



**CATHOLIC  
EDUCATION  
MELBOURNE**

# **Seeking to Live the Good News**

CATECHIST BOOK

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YEAR  
**5**

*Seeking to Live the Good News Catechist Book Year 5*

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This Catechist Book is a companion to *Seeking to Live the Good News Student Workbook, Year 5*.

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# Introduction

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

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

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

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**Denis J. Hart DD**  
Archbishop of Melbourne



# God's Mission for Me

## Background for the Catechist

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

### **Reflection/Doctrinal Reference**

Holy Baptism is the basis of the whole Christian life, the gateway to life in the Spirit and the door which gives access to the other sacraments. Through Baptism we are freed from sin and reborn as sons of God; we become members of Christ, are incorporated into the Church and made sharers in her mission (CCC, n. 1213).

... the faithful, who by Baptism are incorporated into Christ and integrated into the People of God, are made sharers in their particular way in the priestly, prophetic, and kingly office of Christ, and have their own part to play in the mission of the whole Christian people in the Church and in the World (CCC, n. 897).

By virtue of their prophetic mission, people 'are called ... to be witnesses to Christ in all circumstances and at the very heart of the community of mankind' (GS, n. 43) (CCC, n. 942).

Individuals are born with their own particular physical, psychological and spiritual identities. Each person is unique and belongs to a particular situation: family, local community, nationality. Each one's talents and gifts are unique. Therefore, while the mission of all baptised Christians is to announce, bear witness, make present, and spread the gospel of Christ, people must discover the way to do this in their own circumstances. No one else can fulfil the special mission of another person. Just as a particular child in a family can never be replaced by another child, so all Christians have their own individual mission in the Church. Part of the adventure of living is discovering our own special role, and part of the adventure of being a Christian is discovering how to express faith in Jesus, how to announce the Good News and put it into practice in and through our own individual personality and talents.

### **Student Focus**

Students of this age know their likes and dislikes. They are particularly aware of the approach of secondary school and up-coming decisions about their future occupations. They will be open to dialogue regarding how they can best respond to what is expected of them and will not be afraid to offer their opinion about what is asked of them.

### **Teaching point**

All the baptised receive a special mission from God.

### **Remembering point**

When I was baptised God gave me a special mission.

## Beginning

(15 minutes)

**Welcome the students** as they come into the learning area.

**Gather the students** around the prayer focus and introduce yourself.

**Invite the students** to introduce themselves as follows. Then each person will thank the person before them using their name. For example, John Nation introduces himself, Karen Polo introduces herself by first saying, 'Thank you John, my name is Karen Polo ... Each student is to share their name, the school they go to, and their favourite colour.

**Tell the students:** Thank you. Today we will be talking about the day we joined the Church when we were baptised. At our baptism we became members of the Body of Christ, the Church. Let us together make the Sign of the Cross and pray.

**Catechist:** In the name of the Father ...

**All:** Our Father ...

**Divide the group** into pairs and **invite them** to sit together at their tables. Hand out the workbooks.

**Invite the students** to take turn to page 2 in their workbooks and the photo of a baptism.

**Invite the students** to answer the questions below and record their answers in the space under the photograph in their workbooks.

- Who is at this baptism?
- What is happening?
- What does the photograph tell me about baptism?

When the students have completed the task, **invite two or three pairs** to share their answers with the whole group.

## Middle

(30 minutes)

**Tell the students:** When you were baptised your family brought you to the church so that you would become part of the Catholic community. Each person who is baptised is a member of this family. Each baptised person also shares in the mission of Jesus.

**Invite each pair of students** to join another pair to make groups of four.

**Tell the students:** From your knowledge of the life of Jesus, talk to each other about what you think might have been Jesus' mission. Think about what Jesus did? After you have shared with each other for about three minutes, record your thoughts on the strip of paper (one thought per strip of paper).

Place the poster of JESUS' MISSION on the board or a table, somewhere the students can see and access it easily.

## PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: A white cloth, the Bible, a coloured candle, a bowl of water and a crucifix.
2. Strips of paper 3 cm wide and an A4 sheet long enough for two per student.
3. A large sheet of paper (poster) with the words JESUS' MISSION, around which the students can place their strips of paper e.g:



4. Workbooks.

## PREPARATION

**Invite the students** to bring up their answers and place them around the caption, JESUS' MISSION (repeats can be placed on top of each other). (You would be looking for answers like: *Jesus healed those who were sick, Jesus cared for the poor, Jesus welcomed those who were outcasts, Jesus ate with sinners ...* )

**Tell the students:** If this is Jesus' mission (pointing to the students' responses) and we share in Jesus' mission when we are baptised, what might be the mission that we received at baptism? Just think about what might be that mission. (You could take answers, but you are not looking for anything in particular at the moment.) Let's explore this a little.

**Ask the students:** How might we share in Jesus' mission?

**Invite the students** to provide possible answers; they may talk to the person beside them to work something out. Then **invite one of them** to share with the rest of the class.

If you find that you get only a few usable examples, then **give the students some instances** e.g. *Jesus healed those who were sick. We can share in this when we help those who are ill. Nurses and doctors share in this in a special way. We can also share in Jesus' healing when we ask for forgiveness or forgive others when they have done something to hurt us).*

**Tell the students:** Now I want you to think about all these examples of Jesus' mission and work out ways in which we all can share in this mission of Jesus.

**Invite the students** to form into groups of three.

**Tell the students:** Open your workbooks at page 3 and in the Jesus' Mission / My Mission grid, list each of the suggestions from the first activity in the first column of the grid.

When the students have finished, **invite the students** to decide with each other in their group how they might answer the middle column. Each student is to record the answers in their workbook.

(Allow 15 minutes for this engagement and recording. An example of the activity is in Appendix 1, page 5.)

**Invite a representative** from each group to report back to the whole group one of their answers from the middle column, selecting something that hasn't been shared. When every group has had a chance to speak, invite anyone to add to the list any item that hasn't been shared.

**Send the students** back to their original places with their workbooks and give them 10 minutes to think about each entry they have made and to write in the last column what might be their own individual and special mission or how they can individually live Jesus' mission today in their life. They do not have to provide an example for each of them – three examples would be adequate.

**Invite the students** to share one entry with the person beside them.

**Invite three students** to share their responses with the whole group. (Consider inviting students who haven't shared previously in the lesson.)

**Ask the students:** What skills, training and permissions might be required to engage in the particular type of work and ministry. (Take some general responses from the students.)

## End

*(10 minutes)*

**Tell the students:** During the coming week I would like you to consider one of the suggestions you have put down for yourself and try to undertake the mission. Be prepared to share with us next week how you managed. Remember to get permission from your parents if you are going to help someone from outside your family or school group or if you are going to visit someone.

**Gather the students** around the prayer focus with their workbooks opened at page 4.

**Catechist:** Let us pray to God, our Father, who gave each of us a special mission when we were baptised.

**Catechist:** Lord God, you are wonderful in all that you have done for us. Help us to fulfil our baptismal gifts.

**All:** Be with us God, our Father.

**Catechist:** As we come to know the special mission given to us through our baptism, may we always seek to follow the mission of Jesus.

**All:** God, help us to follow Jesus, your Son.

**Catechist:** May our lives be richer because we are seeking to fulfil our baptismal mission.

**All:** Help us to recognise the special mission given to us at baptism.

**Catechist:** We make this prayer through Christ Jesus, your Son.

**All:** Amen.

Collect the workbooks and dismiss the students.

## PREPARATION

## Appendix 1 – Jesus' Mission / My Mission

JESUS' MISSION	OUR SHARE IN JESUS' MISSION	I SHARE IN JESUS' MISSION
<p><i>Example:</i> Jesus healed those who were sick.</p>	<p>Nurses and doctors, when they help to heal people, share in Jesus' mission. When we seek forgiveness or when we forgive others, we share in Jesus' mission.</p>	

# We are Gifted

## Background for the Catechist

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

### Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

The body's unity does not do away with the diversity of its members: 'In the building up of Christ's Body there is engaged a diversity of members and functions. There is only one Spirit who, according to his own richness and the needs of the ministries, gives his different gifts for the welfare of the Church' (LG, n. 7) (CCC, n. 791).

From the beginning, this one Church has been marked by a great diversity which comes from both the variety of God's gifts and the diversity of those who receive them. Within the unity of the People of God, a multiplicity of peoples and cultures is gathered together. Among the Church's members, there are different gifts, offices, conditions, and ways of life (CCC, n. 814).

The Church is the one body of Christ, but within it, there is a great variety of possible ministries, vocations and roles to be fulfilled. Within the community of the Church, there are both formal and informal leadership roles. Examples of the former are the bishops, who lead the people in their dioceses, and the priests who help them. These people are ordained for the service of the whole community of the Church. This community includes parents within their families, organisers and managers of church agencies, e.g. hospitals and schools, as well as leaders of religious communities and leaders of parish groups.

Within these various community roles, the gifts of each individual person contribute to building up the Church. Artists, technicians, builders, teachers, labourers and every other kind of worker can offer their skills. People with the gifts of understanding, good organisation, kindness, patience, intuition and humour bring these personal traits to whatever job they do. The Church is blessed and enriched by all these people and their diverse gifts.

### Student Focus

Year 5 students are very aware of each other's gifts and talents, particularly in sporting and academic pursuits. These students know that every organisation is kept going by different people doing different things according to their abilities. These students need to be encouraged to accept that, despite not being able to do everything, they have their own abilities and gifts that they can share to build up the Church community as well as themselves.

### Teaching Point

Within a Church community, there are a variety of gifts and ministries shared by its members.

### Remembering Point

As members of the Church community we share our different gifts.

## PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: A cloth, the Bible and a candle. A box containing a mirror and tied with a ribbon.
2. On two sheets of A3 paper taped together to form a large poster, or on the whiteboard, prepare a grid as below:

NAME	GIFT

3. Enough sheets of paper for one per student. At the top of each paper have a student's name written clearly.
4. A large sheet of paper with a list of ministries active in your parish. (An example of the types of ministries is provided in Appendix 2b on page 10.)
5. Write the Remembering Point on the whiteboard (or a large sheet of paper).
6. A copy of the Word Find for each student, available in Appendix 2c on page 11.
7. Workbooks.

## Beginning

(5 minutes)

**Welcome the students** as usual.

**Gather the students** around the prayer focus, hand out the workbooks and make the Sign of the Cross together. **Ask the students** to open the workbook at page 5.

**Catechist:** We light the candle to remind us that Jesus is the light of the world and is with us when we gather in God's name.

**All:** Lord, help us to discover our gifts and use them to make a better world.

**Catechist:** As we gather together today open our hearts and minds, so that we can learn who we truly are.

**All:** Lord, help us to discover our gifts and use them to make a better world.

**Catechist:** Those who work and play with us often know more about us than we know about ourselves. Open our minds to hear what they are telling us.

**All:** Lord, help us to discover our gifts and use them to make a better world.

**Catechist:** Come into our lives anew, Holy Spirit, and teach us what our gifts are and how to develop them.

**All:** Lord, help us to discover our gifts and use them to make a better world.

Point to the box on the prayer focus and **ask the students:** What do you think might be in the box? (*Accept all suggestions with enthusiasm; then invite a child to open it.*)

**Invite one student** to open the box and look inside. **Then, ask that student** to show everyone what is inside.

**Ask the students:**

- What do you use a mirror for?
- Are you always pleased by what you see in the mirror?
- How would life be different for you if there were no mirrors?
- What sorts of things can't a mirror tell us about ourselves?

(*Encourage the students to think carefully about the questions before they answer.*)

**Invite two or three students** to describe someone they care about e.g. Grandma, Uncle, their best friend.

**Tell the students:** When we tell others about someone we love or care a lot about, we do not go into the detail of what they wear or how their hair looks or whether they are tall or short. We describe other things, the important things. We might say that they are great company, good cooks, know how to laugh and have fun. We might add that they are easy to talk to because they are good listeners. How we look is not what is most important about us.

## Middle

(35 minutes)

On the poster or the whiteboard, list the names of some of your family and friends (or made-up names if you wish) in the first column under 'name', with their qualities in the second column under 'Gifts'.

(An example of the 'Gifts Grid' is in Appendix 2a, page 10.)

After about the third or fourth example **invite the students** to add to the list. If the students know other members of the class well enough, invite them to list the gifts of some of these students also.

**Tell the students** to open their workbooks at the 'My Gifts' activity on page 5. **Invite them** to use the best phrases from the poster or whiteboard that express their own gifts.

**Display the list** of ministries active in your parish. **Invite the students** to give examples of the work people involved in each ministry would do.

