granted and share them with others almost everyday. Turn to pages 63 and 64 in your workbooks and in the spaces titled The Story of Bread and The Story of Wine, illustrate the story of how we get bread from wheat and wine from grapes.

Invite the students to read with you Jn 12: 23–24 on page 65 of the workbook:

Jesus answered them, 'The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit (Jn 12: 23–24).

Ask the students: Why do you think Jesus used the image of a grain of wheat to refer to his death?

Tell the students: Now let's read together John 15: 4–5 on the same page.

Live in me as I live in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it lives in the vine, neither can you unless you live in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who live in me and I in them bear much fruit (Jn 15: 4–5).

Ask the students: Why do you think Jesus used the image of a vine to talk about himself?

End

(10 minutes)

Tell the students: Now we are going to plant some of the wheat seeds. I will water them during the week. Next week we will see if they are showing signs of life and growth.

Gather the students around you at the front of the class with their workbooks ready for prayer. Have a plate with some cotton wool.

Tell the students: We will look at how these wheat seeds grow and what it means when a seed 'dies' as we heard in the Scripture earlier. First, I will put some water onto the cotton wool so that the seeds can grow and then I will scatter the seeds over the cotton wool, place the plate in a warm, well-lit spot and remember to water it during the week.

Put the water on the cotton wool and scatter the seeds on the top.

Put the plate with the seeds on it onto the prayer focus.

Invite the students to pray as you light the candle, reminding them that the candle reminds us of the light of Christ, that Christ is present with us whenever we gather to pray.

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

Catechist: Jesus Christ, bread of life.

All: Thank you, God, for the bread that becomes
the body of Christ that we will share in Communion.

Catechist: Jesus Christ, the true vine.

All: Thank you, God, for the wine that becomes
the blood of Christ that we will share in Communion.

Catechist: The bread and wine we give to God

All: Thank you, God, for letting us share in this great gift.

Catechist: Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.

All: Thanks be to God!

Take up the workbooks.

Dismiss the students as usual.

PREPARATION

The Liturgy of the Eucharist

Background for the Catechist

Take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

The Eucharist is a sacrifice of thanksgiving to the Father, a blessing by which the Church expresses her gratitude to God for all his benefits, for all that he has accomplished through creation, redemption, and sanctification. Eucharist means first of all 'thanksgiving' (CCC, n. 1360).

The Eucharist is also the sacrifice of the Church. The Church which is the Body of Christ participates in the offering of her head. With him, she herself is offered whole and entire. She unites herself to his intercession with the Father ... In the Eucharist the sacrifice of Christ becomes also the sacrifice of the members of his Body. The lives of the faithful, their praise, sufferings, prayer and work, are united with those of Christ and with his total offering, and so acquire a new value (CCC, n 1368).

As we participate in the Mass we are swept up into the great dynamic between the word of God and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. As believers, we enter into the Eucharistic celebration with the sense of 'giving thanks' for all that God has given to us, and most especially, for the gift of Jesus. When engaging in the Liturgy of the Eucharist, we share in the Body and Blood which Jesus first gave to his disciples at the Last Supper. When we receive the Body of Christ in the Eucharist, we experience our union with him, and also our communion with one another.

Student Focus

Students are aware that certain events in life have ceremony and ritual that are followed closely. Consequently, appreciating the importance and purpose of the ritual and ceremony surrounding the Liturgy of the Eucharist can be achieved through this valuable connection with the students' life. Young people of this age also understand the nature of giving thanks. Ever since infancy they have been encouraged by their parents to say 'thank you' for gifts and kindness shown toward them.

Teaching Point

The Liturgy of the Eucharist begins with the Preparation of the Offerings and concludes with the Communion Rite.

Remembering Point

The Liturgy of the Eucharist begins with the Preparation of the Offerings and concludes with the Communion Rite.

Beginning

(10 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Tell the students: A few weeks ago we learned about the Liturgy of the Word. We learned about listening and responding to the word of God at Mass. Today we are going to look at the Liturgy of the Eucharist. First let us begin with prayer.

Set up the prayer focus on a table where all the students can see.

Explain each item as you place it on the table.

As you place the Missal (or wine glass and plate) on the prayer focus, **tell the students:** the Missal (or the wine glass and plate of unconsecrated hosts) helps us to focus on what we are going to learn today. This (these) item(s) is (are) used during Mass and particularly during the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

Hand out the workbooks and **ask the students** to open them at page 66 for the prayer.

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

All: In the name of the Father ...

Catechist: God, our Father, bring us together today so that we might hear your word and learn about your Son.

Students: Lord, help us to hear your word.

Catechist: God, our Father, may we gain an understanding of the Liturgy of the Eucharist and our oneness with Jesus, our brother, and each other.

Students: Lord, help us to understand.

Catechist: We make our prayer through Christ, our Lord.

All: Amen.

Place the A3 sheet of paper (or the whiteboard) with the word *Eucharist* written at the top where it will be seen clearly.

Tell the students: This word we have been using to talk about the Mass – Eucharist – is a special word that has been around for a very long time. It describes what we do in the Mass: that is, we give thanks. *Eucharist* means to give thanks or to say 'thank you'.

Break up the word *Eucharist* into its components: EU and CHARIS, and write each of these on the sheet under the word *Eucharist*.

Tell the students: The word *Eucharist* is a word from the Greek language and we can split it into two other smaller words that help us understand what it means. EU means good, and CHARIS means gift. So when we use the word Eucharist, we are saying 'this gift is good', or 'thank you'. It is important to remember that we are saying 'thank you' each time we go to Mass, and particularly when we get to the part of the Mass called the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: a cloth, a candle and the Bible. Include a Sunday Missal or a wine glass and a flat plate with some unconsecrated hosts.
2. An A3 sheet of paper with the word EUCHARIST written at the top, e.g.



(or write *Eucharist* on a whiteboard if you have one).

3. Copies of Task 2 in Appendix 21b on page 117–118 – enough for one between three.
4. Workbooks.

PREPARATION

Middle*(30 minutes)*

Invite the students to open their workbook at page 67 at the Outline of the Liturgy of the Eucharist. **Ask them** to underline with a coloured felt pen or pencil all the headings starting with the Preparation of the Offerings and finishing with Prayer after Communion.

Tell the students: This is the order for the Liturgy of the Eucharist that is used every time we go to Mass. Today we will look closely at the Liturgy of the Eucharist, the time when we particularly give thanks for the gift of Jesus and offer ourselves with Jesus to God.

Tell the students: On these two pages there is a lot of information about the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Let us read together the Preparation of the Offerings.

Remind the students that we have looked at these prayers before in Lesson 15: Our Gifts of Bread and Wine and Lesson 19: The Last Supper.

Ask the students:

- What do you think these two prayers mean? *(Encourage the students' answers. They will offer some valuable insight. Help the students recall the earlier lessons where the bread and wine are common parts of our meals.)*
- What might be some of the joys of your life that you bring to offer God through Jesus? *(Invite the students to think about the last week and what they enjoyed and did well.)*

Invite one or more students to share what they can bring to offer. (Remember that when it comes to these types of reflections, the student should be free not to have to share their thought.)

Tell the students to write their thoughts in the space under Task 1: Preparation of the Offerings on page 69. (Allow them three minutes to do this.)

Tell the students: At this moment in the Liturgy of the Eucharist we bring the bread and wine, part of our daily lives, to the altar to be part of the celebration. This offering is also a symbol of what we bring of ourselves to be offered to God through Jesus, so that it might be changed into the Body and Blood of Christ.

Ask the students: What might be some of the things you might want to change about your life? What would you like to improve or heal? *(Invite the students to think about the last week and things they might need to change.)*

Tell the students: We offer these gifts so that they might become something that nourishes us spiritually just as they nourish us physically. Through offering this food that is normally for our body, we are also able to receive Communion, food that will strengthen us in our faith.

Divide the class into groups of three and **hand out** Task 2 sheets from Appendix 21b. (You will need to move around the groups, helping where necessary.)

Tell the students: Complete Task 2 with the other two people in your group. As you are trying to work out an answer in your groups, remember to listen carefully to each other and not to interrupt while

someone is speaking. Appoint someone as *Tracker* (keeps the group 'on track') and someone as *Recorder* (records what the group decides). The recorder will write the answers on the sheets provided.

Invite the students to read with you the Eucharist Prayer from 'the Lord be with you' to 'Hosanna in the highest'. **Ask the students** to complete the first three questions. (Allow 10 minutes to complete this part of the task.) (*Appendix 21c, pages 119–120, offers some help in how to assist the students with their answers for this section; please read the suggestions.*)

Invite the students to read with you the Words of Institution, from 'You are indeed holy' to 'Amen'.

Tell the students to write their responses to the next question. (Allow five minutes to complete this question.)

Tell the students: We have been looking at the Eucharistic Prayer in some detail. In the Institution Narrative the priest repeats the words that Jesus used at the Last Supper. (*For more information, refer to Appendix 21c, pages 119–120*). The next question requires you to summarise what you have learnt. You will not find the answer in the text, you will have to think about what you have heard and what is important. Record your answer in the space provided. (*Allow 10 minutes*).

Invite the students to read with you the Communion Rite.

Direct the students to Task 3 on page 69 of their workbooks and invite them to complete it. **Remind them** that receiving Holy Communion is an opportunity to be fed by Christ so that we might live our lives as God intended. (Allow eight minutes for this task.)

Collect the workbooks.

End

(5 minutes)

Gather the students around the prayer focus.

Tell the students: Let us sit for a short while thinking about all the things we have learned today. We know that the Liturgy of the Eucharist includes the Preparation of the Offerings, the Eucharistic Prayer and the Communion Rites. We also learned that during the Liturgy of the Eucharist we bring ourselves to give thanks and to be changed so that we might live as God wants us to live. Let us be silent for a while.

(*Pause for a short while, no longer than one minute.*)

Catechist: With all these important things in our minds, let us make the Sign of the Cross together.

All: In the name of the Father ...

Catechist: Let us now say the prayer that we say during Mass, during the Communion Rite, the Our Father.

All: Our Father ...

Remind the students that the lesson next week will be conducted in the parish church (if the parish priest has given his approval).

Dismiss the students as usual.

PREPARATION

Appendix 21a – Outline of the Liturgy of the Eucharist

Preparation of the Offerings

Priest: Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation, for through your goodness we have received the bread we offer you: fruit of the earth and work of human hands, it will become for us the bread of life.

All: Blessed be God for ever.

Priest: Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation, for through your goodness we have received the wine we offer you: fruit of the vine and work of human hands, it will become our spiritual drink.

All: Blessed be God for ever.

Priest: Pray, brethren (brothers and sisters), that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

All: May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands, for the praise and glory of his name, for our good, and the good of all his holy Church.

Eucharistic Prayer II

Priest: The Lord be with you.

People: And with your spirit.

Priest: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them up to the Lord.

Priest: Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God.

People: It is right and just.

PREFACE (giving praise and thanks to God)

Priest: It is truly right and just, our duty and salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Father most holy, through your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, your Word through whom you made all things, whom you sent as our Saviour and Redeemer, incarnate by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin. Fulfilling your will and gaining for you a holy people, he stretched out his hands as he endured his Passion, so as to break the bonds of death and manifest the resurrection. And so, with the Angels and all the Saints we declare your glory, as with one voice we acclaim:

**All: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of hosts.
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

INSTITUTION NARRATIVE

Priest: You are indeed Holy, O Lord, the fount of all holiness. Make holy, therefore, these gifts, we pray, by sending down your Spirit upon them like the dewfall, so that they may become for us the Body + and Blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

At the time he was betrayed and entered willingly into his Passion, he took bread and, giving thanks, broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take this, all of you, and eat of it: for this is my Body which will be given up for you.

In a similar way, when supper was ended, he took the chalice and, once more giving thanks, he gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take this, all of you, and drink from it: for this is the chalice of my Blood, the blood of the new and eternal covenant, which will be poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in memory of me.

Priest: The mystery of faith:

People: When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your death, O Lord, until you come again.

Priest: Therefore, as we celebrate the memorial of his Death and Resurrection, we offer you, Lord, the Bread of life and the Chalice of salvation, giving thanks that you have held us worthy to be in your presence and minister to you. Humbly we pray that, partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ, we may be gathered into one by the Holy Spirit. Remember, Lord, your Church, spread

Appendix 21a – Outline of the Liturgy of the Eucharist (continued)

throughout the world, and bring her to the fullness of charity, together with N. our Pope and N. our Bishop and all the clergy. Remember also our brothers and sisters who have fallen asleep in the hope of the resurrection and all who have died in your mercy: welcome them into the light of your face. Have mercy on us all, we pray, that with the blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, with the blessed Apostles, and all the Saints who have pleased you throughout the ages, we may merit to be co-heirs to eternal life, and may praise and glorify you through your Son, Jesus Christ.

Priest: Through him, and with him, and in him, O God, almighty Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honour is yours, for ever and ever.

People: Amen.

Communion Rite

LORD'S PRAYER

Priest: At the Saviour's command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:

**All: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.**

Priest: Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil, graciously grant peace in our days, that, by the help of your mercy, we may be always free from sin and safe from all distress, as we await the blessed hope and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

All: For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever.

SIGN OF PEACE

Priest: Lord Jesus Christ, who said to your Apostles, Peace I leave you, my peace I give you, look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church, and graciously grant her peace and unity in accordance with your will. Who live and reign for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

Priest: The Peace of the Lord be with you always.

All: And with your spirit.

Priest: Let us offer each other a sign of peace.

FRACTION RITE – 'BREAKING' OF THE BREAD

**All: Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: grant us peace.**

COMMUNION

Priest: Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

All: Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

Communion Minister: The body of Christ.

Communicant: Amen.

Communion Minister: The blood of Christ.

Communicant: Amen.

Communion Song

Period of Silence or Song of Praise

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Priest: Let us pray ...

All: Amen.

Appendix 21b – Task Two: The Eucharistic Prayer II

Read the Eucharistic Prayer II from the Preface to ... Hosanna in the highest.	Answer
<p>For what do you want to give thanks?</p>	
<p>What do you think the Preface is saying?</p> <p>a) Who is it directed to?</p> <p>b) What are we called to do always and everywhere?</p> <p>c) Why do we give thanks?</p>	
<p>Write the prayer that the people say in praise of the 'Lord God of hosts'.</p>	

Appendix 21b – Task Two: The Eucharistic Prayer II (continued)

Read the Eucharistic Prayer II from the Institution Narrative to the end.	Answer
<p>Looking at the words of institution, what does Jesus say will happen to his Body and his Blood?</p>	
<p>Who else is called the Body of Christ?</p>	
Summarise	Answer
<p>Write in your own words what you think we are celebrating when we attend Mass.</p>	

Appendix 21c – Answers to Tasks 2 & 3: The Eucharistic Prayer II

Task 2: The Eucharistic Prayer II

Read the specified parts of the Eucharistic Prayer with the students. Hand out copies of Task 2 (see Appendix 21a, page 114.)