**Invite the students** to find a partner (alternately, suggest that the students work with the person beside them).

**Tell the students:** On page 6 in your workbook you will see the Gifts and Ministries activity. A number of possible parish ministries have been listed. Tick the ministries that appear on our list on the board (or poster). You will only work with the ministries you have ticked.

You are to decide what gifts people involved in each ministry would bring and write it under the ministry in the list, e.g. readers would bring the gift of clear speech...

Walk around the class, offering help where required.

**Invite the students** to recall the gifts they listed for themselves on page 5.

**Ask them** what ministry or ministries might their gifts enable them to fulfil in the future.

**Invite the students** to record their answers in their workbooks in the space provided on page 7 and then to write the Remembering Point (that is written on the whiteboard or on a large sheet of paper) in the space marked 'Something to Remember'. (*Remembering Point: As members of the church community we all share in different gifts and ministries.*)

**Distribute the Word Find activity** (if there is time) and **invite the students** to complete it and to find the hidden message. The answer is provided in Appendix 2d on page 12.

## PREPARATION

## PREPARATION

**End**

*(5 minutes)*

**Gather the students** with their workbooks around the prayer focus for the final prayer and **invite them** to open their workbooks at page 7.

**Catechist:** In the name of the Father ...

Let us sit quietly for a few moments thinking about what we have learnt today. We are all created by God with unique gifts.

Let us pray.

**All:** We thank you, God, for our gifts. Guide us in our life's journey so that we may be gifts to all we meet.

**Catechist:** So let us now pray the Glory be to the Father.

**All:** Glory be to the Father ...

Take up the workbooks and dismiss the students as usual.

## Appendix 2a – Gifts Grid

NAME	GIFT
Bill	Is great to work with on written tasks.
Dianne	Is a great listener.
John	Amuses us with his stories.

Other examples might be:

- Peggy ... explains things clearly.
- Patricia ... always puts others first.
- ...is generous, will always lend you something you need.
- ...comes to help when they know you are facing a difficult job.
- ...runs errands without a word of complaint.

## Appendix 2b – Types of Ministry in a Parish

Reader

Special minister

Church cleaner

Gardener

Money counter

Visitor to the homebound

Letter writer

Prayer group

Musician

Maintenance group

St Vincent de Paul group (St Vinnies)

Vinnies shop worker

Catechist

Children's Liturgy Leader

Baptism group

R.C.I.A. (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults)

Pastoral Associate

Parish school teacher

### Appendix 2c – Word Find

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

Find the words and phrases. The words are horizontal, vertical, forwards and diagonally. **Some of the longer phrases are on different lines and in different directions, but always close to one another.** The left over letters spell an important message.

Reader	Letter writer	Catechist
Special minister	Prayer group	Parish school teacher
Church cleaner	Musician	Children's Liturgy Leader
Gardener	Maintenance group	Baptism group
Money counter	St Vincent de Paul group	RCIA
Visitor to the homebound	St Vinnies shop worker	Pastoral Associate

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**Appendix 2d – Word Find**

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

SOMETHING TO REMEMBER  
 AS MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH  
 COMMUNITY WE SHARE OUR  
 DIFFERENT GIFTS.

# Lent

## Background for the Catechist

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

### **Reflection/Doctrinal Reference**

The seasons and days of penance in the course of the liturgical year (Lent, and each Friday in memory of the death of the Lord) are intense moments of the Church's penitential practice (CCC, n. 1438).

The interior penance of the Christian can be expressed in many and various ways. Scripture and the Fathers insist above all on three forms, fasting, prayer, and almsgiving, which express conversion in relation to oneself, to God, and to others (CCC, n. 1434).

Lent is a forty day period of preparation for Easter during which members of the Church are invited to focus more intensely on prayer, penance and giving to others. These three practices are basic to Christian spirituality at all times but we practise them in a more conscious way during Lent. Prayer is the conscious entry into communion with God and it can take many forms: verbal, meditative, scripturally-based. It can be in response to natural, musical or other sensory experiences and it can be practised in every place and circumstance. Lent may be a period in which people discover new ways and means of prayer. Making sacrifices (penance/fasting) is a means of conversion, of claiming our freedom from habits, needs or desires that control us. Doing without is an attempt, with God's help, to live as fully human persons unfettered by needs and cravings. Fasting can be compared to the training which athletes undertake to prepare for games and matches so they can be at their peak. Practising generosity is a way of deflecting the selfishness that so easily manifests itself in human beings.

### **Student Focus**

The students will have experienced Lent over a number of years. It is not guaranteed that these students will fully comprehend or understand the nature or importance of prayer, fasting and giving to those in need. Families are frequently being called upon to give to various charities and, particularly at Christmas, the students will be familiar with radio and television appeals for gifts for those in need. All this leads to an awareness of the importance of supporting those with less. However, students may not be clear about the connection between prayer, fasting and giving to the poor during Lent.

### **Teaching Point**

In Lent, the Church calls us to pray better, to fast and to give to the poor.

### **Remembering Point**

Lent is the time we pray, give to the poor and fast.

## Beginning

(10 minutes)

**Welcome the students** as usual.

Place on a separate table, or in a bag, the items that you will use for your prayer focus. As the lesson progresses build up the focus and use the elements to explore a deeper understanding of Ash Wednesday and the season of Lent.

**Invite the students** to be seated and begin with the Sign of the Cross.

**All:** In the name of the Father ...

**Catechist:** Let us remember that we are beginning the season of Lent, a special time to prepare for Easter. So let us pray to God, our Father, in the words that Jesus gave us.

**All:** Our Father ...

**Tell the students:** Today we will look closely at the meaning of Ash Wednesday and Lent as a time of preparation. Every year we have the same length of time set to get ready for Easter, the most important celebration in the Church's year. We call this time Lent. Every year we begin Lent with Ash Wednesday. So let us look more closely at Ash Wednesday.

**Ask the students:** When you hear the words, Ash Wednesday, what do you think about? *(Be prepared for answers such as bush fires. Some students will remember and share their understanding, but some will talk about 'the dirt that is put on my forehead'. Accept these answers but build on them.)*

**Tell the students:** Yes, these things are part of Ash Wednesday. Ash Wednesday is also the day on which we begin our preparation for Easter. The priest or leader of the prayer service puts the ashes on our forehead to remind us that we will not live forever.

**Distribute** the workbooks and have the students turn to page 8.

**Tell the students:** On this page headed Ash Wednesday, there is some information about how Ash Wednesday began and what it means. I would like you to read the passage and answer the questions underneath and on the next page.

**Invite the students** to share their answers with the person beside them.

**Select two or three students** to share their answers to questions one and two, with the whole group.

## PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus items in a bag or on a separate table: a purple cloth, the Bible, a bowl with ashes, a candle.
2. Some ashes – if possible use burnt palms from the previous year.
3. One enlarged copy of the calendar placed on the whiteboard or in a central place. (See Appendix 3 on page 18.)
4. Enlarged copies of the calendar, one per student.
5. Small sticky note pads (to fit in the grids of the calendar), enough for one pad per group.
6. Workbooks.

## PREPARATION

**Middle***(25 minutes)***Gather the students** round you, at the front of the room.

Take out the purple cloth and lay it on a table.

**Tell the students:** We use a purple cloth to remind us that we are in a special time of preparation, a time of 40 days, when we are to pray, fast and give to the poor. Purple is the Church's colour used during this liturgical season of Lent. The priest will wear purple vestments when he says Mass during Lent.

Take out a bowl and add some ashes, then place it on the cloth.

**Tell the students:** These ashes are the same as those used in the Church on Ash Wednesday. The ashes were made by burning the left-over palms from last year's Palm Sunday. Many years ago people who were sorry for their sins would be required to wear rough clothes made from something like hessian – a rough cloth – and to put ashes on their head. Everyone would then know that they were serious about being sorry for what they had done wrong. Today, we use the ashes to remind us of the need to be sorry for what we do wrong, particularly when we are preparing for Easter. Therefore we have a cross marked in ash on our foreheads.

Let us look a little more closely at what we can 'do' or prepare during Lent.

**Divide the class** into three even groups and gather them together in one area. Call one group Fasting, one Prayer, and one Alms-giving.**Invite the students** turn to page 10. **Direct each group** to read the section appropriate to their title.**Tell the students:** You now know what your particular group will be thinking and talking about. Each group is to prepare a list of ways that this class can pray, fast and give alms in preparation for Easter. Brainstorm the possibilities, or you might like to answer the questions in each section. Be specific about the activities.

When you have exhausted your ideas, select the top five examples and write them onto the sticky-notes.

**Invite one student** from each group to share their ideas.

Take out the prepared calendar.

**Tell the students:** These are all good examples of how we can prepare for Easter. Let's put them into the days of Lent on this calendar, so that we can remember when we might complete the tasks.**Invite the students** to place their sticky notes into the days of Lent on the calendar, one per day. Ensure that there is a good space between activities and that not all of one type is clustered together.**Distribute one calendar** to each student.**Tell the students:** Copy these activities onto your own calendar. If there are spaces, you can fill them in over the next few weeks as you think more about how you can journey towards Easter.

**End***(10 minutes)*

**Gather the students** round you at the front of the room. Ensure that the students have their workbooks with them.

**Invite the students** to turn to the prayer on page 12 and **select a student** to read the scripture text during the prayer.

**Catechist:** Let us pray today, remembering that we are beginning our journey to Easter. We light the candle that reminds us of Christ present to us, always.

**All:** In the name of the Father ...

**Catechist:** Let us listen to the reading from Matthew's Gospel.

**Student:** Beware of practising your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven. So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

The gospel of the Lord.

**All:** Praise to you, Lord, Jesus Christ.

**Catechist:** Let us pause for a couple of moments to think about what Jesus is telling us about fasting, alms-giving and prayer.

*(Pause for a short while.)*

What do you think we are being told in this text? *(Allow three or four students time to answer, if no one wants to answer then invite the students to think about the text during the week. Leave the text unexplained.)*

## PREPARATION

## PREPARATION

**Catechist:** We will now receive the ashes to remind us that we have begun our journey of preparation. *(Stand with the ashes in the bowl and either have the students line up or have them stand in the circle and go to each and make the Sign of the Cross on their forehead.)*

**Catechist:** Turn away from sin and be faithful to the gospel.

**Student:** Amen.

**Catechist:** Let us pray:

Come to the Lord with all your heart.

**Students:** Direct our hearts to better things, O Lord.

**Catechist:** Leave the past in ashes.

**Students:** Direct our hearts to better things, O Lord.

**Catechist:** Turn to God with tears and fasting.

**Students:** Direct our hearts to better things, O Lord.

**Catechist:** For God is slow to anger and ready to forgive.

**Students:** Direct our hearts to better things, O Lord. Amen.

Collect the workbooks and dismiss the students as usual.

## Appendix 3 – Lenten Calendar

Use a photocopier to enlarge the calendar below to A3 size and give one to each student.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 ASH WEDNESDAY	2	3	4
	5	6	7	8	9	10
	11	12	13	14	15	16
	17	18	19	20	21	22
	23	24	25	26	27	28
	29	30	31	32	33	34
	35	36	37	38	39	40

# The Beatitudes

## Background for the Catechist

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

### Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

The Beatitudes respond to the natural desire for happiness. This desire is of divine origin: God has placed it in the human heart in order to draw man to the One who alone can fulfil it: 'We all want to live happily; in the whole human race there is no one who does not assent to this proposition, even before it is fully articulated' (St Augustine). 'How is it, then, that I seek you, Lord? Since in seeking you, my God, I seek a happy life, let me seek you so that my soul may live, for my body draws life from my soul and my soul draws life from you' (St Augustine). God alone satisfies (St Thomas Aquinas) (CCC, n. 1718).

At first sight the Beatitudes do not look like a recipe for happiness. Few people deliberately aspire to be poor, to suffer, to mourn or to be reviled and so on. But in reality the Beatitudes do propose the only plan for happiness that really delivers. They propose that human beings must learn that happiness lies not in possessions, not in diversions that deny the dimension of pain in human life, not in the exercise of power over others, nor in ignoring the pain and suffering of others, but in mercy, purity, peacemaking and willingness to suffer in the cause of right. The Beatitudes set out an itinerary for human happiness. As people begin living them they discover the true happiness that lies in God alone, as St Augustine and St Thomas realised.

### Student Focus

With the contemporary experience of students being diametrically opposed to the message of the beatitudes, helping students to understand their importance will be a challenge. Students know what happiness means for them and they are familiar with good actions and doing the 'right' thing. It will be difficult for many students, however, to understand that, contrary to what society puts forward as essential, happiness is not found in the 'things' one has, but rather in being willing to step away from things and to think of others.

### Teaching Point

The beatitudes express Christ's plan for our happiness in this world and the next.

### Remembering Point

The beatitudes are Christ's plan for our happiness.

## Beginning

(10 minutes)

**Welcome the students** as usual.

**Gather the students** on the floor (or seated in a circle) around the prayer focus which you have prepared before class. **Distribute the workbooks** and the Beatitude cards.

**Tell the students:** Today we are going to read the Sermon on the Mount from the Gospel of Matthew. Our prayer is on page 13 of your workbook.

Some of you will have a card that has a number in the left-hand corner. If you have the 'a' cards such as 1a, 2a, etc. then you will say your bit first then the 'b' cards will follow. So 1a will be followed by 1b, then 2a will be followed by 2b, until we have completed the nine beatitudes. Some of you might have two cards to read out. Just read the cards when your number is mentioned. Students with an 'a', sit on my left and the students with a 'b', sit on my right, in numeric order. (This will ensure that students know when to say their particular piece. Students with more than one card can sit in line for their first number.)

**Catechist:** Let us begin with the Sign of the Cross.  
In the name of the Father ...

We will now listen carefully as we read from the Sermon of the Mount in Matthew's Gospel. (Invite the person who has card '1a' to follow after you when you have finished reading the introduction.)

**Catechist:** When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

**Student 1a:** Blessed are the poor in spirit,

**Student 1b:** for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

**Student 2a:** Blessed are those who mourn,

**Student 2b:** for they will be comforted.

**Student 3a:** Blessed are the meek,

**Student 3b:** for they will inherit the earth.

**Student 4a:** Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,

**Student 4b:** for they will be filled.

**Student 5a:** Blessed are the merciful,

**Student 5b:** for they will receive mercy.

**Student 6a:** Blessed are the pure in heart,

**Student 6b:** for they will see God.

**Student 7a:** Blessed are the peacemakers,

**Student 7b:** for they will be called children of God.

**Student 8a:** Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake,

## PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: a cloth, a candle, the Bible, Beatitude cards (as noted below).
2. Prepare a reflection on the Beatitudes using a good commentary.
3. Beatitude cards – each stanza written on two cards, e.g.
  - Card 1a: Blessed are the poor in spirit,
  - Card 1b: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
  - Card 2a: Blessed are those who mourn

(Cards can be found in Appendix 4a, page 23.)
4. Coloured pencils.
5. Greaseproof paper for scroll.
6. Snakes and Ladders grid, enough for each student. See Appendix 4b, page 28.
7. Workbooks.

## PREPARATION

**Student 8b:** for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

**Student 9a:** Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.

**Student 9b:** Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

**Catechist:** Let us think in silence, asking ourselves 'What is Jesus saying to us in this story from scripture'?

*Pause*

Invite students to share a thought if they wish.

**Catechist:** Let us pray:

**All:** Jesus, in your goodness you show us how to be happy.

Help us to seek out ways to make the promises of these Beatitudes real and present in our lives. We ask this in your name.

**All:** Amen.

Collect the cards from the students.

## Middle

*(35 minutes)*

**Tell the students:** We will now take a closer look at this piece of Scripture from the Gospel of Matthew. It is called the Beatitudes and it is part of the Sermon on the Mount.

**Ask the students:** What might the word 'beatitude' mean? (*A state of ultimate happiness. Being as happy as a human being can be. Being very blessed ...*)

**Explore** this understanding with the students.

**Tell the students:** This is the plan Jesus gave us so that we would know how to live happily here on earth. Let us look more closely at what this might mean. If Jesus wants us to be happy, how might this look in our daily lives?

**Divide the class** into three groups and hand out the cards with the beatitudes (used in the prayer) – three per group. **Direct the students** to turn to page 14 in their workbooks and work from the Thinking Hats activity. (You will need to have greaseproof paper, pencils and the 'Snakes and Ladders' grid available for students to collect as needed.)

**Tell the students:** In your group, take each Beatitude and complete the activities in the Thinking Hats activity. Each group is to complete the White Hat questions and activities plus two other hats for each Beatitude. Remember that you must all participate in the activities, and all share the tasks. Try to choose a different combination of hats for each of your Beatitudes.

**Move around** the group offering assistance as necessary. You might find that going to each group will be useful as students might require some explanations or clarifications for difficult phrases such as 'hunger and thirst for righteousness' and 'poor in spirit'. Ensure that your explanations are appropriate for the age of the students.

Be sure to allow adequate time for the groups to finish.

## End

*(15 minutes)*

Bring the activity to a close, collect the coloured pencils and tidy up.

**Gather the students** around you or allow them to remain in their seats.

**Invite a representative** from each group to show what the group made for their Beatitudes activity. (Affirm the students' work.)

**Tell the students:** We now know that the Beatitudes are Christ's plan for our happiness. We can live happy lives by following what Jesus wants for us. Turn to the next page and write 'The Beatitudes are Christ's plan for our happiness', in the space marked 'Something to Remember'. Underneath, add one of the Beatitudes that you will try to live by this week.

**Invite the students** to sit quietly when they have finished this task.

Collect the workbooks and prepare the students for prayer.

**Catechist:** Let us say the Glory be to the Father, together.

**All:** Glory be to the Father ...

Dismiss the students as usual.

## PREPARATION

**Appendix 4a – Beatitude Cards**

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Photocopy and laminate a set of these cards for use during the prayer and the lesson.

**1a**

Blessed are the poor in spirit,

**1b**

for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

**23****2a**

Blessed are those who mourn,

**2b**

for they will be comforted.

**Appendix 4a – Beatitude Cards (continued)**

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**3a**

Blessed are the meek,

**3b**

for they will inherit the earth.

24

**4a**

Blessed are those who hunger  
and thirst for righteousness,

**4b**

for they will be filled.

**Appendix 4a – Beatitude Cards (continued)**

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**5a**

Blessed are the merciful,

**5b**

for they will receive mercy.

**25****6a**

Blessed are the pure in heart,

**6b**

for they will see God.

**Appendix 4a – Beatitude Cards (continued)**

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**7a**

Blessed are the peacemakers,

**7b**

for they will be called  
the children of God.

26

**8a**

Blessed are those who are persecuted  
for righteousness' sake,

**8b**

for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

**Appendix 4a – Beatitude Cards (continued)**

---

**9a**

Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.

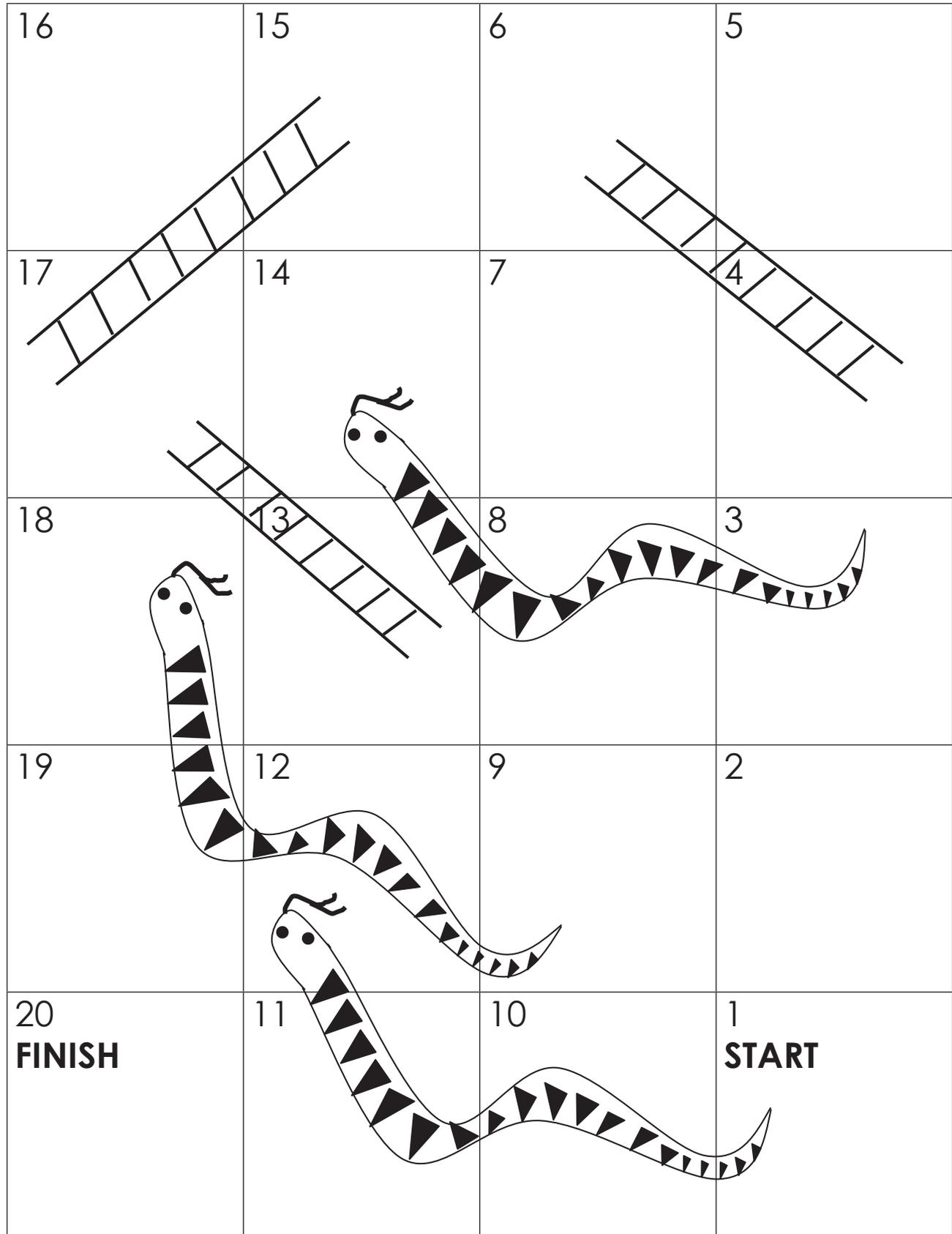
**27****9b**

Rejoice and be glad,  
for your reward is great in heaven,  
for in the same way they persecuted  
the prophets who were before you.

## Appendix 4b – Snakes and Ladders

Photocopy and enlarge for the students to use.

To play the game, you need a die and a counter for each player. Roll a 6 to start.



# The Christian Community Prays

## Background for the Catechist

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

### *Reflection/Doctrinal Reference*

The prayer and offering of the Church are inseparable from the prayer and offering of Christ, her head; it is always the case that Christ worships in and through his Church. The whole Church, the Body of Christ, prays and offers herself 'through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit', to God the Father (CCC, n. 1553).

In the sacramental liturgy of the Church, the mission of Christ and of the Holy Spirit proclaims, makes present, and communicates the mystery of salvation, which is continued in the heart that prays. The spiritual writers sometimes compare the heart to an altar. Prayer internalises and assimilates the liturgy during and after its celebration. Even when it is lived out 'in secret', prayer is always prayer of the Church; it is a communion with the Holy Trinity (CCC, n. 2655).

While all Christians have their own mission and special work to do, the Church most clearly expresses itself and its role when all the members of the community gather together in prayer, particularly at the Eucharist. The community gathers, it listens to God's word in the Scriptures, contemplates God's glory and goodness in shared silence. It might sing and verbalise its own needs and the needs of others. In union with Jesus Christ it offers praise and thanksgiving to God and represents the great act of self offering of Jesus on the cross. While the Eucharist is the greatest prayer of the Church, Jesus' promise is fulfilled whenever the community gathers for prayer. Even when we pray individually or privately we always pray as members of the community of the Church.

### **Student Focus**

These students will have made their first Communion and will have some understanding of the Mass. They will have been through a number of lessons on prayer, so they should have some knowledge of what this means for them. Not all of them will have an understanding of the Mass as a prayer of the community.

### **Teaching Point**

A Christian community prays together.

### **Remembering Point**

A Christian community prays together.

## Beginning

(10 minutes)

(Note: If possible, ask the parish priest to celebrate Mass for all the students attending after-school classes. Invite parents and guardians to attend the Mass. If you have Mass, arrange for everyone to gather in the Church when they arrive. Celebrating Mass will replace the lesson.

If it is not possible, you might consider gathering your students to attend the prayer service, which would take place after the introductory activity.

Parents can then take their children home after the Mass or prayer service. You might like to offer a cup of tea if you are able to organise for this to be made available. In either case, you need to allow time to move to the church and set up for Mass or the prayer.)

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

**All:** In the name of the Father ...

**Catechist:** Let us pray in the words that Jesus taught us.

**All:** Our Father ...

**Divide the students** into three groups and distribute a sheet of A4 paper and a pencil or felt pen to each group. **Send the groups** to their desks.

**Tell the students:** You will have 10 seconds to write down all that you know about prayer. At the end of the 10 seconds you will pass your sheet to the group on your right and you will have 15 seconds to add anything new that you know about prayer, to the list you have received. Then after 15 seconds you will pass that sheet to the right and do the same again. At the conclusion of this time, we will see what we know about prayer. To begin, appoint a recorder. Are you ready? Begin.