Read the Eucharistic Prayer II from the Preface to ...Hosanna in the highest.	Answer
For what do you want to give thanks?	Remind the students that Eucharist means to 'give thanks' and when we go to Mass we are saying thank you to God or many things in our lives as well as for the gift of Jesus which we share in. Ask the students to record in this part, the things in their life that they want to thank God for, as well as for the gift of Jesus in the Mass.
<p>What do you think the Preface is saying?</p> <p>a) Who is it directed to?</p> <p>b) What are we called to do always and everywhere?</p> <p>c) Why do we give thanks?</p>	<p>a) Father most holy</p> <p>b) Always and everywhere to give you thanks ...</p> <p>c) This is an opportunity for the students to express their understanding of why they give thanks when they participate in the Eucharist. The preface says: 'It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation...' that is why we give thanks. You might be able to explore why it is right, just and our duty.</p>
Write the prayer that the people say in praise of the 'Lord God of hosts'.	The students can copy the prayer 'Holy, Holy, Holy Lord ...' here.
Read the Eucharistic Prayer II from the Institution Narrative to the end.	Answer
<p>Looking at the words of institution, what does Jesus say will happen to his Body and his Blood?</p> <p>Who else is called the Body of Christ?</p>	<p>Jesus gives himself for us. Jesus says ... for this is my body which will be given up for you. And ... for this is the chalice of my blood ... which will be poured out for you and for many ...</p> <p>These words are about Jesus' transformation and the opportunity we have to also be transformed or changed.</p> <p>The term 'Body of Christ' also refers to the Church, that is those who are baptised. St Paul says to the Corinthians (1 Cor 12: 27) 'Now you are the Body of Christ.'</p>

Appendix 21c – Answers to Tasks 2 & 3: The Eucharistic Prayer II (continued)

Summarise	Answer
<p>Write in your own words what you think we are celebrating when we attend Mass.</p>	<p>This will be different for different students. Their answers will reflect previous learning and thoughts from what they have read. You might direct the students to underline words in their outline that tell them something about what the 'people of God' are celebrating.</p> <p>Recall lesson 17, Jesus Is With Us in the Eucharist – how Jesus is present in the people who gather for Mass as well as in the word, the priest and the bread and wine changed into Jesus' Body and Blood. If one of these elements is missing then Mass is not complete.</p> <p>We celebrate the coming together of all of our lives reflected on in light of Scripture and Jesus' message.</p> <p>Our celebration is guided by the words and actions of the priest, who offers to the Father what we bring. We are nourished by the Body and Blood of Christ. We are making a gift of ourselves to be transformed along with the bread and wine.</p> <p>All is offered so that we can go out and continue to live our lives as the Church, the Body of Christ, fulfilling our baptismal promise of carrying the light of Christ to all those we meet.</p>

Task 3: Communion Rite

1. What name do we give to the prayer that Jesus gave us and that we say during the Communion Rite?

The Lord's Prayer, The Our Father

2. What is another name we give Jesus Christ that is used during this part of the Mass? We use this name in a special prayer after the priest breaks the bread.

Lamb of God

3. What word do we say after we receive Communion that means 'yes'?

Amen

Sacrifice and Sacred Meal

Background for the Catechist

Take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

The Eucharist is a memorial of the sacrifice of Christ in the sense that it makes present and actual the sacrifice which Christ offered to the Father on the cross, once and for all on behalf of us all. The sacrificial character of the Holy Eucharist is manifested in the very words of institution, 'This is my Body which is given for you' and 'This cup is the New Covenant in my Blood that will be shed for you' (Luke 22: 19–20). The Eucharist ... is a sign of unity, a bond of charity, a Paschal banquet, in which Christ is consumed, the mind is filled with grace, and a pledge of future glory is given to us (CCCC, n. 271).

Through Jesus Christ's once-and-for-all offering of himself (his Body and Blood) to God as a 'holy and living sacrifice', the Temple tradition of offering animal sacrifices as peace offerings to God has been removed. The word 'sacrifice' can best be understood as giving up something that is valuable for something or somebody more important. In remembrance of what Jesus did, we offer the gifts of bread and wine to join with the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, so that it might become this same sacrifice offered to God. We in turn, receive this bread and wine back from God as a sacred meal – the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.

Student Focus

Sacrifice is a difficult concept but students at this age are familiar with the sacrifices people make, particularly the sacrifices parents make for their children. We make sacrifices for a greater good. Students may not be aware of the ancient Temple tradition of offering animal sacrifices as peace offerings to God.

Teaching Point

The Eucharist is both sacrifice and sacred meal.

Remembering Point

The Eucharist is both sacrifice and sacred meal.

Beginning

(5 minutes)

Welcome the students at the back of the parish church, in the narthex.

Invite the students into the church, reminding them to genuflect (you might have to remind the students what genuflection means) towards the altar.

Gather the students around the altar.

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

All: In the name of the Father ...

Catechist: As we gather in this sacred place, our parish church, let us think about God, our Father, who sent his Son, Jesus, to be with us always. Let us say the Lord's Prayer together.

All: Our Father ...

Invite the students to take a close look at the altar (if this is feasible in your church) without touching it. **Point out** any significant images or structure that is important for your parish, such as a connection between the shape of the altar and the lectern or a story about its construction.

Tell the students: The altar is the most sacred item of furniture in our church.

Ask the students: From last week's lesson, who can remember what part of the Mass we were looking at? (*The Liturgy of the Eucharist*)

Tell the students: It is this part of the Mass, the Liturgy of the Eucharist, that the priest conducts from the altar. It is from behind the altar, facing the people, that the priest offers our gifts of bread and wine to God. We are then fed by God with a sacred meal, the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. Today we will explore in more detail the sacrifice and sacred meal that we celebrate in the Eucharist.

Middle

(35 minutes)

Continue your lesson at the back of the church in a suitable location.

Ask the students: When have you heard the word *sacrifice* used in ordinary conversation? (*Dad makes a big sacrifice by getting up early on his day off to take me to footy training; It was a sacrifice for me to give my pocket money to Project Compassion ...*) (*Encourage the students' answers.*)

Tell the students: From listening to your answers, I know that you realise that a sacrifice is really giving a special gift of yourself, your time or possessions for something that is more important or is better for everyone else. We can think of it as a 'sacred gift' because it is a difficult thing to do. Sacrifice is never easy. Think for a moment of times when you have done something good for others that wasn't particularly easy to do and meant that you missed out on something or had to give up something.

PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: a cloth, a candle and a Mass book.
2. Large, cut-out letters that spell the word sacrifice, e.g. S A C R I F I C E, enough for at least one letter per student. Templates for the letters are in Appendix 22a, page 127.
3. Laminated Receiving Communion cards (Appendix 22b, page 128), one per student.
4. If possible, unconsecrated hosts in a small bowl and a chalice/wine goblet.
5. Workbooks.

PREPARATION

(Allow the students a couple of minutes to think about the task.)

Have large letters of the word *sacrifice* cut from coloured card. **Hand out** a letter to each student to work on individually.

Tell the students: Inside the letter I would like you to write a sentence that describes what the word *sacrifice* means for you. You might like to provide an example as well as your definition. When you have finished we will put the letters together to form the word *sacrifice*.

(Allow 10 minutes for the students to complete this activity.)

Invite a selection of the students to share their responses with the whole group. When they have finished, **invite all the students** to bring their letter out to the front of the group and make up the word SACRIFICE. (If you have a large group you will have enough for more than one word.)

Send the students back to their seats and distribute the workbooks.

Invite the students to open their workbooks at page 70.

Tell the students: Keeping in mind what we have just discussed about the word *sacrifice*, we will now look at the section titled 'Sacrifice before the time of Christ'. You can follow as I read.

Read the following:

In ancient times (before the time of Christ) people offered valuable animals, such as lambs, to God. Outside the Temple in Jerusalem they made a fire on an altar. Then a lamb, or even a bull, was placed on the fire and burnt as an offering to God. The flames and the smoke rose up to the heavens, to God. The people believed God would look kindly on them and forgive their sins, because of their sacrifice. This was known as a sacrifice because the animal was given as a sacred gift to God.

Pause here and **invite the students** to comment on or ask questions about anything thus far in the reading. (If the students do not have comments or questions – just move on.)

Tell the students: Let us read 'Sacrifice in the Eucharist'. You can follow in your workbook as I read.

Today, we have not needed to offer animals to God because Jesus Christ has sacrificed himself, has offered himself on a cross, his own Body and Blood, once and for all. Since Jesus was perfect, it was a perfect offering to God. Ever since then, in the Eucharist, we offer the gifts of bread and wine to God and receive them back from God as a sacred meal – the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.

Tell the students: Jesus gave his life to God by making choices to continue his work of bringing about the kingdom of God despite the risks. In sacrificing his life to God, he gave his life for us, so that we might know God and be able to live with God.

Ask the students:

- How do people today choose to give their lives or their ambitions for others? (*devoting themselves to their families rather than to careers, enlisting in the Australian Defence Force, choosing careers that serve others rather than more highly paid jobs, ...*)

Tell the students that at the Last Supper Jesus told his disciples that he was going to give his life, his Body and Blood, for them.

Invite one of the students to read the words of institution from the previous lesson, page 67 in the workbook.

... For this is my Body which will be given up for you.

... For this is the chalice of my Blood, the blood of the new and eternal covenant, which will be poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.

Ask the students: During the Liturgy of the Eucharist, when do we receive the bread and wine back from God? (*During the Communion Rite, or when we receive Communion.*)

Tell the students: When the time comes for you to receive your First Holy Communion you will be sharing in this sacred meal. Like all meals there are ways that we do things so that everyone is fed and we all have the time to be considerate of each other.

After the Our Father is said, you will be invited to go to Father to receive the host, and share in the Body and Blood of Christ. When you go to Mass at other times you will go with everyone else. Let's go back into the church and run through what you will do on the day of your First Holy Communion.

Tell the students to leave their workbooks aside and **take the students** to the front of the church to practise what they will be doing on the day.

Seat the students in the pews on either side of the aisle. Distribute the Receiving Communion card to each student.

Tell the students: When we go to Communion we welcome Jesus Christ with our whole body. We remember all we have learnt about this being part of a special, sacred meal and we recall that we are sharing in God's gift to us of the risen Jesus. Since this moment is so special, and even more important to you because it is the first time you will be receiving Jesus, we do everything – our walking, sitting and listening – as carefully as we can.

The card you have gives you a simple outline of how to receive your First Holy Communion. You can take the card home so that you can practise. We will now run through the list and practise what we will do on the day.

PREPARATION

PREPARATION

Run through the following with the students before you practise.

- As you leave the pew follow behind the person in front of you and keep in line. Walk towards the altar and the priest with your hands together. Think about what you are doing and whom you are going to receive.
- When the person in front of you is receiving communion, give a small bow to acknowledge that it is Jesus you are receiving. (*Demonstrate a small movement of the head, not a full bow from the waist*).
- When it is your turn, you put forward the hand you write with, palm up and place your other hand, also with the palm up, on top. The priest will offer you the host saying, 'The Body of Christ', and you answer, 'Amen'.
- When you have the host in your hand, step to one side and use your writing hand to put the host in your mouth and consume it as you return to your seat or walk to where the special minister is holding the chalice.
- When the person in front of you is receiving the chalice, give a small bow to acknowledge that it is Jesus you are receiving. (*Demonstrate a small movement of the head, not a full bow from the waist*).
- When it is your turn, the minister will offer you the chalice saying, 'The Blood of Christ', and you answer, 'Amen'.
- Hold the chalice in your hand and take a sip. Then step aside and return to your seat.

While you are returning to your seat, it is a good opportunity to think about the wonderful experience of sharing in this sacred meal and receiving the Body and Blood of Christ.

When you are back in your seat, say a prayer of thanks to God.

Run through this with the students a couple of times so that they feel comfortable knowing what they will be doing. If you are able to have the unconsecrated hosts, use these as well to give the students a sense of what they taste like.

End

(15 minutes)

Take the students back to the back of the church and **invite them** to sit.

Tell the students: When we have received Communion we go back to our seat and say a prayer of thanks, also known as a thanksgiving prayer. It is an opportunity for us to thank Jesus for the sacrifice he made and to thank God that we are welcomed to the table of God to share in this sacred meal.

In your workbooks, on page 71, you have two examples of thanksgiving prayers and a space to write your own.

Invite the students to read the thanksgiving prayers together.

Tell the students: You can now write your own prayer. Let us begin with words that address God, such as Lord God; or God, our Father.

Ask the students: Who has another example? *(Take a few examples.)*

Invite the students to take a moment to write their introduction to their prayer in the space provided in their workbook.

Tell the students: Now you can write what we want to thank God for. Take a few moments to write your thanks to God.

(Allow time for the students to write.)

Tell the students: Now you can write a conclusion such as: I make this prayer through your Son, Jesus. Amen.

An example of a prayer might be like this:

God, our Father,

Thank you for your wonderful gift to me of Jesus' Body and Blood and life. Thank you for the opportunity to come to Communion and share in your sacred meal, today and for many years ahead.

I make this prayer through Jesus, your Son. Amen.

Invite the students to read their prayers during your closing prayer (if time permits).

Gather the students around the prayer focus.

Catechist: Let us pray to God, our Father, who gives us everything we need. Let us listen to our prayers of thanks, which we offer to God in anticipation of the special day of our First Communion.

Students: Share their prayers of thanks. Group responds with Amen.

Catechist: We make all these prayers through Christ, our Lord.