When the task is complete, **invite a student** from each group to read what they have recorded, omitting any duplicate answers. Invite the students to contribute anything they think might be missing.

**Tell the students:** We have a very good outline of what prayer is about, the names of prayers, where we pray, how we can pray and why we pray.

## Middle

(35–40 minutes)

**Distribute the workbooks** and **tell the students** to look at The Christian Community Prays Together activity on page 19. **Invite them** to complete the sentence in the space provided.

**Invite a few students** to share their answers. (*Students' responses might include prayer before meals, Anzac Day services, funerals and Parliament. Encourage them to think broadly if they have had difficulty identifying times; they do not have to be in a 'church' context.*)

**Tell the students:** Whenever we gather to celebrate as a faith community we usually pray. There are special times when we gather **just to pray** and you have mentioned some of these in your answers (*Mass, the sacraments, special prayer services*).

## PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: a cloth, a candle and a Bible.
2. A bell or other sound-maker.
3. A clock or timer.
4. Sheets of A4 paper, enough for one per group.
5. Two well-known hymns for the prayer service. (You will need to provide words if you wish the students to join in the singing.)
6. Prayer booklet copied from Appendix 5, page 32.
7. A recording of soft, reflective music.

## PREPARATION

**Take up the workbooks** and **invite the students** to get ready to go to the church for the prayer service. (They will need to take their bags etc. with them.)

**Prepare the students** who will be reading particular parts of the prayer. A run-through of the prayer before the parents arrive will be adequate. Remember to guide everyone through the prayer.

**Invite the parents** to take a seat behind or with their child, whichever is most appropriate. Settle the students in their places. Ensure the prayer focus can be seen by everyone.

**Distribute** the prayer booklet (and words to hymns).

**Welcome the parents** and briefly explain who will be reading and what will be happening. You might like to use a variation on the following text.

I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome all parents, guardians and relatives of the students, to our prayer today. We remember that as members of this Christian community we pray together because that connects us more deeply with God through his Son, Jesus.

During our prayer today, \_\_\_\_\_ (name of student) will read the first reading and \_\_\_\_\_ (name of student) will read the second reading. I invite you all to join in the responses.

So let us begin.

(Begin with a piece of soft, reflective music.)

I invite you all to sit quietly and close your eyes. Put aside anything you have in your hand and just rest.

Bring to your mind all the things you have been doing today both happy and challenging. *Pause*

Place these before the Lord.

In this quiet space, I invite you to open your eyes as I now light our candle. This lighted candle reminds us that Christ is always present with us and will remain with us.

Follow the outline of the prayer service in the booklet. Don't be afraid to gently lead the group through the prayer if people forget what to do. Use phrases such as: 'We will now listen to \_\_\_\_\_ (name) read our first reading.'

**Begin the prayer.**

**End**

*(5 minutes)*

When the prayer service is finished, invite the parents and students to afternoon tea (if possible). Thank all the participants and particularly the students who undertook specific roles.

Dismiss the students as usual.

## Appendix 5 – Prayer

Photocopy enough for one per student (and their families).

### Celebrating Together

#### Gather and Welcome

Welcome parents and students to the gathering.

#### Opening Hymn

#### Opening Prayer

**Leader:** God, our Father,  
You call us to follow you as members of our Christian community. When we come together we pray that we might come closer to knowing you and your Son, Jesus. May we join together in prayer, with our families and this community, through Christ, our Lord.

**All:** Amen.

#### First Reading (Acts 2: 44–47)

**Reader 1:** A reading from the Acts of 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 goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

The Word of the Lord.

**All:** **Thanks be to God**

*Pause for quiet reflection*

**Leader:** If you would like to, I invite you to share a word or thought that this piece of Scripture suggests to you. We will listen carefully to each other.

**Leader:** Let us pray.  
**Reader 2:** The response to our prayers is:  
Praise and thanks to you, Lord God.  
**All:** **Praise and thanks to you, Lord God.**  
**Reader 3:** We pray for our parents, that they will know that we appreciate and love them.  
Let us pray to the Lord.  
**All:** **Praise and thanks to you, Lord God.**  
**Reader 4:** We pray for all those who care for sick, hungry, and fearful children, that they may know your love.  
Let us pray to the Lord.  
**All:** **Praise and thanks to you, Lord God.**  
**Reader 5:** We pray for our friends and relatives, that they may know they are loved by God.  
Let us pray to the Lord.  
**All:** **Praise and thanks to you, Lord God.**  
**Leader:** Let us now pray together the words Jesus taught us.  
**All:** **Our Father ...**

#### Closing Prayer

**Leader:** God of all glory and majesty,  
You who created the heavens and the earth,  
smile upon the families gathered here today.  
Bless us, keep us safe and unite us in your creative power.  
We make this prayer, through Christ Jesus, your Son.

**All:** Amen.

#### Concluding Hymn

# Be Just and Respectful

## Background for the Catechist

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

### Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

Justice is the moral virtue that consists in the constant and firm will to give their due to God and neighbour. Justice toward God is called the 'virtue of religion'. Justice ... disposes one to respect the rights of each and to establish in human relationships the harmony that promotes equity with regard to persons and to the common good. The just man, often mentioned in the Sacred Scriptures, is distinguished by habitual right thinking and the uprightness of his conduct toward his neighbour (CCC, n. 1807).

Respect for the human person entails respect for the rights that flow from his dignity as a creature. These rights are prior to society and must be recognised by it. They are the basis of the moral legitimacy of every authority (CCC, n. 1930).

Respect for the human person proceeds by way of respect for the principle that 'everyone should look upon his neighbour (without any exception) as "another self," above all bearing in mind his life and the means necessary for living it with dignity' (GS, n. 27) (CCC, n. 1931).

Justice and the concept of being fair, which is so familiar to students, have much in common. It is not so difficult to explain the basis for justice nor that everyone ought to be entitled to just and fair treatment. It is much more difficult to put it into practice. Perhaps the best advice is that given in the reference above, 'Everyone should look upon his or her neighbour as another self'. It means we need to make an effort to understand and appreciate the other person and his or her needs as clearly as we understand our own and then commit to whatever we can do to bring that about. It is a huge task, especially in a world in which we know so much of the injustices and lack of respect shown to our fellow human beings. As Mother Teresa said, 'What we are doing is just a drop in the ocean. But if that drop was not in the ocean, I think the ocean would be less because of that missing drop'.

### Student Focus

Students of this age are very aware of justice and fairness in their lives at school and at home. Practical examples of how they can be just and respectful will enable a deeper understanding of how they can live the two aspects of justice and respect in their lives.

### Teaching Point

We are called to be just and respect the rights of others.

### Remembering Point

We must be just and respect the rights of others.

## Beginning

(5 minutes)

**Please read Appendix 6a, page 37, before you teach this lesson.**

**Welcome the students** as usual.

**Gather the students** around the prayer focus. **Hand out the workbooks** and light the candle. Begin with the Sign of the Cross

**Catechist:** Today we are going to think about how we can make our world a just place.

We are called to be just and respect the rights of others.

**All:** Lord, teach us to recognise injustice around us.

**Catechist:** We are called to be just and respect the rights of others.

**All:** Lord, show us how to recognise the goodness of others.

**Catechist:** We are called to be just and respect the rights of others.

**All:** Lord, help us to respect everyone, young and old alike.

**Catechist:** We are called to be just and respect the rights of others.

**All:** Lord, make us champions of the downtrodden.

**All:** Glory be to the Father ...

## Middle

(45 minutes)

**Allocate the students** to groups of three. Randomly distribute a 'Dialogue Scenario', the 'Dialogue Card', and the 'Dialogue Questions' to each group.

Invite the students to read the Dialogue Card. Clarify any questions that the students might have regarding the process of dialogue.

**Tell the students:** Dialogue is a very valuable way of coming to understand something about a topic or issue. When you enter into dialogue with someone you are willing to share what you think as well as be open to being challenged to think deeper. In a dialogue, everyone's ideas and thoughts are valuable. Every idea shared is required to be justified – Why do I think this? There will not be a right or wrong answer, but there will be an opportunity for growth. Today we will try to dialogue about the scenarios on your 'Dialogue Questions' card.

**Invite the students** to read the scenario and enter into dialogue regarding the justice and fairness of the situation.

**Tell the students:** In your groups read the scenario and ask yourself the following questions:

- Is this situation fair? Why or why not?
- Is this situation just? Why or why not?
- What might Jesus have done in this situation?

## PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: A coloured cloth, a candle and a Bible.
2. The scenarios and a Dialogue Card, for each group. (Appendix 6b & 6c pages 38–39).
3. The questions for the two dialogues from Appendix 6d on page 40, one copy for each group.
4. Workbooks.

## PREPARATION

You are to share with each other what you think about each situation. The other members of the group are to listen carefully, without interruption, to what you are saying. Then, when each person has had a chance to share their thoughts, you can offer your thoughts or ask questions of each other about what was shared.

Allow 16 minutes for this dialogue.

**Invite the students** to listen and follow the text on page 20 as you read the Scripture: Jesus telling the parable of the labourers in the vineyard.

For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire labourers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the labourers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the market-place; and he said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went. When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, 'Why are you standing here idle all day?' They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.' When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the labourers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.' When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?' So the last will be first, and the first will be last (Mt 20: 1-16).

**Invite the students** to dialogue about these questions in their groups:

- What do you think about this parable?
- Is the landowner fair? Why?
- Is the landowner just? Why?
- In what ways are justice and fairness the same and different?

**Invite the students** to go through the same process as earlier, listening to each person carefully and responding after everyone has had a chance to contribute. Allow 16 minutes for this activity.

**Invite the students** to turn to page 21 in their workbooks.

**Invite the students** to answer the question: How might you describe justice as Jesus wants us to understand it? Then direct the students to completing the statement, 'I am just and respect others when I ...'

## End

---

*(5 minutes)*

**Gather the students** with their workbooks, for the final prayer on page 22.

**Catechist:** Jesus talked about establishing the kingdom of God where peace and justice reign. Since we are God's hands it is up to us to help bring about a just world in which everyone's rights are respected.

**Students:** Lord, thank you for the privileges we enjoy. Help us not to be blind to the rights of others.

**Catechist:** Lord, you value justice because you created us all in your image.

**Students:** Help us not to be blind to the rights of others.

**Catechist:** Lord, help all humankind see that equality results in peace and harmony.

**Students:** Help us not to be blind to the rights of others. Amen.

Collect the workbooks and dismiss the students.

## PREPARATION

## Appendix 6a – Understanding Dialogue

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### Understanding Dialogue in the Catechetical Lesson

The way young people engage with the world today is different to anything we have known before. Research has shown that the old ways of teaching religious education no longer work with people who ask questions and challenge the status quo. Young people of today will not sit back and blindly accept being told what to believe and think about their faith. Religious educators are challenged to look more closely at how to assist young people to interpret their faith and religion in a way that makes sense and has meaning for them in their context. Young people are constantly engaged in their learning and are expected to be thinkers about all aspects of their education from a very early age. *Dialogue* is one approach to learning that facilitates this deep thinking while channelling the questions into a productive forum that negotiates an outcome.

True dialogue is considered to be the highest form of communication between human beings. It is the opportunity for two or more people to listen to each other, share their thoughts and ideas and consider the position other people take on an issue. As these ideas and thoughts are shared, the participants in the dialogue build on them to strengthen or change their own position. Dialogue opens the individual to explore other possibilities in an effort to understand what the other person is sharing, but not necessarily to agree with their position. Dialogue also allows for divergent thinking to occur, ideas and sharing that are not always on the topic, but engage participants in thinking and enquiry into other ideas and thoughts.

When used in these lessons, the dialogue process is in a modified form. The nature of the after-school catechetical lesson prohibits true dialogue being used, but does allow for elements of it to be nurtured. The challenge is to have the students think in new ways, critically and creatively. They are supported to offer their own thoughts and understandings, to think about what they are reading, hearing and experiencing. Students are encouraged to make connections with their learning through dialogue, and to come up with possibilities that may not have been apparent.

Some ground rules that guide good dialogue and give an idea of what is expected, are as follows:

**Participants share.** *(There has to be a focus to the dialogue and all information relevant to this focus has to be shared. Dialogue does not happen in ignorance. Something new might be introduced, or some further information about a subject already understood.)*

**Reasons are expected.** *(When someone says something, they must be willing and able to say why they think that.)*

**Participants can challenge the ideas.** *(Students can challenge others but, again, must be able to say why they challenge and offer an alternative.)*

**Alternatives are discussed.** *(The alternatives offered in challenges are discussed.)*

**Every idea has merit.** *(This is the principle upon which much of this dialogical approach is based. All students are valued and their ideas and thoughts are valued also. When entering into dialogue it is understood that all ideas are seen as valuable and form part of the fabric of the dialogical process.)*

**The group's purpose is deeper understanding.** *(The process is collaborative. All the students and the catechist are working together to better understand the point at issue.)*

(These ground rules are adapted from Fisher 2009, p. 152.)

## Appendix 6b – Dialogue Card

Copy this page then laminate it and cut out each card. Make enough for one per group.

### Dialogue Card

Dialogue is about speaking, listening and sharing your ideas. So that everyone gets a chance to speak and is listened to carefully by everyone else, you are asked to follow the steps below when undertaking group dialogue.

1. Read the questions you are required to answer carefully and prepare your own answers in your head, or write them, if that helps you.
2. You each have no more than two minutes to share your answers to the questions – **without interruption**. Everyone else in the group listens and thinks about what the person is saying. You might like to write a word or sentence about what the person has said or a question that you think about, but you are not to say anything, yet.
3. After everyone has had the opportunity to share their answers, anyone from the group can ask a question of another person or can share a thought about what someone else has said. You must remain on task and only ask questions that are relevant to the issue.

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### Dialogue Card

Dialogue is about speaking, listening and sharing your ideas. So that everyone gets a chance to speak and is listened to carefully by everyone else, you are asked to follow the steps below when undertaking group dialogue.

1. Read the questions you are required to answer carefully and prepare your own answers in your head, or write them, if that helps you.
2. You each have no more than two minutes to share your answers to the questions – **without interruption**. Everyone else in the group listens and thinks about what the person is saying. You might like to write a word or sentence about what the person has said or a question that you think about, but you are not to say anything, yet.
3. After everyone has had the opportunity to share their answers, anyone from the group can ask a question of another person or can share a thought about what someone else has said. You must remain on task and only ask questions that are relevant to the issue.

## Appendix 6c – Dialogue Scenarios

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Copy this page and cut it into strips. Distribute the strips randomly to the groups.

Daniel is forced to go to bed at 8.30 pm because his younger brother needs more sleep.

Frazer's Mum works as a sales assistant with Dimitri. She works the same hours and does the same job as Dimitri but Dimitri earns \$200 dollars more.

Old Mr Brown needs a hip replacement but he has no medical insurance. So he must wait three years, in pain.

39

Mohamed fears for his life and his family because Muslims are being shot in his home town just for being Muslim.

In quite recent times girls in Afghanistan were forbidden an education so they could not read. They could not drive, go out without a man or do paid work.

## Appendix 6d – Dialogue Questions

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Make a copy of these questions for each group.

**For the Dialogue Scenario ask yourself the following questions:**

- Is this situation fair? Why or why not?
- Is this situation just? Why or why not?
- What might Jesus have done in this situation?

**For the Scripture Dialogue ask yourself the following questions:**

- What do you think about this parable?
- Is the landowner fair? Why?
- Is the landowner just? Why?
- In what ways are justice and fairness the same and different?

**For the Dialogue Scenario ask yourself the following questions:**

- Is this situation fair? Why or why not?
- Is this situation just? Why or why not?
- What might Jesus have done in this situation?

**For the Scripture Dialogue ask yourself the following questions:**

- What do you think about this parable?
- Is the landowner fair? Why?
- Is the landowner just? Why?
- In what ways are justice and fairness the same and different?

# Liturgical Signs and Symbols

## Background for the Catechist

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

## Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

In human life, signs and symbols occupy an important place. As a being at once body and spirit, human beings express and perceive spiritual realities through physical signs and symbols. As a social being, [we] need signs and symbols to communicate with others, through language, gestures, and actions. The same holds true for [our] relationship with God (CCC, n. 1146).

The liturgical celebration involves signs and symbols relating to creation (candles, water, fire), human life (washing, anointing, breaking bread) and the history of salvation (the rites of the Passover). Integrated into the world of faith and taken up by the power of the Holy Spirit, these cosmic elements, human rituals, and gestures of remembrance of God become bearers of the saving and sanctifying action of Christ (CCC, n. 1189).

The symbols and signs we use during liturgical celebrations are like plugs into the mystery of God's life and love. Through them, we can die to sin in the waters of baptism and rise to a new life in Christ. Through them, we can offer to God, the Son who was given to us and for us. Through them, the life of Christ courses through our bodies as we receive him in Holy Communion. At reconciliation we experience the touch of God's love and mercy. The sick are comforted and strengthened in their suffering by being anointed with oil. In the sacrament of marriage the husband and wife experience the tender love of God in the mutual love and concern for each other. Ordination conveys from one generation to another the gift of priesthood through the laying on of hands. All of the liturgical signs, in their own way, bring about a real and intimate exchange with the divine; they both comfort and challenge Christians on the life journey. They also bind those who share in them more closely to the life of the Church and to the service it offers the world as the Body of Christ.

## Student Focus

Many of your students will have a limited experience of Church and liturgy. Those who attend Mass regularly will have some understanding of what the liturgy is and what the signs and symbols might be. However, many students will be new to these elements. They will, however, be familiar with symbolism and signs. This will enable you to help them to connect with the deeper understanding of the liturgy.

## Teaching Point

We use liturgical signs and symbols.

## Remembering Point

We use liturgical signs and symbols.

## Beginning

(5 minutes)

**Welcome the students** as usual.

**Invite the students** to sit in their places and distribute the workbooks. Ask the students to open the workbooks at page 23. **Invite the students** to prepare for prayer by being still and quiet.

**Catechist:** Let us make the Sign of the Cross:

**All:** In the name of the Father ...

**Catechist:** Let us pray together:

**All:** God, our Father,  
Be with us as we begin this lesson;  
help us to be attentive and to work well.  
We ask this in the name of Jesus, your Son. Amen.

**Tell the students:** The items on this table are all symbols used in liturgy. In our lesson today we will explore some of these signs and symbols. The word *liturgy* refers to the formal prayer of the Church. All liturgies have a format or framework and celebrate Christ present to us in the life of the Church and in our life. The liturgy that most of us are used to is the Eucharist or the Mass but every sacrament has its own liturgy.

## Middle

(50 minutes)

**Invite the students** to turn to the next page in their workbooks. **Tell them:** You will see on this page two short explanations about Sign and Symbol.

**Invite one student** to read aloud the explanations of sign and symbol while the rest follow in their books.

**Tell the students:** Today we will be looking at the signs and symbols used in liturgy.

**Invite the students** to gather around the table of symbols at the front of the class. Ensure that everyone can see and allow them to touch the items if they wish.

**Invite the students** to identify each item.

**Tell the students:** These items are all used in the liturgy of the Mass. Our next activity will help us understand these signs and symbols a little better and how important they are to our understanding of what is happening in the Mass.

**Allocate the students** to four groups and give each group one of the A3 symbol sheets. Send the students to find a place where they can gather around the symbol sheet and are able to write. Ensure that every student has a felt pen.

**Tell the students:** The following activity is to be conducted in silence. While you are writing, or moving, no one is to talk.

## PREPARATION

1. At the front of the learning space place a table covered with a white cloth. Place on it a white candle, a bread roll, a glass of grape juice, and a glass bowl of water.
2. Four sheets of A3 paper to make symbol sheets. Paste at the top of each sheet one of the images from Appendix 7a, page 45.
3. Felt pens.
4. The Symbols Activity Instructions enlarged to A3 size (see Appendix 7b on page 46).
5. A copy of Dialogue Questions for each group. (See Appendix 7c on page 47).
6. A Dialogue Card (from lesson 6, Appendix 6b on page 38) for each group.
7. Blu Tack.
8. Workbooks.

## PREPARATION

**Display the Symbols Activity** Instructions where the students can see them. Tell the students: The task is to:

1. Look at the picture at the top of your page and think about when you see that item in your daily life.
2. Think about all the ways we might use the particular item and what you know about the item.
3. Individually write what you know about the item, on the sheet.

**Tell the students:** For example, if my picture was of a flame, I might write about where fire is found such as heating at home in a wood fire, melting iron, lighting a candle, clearing rubbish or property. I might also say some negative things about fire: it burns, when it is uncontrolled, such as a bushfire, or a house fire, it can destroy property. These are the sorts of things that I want you to think about and record on the sheets. If someone else has written what you were going to write, put a tick beside their statement.

You will have five minutes to complete this task.

After the five minutes, **direct the students** to stop and stand and look towards you.

**Tell the students:** Now I want you to go and look at the other groups' posters and read carefully what they have written. You may then add relevant questions or comments. For instance, if there were a fire sheet I might think about how warming fire is when it is a very cold day and I could add 'it keeps you warm on a very cold day', and link it to the statement about fire. You will have five minutes to do this. Remember to keep your questions and comments relevant and appropriate.

**Remember** to walk around the sheets yourself, reading and watching what is written and managing the group. After the five minutes, **gather the students** around you with the sheets.

**Invite the students** to walk along the row of sheets so that they might read everything that has now been written. Allow five minutes for this activity.

**Ask the students:** What do we now know about these items?  
(Draw together and highlight the key responses made by the students on the sheets.)

**Tell the students:** All of these items are used frequently in our lives. We have said how we might use them and how influential they are in our lives. We can drink water, we can wash in it as well as drown in it. Candles are used as light and to mark special occasions. Wine, made from grapes, is a drink to enjoy with special meals. If we drink too much we may become intoxicated. Water is essential to life. Without it, plants, animals and people die. We use water to clean ourselves and our clothing. Water can also be destructive when there are floods. Bread is an essential part of our lives providing nourishment. Bread is also the end product of a lot of people working to make it become the item we have here. You might recall the lesson last year about how bread is made. These ordinary items are deliberately used in our liturgy.

**Ask the students:** Why do you think these ordinary items are used when we celebrate Mass? *(Take answers from the students. Remember to accept them all as there is no one answer. This is a preliminary question; the students' understanding will hopefully increase through the next activity.)*

**Invite the students** to form into four different groups – so they are not with the same people as they were at the beginning of the class. Hand each group one of the symbol posters, a copy of the Dialogue Questions and a Dialogue Card. Send them to find a place where they can work together.

**Invite the students** to use the questions to engage in dialogue about the symbol they have been allocated.

- Dialogue Questions:
- What does the symbol mean to me?
- What connections can I make between the meaning of this symbol and my life?
- What connections can I make between what happens with this item in life and what happens in the Mass?

**Remind the students** about how to engage in active dialogue.

Allow the students to dialogue for 15 minutes.

**Invite one student** from each group to feed back something from their answers to the last three questions. *(Remember to respect their privacy while encouraging sharing of their thoughts and ideas.)*

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**Invite the students** to turn to page 25 in their workbooks. **Tell the students:** In the space titled 'Symbols', write your individual answers to the question: Why are these symbols, which are used in everyday life, used in liturgy?

**Invite a few students** to share their response (as time permits).

Take up the workbooks.

## End

*(5 minutes)*

**Gather the students** round the table of symbols.

**Catechist:** Let us remember that Jesus died for us by making the Sign of the Cross.

**All:** In the name of the Father ...

**Catechist:** Lord, God, help us to reflect more deeply upon the meaning of the symbols used in the liturgy so that we might come to know you more.

So together let us pray to the Father, in the words of Jesus.

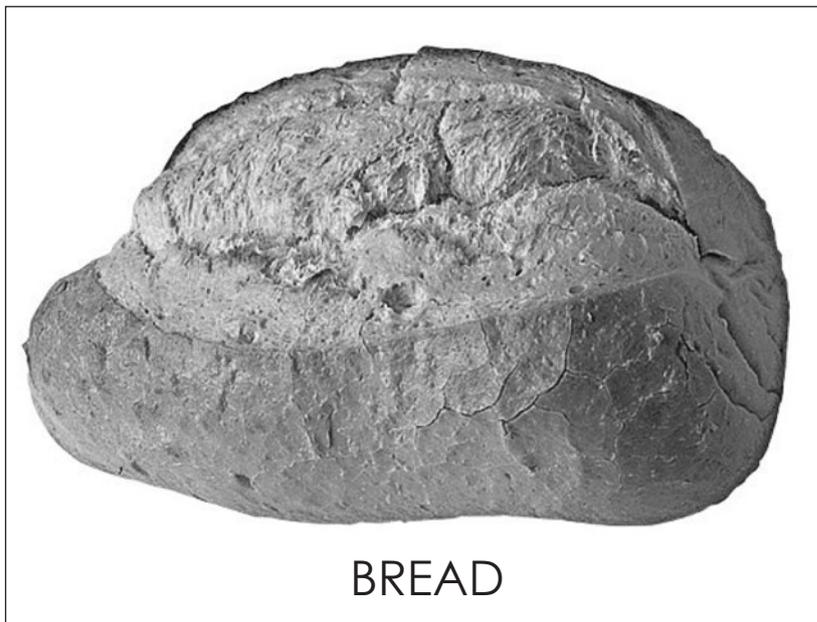
**All:** Our Father ...