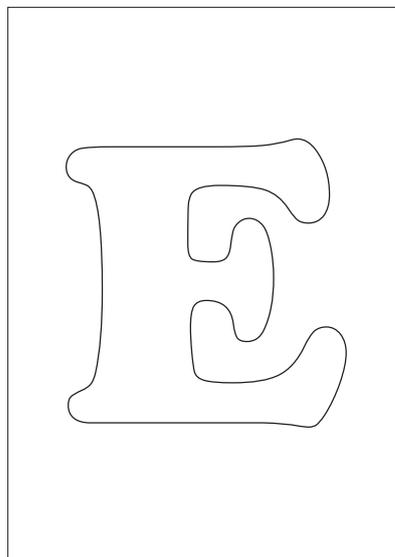
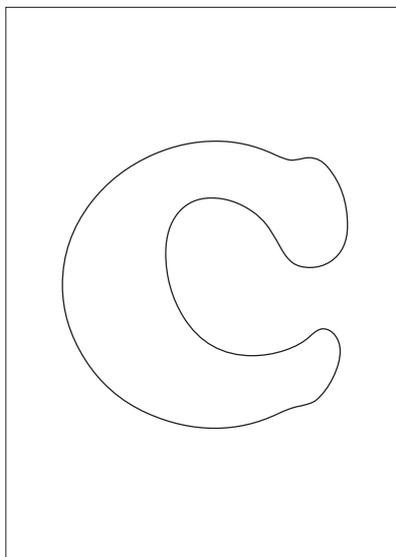
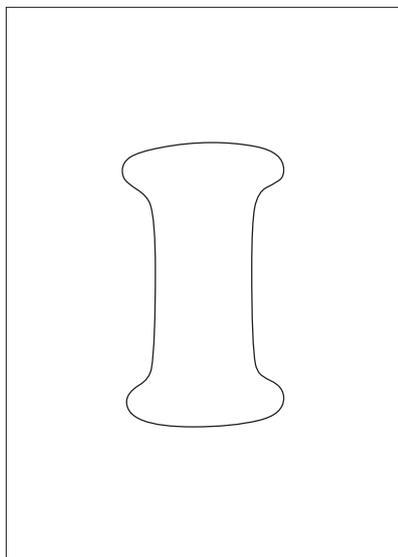
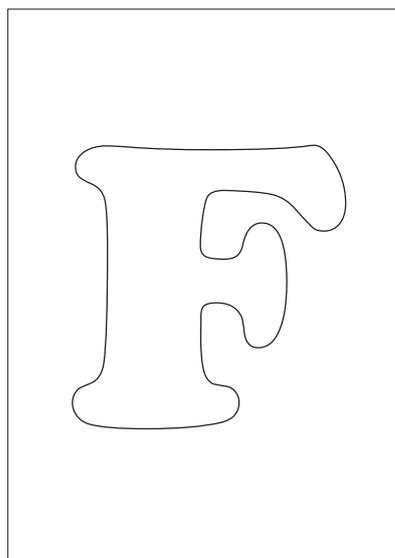
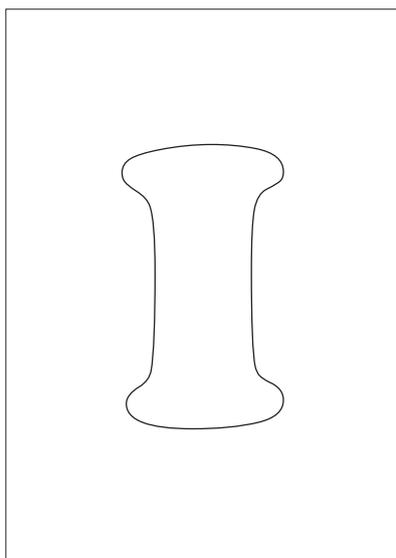
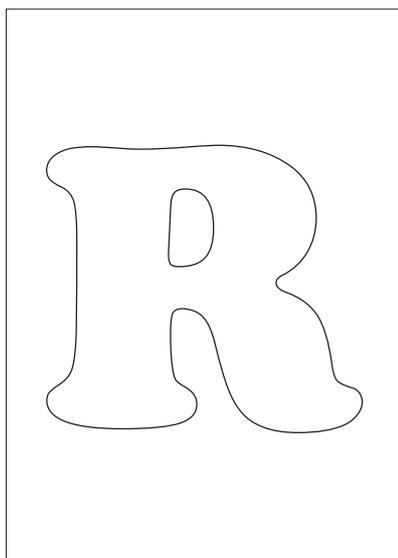
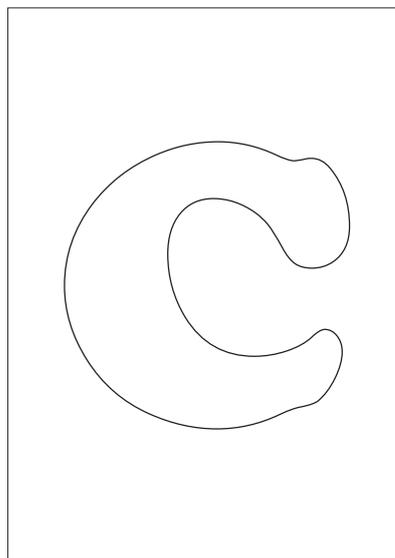
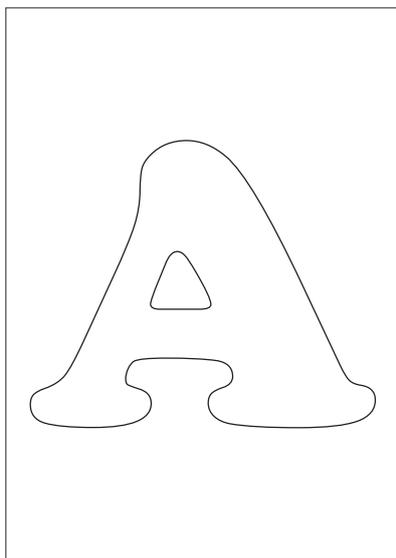
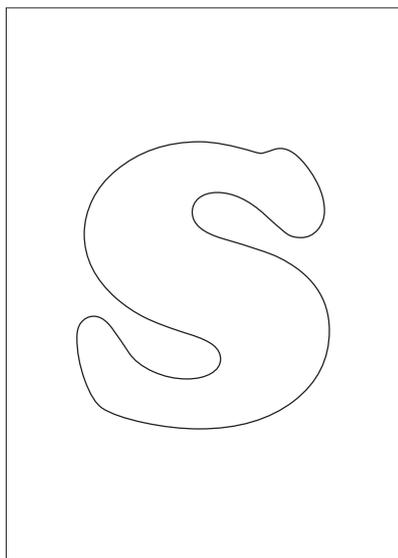
All: Amen.

Collect the workbooks and dismiss the students as usual.

PREPARATION

Appendix 22a – Sacrifice Template

Enlarge each letter onto a separate card. They need to be at least as large as an A4 sheet.
Ensure that you have enough for one per student.



Appendix 22b – Receiving Communion Card

Make enough copies for one per student and laminate.

Receiving Communion

As you leave the pew follow behind the person in front of you and keep in line. Walk towards the altar and the priest with your hands together. Think about what you are doing and whom you are going to receive.

When the person in front of you is receiving communion, give a small bow to acknowledge that it is Jesus you are receiving.

When it is your turn, you put forward the hand you write with, palm up and place your other hand, also with the palm up, on top. The priest will offer you the host saying, 'The Body of Christ', and you answer, 'Amen'.

When you have the host in your hand, step to one side and use your writing hand to put the host in your mouth and consume it as you return to your seat or walk to where the special minister is holding the chalice.

When the person in front of you is receiving the chalice, give a small bow to acknowledge that it is Jesus you are receiving.

When it is your turn, the minister will offer you the chalice saying, 'The Blood of Christ', and you answer, 'Amen'.

Hold the chalice in your hand and take a sip. Then step aside and return to your seat.

While you are returning to your seat, it is a good opportunity to think about the wonderful experience of sharing in this sacred meal and receiving the Body and Blood of Christ.

When you are back in your seat, say a prayer of thanks to God.

Jesus, the Bread of Life

Background for the Catechist

Take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

The miracles of the multiplication of the loaves, when the Lord says the blessing, breaks and distributes the loaves through his disciples to feed the multitude, prefigure the superabundance of this unique bread of his Eucharist. The sign of water turned into wine at Cana already announces the Hour of Jesus' glorification. It makes manifest the fulfilment of the wedding feast in the Father's kingdom, where the faithful will drink the new wine that has become the Blood of Christ (CCC, n. 1335).

In coming to understand the meaning of the Eucharist it is important for us to reflect on the significance of bread and wine in our daily lives. Bread is one of our staple foods. Jesus likens himself to this daily bread and invites us to think of him as our spiritual nourishment. Bread is life-giving.

Student focus

Students at this age have a good awareness of the life-giving nourishment of bread. They are also aware that we hunger for much deeper things such as peace and love. Ultimately our hunger is for God. It is a difficult leap, but it is important for the students to understand why Jesus proclaimed himself as the 'bread of life'. He is the one who answers our deepest hunger for God at the depths of our hearts.

Teaching point

Jesus is the Bread of Life.

Remembering point

Jesus is the Bread of Life.

Beginning

(5 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Invite the students to sit in a circle on the floor. From your container take out the cloth and spread it on the floor in the middle of the group. Then place each item on the cloth, naming it and commenting on its significance. (We place the Bible (opened at Mark 6: 30–44) because it has all the stories of Jesus. We place the candle and light it because it reminds us that Christ is always with us, lighting our way. We place the bread and fish because they remind us of the scripture story that we will read today.)

Tell the students: Let us now prepare ourselves for our lesson with our prayer.

All: In the name of the Father ...

Catechist: God, you want us to be with you always and because of this, you sent your Son, Jesus, to show us the way.

May we listen to your word and the message of Jesus and understand the importance of your teaching. Help us understand that Jesus is the bread of life, and we are nourished by Christ's Body and Blood when we go to Mass.

We make this prayer through Christ, our Lord.

All: Amen.

Ask the students:

- Why might I have these five loaves and two fish? What story might they come from? *(There could be a variety of answers. If you don't get an answer about the story of the feeding of the five thousand, then tell the students that this is the reason.)*
- How do you feel when you are hungry?
- Why is food so important to us? *(Encourage the students in their answers. Assist the students in understanding that food keeps us alive and makes us feel good. Food ensures that we can live our life to the best of our abilities, without being stopped by illness. Food also ensures that we can think clearly and make good decisions.)*

Middle

(35 minutes)

Tell the students: Jesus knew what it was like to be hungry. Jesus knew the importance of food. We will now listen to a story about Jesus satisfying people's hunger in an amazing way.

Distribute the workbooks and **invite the students** to turn to page 73.

Invite a student who can read reasonably well to read the following passage from Mark 6: 30–44. **Hand the student** the Bible to read from, as this places the text in the context of being Sacred Scripture.

PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus to be 'built' when the students have gathered: a cloth, a candle, five small rolls and two paper cut-outs of fish, the Bible.
2. A pillowcase, bag or basket in which to have the prayer focus items. See Appendix 23 on page 133 for a template for the fish.
3. Workbooks.

PREPARATION

Ask the reader to stand next to the prayer focus for the reading.

The apostles gathered around Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught. He said to them, 'Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while.' For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves. Now many saw them going and recognised them, and they hurried there on foot from all the towns and arrived ahead of them. As he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things. When it grew late, his disciples came to him and said, 'This is a deserted place, and the hour is now very late; send them away so that they may go into the surrounding country and villages and buy something for themselves to eat.' But he answered them, 'You give them something to eat.' They said to him, 'Are we to go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread, and give it to them to eat?' And he said to them, 'How many loaves have you? Go and see.' When they had found out, they said, 'Five, and two fish.' Then he ordered them to get all the people to sit down in groups on the green grass. So they sat down in groups of hundreds and of fifties. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to his disciples to set before the people; and he divided the two fish among them all. And all ate and were filled; and they took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish. Those who had eaten the loaves numbered five thousand men (Mk 6: 30–44).

Invite the students to turn to page 74 in their workbook to the *Feeding of the Five Thousand Activity – Part 1*.

Tell the students: With the person beside you, re-read the story and answer the questions in the outer circle (who, what, when ...), and write your answers in the spaces.

Ask the students to look at page 75 at *The Feeding of the Five Thousand Activity – Part 2*, and answer the questions.

Ask the students: What do you think this story might be telling us? (*This is probably the most important question, as it both focuses the students' thinking as well as giving them the opportunity to think more deeply about the message in the story and how it is relevant to their lives.*)

Tell the students: Yes, the message in this story is important for us to remember. Mark tells this story to remind us of the Old Testament story of God feeding the Hebrew people in the desert after their escape from Egypt. What we are invited to think about is that God will provide the food that we need.

The connection between the words used here, to bless and break and share, and those used during the Last Supper when Jesus also says a blessing, breaks the bread and shares it with the apostles, is very strong. In this case, the food is offered through Jesus. We are meant to see that not only does God provide food for us, but that Jesus offers us his Body and Blood in the Eucharist, the memorial, or remembering, of Christ's action at the Last Supper. In this action of consecration of the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ, we know that we will be sharing in the 'bread of life', Jesus Christ.

When we are fed by Jesus, the bread of life, it is our inner spiritual self that is nourished. When we receive Communion we are strengthened so that we can respond to what God wants us to do, to be the very best person we can be and help others come to know God and Jesus. Receiving Christ in the Eucharist is not for ourselves alone, but rather so that we might make God known to others, especially by the way that we live.

End

(10 minutes)

Invite the students to write 'Jesus is the bread of life' in the space marked 'something to remember'.

Gather the students around the prayer focus with their workbooks open at the prayer (page 75).

Catechist: Let us be still for a few moments to consider what we have learned today.

All: In the name of the Father ...

Catechist: Let us join together singing the following hymn:

'Jesus, You are the Bread We Long For' by Bernadette Farrell, or another hymn related to the 'Bread of Life'.

Catechist: Let us pray together:

Jesus, you are the bread of life.
 You know all our needs.
 You show us how to love,
 and how to be generous.
 You feed us all with the Bread of Life
 and you teach us to feed the hungry.
 In you we see God's love.
 Bless us today and every day.

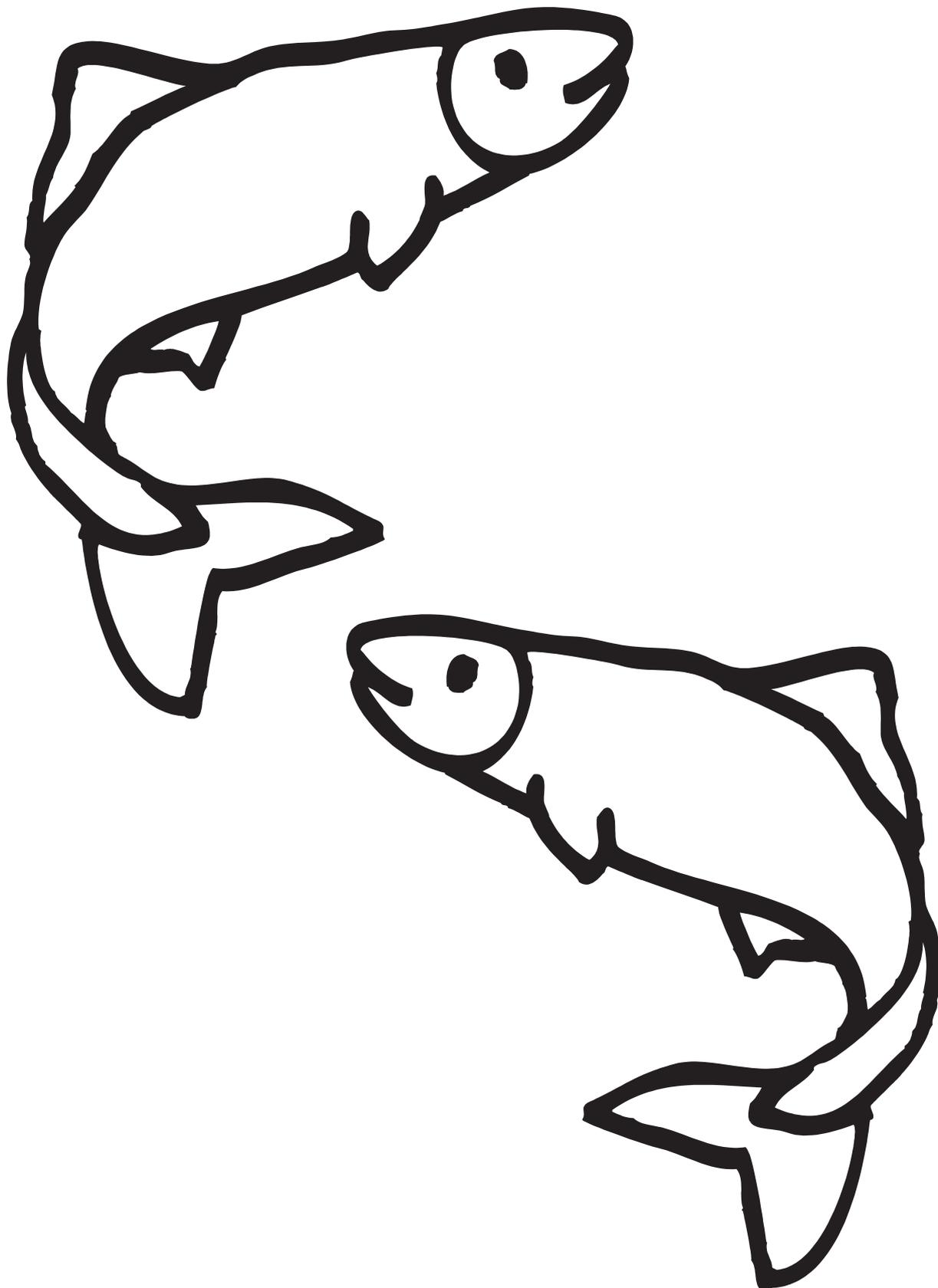
Amen.

Collect the workbooks and dismiss the students as usual.

PREPARATION

Appendix 23 – Fish Template

Photocopy and cut out the fish. If possible laminate each fish.



Living as Jesus Taught Us

Background for the Catechist

Take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

The mission of the Church is to proclaim and establish the Kingdom of God begun by Jesus Christ among all peoples (CCCC, n. 150).

The Kingdom of God is present with us now in this world, though not yet complete. Christ asks his followers to work with him to complete his work on earth. This is our challenge to carry out Christ's mission to spread the Good News of salvation. In the Eucharistic celebration the challenge is presented to us. In receiving the Body of Christ we accept the challenge and are given the strength to carry out our task. The priest charges the community to 'Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord'. We are sent forth as servants of the Lord to help to build up his Kingdom and to help to bring to fulfilment his own reign of love and peace. 'Love one another as I have loved you' (Jn 13: 34–35).