Dismiss the students as usual.

## PREPARATION

## Appendix 7a – Symbols used in the Liturgy

Copy this page and cut out the symbols. Place each picture at the top of a large sheet of paper and distribute one sheet per group.



## Appendix 7b – Instructions for Symbols Activity

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Enlarge this on the photocopier onto an A3 sheet and display it for students to see clearly.

1. Look at the picture at the top of your page and think about when you see that item in your daily life.
2. Think about all the ways we might use the particular item and what you know about the item.
3. Individually, write on the sheet what you know about the item.

## Appendix 7c – Dialogue Questions

Photocopy these questions for each group.

Read these questions and spend a few moments thinking about them. Record any thoughts or comments if you wish. When the group is ready, take turns in sharing your answers.

### Dialogue Questions

- What does the symbol mean to me?
- What connections can I make between the meaning of this symbol and my life?
- What connections can I make between what happens with this item in life and what happens in the Mass?

Read these questions and spend a few moments thinking about them. Record any thoughts or comments if you wish. When the group is ready, take turns in sharing your answers.

### Dialogue Questions

- What does the symbol mean to me?
- What connections can I make between the meaning of this symbol and my life?
- What connections can I make between what happens with this item in life and what happens in the Mass?

# Easter

## Background for the Catechist

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

### **Reflection/Doctrinal Reference**

O truly blessed Night, sings the Exsultet of the Easter Vigil, which alone deserved to know the time and the hour when Christ rose from the realm of the dead! But no one was an eyewitness to Christ's Resurrection and no evangelist describes it. No one can say how it came about physically. Still less was its innermost essence, his passing over to another life, perceptible to the senses. Although the Resurrection was an historical event that could be verified by the sign of the empty tomb and by the reality of the apostles' encounters with the risen Christ, still it remains at the very heart of the mystery of faith as something that transcends and surpasses history. This is why the risen Christ does not reveal himself to the world, but to his disciples, 'to those who came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are now his witnesses to the people' (Acts 13: 3) (CCC, n. 647).

By his Death and his Resurrection, Jesus is constituted in glory as Lord and Christ (cf. Acts 2: 36). From his fullness, he poured out the Holy Spirit on the apostles and the Church (CCC, n. 746).

The symbols, signs and readings of Easter, especially of the Easter Vigil, express the core significance of Jesus' passing over from death to life. They express the Church's most central convictions about what God has for us in the death and Resurrection of Jesus. The Easter fire is a sign of Jesus' life on earth. From its dying flames is lit the Paschal Candle, the light of the Risen Christ held up in the darkness of sin and chaos. The sharing of that light symbolises the way faith in Christ is shared from one to another until the whole building, a sign of the world, glows with the light of Christ. The Easter Exsultet puts into words and sounds the joy of the Church in her Risen Lord. The readings of the Vigil give a cosmic and historic context to the significance of the event. Those who have been preparing to enter the Church die to their old lives in the water of baptism so that they may rise to share the new life of Jesus. They are anointed with oil as a share in his identity; they are clothed in white to show that they have 'put on' Christ and are given a lighted candle to express their newly enlightened selves. The Eucharist itself makes present through bread and wine the paschal mystery of the dying and rising of Jesus, the inexpressible mystery which is at the heart of our faith.

## PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: White or gold cloth, candle decorated as an Easter candle, bowl of water.
2. Pictures of Easter fire, Easter candle and baptismal font.
3. A small length of foliage to be used to sprinkle the water during the final prayer.



4. On the whiteboard or a large sheet of paper draw a grid with three columns with the words *fire*, *candles*, *water* at the top of each column e.g.

fire	candles	water

5. Enough household candles for one per student.
6. Spirit-based felt-tip pens.
7. Workbooks.

## Student Focus

Over the years, these students will have participated in a number of lessons on Easter. We need to help them to make sense of Jesus rising to new life for today. An exploration of the symbols that abound in their daily life – light, water and fire – will bring new life to this significant celebration.

## Teaching Point

The symbols of Easter remind us of the importance of Jesus' rising to new life.

## Remembering Point

The symbols of Easter remind us of the importance of Jesus' rising to new life.

## Beginning

(10 minutes)

**Welcome the students** as usual and allow some time for students to share stories of their Easter celebrations.

**Invite the students** to gather around the prayer focus.

**Catechist:** Easter is such an important event in the Church's year that we celebrate it for six weeks. Today, we will be learning about the symbols of Easter so that when we see them at Church we will understand them a little more.

Let us begin with the sign of the cross.

**All:** In the name of the Father ...

**Catechist:** God our Father, we praise you and we bless you because you raised Jesus from the dead.

**All:** Glory be to the Father ...

**Tell the students:** Easter is the time when we remember and celebrate that Jesus rose from the dead.

**Ask the students:** who has been to the Easter Vigil, the Church service held the night before Easter Sunday?

If anyone has, **invite them** to tell about it. What happened? (*fire, dark church, lighting candles, people being baptised, ...*) If no one has attended an Easter Vigil **tell them** that it's a very special celebration and point to the pictures as appropriate. It starts outside the church with a fire that the priest blesses. Then the priest takes the lighted Easter candle into the dark church and everyone follows him in. Then small candles are lit from the Easter candle and eventually everyone holds a lighted candle and the church becomes light. Sometimes people are baptised with the baptismal water which has just been blessed.

**Invite the students** to go to their seats.

## Middle

(35 minutes)

**Tell the students:** Last week we looked at signs and symbols used at Mass and discovered that the Church uses ordinary things to help us understand the mystery of Jesus.

**Ask the students:**

- In our ordinary everyday lives, why do we have fire, candles or water?
- How do we use these? (important for keeping us alive and safe and healthy ...)

**Record** on whiteboard/large sheet of paper their various uses.

**Hand out** the workbooks.

**Invite the students** to open their workbooks at page 26 and to read carefully the Research Cards.

**Ask the students** to use their knowledge of fire, candles and water in everyday life and the information on the Research Cards in making a response to these questions:

- Why do you think that light is a good sign for the risen Lord?  
*(Encourage a variety of answers and remember that although you might think the following – Jesus said I am the light of the world, light helps us to find our way and Jesus taught us how to live, to see clearly and we need help to see what Jesus means – is the correct answer, there are a variety of observations and interpretations that can legitimately be made. Therefore encourage the students to think about the significance and meaning of all these elements.)*
- Why do you think we write Alpha and Omega and the year on the Easter candle? *(Remember to accept and encourage a variety of answers. Note the comment above. Jesus is the beginning and the end, Jesus is for all time, the year belongs to Jesus, Jesus died on the cross but rose to new life.)*
- Why do you think that water is used for baptism? *(Remember to accept and encourage a variety of answers. Note the comment above. Water is life-giving just as Jesus gives us life.)*
- Why do you think we often have a baptism at the Easter vigil?  
*(Remember to accept and encourage a variety of answers. Note the comment above. Baptism is about dying to oneself and being born into Christ and Easter is about Jesus' new life, dying with Christ and rising with Christ.)*

**Invite the students** to write their responses in the shape titled 'Questions about Easter Symbols' on page 28 of the workbooks.

Walk around the class as the students work, giving encouragement and assistance where needed. This is a time for students to engage in their own learning; it is not a time for the catechist to give explanations.

## PREPARATION

## PREPARATION

**Invite the students** to share their answers with one other student. (If there is an uneven number of students the catechist should partner a student.) After a few minutes, draw the dialogue to a close and take up the workbooks.

**Distribute to students** an ordinary household candle.

**Invite the students** to use the spirit-based felt-tip pens to make their own Easter candle by decorating it like the one on the prayer focus. (Allow about five minutes.)

## End

*(10 minutes)*

**Invite the students** to bring their candles and gather round the lighted 'Easter' candle.

**Tell the students:** We are going to light our candles during the prayer and therefore we need to be very careful.

**Catechist:** At the Easter Vigil, the priest invites us to renew our baptismal promises. We will do this today. The response is: I do.

**Catechist:** Do you believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth?

**All:** I do.

**Catechist:** Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, who was crucified, died and was buried, rose from the dead, and is now seated at the right hand of the Father?

**All:** I do.

**Catechist:** Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins and the resurrection of the body and life everlasting?

**All:** I do.

**Catechist:** Please blow out your candle.

At the Easter vigil the priest sprinkles the people with the Easter water. Bow your heads as I sprinkle you with water. *(Dip a piece of foliage in the water and splash water on the students saying:)* Springs of water, bless the Lord. Give him glory and praise forever.

**Catechist:** Let's say together the prayer that Jesus taught us.

**All:** Our Father ...

**Catechist:** Let us conclude with the Glory Be.

**All:** Glory be to the Father ...

Dismiss the students as usual.

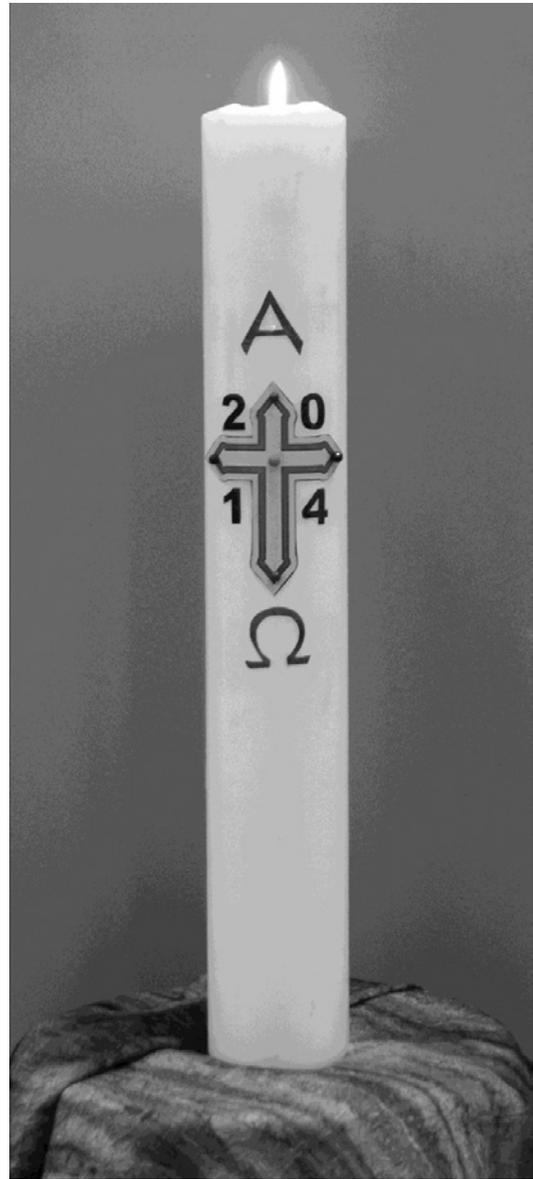
## Appendix 8 – Some Easter Symbols

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Photocopy, perhaps enlarge, laminate and cut out the images to use in the lesson.



Baptismal Font



Paschal Candle

## Appendix 8 – Some Easter Symbols (continued)

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Photocopy, perhaps enlarge, laminate and cut out the images to use in the lesson.



An Easter Fire



The Light brought into the darkened church from the Easter fire lit during the Easter Vigil

# The Lord's Prayer

## Background for the Catechist

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

### Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

The traditional expression 'the Lord's Prayer' – oratio Dominica – means that the prayer to our Father is taught and given to us by the Lord Jesus. The prayer that comes to us from Jesus is truly unique: it is 'of the Lord'. On the one hand, in the words of this prayer the only Son gives us the words the Father gave him: he is the master of our prayer. On the other, as Word incarnate, he knows in his human heart the needs of his human brothers and sisters and reveals them to us: he is the model of our prayer (CCC, n. 2765).

When we pray to the Father, we are in communion with him and with his Son, Jesus Christ (1 Jn 1: 3). Then we know and recognise him with an ever new sense of wonder. The first phrase of the Our Father is a blessing of adoration before it is a supplication. For it is the glory of God that we should recognise him as 'Father', the true God. We give him thanks for having revealed his name to us, for the gift of believing in it, and for the indwelling of his Presence in us (CCC, n. 2781).