First Communion is not an ending but a beginning. It is not so much a special day to remember, but rather an event, a reality, to look forward from. This is true each and every time we receive Communion and participate in the Eucharist. The title – 'Living as Jesus Taught Us' – is important because it emphasises the place of the Eucharist in the context of our whole life.

Student Focus

Through the means of social communication, students have a broad awareness of events outside their immediate experiences. They have a sense of a world which is big, yet very close. At this time in their lives students need to be given gentle guidance to assist them to live as Jesus taught.

Teaching point

At the end of the Mass, we are sent out to live as Jesus taught us to live

Remembering point

At the end of the Mass, we are sent out to live as Jesus taught us to live.

PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: a cloth, a candle, a Missal.
2. Workbooks

Beginning

(5 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Gather the students around the prayer focus.

Tell the students: So far in our lessons we have looked at all the different parts of the Mass except for one, the last one, called the Concluding Rites. Today we will look at how we are sent out from Mass to carry Jesus' message about God to everyone. It is a very important part of the Mass because throughout the Eucharist we are helped to learn more about God and to respond to the message of Jesus, to celebrate and give thanks. At the end of Mass, we are 'sent out' to carry this message to others.

Today we will look at how we might live as Jesus taught us. First, let us pray.

Catechist: In the name of the Father ...

Lord God, we praise you for your goodness and kindness.
We have learned much about you through your Son,
Jesus Christ. We thank you for Jesus Christ, who has
given himself for us. We make this prayer to you, God,
who is Lord forever.

All: Amen.

Middle

(30 minutes)

Divide the students into groups of four and distribute the workbooks. **Ask the students** to open them at page 76. **Allocate** one reading per group.

Tell the students: In your group, one person will read the Scripture out loud for everyone else. Then your task is to identify what Jesus is saying and what he is telling us about living our lives. Take time to talk about what each of you thinks Jesus is teaching about life, listening carefully and respectfully. Each of you is to record the answer in your own workbook. Then individually, think about and choose a time or event in your own life that is a positive example of Jesus' teaching.

While you are working together, remember to listen to each other without interruption. Allocate someone to be timekeeper – you have 10 minutes for this activity – and someone to monitor who is speaking. When you have all written down your event in your workbooks on page 76, then share these with each other.

Invite one student from each group to share their answer to identifying what Jesus is telling us about living our lives.

Tell the students: Now I am going to give you a challenge. I want each group to decide which of your four life events you think best describes Jesus' teaching in the Scripture you read. Then I would like each group to prepare a drama of that event that illustrates the teaching of Jesus in the scripture passage. You might want to change some of the characters so that they are not identifiable, and you might want to change some aspects of the setting. These changes are fine, as long as the drama illustrates the teaching of Jesus in the Scripture.

(Give the students at least 15 minutes to prepare and rehearse their drama.)

Have the students return to their seats. **Nominate the order** in which the groups will be presenting back to the class.

Tell the students: We will now watch each group's presentation. Remember, we listen attentively and respectfully. At the beginning of each play, I would like one of you to read the scripture text before you begin.

(Allow enough time to present their dramas.)

Tell the students: These plays have been very well done. You have captured the message of Jesus quite well. Let us think for a few moments about what these events from our lives say about the message of Jesus.

Invite a few students to respond to this reflection.

Tell the students: Open your workbook at page 78 at the space titled 'Living Like Jesus Wants Me to Live'. In the placard write a sentence or two that says how you might apply the teachings of Jesus from the three scripture texts we have read and dramatised, in your daily life. You might start your sentences with, 'I can live like Jesus wants me to when I ...'.

End

(5 minutes)

Tell the students: What you have just written is for you to think about and remind yourself. In particular you might think about it every time you go to Mass. Remember at the beginning of the lesson I spoke about the Concluding Rites. It is at this time that you can consider what you will go out to do, how you will carry Christ's message to others.

Turn to page 79 in the workbook and you can read the words that the priest uses. We are told to 'Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life', which means we are to go and live as Jesus wants us to live. We respond with, 'Thanks be to God'.

Gather the students around the prayer focus with their workbooks open at page 79.

Tell the students: We will now conclude with our prayer, remembering that, as Christians, we follow the teachings of Jesus in the way we live our lives. We live as he taught us to live.

Catechist: Let us pray.
Jesus, your teaching guides our lives.

All: Help us to follow your way.

Catechist: Jesus, you teach us to love one another.

All: Help us to show our care for others.

Catechist: Jesus, your teaching shows us the path to life.

All: Help us to be generous and kind.

Catechist: Jesus, we see you in the poor and wounded.

All: Open our eyes to your presence.

Catechist: Let us go in peace, glorifying the Lord by our lives.

All: Thanks be to God!

Collect the workbooks. Dismiss the students as usual.

PREPARATION

LESSON 25

God, Our Creator

Background for the Catechist

Take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

God himself created the visible world in all its richness, diversity and order. Scripture presents the work of the Creator symbolically as a succession of six days of divine 'work', concluded by the 'rest' of the seventh day. On the subject of creation, the sacred text teaches the truths revealed by God for our salvation, permitting us to 'recognize the inner nature, the value and the ordering of the whole of creation to the praise of God.'

Nothing exists that does not owe its existence to God the Creator. The world began when God's word drew it out of nothingness; all existent beings, all of nature, and all human history are rooted in this primordial event, the very genesis by which the world was constituted and time begun (CCC, nn. 337–338).

Faith in God as Creator is a hallmark of Christian faith: 'I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth,' proclaims the Creed. The first chapters of Genesis reveal a God whose power is the power to create, to do good and confer good things. Every act of God is designed for the blessing and wellbeing of human beings who are the crown of creation, made in the image and likeness of God. God is the origin and end of every created thing. This is the clear message of the inspired stories of Genesis and the faith of the Church.

Student Focus

Students of this age are interested in the natural world. They appreciate its beauty and its diversity. They are fascinated with the intricacies of creatures, e.g. the eyes of an insect. They are open to wonder at the beauty of God, who is the Creator of all these things.

Teaching Point

We explore the image of God as Creator.

Remembering Point

God created everything.

Beginning

(7 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Gather the students around the prayer focus. Hand out the workbooks and ask the students to open them at page 80. **Tell the students:** In our prayer we are going to respond to the phrases of the Sign of the Cross with the prayers that are in your workbook.

Catechist: Let's get ready for prayer by being still.

Today we are learning about God as creator. Look carefully at the things on the prayer focus. *(Pause for a few moments.)*

Catechist: In the name of the Father,

All: who brings life to the world. Help us to care for your creation today.

Catechist: And of the Son,

All: who shows us how to live. Help us to live as your followers today.

Catechist: And of the Holy Spirit,

All: who lives within us. Fill us with your gifts today. Amen.

Ask the students: What did you notice about the prayer focus? *(Take all their responses.)*

Tell the students: Yes, there are all leaves of different sizes, shapes and colours.

Invite the students to sort the leaves into colours. *(Allow one minute.)*

Ask the students: What do you notice about these groups? *(There are different sizes and shapes.)*

Invite the students to sort each colour into sizes. *(Allow one minute.)*

Ask the students: What other ways could we sort the leaves? *(by plant names, what we can eat, what animals eat ...)*

Tell the students: Return to your tables and open your workbooks at page 80. In each leaf write one of the categories into which we have sorted the leaves. *(Colour, sizes, food ...)*

PREPARATION

1. Collect a large variety of leaves, different shapes, colours, sizes and functions.
2. Workbooks.
3. Prayer focus: A cloth, a variety of leaves, a candle.
4. Write the Remembering Point, 'God created everything', on a large sheet of paper allowing space for words to be written around the phrase.

God created everything.
5. Blu-Tack.
6. Copy and cut out enough leaf shapes for each student. (See the template in Appendix 25b, page 142.)
7. Sample Word Map, in Appendix 25a, page 141.

PREPARATION

Middle*(35 minutes)*

Display the remembering point: 'God created everything', in a prominent place where all the students can see it clearly.

Ask the students: What sorts of things has God created? (*Animals, people, plants ...*)

Record the brainstorm responses around the phrase.

Tell the students: Just as the leaves we looked at earlier were all different shapes and colours, so everything that God created is different and unique. God created everything because God wanted to and we are part of that 'everything'.

Invite the students to look at each other and think about what things are the same and what is different. What do we know about each other? (*Rita is a good soccer player, Rob draws well ...*)

Divide the class into three groups of four students (more groups if you have a larger number of students).

Tell the students: Each group is to create a word map about what you know about each other at your table. On page 81 of the workbook you will see a scroll with 'God Created Us' in the centre. In each oval space around it, you are to write the name of each member of your group. Then, in the boxes, write what you know is the same and different about each other and connect this information to the person. It will look something like this (*show the Sample Word Map*).

You will have five minutes to write as much as possible. Use one person's workbook for your recording, then copy the responses into your own workbook.

Walk around the groups as they work. Give help where needed.

After five minutes, **invite the students** to link, using a coloured pencil or felt pen, all the things that are the same. For example, all the sports they have listed, all the physical characteristics. **Remind the students** to use a different colour for each category. (*Allow five minutes for this activity.*)

After five minutes **ask a representative** from a group to tell everyone what the word map shows. (There are a lot of things that each person does that are different from what every other member of the group does.)

Tell the students: Your word maps show us how different, how similar, how gifted, and how wonderful people are. We are like this because God created us. We might remember that last year we learned that God made us in God's image. That means that we are like God but we need to work at being more like God.

Point to the Remembering Point on to the whiteboard and **ask the students** to copy the phrase into the scroll at the top of their word maps on page 81 of their workbook.

End

(15 minutes)

Give each student a leaf shape.

Tell the students: We are now going to write a prayer on this leaf which we will use at the end of the lesson. The prayer that you write is to be about our lesson today. I invite you to write about the fact that God created everything.

Your prayer might be a prayer of praise, praising God for God's creation, or it might be asking God for something to do with God's creation. You might combine your prayer and write a prayer of praise and thanks for God's creation. Turn to page 80 in your workbook and you will see some suggestions for how you might start your prayer and how you might end your prayer. Write your prayer on the leaf shape; you can use coloured pencils or felt pens if you wish. You might like to write your prayer in your workbook first and then copy it onto your leaf. You will have 10 minutes to write your prayer.

When the students have finished, **collect the workbooks.**

Invite each student to put their leaf on the prayer focus.

Gather the students around the prayer focus.

Catechist: Let us stand around our focus. We have our candle (*light the candle*), which reminds us that Christ is present with us. Our Bible provides us with the stories and teachings of Jesus that help us know about God, and the leaves are our prayers.

Let us now make the Sign of the Cross together, asking the Trinity – Father, Son and Spirit – to be with us as we pray.

All: In the name of the Father ...

Catechist: I will select a leaf and read the prayer. After each prayer, we will respond with Amen.

The catechist selects a leaf and reads the prayer.

All: Amen.

Catechist: (student name) would you select a leaf and read the prayer, please.

Invite three students to select and read a prayer, after which everyone responds with, Amen.

Catechist: God of all creation, you made everything, and everything reflects your goodness. Help us to always remember to care for and respect your creation, especially each other.

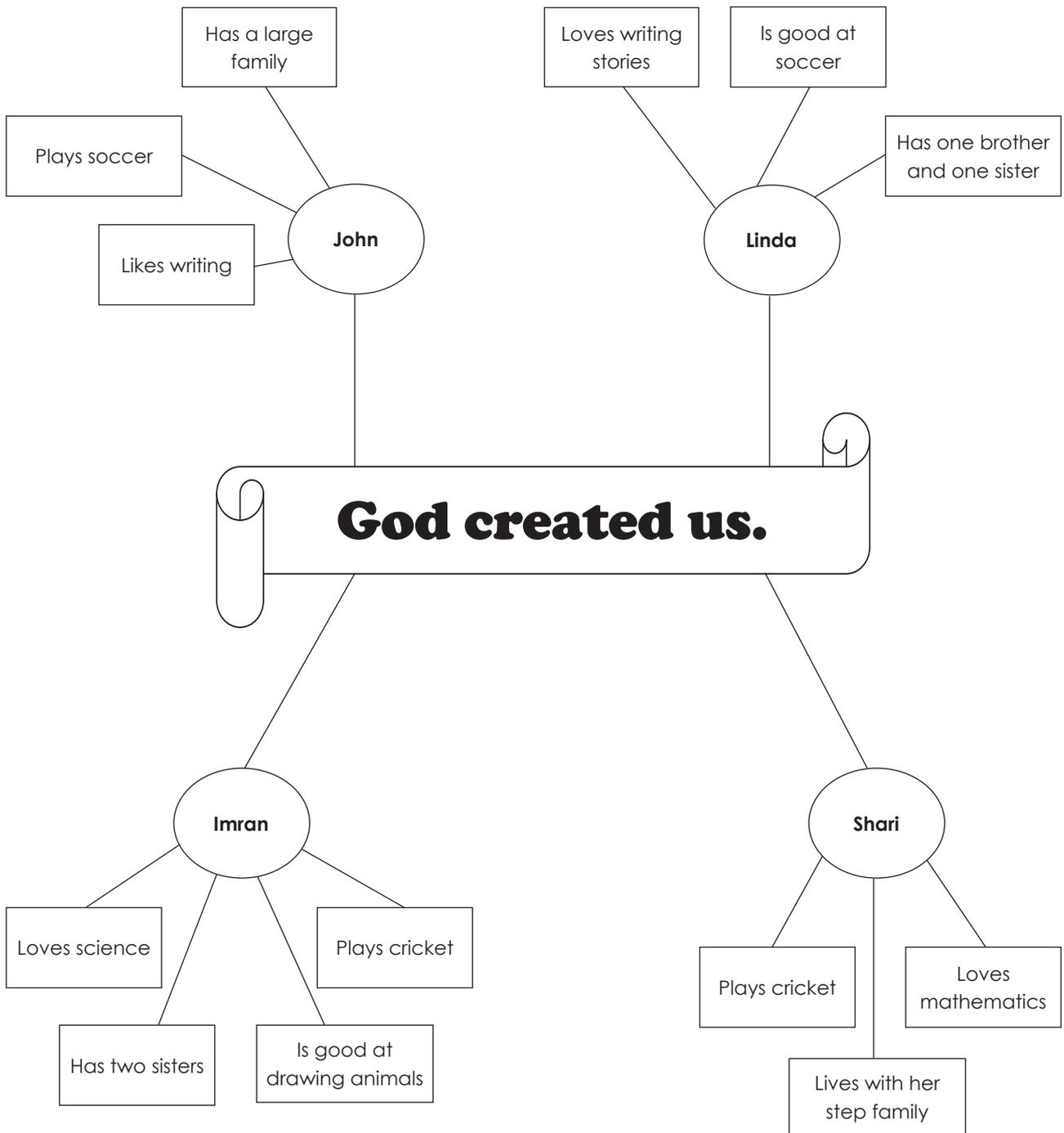
We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

All: Amen

Dismiss the students as usual.

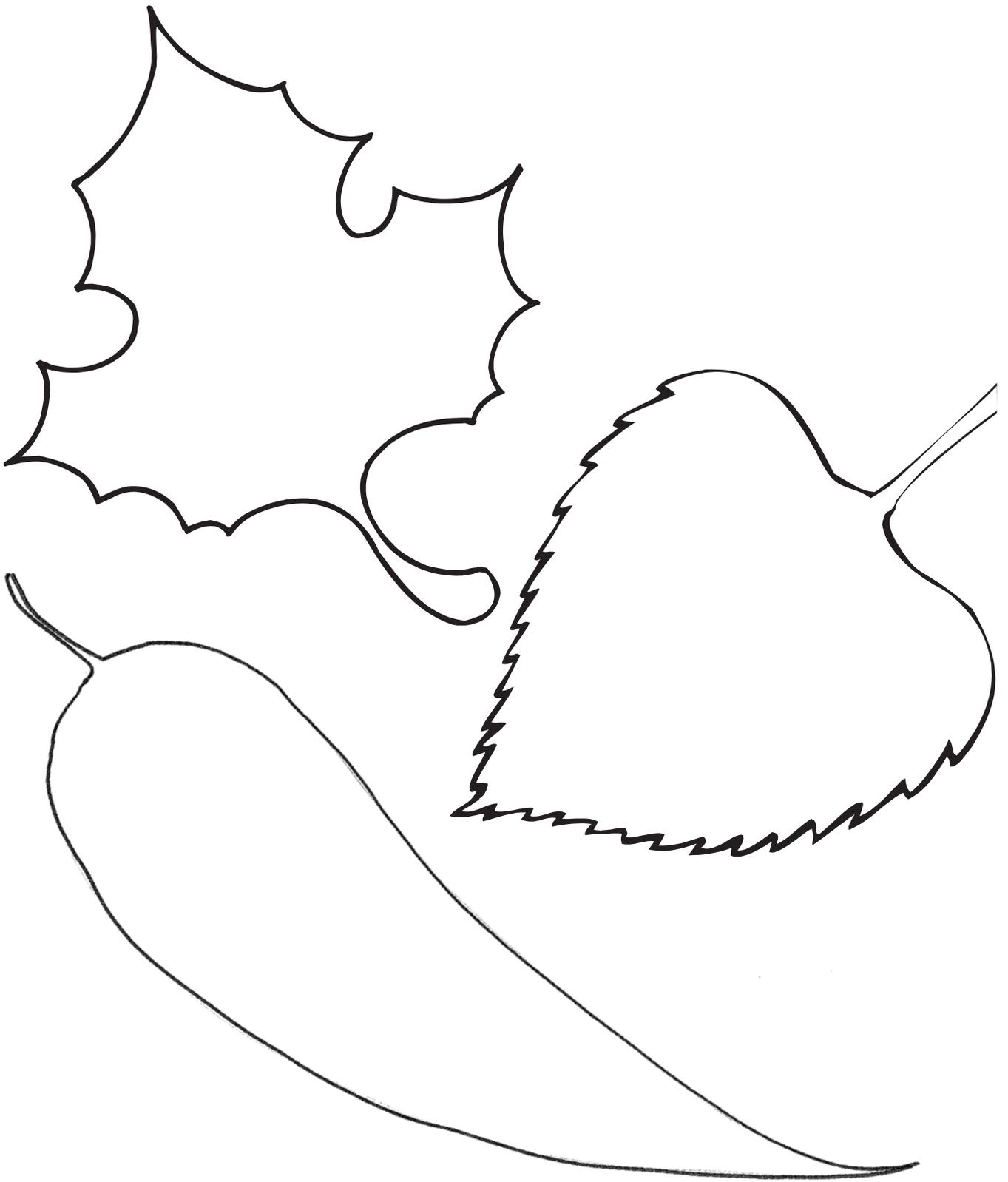
PREPARATION

Appendix 25a – Sample Word Map



Appendix 25b – Leaf Templates

Enlarge these on the photocopier and cut them out. Make enough for one leaf per student.



LESSON 26

Prayer

Background For Catechist

Take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

The choice of the time and duration of prayer arises from a determined will, revealing the secrets of the heart. One does not undertake prayer only when one has the time: one makes time for the Lord, with the firm determination not to give up, no matter what trials and dryness one may encounter. One cannot always meditate, but one can always enter into inner prayer, independently of the conditions of health, work, or emotional state. The heart is the place of this quest and encounter, in poverty and in faith (CCC, n. 2710).

Prayer is the human effort to come close to God. It is response to the sense of God implanted deep within each human heart. Sometimes it happens almost automatically in times of great pain, joy or sorrow and at other times it is a result of a deliberate decision to open oneself to God. Through the centuries the Church has developed many paths of prayer to help people come closer to God. Some of these are:

- *liturgical prayer* which is centred on the celebration of the Eucharist, the sacraments and the daily prayer of the Church (the Liturgy of the Hours)
- *learned prayers*, which can be prayed together or alone, e.g. the Hail Mary
- *meditative prayer* focuses on a passage from Scripture or other writings, an image, or an experience
- *Spontaneous prayer*, which arises from the ordinary events and experiences of life and connects us to God within the event.

Each of these ways of praying increases our closeness to God.

Student Focus

Students of this age value friendship and the love of family members. They know how to communicate their thoughts, troubles and needs with their cherished ones. They can readily see how they do the same with God, Jesus' Father and their Father too.

Teaching point

Through prayer we come closer to God.

Remembering point

I can grow closer to God through prayer.

Beginning

(10 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual and gather around the prayer focus.

Assemble the prayer focus with the children and as you place each item, comment on it.

Catechist: This green cloth that I am putting on our prayer focus reminds us that we are in *ordinary time* of the Church's year. Today in our lesson we are looking at the importance of prayer and how we pray.

This Mass Book helps us to remember that the Eucharist is the central Church prayer.

This set of rosary beads reminds us that the traditional prayers of the Church help us to pray.

When we stop to think about the place of God in the life of Mary MacKillop and in saintly people, as well as in our own lives, we are praying.

This can-opener is an ordinary thing that we use frequently. Just as this reminds us of all the foods our family shares, we can also think about the gift of food and be reminded to pray in thanks each time we use the things of everyday life.

As we light the candle we remember that Jesus is the light of the world and present with us as we pray.

Let us pray together the words that Jesus gave us.

All: Our Father ...

Catechist: Now we follow that traditional prayer with any prayers you would like to share.

To start your prayer say: We pray for ...

When those who wish to pray have had the opportunity, conclude with:

Catechist: Let us now pray the Glory be, together.

All: Glory be to the Father ...

Invite the students to brainstorm their answer to the following question: When have you seen people pray? **Record their answers** on the whiteboard or on a large sheet.

Tell the students: Prayer can happen at any time of the day and in any place. We can pray in the playground outside just as easily as we can pray in the church. Many people pray, and not always in a formal way on their knees with hands together! Today we will look closely at prayer and how praying helps us to grow closer to God.

PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: A green cloth, a candle, a Mass book, a set of rosary beads, a picture of St Mary of the Cross, a can-opener.
2. Four large sheets of paper with each of the following words on a separate sheet: Spontaneous, Meditation, Liturgical, Traditional. Place these around the room before the lesson begins.
3. Prayer examples for the activity, found in Appendix 26b page 149.
4. Whiteboard or large blank sheets of paper for the brainstorm.
5. Blank sheets of A4 paper for the students to write a draft copy of their psalm.
6. Workbooks.

PREPARATION

Middle*(35 minutes)*

Invite the students to go to their seats. **Hand out** the workbooks and **ask the students** to open them at page 82.

Tell the students: There are different categories of prayer. (See Appendix 26a on page 148.) There is formal prayer – prayer that is planned for a group of people and is usually prayed together – and informal prayer – prayer that is often prayed alone, but can, at times, be prayed with others, but it does not have a set structure.

Direct the students to look at the Two Categories of Prayer as you work through these descriptions. **Give some examples** of formal prayer, e.g. Mass, saying the Rosary. **Ask the students** to name other examples of formal prayer. **Give some examples** of informal prayer, e.g. prayer at the end of class, prayers of thanks. **Ask the students** to give some other examples of informal prayer. **Invite the students** to write in the spaces provided some examples of formal and informal prayer.

Ask the students to look at the types of prayer on page 83. **Tell them** that liturgical, traditional, meditation and spontaneous prayer are types of prayer. **Give examples** of each type of prayer as you describe them.

Tell the students: No matter what form our prayer might take, when we pray, we grow closer to God. Just as when we spend time with our friends and talk to them, we get to know them better and our friendship grows, so when we talk to God and spend time with God, our friendship with God grows.

Invite the students to gather round you at the front of the room.

Instruct the students to listen carefully to the prayers you read out.

Explain that when you have finished reading each prayer, the students are to decide which type of prayer it is and to move to and stand beside the appropriate poster in the room.

Read from the 'Forms of Prayer Activity' in Appendix 26b.

Invite the students to return to their seats when the activity is finished.

Tell the students: These types of prayers are some of the ways we can grow closer to God. We don't always have to go into a church or kneel down to pray. Whenever we think about God, whenever we speak to God in either a formal or an informal way, we are praying.

We do need to practise praying often, so that we become close friends with God. For thousands of years people have been praying to grow closer to God. Even as far back as the Old Testament people were turning to God with all their concerns. In those days, the Hebrew people had a very close friendship with God and because of this friendship special prayers were written. One kind of prayer during this time was the psalm. The psalm is a formal prayer that the Hebrew people prayed together. Jesus prayed the psalms, praising, thanking and asking God, his Father, for many things.

We pray the psalms at Mass. The special prayer, the Responsorial Psalm, prayed after the first reading, is from the Old Testament psalms. People who pray the Divine Office, or Daily Prayer of the Church, pray the psalms.

Let us look at a psalm and see what it looks like and see if we can write a psalm for today.

Invite the students to turn to page 84 in the workbook and to look at the two psalms with you. Either read them or choose a student to read them to the class.

Ask the students:

- What do you notice about the psalms? *(They are written like poems with verses, they tell us things about God ...)*
- What are the two psalms about? *(One is praising God in all the places we might find God, the other is telling everyone about God and how we can trust God to care for us ...)*

Ask the students: If you were going to write a psalm, what might you write your psalm about? *(Take all the answers from the students and help them to think about what they know about God and what they might praise about God.)*

(These reflections are very open-ended. Allow the students to answer from their understanding. There is no right or wrong answer.)

Invite the students to find a partner and to prepare a psalm of four verses that either praises what they know about God or tells others about the wonderful things they know about God. Distribute a blank sheet of paper to each pair of students.

Tell the students: You will need to decide which type of psalm you want to create and then to work out together the things you want to include. Prepare a draft of your psalm and when you are both happy with it copy it into your workbooks in the space marked 'My Psalm'.

When they have completed the task **select three students** to share their psalm with the group.

Tell the students: Your psalms tell me a lot about God. If we pray these psalms, and especially when we pray the ones in the Old Testament, then we will grow closer to God.

Underneath your psalm in the space 'Something to Remember' please write: When I pray, I grow closer to God.

Select three students to share their psalms during the prayer time.

PREPARATION

PREPARATION

End*(10 minutes)*

Invite the students to gather around the prayer focus. **Remind the students** who are sharing their psalms to bring their workbooks, opened at their psalms.

Tell the students: For our prayer we will listen to the prayer psalms of three groups.

Catechist: Let us begin our prayer by lighting our candle and making the Sign of the Cross together.

All: In the name of the Father ...

Catechist: Let us listen to three of the psalms written today. After each psalm we will respond with:

God, help us to pray so that we might grow closer to you.

All: God, help us to pray so that we might grow closer to you.

When all three psalms have been read ...

All: God, help us to pray so that we might grow closer to you.

Catechist: Lord God, you have helped us grow closer to you, to know more about you and become better friends with you. Be with us when we pray our spontaneous prayers and our formal prayers. Strengthen our longing to know you better. We make this prayer, through Jesus, your Son.

All: Amen.

Collect the workbooks and dismiss the students as usual.

Appendix 26a – Different Forms of Prayer

FORMAL

This is prayer that is planned for a group of people and is usually prayed together. It uses a standard set of prayers that people know or follow. Formal prayer is usually associated with the Church's celebration of the sacraments. Formal prayer can be used when any group gathers to pray, anywhere.

INFORMAL

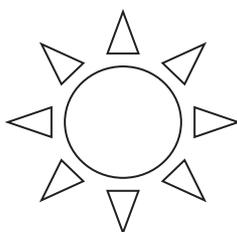
Prayer that is often prayed alone, but can be prayed with others. This form of prayer does not have any set words or structure for the prayer. This can use traditional prayers, meditation or spontaneous prayer.

TRADITIONAL PRAYERS

These are generally the prayers that we learn 'off by heart'. They are the prayers that are usually used for formal prayer, but they can be a part of the informal prayer as well. These prayers include the Our Father and the Hail Mary.

LITURGICAL PRAYER

This prayer is the official prayer of the Church. It is prayed by the community when celebrating the sacraments. It also includes the prayers set down by the Church called 'The prayer of the Church', or the Divine Office.



MEDITATION

This involves spending time quietly reflecting on Scripture, an image, a thought, inspirational writing or a prayer. Meditation requires a quiet place and silence. Meditation is most frequently practised by an individual in an informal setting, but can also be undertaken in a formal setting.

SPONTANEOUS PRAYER

When we speak to God our Father, Jesus, or the Holy Spirit, about what is in our hearts, then this is what is called 'spontaneous prayer'. Spontaneous prayer can be included in formal prayer times, but it is usually part of informal prayer and usually by an individual. These prayers are often about things that happen in our daily life.

Appendix 26b – Forms of Prayer Activity and Answers

Prayer	Type
Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen.	<i>(Traditional prayer)</i>
May the Lord be with you. And with your spirit.	<i>(Liturgical)</i>
Loving God, help Grandma's doctor make her well.	<i>(Spontaneous)</i>
Thank you, Lord, for the sunshine that made sports day so enjoyable.	<i>(Spontaneous)</i>
'Love one another as I have loved you.' Think about these words. What would I have to change to achieve this?	<i>(Meditation)</i>
Holy, holy, holy, Lord, God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.	<i>(Liturgical)</i>
Bless us, O Lord, and these your gifts which we are about to receive from your goodness, through Christ, our Lord.	<i>(Traditional prayer)</i>

Mary, Model for Believers

Background for the Catechist

Take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

By her complete adherence to the Father's will, to his Son's redemptive work, and to every prompting of the Holy Spirit, the Virgin Mary is the Church's model of faith and charity. Thus she is a 'preeminent and ... wholly unique member of the Church'; indeed, she is the 'exemplary realization' (typus) of the Church (CCC, n. 967).

The life of Mary, Mother of God, was both extraordinary – because her Son was Jesus, second Person of the Trinity and one of the outstanding religious teachers of all time – and profoundly ordinary in its hiddenness. Unlike her son, Mary did not live a high-profile public life, she did not challenge the status quo, she did not clash with the religious leaders, attract any kind of following or die an agonised, disgraceful death in dubious circumstances. Her life and faith suggest themselves to us as a much more possible example to follow.

The various events that are recorded in Scripture about Mary reveal:

- her faith in God and ready acceptance of God's will for her (Annunciation)
- her kindness and concern for others (Visitation and Cana)
- her prayer, deeply rooted in her own Jewish tradition (Magnificat)
- her endurance and courage and capacity for joy and pain (the Nativity of Jesus and at the foot of the cross)
- her faithfulness to the requirements of religion (Presentation in the Temple)
- her care and concern for her son as a child (when he was lost in Jerusalem) and as a man (when she is mentioned among his disciples).

Each of these attributes of Mary is at least possible for each of us. Mary lived them to the full. We can live them to the best of our ability.

Student Focus

Students of this age appreciate the people whose lives witness to God. They readily understand that the actions and words of these witnesses are expressions of their faith. Students are able to transfer this knowledge to an understanding of Mary as a model for believers.

Teaching Point

Mary, Mother of God, is a model for believers.

Remembering Point

I can live my life like Mary.

PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: A cloth, a candle, the Bible, an icon image of Mary.
2. Workbooks.
3. Activity Sheets in Appendix 27, pages 153–155, enlarged onto A3 sheets.
4. Blank sheets of A4 paper for the 'Hot Potato' activity.

Beginning

(5 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Gather the students around the prayer focus and light the candle. **Hand out** the workbooks and **invite the students** to turn to page 86 and together pray the Hail Mary.

Tell the students: Find three other students and sit together to form a group of four. Today we are going to begin with a quick game of 'Hot Potato'.

(Hot Potato requires each member of the group to list as many facts as they can about the subject within a short period of time, and then pass the sheet on to the next student, who has to add new information and not duplicate what is there.)