The Lord's Prayer, also called the Our Father, is the perfect pattern for Christian prayer because it was given to us by Jesus, God's own Son. Prayer was a key aspect of Jesus' life and mission and when his disciples saw him at prayer they wanted to learn from him. As the form of the prayer indicates, the first characteristic of prayer is praise and honour of God and a plea that God's kingdom and God's will be realised at all times and everywhere. The second part is a plea for bread that will sustain us, for forgiveness of our sins in proportion to the forgiveness we offer others and that we will not be tried beyond our strength and be saved from evil. The Lord's Prayer is a prayer that can never be exhausted of meaning and takes a lifetime to learn to pray attentively. The first step is learning it by heart. Then Christians spend the remainder of their lives growing into this prayer, gradually appreciating its richness and allowing its concerns to become their concerns, its challenges their challenges, its consolations their consolations.

### Student Focus

There have been many lessons in previous years that have helped the students learn this traditional prayer of our faith. You will find that many students will be able to recite this prayer but may not understand the deeper meaning. Students of this age will understand the deeper meaning often found in various forms of literature and thus be able to appreciate the complexity of this prayer.

### Teaching Point

The Lord's Prayer, also called the 'Our Father', shows us how to pray to the Father.

### Remembering Point

The Lord's Prayer shows us how to pray to the Father.

## PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: A cloth, a candle and the Bible.
2. Workbooks.
3. An A3 sheet of paper.
4. Blu-Tack.
5. Highlighters for students.
6. Four pieces of paper, each containing a part of the Our Father (see Appendix 9 on page 57).

## Beginning

*(10 minutes)*

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

**Tell the students:** today we are going to focus on the Lord's Prayer, better known as the Our Father.

**Catechist:** Let us pray the Our Father together.

**All:** Our Father ...

Distribute the workbooks to students and ask them to open them at the Our Father, page 31.

**Ask the students:** Why does the Our Father have such a special place in our worship? *(Take all responses.)*

**Tell the students:** This prayer is from the Bible and is Jesus' response to a request from the disciples to be taught how to pray.

**Ask the students:** When have you heard this prayer? *(scouts, army funeral services, opening of parliament, baptisms, marriages, reconciliation ceremonies ... it is the universal Christian prayer.)*

**Tell the students:** When we say prayers that we know off by heart we sometimes don't pay much attention to what we're saying. Let's look at the Lord's Prayer.

**Invite the students** to look for a word that means 'praising God' and highlight it with a highlighter (*Hallowed*), and to highlight in the prayer what we request for our body (*daily bread*).

**Ask the students:**

- What might asking for *daily bread* mean for us today? *(There is no one answer to this question.)*
- What does asking for forgiveness mean for us today? *(There is no one answer to this question.)*
- What are we asking God to do for us today when we say *lead us not into temptation*? *(There is no one answer to this question.)*

*(Affirm the students' answers. Remember to allow them to explore these questions for themselves. You might have an understanding of what these phrases in the Lord's Prayer mean for you, but giving students the opportunity to articulate their understanding will make the prayer relevant for them, today. They might then use the prayer more often and strengthen their relationship with God.)*

## Middle

*(40 minutes)*

**Invite the students** to turn to the Division of the 'Our Father' activity on page 30.

**Tell the students:** Rewrite the prayer putting the sentences from the prayer into the appropriate boxes: praise, petition and forgiveness. You might notice that there are no prayers of thanksgiving in the Lord's Prayer.

Divide the class into four groups. Give each group a piece of paper on which one part of the Our Father has been written (See Appendix 9, page 57).

- 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.
- Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

**Tell the students:** In your groups translate your phrase of the Our Father into contemporary language. You might like to do this in the form of a tweet or an SMS.

**Display a sheet** of A3 paper on the wall or whiteboard.

**Invite a student** from each foursome to bring up their version of the group's phrase and stick it on the sheet.

When all the groups have placed their phrase on the sheet, **invite a different student** from each group to read their contemporary version in a prayerful way.

## End

*(7 minutes)*

**Gather the students** with their workbooks around the prayer focus. You could also put up the A3 sheet with the students' contemporary version of the Our Father on the table or on the wall behind the table.

**Tell the students:** Open your workbooks at page 31 and let us pray the Lord's Prayer in another contemporary way.

**All:** In the name of the Father ...  
 Our Father, who are in heaven, praised be your name,  
 Your kingdom come ... in our family  
 Your will be done ... in our neighbourhood and throughout  
 the earth, as it is in heaven.  
 Give us this day our daily bread ... let no one go hungry.  
 Forgive us our trespasses ... hurtful words, leaving people  
 out and taking more than our share.  
 As we forgive those who ... overcharge us, call us names,  
 leave us out.  
 Lead us not into temptation but towards a life of justice,  
 reconciliation and peace.  
 Amen.

**Thank the students** for their cooperation and collect the workbooks.

Dismiss the students as usual.

## PREPARATION

## Appendix 9 – The Our Father

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Cut out these phrases and give one to each group.

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.

Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

# LESSON 10

## The Gospel Writers

### Background for the Catechist

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

#### Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

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).

We can distinguish three stages in the formation of the Gospels:

1. The life and teaching of Jesus. The Church holds firmly that the four Gospels, 'whose historicity she unhesitatingly affirms, faithfully hand on what Jesus, the Son of God, while he lived among men, really did and taught for their eternal salvation, until the day when he was taken up' (Acts 1: 1–2) (DV, n. 19).
2. The oral tradition. 'For, after the ascension of the Lord, the apostles handed on to their hearers what he had said and done, but with that fuller understanding which they, instructed by the glorious events of Christ and enlightened by the Spirit of truth, now enjoyed' (DV, n. 19).
3. The written Gospels. 'The sacred authors, in writing the four Gospels, selected certain of the many elements which had been handed on, either orally or already in written form; others they synthesised or explained with an eye to the situation of the churches, while sustaining the form of preaching, but always in such a fashion that they have told us the honest truth about Jesus' (CCC, n. 125–126).

The Gospels are the bedrock of Christian faith because they present the clearest picture we have of the life and teachings, the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus. The gospels may be trusted implicitly as presenting the truth about Jesus. However, they are not news reports or history in the usual sense, but inspired accounts which witness to the meaning and significance of Jesus for the world. The four gospels are four accounts with differing emphases and concerns and present four differing but complementary portraits of Jesus. They are based on the events of his life and incorporate varying amounts of his teachings and sayings together with theological interpretations of his life. The Catechism points out that the Gospels evolved in stages from the events of the life of Jesus, through a period of oral preaching and teaching, until these memories, testimonies and traditions were gathered together and written down by evangelists within their communities.

#### Student Focus

Students of this age are fascinated with mystery as well as with detailed facts. They are beginning to move into different communities e.g. sports, dance, youth groups, so have a better understanding that each group

## PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: a cloth, a candle, the Bible and various magazines.
2. A collection of books/ magazines suitable for people with different interests, such as: a footy magazine, a girls' / women's magazine, a cooking book, a mathematics book, a car manual.
3. Felt pens for colouring.
4. One copy of each Information Card, one for each 'home' group (see Appendix 10, page 62).
5. Workbooks.
6. A good Bible dictionary would be helpful.

is different. Students will gain an insight and come to understand that the gospels sometimes contain different stories and emphases for the particular audience involved.

### Teaching Point

After Jesus' death and resurrection the gospels were written for different communities.

### Remembering Point

The gospels were written for different communities.

### Beginning

(15 minutes)

**Welcome the students** as usual.

**Invite the students** to stand for a few moments in silence, eyes closed.

**Catechist:** Let us ask the Holy Trinity: Father, Son and Spirit, to be with us as we make the Sign of the Cross together.

**All:** In the name of the Father ...  
Glory be to the Father ...

**Ask the students** to go to their seats.

Have a collection of books suitable for people with different interests, such as: a footy magazine, a girls' / women's magazine, a cooking book, a mathematics book, a car manual. **Show the books** to the students.

**Ask the students:** Who might these books be useful for? Who might use them? (*Boys, girls or families interested in footy, young girls, people wanting to cook, those students learning mathematics, anyone wanting to fix a car.*)

**Tell the students:** Each of these books has been written for a particular purpose. They have been written for people involved in each of these activities. What else can we say about these books? (*They have been written by people who know what they are talking about. Many have contributions from different people – particularly the magazines. They are full of information that help us with the particular themes or things.*)

Hold up the Bible.

**Ask the students:**

- Who might this book be useful for? (Any one of us, priests, teachers.)
- Who might read it? (Accept all the students' answers.)
- What is in it? (Again, accept a variety of answers.)

**Hand out the workbooks** and **invite the students** to turn to page 32 and the Books of the Bible activity.

**Revise with the students** what they know about the Bible, that it is a collection of books, that there is a difference between the two parts – old and new – and explore the students' general knowledge about the books of the Bible.

**Tell the students:** Now let's look at the New Testament. Draw a blue circle round the books of the New Testament. Use a yellow pencil to underline the names of the Gospel. Use a green pencil to circle the titles of the Letters written by St Paul, St Peter and others. (*Check the answers with the students.*)

## Middle

(40 minutes)

**Tell the students:** Today we will look particularly at the gospels, who might have written them and why. We can know a lot more about Jesus and about the message he left for us when we understand the background to the gospels, when they were written and for whom they were written. Just as we looked at the books and magazines at the beginning and know that some books are written for particular reasons and some are written by more than one person, these gospels are the same. The gospels were written many years ago, in the first hundred years after Jesus died and rose from the dead.

We will now find out a lot more about these Gospels, who wrote them and who they were written for.

**Ask the students** to turn to the Gospel Jigsaw Activity on page 33.

**Divide the class** into four groups, one for each gospel.

**Tell the students:** Each group will be provided with historical information about the authorship, community and purpose of one of the gospels. You are to record your answers in the spaces provided on pages 33–35 in your workbooks.

**Tell the students:** This Gospel Jigsaw Activity will run as follows ... (Students may already be aware of how this activity occurs.)

- Each 'home' group receives an information card of the assigned gospel.
- Each group appoints a leader who will coordinate the dialogue.
- You will have 10 minutes to read the card before the dialogue occurs. The dialogue will also continue for 10 minutes.
- Write down the three most important points about the gospel in your workbooks. You will have 5 minutes.
- Next you will leave your 'home' group and meet in 'expert' groups – made up of one person from each gospel 'home' group.
- 'Experts' discuss their findings from each gospel (3 minutes each). In the template on pages 34–35 in your workbook write down three important points that you have learnt (5 minutes). You will then have information on all four gospels.

**Remind the students:** Listen to each other carefully in your groups; each person's contribution is very important.

**Walk round the groups** listening to the dialogue and offering assistance where required.

**Select one or two students** to share what they have learnt.

Collect the workbooks.

## PREPARATION

## PREPARATION

**End**

*(5 minutes)*

**Gather the students** around the prayer focus.

**Remind the students:** the gospels were written for different communities but they are the basis of our Christian Faith. They give us the best possible picture of the life, death, resurrection and teachings of Jesus.

**Catechist:** Let us pray by making the Sign of the Cross together.

**All:** In the name of the Father ...

**Catechist:** We will end as we began.

**All:** Glory be to the Father ...

Dismiss the students as usual.

## Appendix 10 – Information Cards

Photocopy enough cards for one card per four students. Laminate if possible.

### Matthew's Gospel

**Author** Many scholars believe the author is not the apostle Matthew because an eyewitness would not have copied as much from the Gospel of Mark, and also by 85–90 AD the apostle Matthew would probably not still be alive. The author Matthew was probably a Jewish convert familiar with Jewish traditions and expectations. He wrote in better Greek and had a wider vocabulary than Mark.

**Date** The gospel of Matthew is likely to have been written after the destruction of Jerusalem because that is presented as a past event in the parables of the wicked tenants (21: 33–41) and the wedding feast (22: 1–14). It was most likely written between the years 85 and 90 AD.

**Place** It is uncertain where this gospel was written, but it was probably Antioch in Syria.

#### Community (Audience)

Matthew's community probably consisted of Jewish-Christians (converts from Judaism) and Gentiles (non-Jews) because they knew the Scriptures (there are over 130 quotes from the Old Testament) and the Jewish Law remains the rule of life (5: 17).

It was most likely an urban community because he uses *polis* (city) 26 times.

It was probably a relatively wealthy community because Matthew frequently uses gold, silver, and 'talent' which was worth about 50 times the *minas* (pound) used in Luke.

**Purpose** The Christian message is for everyone. *Gentiles* come to worship Jesus at his birth (2: 1–12). There is the mission of the disciples to *all nations* (28: 19).

Matthew adds the story of Jesus' birth to build a bridge between the Old Testament and the life of Jesus. He wanted his readers to know that Jesus completed all the promises God made in the Old Testament.

Matthew's Gospel encourages the community to live in constant readiness for Jesus' return.

There is a strong emphasis on Christian community (church). Matthew is the only evangelist to use the word *ekklesia* (church) (16: 18; 18: 17). There seemed to be an organised church government – keys of heaven (16: 19), power to bind and loose (18: 18), Peter's leadership (16: 18).