Hand out a blank sheet of paper to each group.

Tell the students: Each person, in turn, has 15 seconds to write as many facts or things you know about Mary, Jesus' mother. When I ring this bell *(or clap or make a noise ...)* you are to pass the piece of paper on to the next person. That person is to add to the facts by writing new information, not duplicating what is already on the list. When everyone has had a turn, we will hear what each team has written.

When the one minute is up, **invite the last student** in each team, to share with the rest of the class what their team has written. *(Affirm their correct pieces of information and ask for further clarification, if necessary, for others.)*

Tell the students: You do know a lot about Mary, Jesus' mother. The Church looks to Mary in a special way. The Church sees Mary as an important person of faith. Mary is the best model we have of how to live our lives as Jesus wants. As Jesus' mother, Mary was the first person to believe fully in Jesus and the message given to her from God. So today we are going to explore a little more about what Mary was like and how she lived her life.

Middle

(40 minutes)

Tell the students: Most of our information about Mary comes from the gospels. Today we will look more closely at some of the stories in the gospels that tell us things about Mary's life and her personality.

Divide the class into three groups and hand each group one of the Activity Sheets in Appendix 27. **Tell the students** to open their workbooks at pages 87–88 for the text for their Activity Sheet.

Invite the students to nominate a time-keeper, a scribe (to record their answers), and a moderator (someone to make sure that everyone has a chance to speak, that only one person speaks at a time, and to move the group on through the questions).

Tell the students: You have 20 minutes to read the scripture text and brainstorm answers to each of the questions next to each coloured hat.

Remember to let everyone have a chance to speak if they wish to, and only one person speaking at a time. The time-keeper is to let everyone know when you are getting close to the time to finish. The time-keeper is to allow no more than four minutes per coloured hat. The moderator is to make sure that you get answers for every Thinking Hat. The moderator can tell you when you have to move on to the next set of questions. The scribe will need to pay attention to the moderator and keep up with putting the answers where they belong. You will all need to concentrate on what you are doing and to think about your answers carefully.

You have 20 minutes, starting now!

When the time is up **invite the students** to nominate a speaker for each group.

Invite each speaker to read their text aloud and then to share their answers for each coloured thinking hat, except the white one. When each student has finished reporting, **invite any other students** to respond to the questions from their own thoughts. (This need not take too long, but allow other students' contributions as you move through each group.)

When all three speakers have reported back **ask the students:**

- What does each story tell us about Mary's faith and belief in God and/or Jesus? *(Accept the students' answers, their insights will be rich as there is no right or wrong answer here.)*

End

(10 minutes)

Tell the students: Mary responded in this way to the call to be the first disciple of Jesus. What might this mean for our lives?

Open your workbooks at page 88 and answer the question under Mary is My Model for Living: How does Mary's life help me live like Jesus wants?

After five minutes **invite the students** to share their answer with the person beside them.

Invite the students to gather with their workbooks around the prayer focus. **Invite two students** to read their responses.

Catechist: Let us make the Sign of the Cross.

All: In the name of the Father ...

Catechist: Let us now listen to *(name students)* share with us how Mary's life helps them live like Jesus wants.

After the sharing:

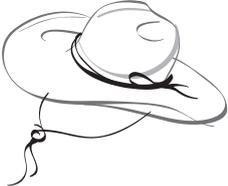
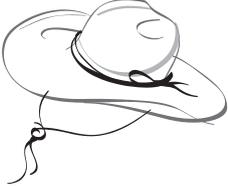
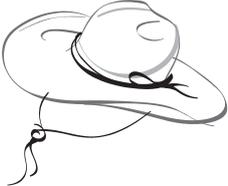
All: Hail Mary ...

Collect the workbooks and dismiss the students as usual.

PREPARATION

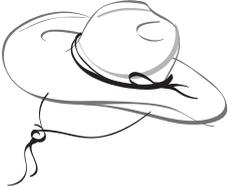
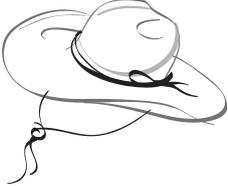
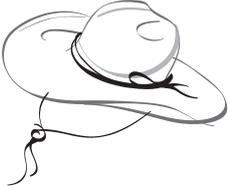
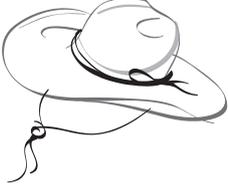
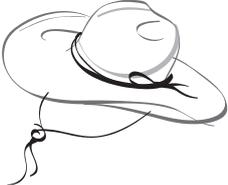
Appendix 27 – Activity Sheets

Scripture: Luke 1: 26–38

COLOURED HAT	QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
<p>WHITE</p> 	<p>Where was Mary? Who visited Mary? What happened in the story?</p>	
<p>RED</p> 	<p>What would it have felt like to be in Mary's shoes, to have been asked to be the mother of Jesus? How might Mary have felt?</p>	
<p>YELLOW</p> 	<p>What might be some positive aspects of Mary saying 'yes' to the angel?</p>	
<p>BLACK</p> 	<p>What difficulties might Mary have encountered in the community?</p>	
<p>GREEN</p> 	<p>How might Mary have told Joseph about what happened and what was going to happen?</p>	
<p>BLUE</p> 	<p>What more do you need to understand this story better? Which coloured hat would you use? Which hat has helped you best understand the story?</p>	

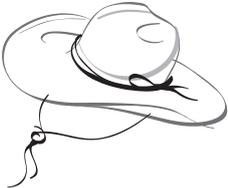
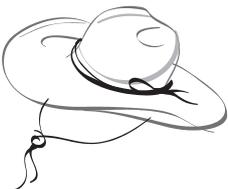
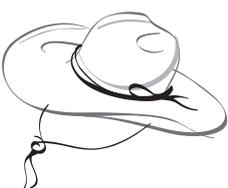
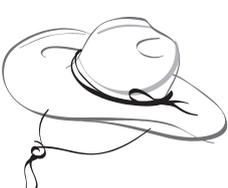
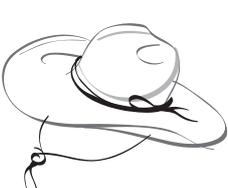
Appendix 27 – Activity Sheets (continued)

Scripture: Luke 1: 39–45

COLOURED HAT	QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
<p>WHITE</p> 	<p>What does Mary do in this story?</p>	
<p>RED</p> 	<p>What would it have felt like to be in Mary's shoes and been asked to be the mother of Jesus. How do you think Mary would have felt to find out an older cousin was going to have a baby too?</p>	
<p>YELLOW</p> 	<p>What could be some positive aspects of Mary travelling to see Elizabeth?</p>	
<p>BLACK</p> 	<p>What difficulties might Mary encounter on her way to visit Mary?</p> <p>What concerns might Mary have for Elizabeth having a baby when she is so old?</p>	
<p>GREEN</p> 	<p>After their greeting, how might Elizabeth and Mary have spent their days together?</p>	
<p>BLUE</p> 	<p>What more do you need to understand this story better? Which coloured hat would you use? Which hat has helped you best understand the story?</p>	

Appendix 27 – Activity Sheets (continued)

Scripture: John 2: 1–12

COLOURED HAT	QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
WHITE 	What does Mary do in this story?	
RED 	What would it have felt like to be the steward knowing that you were running out of wine?	
YELLOW 	What might be some of the positive aspects of no wine at the wedding party?	
BLACK 	What difficulties might Mary encounter when trying to persuade Jesus to help?	
GREEN 	How might Mary have helped out if Jesus had said no? What could she have done?	
BLUE 	What more do you need to understand this story better? Which coloured hat would you use? Which hat has helped you best understand the story?	

LESSON 28

The Life of Jesus in the Liturgy

Background for the Catechist

Take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

Christian liturgy not only recalls the events that saved us but actualises them, makes them present (CCC, n. 1104).

In the Liturgy of the Word the Holy Spirit 'recalls' to the assembly all that Christ has done for us. In keeping with the nature of liturgical actions and the ritual traditions of the churches, the celebration 'makes a remembrance' of the marvellous works of God in an anamnesis which may be more or less developed. The Holy Spirit who thus awakens the memory of the Church then inspires thanksgiving and praise (CCC, n. 1103).

In the Liturgy of the Word, which forms the first part of the Mass, it is not just a matter of listening to stories about long-dead people but of hearing in the readings the living Word who speaks to us today. When we listen to Scripture proclaimed in the liturgy, God is speaking to us through the words we hear. We are not reading to be informed about what happened in the past but to find out what Jesus wants to say to us right now. So learning to listen well and understand is of first importance.

Student Focus

Students of this age are generally excited about the next stage in their initiation into the faith community. The Liturgy of the Word offers the opportunity for greater learning about Jesus. Students enjoy mysteries and the opportunity to delve more deeply into the mystery of the Eucharist, especially when they are preparing to receive their First Communion.

Teaching Point

In the Liturgy we remember the stories and life of Jesus.

Remembering Point

The Liturgy helps us remember the life of Jesus.

PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: A cloth, a candle, the Bible
2. Workbooks.
3. Remembering Point on the whiteboard or a large sheet of paper.

The Liturgy helps us remember the life of Jesus.

Beginning

(5 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Gather the students round the prayer focus and **invite them** to be still and prepare to pray.

Catechist: Let's pray today the prayer that Jesus taught us.

All: Our Father ...

Invite the students to go to their places and distribute the workbooks.

Ask the students: When do we always say this prayer (Our Father)?
(at Mass, at various times of prayer ...)

Tell the students: The disciples often saw Jesus praying. One day, they asked him to teach them to pray. The Our Father is the prayer that Jesus taught his disciples.

Ask the students: What do you know about Jesus and his life?
(Accept all their answers.)

Invite the students to choose one of these things and write it in their workbooks on page 89.

Middle

(35 minutes)

Tell the students: Every time we go to Mass – which we also call the Liturgy – we hear stories about Jesus. Today we're going to look at four different stories that you will hear at Mass sometime, to see what more they tell us about Jesus. Perhaps some of you might have already listed one of these stories in your workbook. Now, you will have an opportunity to explore it more.

Allocate the students to groups and **assign one text** to each. **Tell the students** to read the story together from their workbooks on pages 89–91. (Visit each group to see how they are understanding the reading. Give assistance where needed. *Allow seven minutes.*)

Invite the students to answer the question: What more does this story tell me about Jesus? in the space provided in their workbook on pages 89–91.

Tell the students: Each of you is to write a sentence and draw a symbol for the story in the space provided on pages 89–91. *(Allow 13 minutes.)*

Invite a student from each group to share the story and what they learnt about Jesus' life. *(Allow 10 minutes.)*

Tell the students: We have learnt all these things about Jesus. Every time we go to Mass (the Liturgy) we hear a different story about Jesus and learn something more about his life. More importantly these stories can help us understand how Jesus is important to us today.

Invite the students to reflect on the stories in their workbook that they have just worked on.

Ask the students:

- What is there in the stories of Jesus that we hear during the Liturgy, that connect with or point to similar things in our lives?
- What is there in Jesus' stories and message that gives us hope?
- What questions are we still left with about how Jesus' stories in the Liturgy speak to our lives?

When they have finished **invite the students** to read the 'Something to Remember' phrase: The Liturgy helps us remember the life of Jesus.

End

(10 minutes)

Ask the students to bring their workbooks, open at page 91, and gather round the prayer focus.

Catechist: Let us make the Sign of the Cross.

All: In the name of the Father ...

Catechist: Heavenly Father, today we've looked at different stories about Jesus' life and we have learned more about him.

Reader 1: God, our Father, you let us know that Jesus is your Son through his baptism.

All: Help us to remember that Jesus is your Son.

Reader 2: God, our Father, your Son cared for his disciples when they were struggling against the wind.

All: Help us to remember that Jesus cares for others.

Reader 3: God, our Father, Jesus, your Son, served his disciples by washing their feet.

All: Help us to remember that Jesus served others.

Reader 4: God, our Father, your Son, Jesus, chose twelve to be his friends and helpers.

All: Help us to remember that Jesus wants us to be his friends and helpers.

Catechist: We ask you this in the name of Jesus, your Son.

All: Amen.

Take up the workbooks and dismiss the students as usual.

PREPARATION

LESSON 29

Jesus and Prayer

Background for the Catechist

Take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

Prayer is the habit of being in the presence of the thrice-holy God and in communion with him. This communion of life is always possible because, through Baptism, we have already been united with Christ. Prayer is Christian insofar as it is communion with Christ and extends throughout the Church, which is his Body. Its dimensions are those of Christ's love (CCC, n. 2565).

We can open ourselves to relationship with Jesus through prayer by deliberately deciding to spend some time each day in prayer. Relationship with Jesus is, at least a little, the same as any relationship. Speaking and listening to others, sharing their concerns and work, finding out their story, telling them ours, celebrating together from time to time, are the ordinary ways in which friendships are formed and maintained. It is the same with Jesus. When we pray with Scripture we focus on his presence with us. We can listen to Jesus' words, letting them sink in and asking him to help us understand him better through them. The main thing with prayer is to keep at it, to be regular in catching up with our friend Jesus.

Student Focus

Students of this age understand the need to nurture relationships. They are familiar with changing friendships and how they need to spend time with others in order to develop friendships. They know that true friends share time together, not always talking, sometimes doing things together and sometimes just sitting with each other.

Teaching Point

We grow in relationship with Jesus through prayer.

Remembering Point

We can grow closer to Jesus through prayer.

Beginning

(10 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Gather the students around the prayer focus.

Ask the students: Who can tell me what is on the prayer focus and what it means for you? *(Take the students' answers and explanations. These may not be what these items mean for you, but accept all the answers with affirmation.)*

Tell the students: Thank you for your thoughts. Today we are going to look at how prayer helps us continue our friendship with Jesus. These items on the focus help us remember important things about who Jesus is and how important it is for us to nurture our friendship with him. When we look at the coloured cloth we are reminded of the time of the Church's year. When we light the candle we are reminded of Jesus Christ being with us, and the Bible gives us the stories about Jesus that mean we can get to know him better. The other item is an example of something that can help us to pray.

So let us pray together now, thinking about Jesus and how we are strengthening our friendship with him.

Catechist: Let us make the Sign of the Cross.

All: In the name of the Father ...

Catechist: Our response is: Jesus, help us to pray.

Students: Jesus, help us to pray.

Catechist: Jesus, our guide, by your example we learn how to pray.

All: Jesus, help us to pray.

Catechist: Jesus, our brother, you want us to remain friends with you.

Students: Jesus, help us to pray.

Catechist: Jesus, we want to be close to you, to do what you want and spread your message to those around us,

Students: Jesus, help us to pray.

Catechist: Jesus, be with us and guide us in our prayer so that we might remain in your love. May we nurture our relationship with you by always turning to you in our lives. May we give time and attention to our prayer so that we come to know you more deeply.

All: Amen.

PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: A green cloth, a green candle and a Bible open at Mk 1: 16–20. Add one of the following: a prayer book, a small cross or an icon of a saint.
2. Have an A3 sheet with 'COMMUNICATE' written in the centre, e.g.



3. Friendship Question Cards available in Appendix 29a on page 164, enough for one per group.
4. Praying with Scripture Script (see Appendix 29, page 165).
5. Workbooks.

PREPARATION

Middle*(35 minutes)***Ask the students:**

- What is prayer? *(Take a variety of answers. Help the students understand prayer as communicating with God and often through communicating with Jesus.)*
- If we are communicating with Jesus, how might we do that today? How do we communicate with others?

Invite the students to brainstorm their answers. **Record their answers** on an A3 sheet around the word 'communicate'.

Tell the students: When we communicate with each other we use these different ways. When we communicate or talk to each other, we strengthen our relationship. We find out more about the person and what they think and what they do. We do this by talking AND listening. When we communicate with Jesus we are doing the same – we are trying to find out more about him and what he does and what he wants us to do. We talk AND listen to Jesus so that we can strengthen our friendship with him and, through him, with God.

Divide the group into groups of four students.

Tell the students: In your group I want you to talk with each other about the questions: How do we remain friends with others? What do we have to do to keep being a friend?

Remember that when we are discussing in a group we keep to the rules for discussion: we take turns in talking, we let each person say what they want to say. We listen carefully to what the other person is saying and do not interrupt them. You will have 10 minutes for your discussion.

Hand out the Friendship Question Card available in Appendix 29a. (Walk around the groups, listening to the discussion. Allow the students to enter into their own discussion without interruption. Keep the students to the rules of discussion but do not contribute to the actual discussion.)

Hand out the workbooks and invite the students to turn to page 93.

Tell the students: Each of you is to decide the four most important things you must do to remain a good friend. Prioritise your list and record the points in the Friendship Charter on page 93. This is an individual task.

Allow 10 minutes for this task.

When they have finished, **invite the students** to put their pens down.

Tell the students: Just as we have to work at being a good friend and to remain a friend with others, we also have to work at being a good friend of Jesus. We will grow closer to Jesus when we pray. When we pray, we are communicating with Jesus and through our praying we become better friends with Jesus.

Invite a selected few students to share their Friendship Charter.

Use the responses the students have written on their Friendship Charter to speak about what we need to do in prayer to grow closer to Jesus. *(We need to be with the person, giving time to the relationship. We need to listen to what they want to tell us. We have to become familiar with their story, the story of their life. We need to share something about ourselves. We need to trust them with important things about ourselves. We celebrate the important times with them.)*

Tell the students: When we pray, we are trying to do all these things we have just talked about. When we make a habit of praying we are strengthening our relationship with Jesus.

Ask the students: Thinking about these things you have written, how might you pray to Jesus?

Invite the students to find a partner and talk about this question. **Tell the students** that each person is to record their suggestions in the 'I can pray to Jesus' space in their workbook on page 93.

Select three students (who have not shared earlier) to share their suggestions with the whole group. *(Affirm their answers and encourage them. Ensure that you cover things like, quietly talking to Jesus when you are alone, thinking about Jesus when you are playing or working, making a regular time to sit quietly and say some prayers, talking to Jesus and listening for his answer – even if it is silence.)*

Tell the students: When you go to Mass you will hear the stories about Jesus in the gospel. When you listen carefully to what is being read you are praying. Let us listen to a story about Jesus and pray with it.

Gather the students round you and read Mark 1: 16–20 (using the 'Praying the Scripture Script' in Appendix 29b).

Invite the students to sit with their eyes closed and think about what Jesus was doing in this particular story. Talk the students through the quiet reflection on the story.

PREPARATION

PREPARATION

End*(15 minutes)*

Send the students back to their seats and **ask them** to open their workbooks at page 94 and complete the sentence: 'I will grow in my relationship with Jesus through prayer by ...'

Ask the students to reflect on what they have discussed and learnt during the lesson and respond by listing how they will grow in their relationship with Jesus through prayer.

When the students have completed the task *(allow seven minutes)*

invite the students to gather around the prayer focus with their workbooks. **Invite two or three students** to share what they have written as their response to this task.

Catechist: When we pray we can talk to Jesus. When we talk to Jesus, we are growing in our friendship with him. Let us prepare ourselves to pray.

All: In the name of the Father ...

Catechist: Jesus, may we grow in our relationship with you, so that we might come to know you better.

Students: Jesus, help us to pray.

Catechist: Jesus, help us to pray, so that we might know more about God.

Students: Jesus, help us to pray.

Collect the workbooks and dismiss the students as usual.

Appendix 29a – Friendship Question Card

Copy onto card and cut out enough for one per group.

How do we remain friends with others?

What do we have to do to keep being a friend?

How do we remain friends with others?

What do we have to do to keep being a friend?

Appendix 29b – Praying with Scripture Script

Read the following story from Mark's Gospel.

As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake – for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, 'Follow me and I will make you fish for people.' And immediately they left their nets and followed him. As he went a little farther, he saw James, son of Zebedee, and his brother, John, who were in their boat mending the nets. Immediately he called them; and they left their father, Zebedee, in the boat with the hired men, and followed him (Mk 1: 16–20).

Pause for a few seconds. *Talk the students through a reflection on this text and how they might pray with this Scripture and therefore grow in friendship with Jesus.*

Close your eyes and imagine the Sea of Galilee, a wide expanse of water with fishing boats pulled up on the beaches.

Imagine men, sitting beside and inside the boats with their nets. These men are untangling their nets and mending the holes that have appeared in them. Some of them have their boats moored just off shore and the men are casting their nets into the water trying to catch some fish.

As you look up the beach, notice Jesus walking towards you.

He stops at one of the boats. The boat belongs to Simon.

Jesus speaks to Simon and his brother Andrew. Listen to what Jesus says to him:

'Follow me and I will make you fish for people.'

What do you think about this? It sounds a little funny ... fishing for people. How might you respond to Jesus if he asks you to follow him and fish for people?

(Pause)

What do Simon and Andrew say and do? Watch closely ...

They drop their nets, they say nothing, and they follow Jesus.

Jesus, Simon and Andrew now walk further down the beach to the boat of Zebedee. Here Jesus stops and talks to James and John. He calls them ...

And they follow him, leaving their father and the hired men behind ...

Wow! How do you think everyone feels after this?

How might Zebedee, James and John feel?

Jesus now comes to you ...

Jesus wants to talk to you ... Listen.

What does Jesus say to you?

Answer Jesus, quietly, in your heart. Tell Jesus what you most would like to say, and listen to what Jesus says back to you.

(Pause – allow no more than one minute)

Jesus leaves the beach. You watch him go and you say goodbye.

Sit quietly for a few seconds, thanking Jesus for being with you.

When you are ready, open your eyes and sit quietly.

The Church Is the People of God

Background For Catechist

Take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

'The Church' is the People that God gathers in the whole world. She exists in local communities and is made real as a liturgical, above all a Eucharistic, assembly. She draws her life from the word and the Body of Christ and so herself becomes Christ's Body (CCC, n. 752).

The Church 'is the visible plan of God's love for humanity', because God desires 'that the whole human race may become one People of God, form one Body of Christ, and be built up into one temple of the Holy Spirit' (CCC, n. 776).

Understanding the Church as the People of God helps to make it clear that everyone has a part to play and a responsibility for the life of the Church since the Church 'is the visible plan of God's love for humanity'. Despite individual weaknesses, the task of the People of God, the Church, is to manifest to those with whom we live the love of God for all and the good news of Jesus Christ. All people are God's people and 'we cannot keep to ourselves the words of eternal life given to us in our encounter with Jesus Christ: they are meant for everyone' (VD, n. 91).

This is not just the Pope's job or the task of the bishops and priests. This is the responsibility and privilege of us all because God has called us to it. It would be a calling quite beyond us if we were not able to draw life from Jesus Christ by hearing his word and being incorporated into his Body through the celebration of the Eucharist.

Student Focus

Students of this age are well aware of what it means to belong to a group, whether it be a sporting group, a music group or a specific interest group. They are familiar with the things that keep groups 'together' as well as the responsibility each member has to the group. Helping students to make the connection between their social groups and the Church is an important part of understanding how they 'belong', and what their responsibility is to the faith community.

Teaching Point

The Church is the people of God.

Remembering Point

We are the Church.

PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: A multicoloured cloth or a yellow cloth, a candle, the Bible and a plant.
2. Enough footprints from the Footprint Activity for each group, (see Appendices 30a and 30b, pages 170–172).
3. Church Membership Grid (Appendix 30c, page 173) enlarged to A3.
4. Sticky notes for each group.
5. Blu-Tack.
6. Enough sheets of A4 paper for one per student.
7. Workbooks.

Beginning

(5 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Gather the students around the prayer focus. **Invite three students** to put each item on the prayer focus at the appropriate time.

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

All: In the name of the Father ...

Catechist: Our prayer focus today has a multicoloured cloth (or a bright yellow cloth) to help us think about the richness and diversity of the Church to which we belong.

..... (name) is going to put our candle on the cloth and light it. This reminds us that Christ is present to us when we pray and is with us throughout our lives.

..... (name) will place the Bible on our prayer focus. This holds all the stories about Jesus, his message and his teachings about God. It helps us understand what the early Church believed in and therefore what our responsibility is as members of the same Church.

..... (name) will now place the plant on the focus. Just as a plant grows when it has sunlight, food and water, so do we, as the Church, grow when we turn to God, and are nourished by the words of Jesus and the celebration of the Eucharist.

Catechist: Let us pray the words that Jesus taught us and that we, as the People of God, share every time we go to Mass:

All: Our Father ...

Tell the students: Today we are going to think about what makes the Church. We know that the Church is not just the building where we go to celebrate the Eucharist. If the community doesn't have a church building and uses the hall or school rooms for weekly Mass, this doesn't mean that there is no Church in this community. When we were baptised we all became members of God's family, and because of this, we are all part of the Church. We are all the people of God – the Church.

Invite the students to go to their seats.

Hand out the workbooks.

Middle

(35 minutes)

Divide the class into groups of three. **Hand out** 'Footprint Activity, Part One' and one footprint from 'Footprint Activity, Part Two' to each group, as well as sticky-notes. The Footprint Activity templates are in Appendices 30a and 30b.

Tell the students: I want each group to work together on their particular footprints. All groups will cover the 'Knowing' footprint and then one of the other footprints.

Tell the students: You have 20 minutes to read the Information Card on page 96 of your workbook and complete the two 'footprint' activities. Record your group's answers to the second footprint activity on page 97 of your workbooks or on the sheet of A4 paper. Remember that each of you has to enter the answers in your own workbook.

(Move around the group giving assistance where necessary.)

Invite the students to gather around you at the front of the class. Blu-Tack the Church Membership Grid onto the whiteboard.

Ask the students to identify a member of the People of God who has not been listed on the grid. *(Take all their answers and clarify where necessary. Record these in the first column of the grid).*

Ask a representative from each group to describe the role of the various members and to stick their 'sticky notes' on the grid in the second column.

Invite representatives from each group to share their second footprint activity. Thank the students for their work, affirming them in their presentations.

Tell the students: All of these activities show us how we are the people of God. When we share our gifts in simple ways that help other people; when we celebrate at Mass with the other people of our Parish; when the parish priest and all the members of the parish with particular roles do their tasks well – all these are being the Church. We are being the Church by living our lives as Jesus wants us to live them as members of the faith community. We are all called to show God is in the world and to proclaim Jesus' message in the way we live and in the things we do.

PREPARATION

PREPARATION

End*(10 minutes)***Invite the students** to open their workbooks at page 95 for the prayer.**Catechist:** Lord, God, you have invited us to be a part of your faith community. Help us to be true members of the Church.

Students: Lord, may we remember that we are the People of God, the Church.

Catechist: Lord, God, you give us gifts that will strengthen the Church when we use them to help others.

Students: Lord, help us to use our gifts wisely.

Catechist: Lord, God, be with us each day as we proclaim Jesus' message.

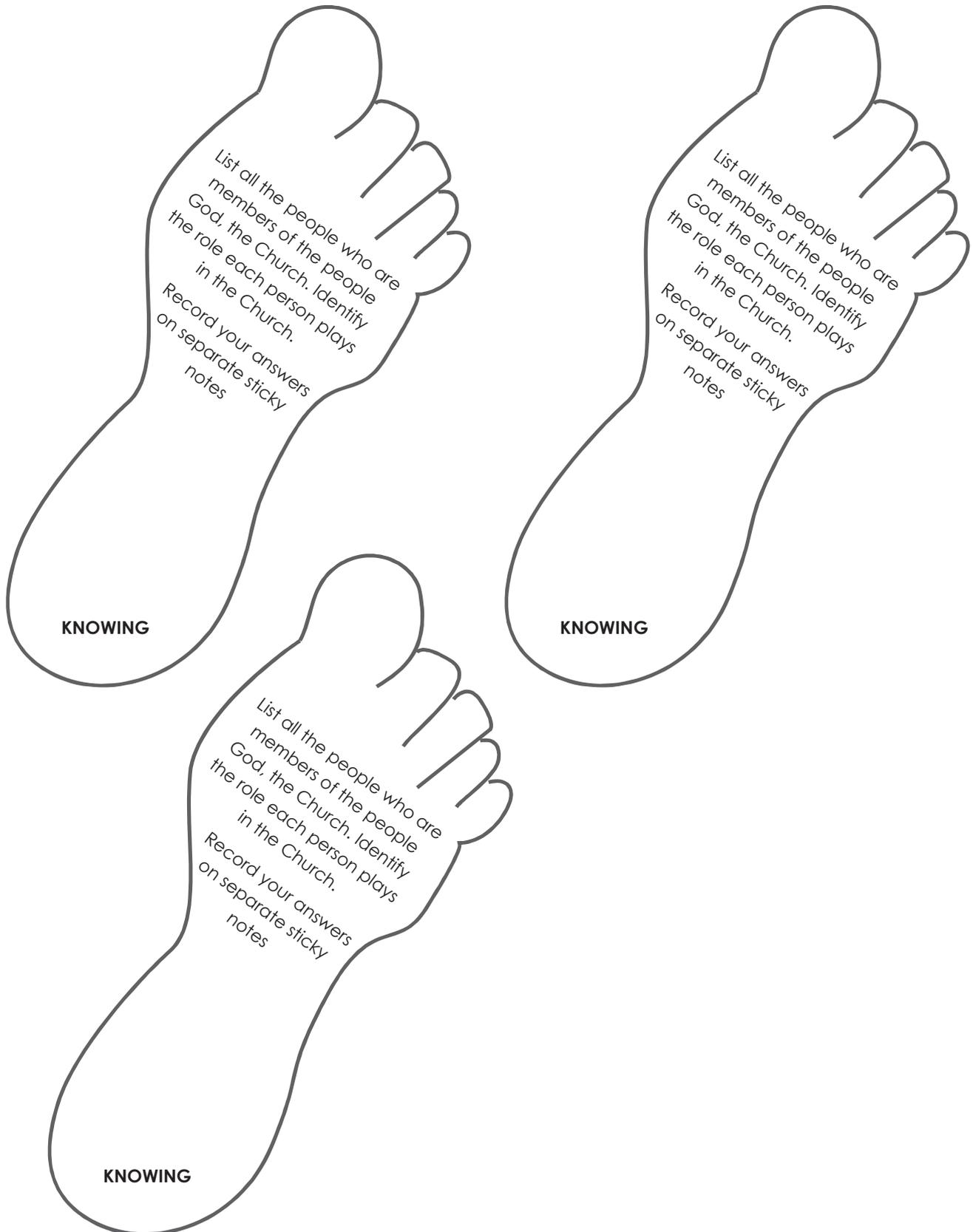
Students: Lord, help us to do and say that which will build up the Church.

All: In the name of the Father ...

Collect the workbooks and dismiss the students as usual.

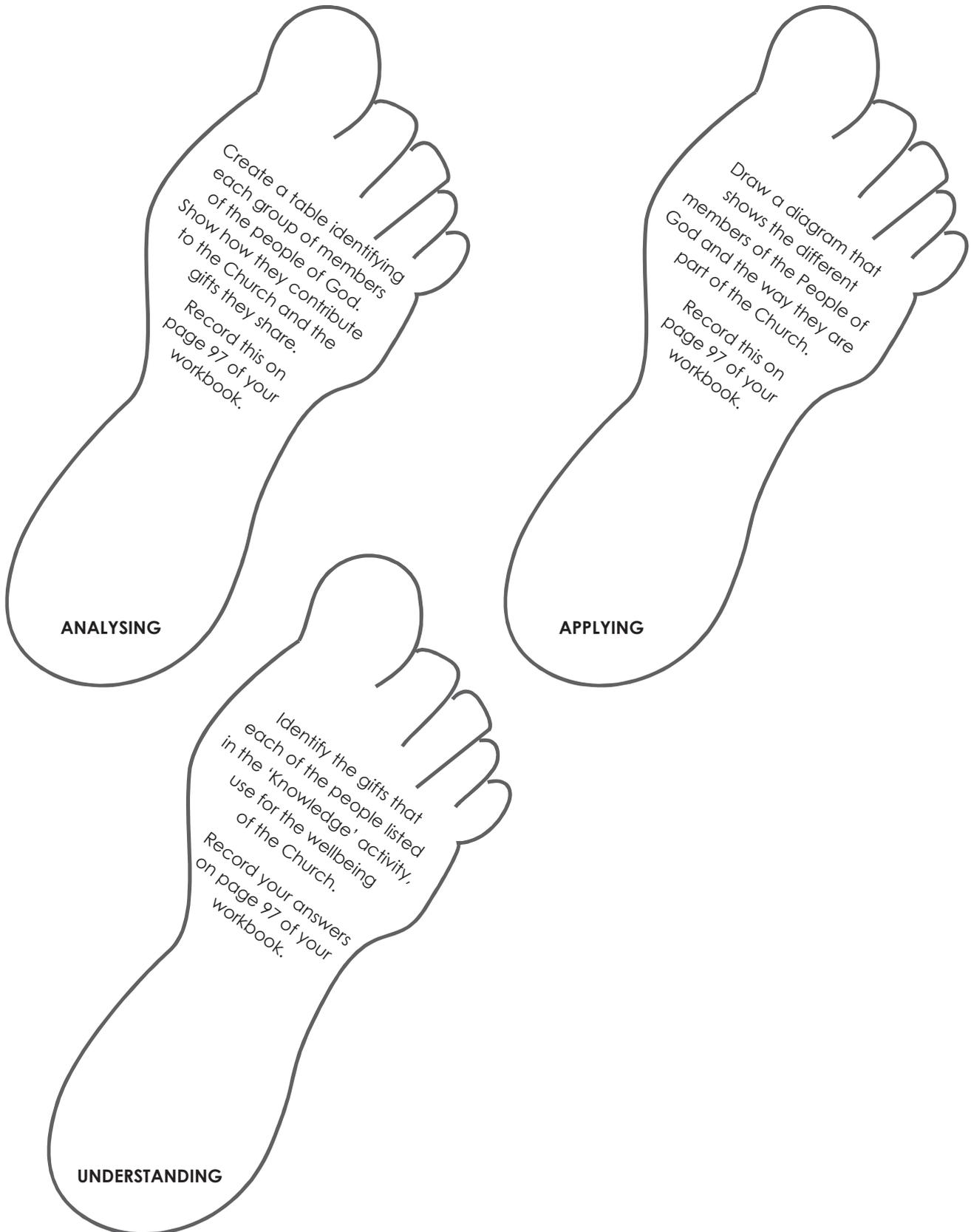
Appendix 30a – Footprint Activity (Part One)

Copy enough of this page for one footprint per group.



Appendix 30b – Footprint Activity (Part Two)

Copy this and the following page and distribute one footprint per group. Make enough copies for your class size.



Appendix 30b – Footprint Activity (Part Two) (continued)



Appendix 30c – Church Membership Grid

Enlarge this onto an A3 sheet and display it for the students. Add their responses (on sticky-notes) in the spaces. There is space for any extra members specific to your parish.

CHURCH MEMBER	ROLE
Ordinary people	
Priest	
Bishop	
Pastoral Associate	
Catechist	
Catholic School Principal	

John the Baptist

Background for the Catechist

Take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

St John the Baptist is the Lord's immediate precursor or forerunner, sent to prepare his way. 'Prophet of the Most High', John surpasses all the prophets, of whom he is the last. He inaugurates the Gospel, already from his mother's womb welcomes the coming of Christ, and rejoices in being 'the friend of the bridegroom', whom he points out as 'the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world'. Going before Jesus 'in the spirit and power of Elijah', John bears witness to Christ in his preaching, by his Baptism of conversion, and through his martyrdom (CCC, n. 523).

Together with the prophet Isaiah, and the blessed virgin Mary, John the Baptist is one of the key figures of Advent, the season of preparation for Christmas.

In all the gospels, John the Baptist features as the one who comes before Jesus, inviting people to repentance and inviting them to prepare to receive the coming Messiah. John the Baptist is the last of the long line of prophets who spoke God's word to the people and longed to see the face of the Messiah. He is called the precursor, a prophet and a baptist. John was a desert dweller, who proclaimed the possibility of freedom from sin and holiness. He called people into the desert to change their lives and wait for the One who was close at hand.

Student Focus

Students are well aware that preparation is necessary for most activities in their lives. They need to prepare for school by doing their homework and gathering their things together. They see their parents preparing the house and food for family celebrations. They can readily apply this knowledge to the concept of John the Baptist preparing the people for Jesus and his message.

Teaching Point

During Advent we remember John the Baptist who prepared the way for the coming of Jesus.

Remembering Point

During Advent we prepare for the coming of Jesus by remembering John the Baptist.

PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: a cloth, a candle, the Bible, a small bowl of water, a picture of John the Baptist (if possible).
2. Workbooks.
3. Prayer response on a sheet of paper.

Praise to you, O God, who gave us John the Baptist.

Beginning

(5 minutes)

Welcome the students as usual.

Gather the students round the prayer focus and invite them to be still as you prepare for prayer.

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

All: In the name of the Father ...

Catechist: God, Father of Jesus, help us to be attentive as we learn about John the Baptist and his teaching. We make our prayer through Christ, our Lord.

All: Amen.

Invite the students to go to their tables.

Middle

(40 minutes)

Hand out the workbooks and **tell the students** to open them at page 98.

Tell the students: Follow the story as I read 'The Birth of John Baptist'. Let us listen and follow the story as told in the Gospel of Luke. Before John the Baptist was born the angel Gabriel told his father, Zachariah, what John would be like.

Read the story:

Your wife, Elizabeth, will bear you a son, and you will name him John. You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink; even before his birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord, their God. With the spirit and power of Elijah he will go before him, to turn the hearts of parents to their children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.'

Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. ... [Zachariah said] 'His name is John' (Lk 1: 13–17, 57, 63).

Tell the students: In pairs, talk about what the angel told Zachariah. On the angel shape on page 98, titled 'The Angel Speaks to Zachariah' write what John was going to be like. (Allow 5 minutes.)

Invite the students to share their work with the whole class.

Tell the students: We will continue the story of John the Baptist. You can follow as I read from page 99.

Read the story:

John the baptiser appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptised by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, 'The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptised you with water; but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit' (Mk 1: 4–8).

Tell the students: I would like you to work by yourselves and answer the who, what, where and when questions in the Scripture Analysis grid on page 99 of your workbooks.

(Walk round the class as the students work, helping where necessary. Allow 10 minutes.)

Ask one student to tell the class the answer to one of the above questions. Then ask another to answer the next question, and so on.

Tell the students: Now we will continue the story of John. You can read along from your workbooks on page 100.

Read the story:

Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptised by him. John would have prevented him, saying, 'I need to be baptised by you, and do you come to me?' But Jesus answered him, 'Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfil all righteousness.' Then he consented. And when Jesus had been baptised, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased' (Mt 3: 13–17).

Tell the students: Again, I would like you to work by yourselves. On page 100 of the workbook you will see the activity 'Jesus and John the Baptist have a conversation'. In the appropriate 'conversation bubble' write the things Jesus said and the things John said.

(Walk round the class as the students work, giving assistance where required. Allow 12 minutes.)

Tell the students: John did such a good job of preparing the people for Jesus that Jesus said, 'Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist' (Mt 11: 11).

Every year, during Advent, we remember John the Baptist and how he prepared the way for the coming of Jesus. John was a prophet; that is, he was a teacher and a preacher. We listen to the story of John the Baptist and try to follow his teaching and prepare for Jesus coming to us at Christmas.

PREPARATION

PREPARATION

End*(5 minutes)***Collect the workbooks** and **gather the students** around the prayer focus.**Catechist:** Let us pray.

We have read how John the Baptist prepared the people to welcome Jesus.

Students: Praise to you, O God, who gave us John the Baptist.

Catechist: John calls us to live a life pleasing to God as we get ready for Jesus' coming.

Students: Praise to you, O God, who gave us John the Baptist.

Catechist: John called the people and us to ask for forgiveness and to be forgiving.

Students: Praise to you, O God, who gave us John the Baptist.

Dismiss the students as usual.

Background for the Catechist

Take 10 minutes to reflect on the following introduction to this lesson.

Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

From the beginning he was 'the one whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world,' conceived as 'holy' in Mary's virginal womb (Jn 10: 36; cf. Lk 1: 35). God called Joseph to 'take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit,' so that Jesus, 'who is called Christ,' should be born of Joseph's spouse into the messianic lineage of David (Mt 1: 20; cf. Mt 1: 16; Rom 1: 1; 2 Tim 2: 8; Rev 22: 16) (CCC, n. 437).

The Gospel of Matthew presents an alternate picture of the birth of Jesus to that offered in the Gospel of Luke. The focus in this story is on Joseph, who, like his namesake in Genesis, is given important dreams that will direct the future of his life. Joseph is guided to take Mary as his wife and to call the child she is carrying, his own. Again, after the birth of Jesus, Joseph is guided to lead his family into Egypt to safety. Any Jew reading this text in Matthew would know immediately the connection being made between this beginning of Jesus' life and the time when Moses and the Hebrew people escaped from Egypt.

Throughout Matthew's infancy narrative we are provided with many such connections to the Old Testament, and in particular with the covenant promise made to the people of Israel. For Matthew, Jesus is the fulfilment of this promise and is presented again and again as the new Moses, come to lead his people to salvation. In this infancy narrative, Matthew uses the story of the visit by the wise men with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh, to present the message of Jesus' 'kingship' and fulfilment of the messianic hopes of Israel in as rich and symbolic a way as possible.

Student Focus

Students continue to enjoy the stories of Christmas. This story is repeated year after year, often mingled with the Lucan version of Jesus' nativity. Students at this age are able to enter into the deeper meaning of stories such as these, and see more in what is often commonplace.

Teaching Point

In the Gospel of Matthew Jesus is the fulfilment of the Old Testament promise and we come to know this in the story of Jesus' birth that the Church celebrates and remembers at Christmas.

Remembering Point

Jesus fulfils the promises of the Old Testament.

PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: a white cloth, a candle, a star, an angel, the Bible.
2. The prayer on a large sheet of paper, e.g.

God of all goodness,
we ask that you guide us
to a deeper understanding
of the story of Jesus' birth.
Amen.

3. CD player and Christmas carol on CD.
4. Workbooks.

Beginning

(15 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 ...

Catechist: *(Light the candle)* Jesus is the light of the world and he is with us in this room. As I read the passage from the gospel, close your eyes and think about what it might mean.

Catechist: Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, And they shall name him Emmanuel, which means 'God is with us' (Mt 1: 23).

All: God of all goodness, we ask that you guide us to a deeper understanding of the story of Jesus' birth. Amen.

Tell the students: On our prayer focus we have a star and an angel. **Ask the students:** Why do you think I have chosen to put them there? *(Take all the students' answers even if they are different from why you put the items on the prayer focus. Tell the students that you put them there simply because they feature in the stories we will listen to today.)*

Tell the students: These two items are quite significant in the story we will be exploring today. They are the special guides for the characters in the story. When we come to listen to the story, listen carefully for what the angel says and how the star is important.

Invite the students to move to a space on the floor where they will have room to move and not knock anyone.

Tell the students: First we are going to have a quiz. If you think the statement is true, then stand up, if you think the statement is false then sit down. If you think that no one actually knows then put your hands on your head.

Ask the students: When reading about the birth of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew, which of these statements is true, false or unknown?

- Mary was engaged to Joseph. *(True.)*
- There were three wise men. *(Number not known.)*
- Jesus was born in a stable. *(No one knows.)*
- Three kings visited Jesus. *(No one knows.)*
- Mary had a baby. They called him Jesus. *(True.)*
- Joseph planned to call off his engagement to Mary. *(True.)*
- Jesus birth was marked by the appearance of a new star over Bethlehem. *(True.)*
- An ox and a donkey watched over the new-born Jesus. *(False.)*

Middle

(35 minutes)

Ask the students to go to their seats. **Hand out** the workbooks.

Tell the students: Now we will listen to the story of Jesus' birth as it is written in the Gospel of Matthew. You will be able to follow the story on page 101 of your workbook.

Read Mt 1: 18–24:

Now the birth of Jesus, the Messiah, took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband, Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.' All this took place to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

'Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel', which means, 'God is with us.' When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife. (Mt 1: 18–24)

Ask the students:

- What surprised you in this passage? *(Accept all the students' answers as there is no right or wrong answer. Their answers can be very insightful.)*
- Why did the angel appear to Joseph?
- Why is it important that Joseph marries Mary? *(Again, accept the students' answers encouraging them to reflect on the importance to the whole story of Jesus' life.)*

Invite the students to answer the questions on page 101 under the scripture text.

Tell the students: The gospel writer, Matthew, wanted the reader to know that Joseph married Mary because through their marriage Jesus was born into the house of David. This fulfilled an Old Testament prophecy – a story which proclaimed that the Messiah would belong to the house of David.

Invite the students to find the next part of the story, Mt 2: 1–6, in their workbooks and to follow as you read to the students.

Read Matthew 2: 1–6:

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, 'Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.' When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, 'In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

"And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel" (Mt 2: 1–6).

PREPARATION

PREPARATION

Ask the students:

- Why did this news frighten King Herod? *(Accept the students' answers. Their answers can be very insightful.)*
- Why was it important for Jesus to be born in Bethlehem? *(Accept the students' answers. They may not be able to connect with the prophecy, but they will have some valuable insights into why Bethlehem is important to Matthew.)*

Ask the students:

- Why do you think the wise men are important in Matthew's account of the Christmas story? *(Encourage the students to reflect on why the wise men are in the story and what they might tell us about Jesus' birth. Take all the students' answers and allow them to explore possible messages.)*

Tell the students: The wise men came from a far distant land, and were not from the Jewish community. Matthew included the wise men to remind readers that Jesus is for everyone and not just for the Jews.

Invite the students to turn to page 102 in their workbooks and to answer the questions under the scripture text in the space provided.

Invite the students to complete the 'Word Find' activity on page 103.

Collect the workbooks.

End

(5 minutes)

Gather the students around the prayer focus.

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

All: In the name of the Father ...

Catechist: The response to our prayer is: Thank you, God, for sending us your Son, Jesus Christ.

All: Thank you, God, for sending us your Son, Jesus Christ.

Catechist: The prophecies of the Old Testament speak of the deepest longings of the Jewish people for freedom.

All: Thank you, God, for sending us your Son, Jesus Christ.

Catechist: The birth of Jesus is the fulfilment of the Old Testament prophecy.

All: Thank you, God, for sending us your Son, Jesus Christ.

Catechist: At Christmas we celebrate the birth of Jesus and the visit of the wise men.

All: Thank you God, for sending us your Son, Jesus Christ.

All: In the name of the Father ...

Dismiss the students as usual.

Appendix 32 – Word Find Answers

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

Answer:

Jesus fulfils the promises of the Old Testament

Abbreviations

CCC	<i>Catechism of the Catholic Church</i>
CCCC	<i>Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church</i>
DV	<i>Dei Verbum</i> , Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation
LG	<i>Lumen Gentium</i> , Dogmatic Constitution on the Church
MC	<i>Mystici Corporis</i>
SC	<i>Sacrosanctum Concilium</i> , Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy
VD	<i>Verbum Domini</i> , The Word of the Lord

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