#### Portrait of Jesus

Jesus is presented as the new Moses (law-giver) because of the Sermon on the Mount (chapters 5–7). He is also shown as a teacher who exercises authority (17: 29). Jesus is the fulfilment of Old Testament promises (the Messiah).



## Appendix 10 – Information Cards (continued)

Photocopy enough cards for one card per four students. Laminate if possible.

### Mark's Gospel

**Author** According to tradition Mark was a disciple of Peter in Rome. Mark is not listed in any gospel as one of Jesus' disciples. He wrote in everyday Greek for Peter's community.

**Date** Mark's Gospel was probably written between 65 and 70 AD, after Peter and Paul had been martyred (64–67 AD) and towards the end of war between Israel and Rome which resulted in the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple (70 AD). Many scholars believe that it was the first gospel written.

**Place** Scholars believe that the gospel was written in Rome because it contains Latin terms like legion in 5: 9, 19.

#### Community (Audience)

Mark's community (audience) consisted of non-Jewish (Gentile) Christians, because he has translated Aramaic phrases into Greek and explains Jewish customs, e.g. 7: 3–4.

**Purpose** Mark wants his audience to know who Jesus is. In the first half of the gospel many different characters ask questions about who Jesus is. Mark finally puts the answer to these questions on Peter's lips: 'You are the Messiah' (8: 29).

Mark wants his audience to know that Jesus is a *suffering* Messiah who would die and be raised on the third day. This is the main theme of the second half of the gospel.

Three times in the gospel Mark records that Jesus is the *Son of God*: at his baptism (1: 11), at his transfiguration (9: 7) and finally at his death on the cross (15: 39).

The main two characters are Jesus and the disciples. The disciples begin well but in the second part of the gospel we see that they do not understand that Jesus will suffer and die and that therefore, as followers, they should do the same.

#### Portrait of Jesus

Jesus is God's Son but he is also the Messiah who suffers and dies on the cross. The person of Jesus in this gospel is very human: Jesus displays anger in the episode of the man with the withered hand (3: 5) and indignation when the disciples rebuke those bringing children to him (10: 14). He is unable to perform miracles if faith is absent (6: 1–6); he suffers physically (8: 31–33; 9: 31). Jesus is a man from Nazareth (1: 9). Jesus is teacher of the crowds (e.g. 6: 34).



## Appendix 10 – Information Cards

Photocopy enough cards for one card per four students. Laminate if possible.

### Luke's Gospel

**Author** Luke was *not* one of Jesus' disciples. He was probably a Gentile (non-Jewish) Christian from Syria. Tradition from the second century says that Luke was probably a doctor and a close friend of Paul (Col 4: 14). Luke had studied other accounts of Jesus and he decided to write 'an orderly' account so that his readers would know the truth about Jesus (1: 3–4).

**Date** Luke's Gospel was probably written around 85 – 90 AD.

**Place** It was possibly written in Greece or Asia Minor.

#### Community (Audience)

Luke wrote for Gentile (non-Jewish) Christians during a time of growth for the Christian community.

**Purpose** Like Matthew, Luke copied much of Mark's Gospel. However, he added lots of different stories, e.g. the son of the widow of Nain (7: 11–17) and Zacchaeus (19: 1–10).

For most of Luke's Gospel, Jesus is on a long journey from Galilee to Jerusalem. Many of the stories unique to Luke occur on the journey.

Luke wanted his audience to understand the happiness of being Christian, e.g. glad tidings of Jesus' birth (2: 10), rejoicing when lost things are found (15: 1–32), the great joy of the disciples after the ascension (24: 52).

Luke tells many stories of Jesus praying, e.g. after his baptism (3: 21), before naming his apostles (6: 12–13) and during his transfiguration (9: 23–34).

Many of Luke's stories encourage the community to be inclusive, e.g. of outcasts like the Samaritans (10: 24–37).

#### Portrait of Jesus

Jesus is the fulfilment of all God's promises (the new Israel); a light to the Gentiles (2: 32).

Jesus is a friend of the marginalised and poor as shown in his parable about the good Samaritan (10: 25–37) and his cleansing of the lepers (17: 11–19).

Jesus is always merciful and compassionate to everyone. He forgives the woman who was a sinner (7: 36–50); he pities the widow of Nain (7: 11–15).



## Appendix 10 – Information Cards (continued)

Photocopy enough cards for one card per four students. Laminate if possible.

### John's Gospel

**Author** Tradition says that John was the author of this gospel. Many scholars think that the gospel could be connected with the 'beloved disciple' or 'other disciple' of the gospel. Other scholars think the author might be a group of scholars who interpreted and expanded the beloved disciple's teachings until it came to be written in the form we know today. The author was certainly a person of Jewish background, who wrote in simple, everyday Greek.

**Date** It was written about 100 AD, because traditions from the second century indicate that John wrote it at the end of a long life. The concerns and issues raised in the gospel are relevant to second-generation Christians, i.e. those who were born after Jesus' death and resurrection.

**Place** According to tradition John wrote the gospel in Ephesus. Scholars suggest that it was written for an audience from a Palestinian background because:

- many Aramaic words are used, e.g. *Cephas* (1: 42), *Rabboni* (20: 16)
- the word *messiah* is carefully explained (1: 41)
- it uses Aramaic grammar in Greek writing.

#### Community (Audience)

John writes for Jewish Christians who are being torn between their synagogue/Jewish heritage and their Christian community (16: 1–4). As a result their faith in Jesus was probably wavering.

The audience included people descended from the original Jews who followed Jesus in Palestine. John the Baptist's disciples were probably part of the community. Probably there were Jews who did not belong to mainstream Judaism.

They are second-generation Christians because they were not eye-witnesses (20: 16–31). They were suffering persecution (15: 18–25; 16: 1–4). They were being challenged to remain faithful (15: 1–11).

**Purpose** John wanted his audience to believe that 'Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing this you may have life through his name' (20: 31). He wanted his audience to understand that faith is needed to totally commit oneself to all that Jesus revealed.

He wanted them to know that Jesus is the Messiah, is divine, but not another God.

He stressed that Jesus is the incarnate Son of God (3: 35; 4: 34; 14: 28) and is the *logos*, the Word of God (1: 1–18).

#### Portrait of Jesus

Jesus is the Incarnate Word – the Son of Man and the Son of God, e.g. the 'I am' formula (8: 24, 28, 58; 13: 19). Jesus is the Light of the World; the Way, Truth and Life.

He is also a very human person who weeps (11: 33, 35), becomes angry (2: 15), is thirsty (4: 5f), has friends (chapter 11); has a home in which to entertain people (1: 38–39; 3: 2).



# Narrative in the Gospels

## Background for the Catechist

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

### Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

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, n. 125).

The Gospels were written by men who were among the first to have the faith (Mk 1: 1, Jn 21: 24) and wanted to share it with others. Having known in faith who Jesus is, they could see and make others see the traces of his mystery in all his earthly life. From the swaddling clothes of his birth to the vinegar of his Passion and the shroud of his Resurrection, everything in Jesus' life was a sign of his mystery (Lk 2: 7, Mt 27: 48, Jn 20: 7). His deeds, miracles and words all revealed that 'in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily' (Col 2: 9) (CCC, n. 515).

All of the gospels use the narrative form to convey their teaching about Jesus' life, death and resurrection. That is, each gospel-writer chooses to tell the story of Jesus rather than conveying the truth about him in formulas or theological terms.

In Mark's gospel, the narrative is fast-paced and urgent. Jesus moves swiftly about Galilee engaged in the urgent task of proclaiming the kingdom of God and challenging evil. There is not a great deal of teaching in this gospel, nor parables, nor sayings. Deeds, not words, characterise Mark's Gospel. Matthew's Gospel also employs the narrative style but in addition, his gospel contains substantial teaching of Jesus and makes an effort to situate Jesus in the longings and prophecies of the Jewish Scriptures. Luke also uses narrative to describe the impact of the person of Jesus but he enhances the story of Jesus with canticles and parables unique to his gospel. John, like the others, narrates Jesus' story but arranges it around seven signs Jesus did and then has Jesus provide quite long discourses on the meaning of these signs. It is a much more theological gospel, even though it is based firmly in the story of Jesus.

Each of the gospels includes a Passion narrative, which is probably the most ancient part of each of the gospels. Matthew and Luke both include an infancy narrative, both of which are among the later traditions about Jesus and are full of symbolism and theological reflection on the true identity of Jesus. All four gospels were written to express the faith of the first witnesses in Jesus Christ and to engender that faith in others.

## PREPARATION

1. Prayer Focus: A coloured cloth, a candle and the Bible.
2. Workbooks.
3. A3 Sheet with two columns headed – Matthew and Luke.

Matthew	Luke

4. Read the sections of Matthew and Luke's Infancy Narratives in Appendix 11a, page 70.
5. Read the commentary on sections of Matthew and Luke's Infancy Narratives in Appendix 11b, page 72.

## Student Focus

Many of the students in your class will be very familiar with different genres (forms) of writing. They will have studied these genres in their literacy lessons. You might have some students, however, for whom this is a difficult or unfamiliar concept. Speaking about the 'story' of Jesus life and teachings and keeping your language focused in this way might help their understanding.

## Teaching Point

The gospels contain different styles of writing, such as narrative, that help to tell the story of Jesus.

## Remembering Point

The gospels contain different styles of writing, such as narrative, that help to tell the story of Jesus.

## Beginning

*(15 minutes)*

**Welcome the students** as usual.

**Gather the students** around the prayer focus. **Hand out the workbooks** and invite the students to turn to page 36 and to follow the prayer.

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

**All:** In the name of the Father ...

**Catechist:** Come, let us praise the Lord, for the gift of the Sacred Scriptures,

**All:** Now and forever.

**Catechist:** Help us know more about your word, Lord, that we might seek you and know you,

**All:** Now and forever. Amen.

**Catechist:** Let us pray:

**All:** Lord God, may we listen to your story so that we might know more about you. May we appreciate that the different narratives in the gospels help us understand what Jesus is telling us about you, God. May we return to your story, again and again, always seeking to know more.

**Tell the students:** Last week we looked at where the gospels came from, who might have written them and how they came to be written down.

**Ask the students** to give a summary of what we learnt. (Take answers from a few students, don't be too concerned if you don't get a full account of the last lesson, it contained a lot of information. There will always be other opportunities for the students to revisit the information.)

**Tell the students:** Today we are going to learn a little more about the gospels and the styles of writing they use to tell the story of Jesus. Today we will look at narrative in the gospels.

**Ask the students:** What is a simple description of narrative? *(Students will have explored many different genres [types of writing in literature, e.g. Poetry and story, in their literacy lessons at school and should be able to give a simple description. If you find that they are unable to provide you with an answer then provide the following brief description: Narrative is a story about someone or something.*

**Tell the students:** Narrative in the gospels is telling stories about Jesus and his life. It is not the only genre used in the gospels. In other lessons coming up we will look at miracles and parables, which also tell us about Jesus and about God.

## Middle

*(30 minutes)*

**Tell the students:** There are many parts of the gospels we could look at to explore the narrative genre, but today we will look at sections of the infancy narratives that we find in both the Gospel of Matthew (Mt 1: 18 – 2: 12) and the Gospel of Luke (Lk 1: 26–38 and 2: 1–20).

These are the stories about the events surrounding Jesus' birth and the people involved, as written by the author of the gospel. Let's begin by having a look at the two narratives. In your workbooks you will find the infancy narratives on pages 37 and 39.

When you talk about a narrative in your literacy class you look at a story more closely to determine the author's meaning. You also want to discern what deeper meaning the story might have for you today, what you can learn. When we work with biblical narrative we do the same thing.

**Divide the group** into two and **invite one half** to read Matthew's narrative and the other half to read Luke's. Show the students the commentaries after each narrative and explain the value of reading a commentary when trying to understand the gospel stories.

**Tell the students:** When you have finished reading the text, I want you to identify:

- the plot for the narrative (the sequence of events)
- all the characters in the narrative (identifying the main characters other than Jesus),
- what the problem might be in the infancy narratives
- how the problem is solved
- what words are used to describe Jesus.

Record your answers in the box titled 'Infancy Narrative'. This is an individual activity.

This will take some time (allow 25 minutes) and you will need to move around the group to offer assistance as the students work on the text.

**Invite the students** to share their answers with the person beside them and add any new information they discover.

Have the A3 sheet with the two columns for the Matthew and Luke narratives, displayed where the students can see it clearly.

**Select two students** from each group to share their answers for each text and record the answers on the A3 sheet.

## PREPARATION

## PREPARATION

**Ask the students:** What do you notice about these two texts when we look at them this way? *(Allow the students to identify the similarities and differences they notice. Some students might offer some answers that are more speculative, and some might comment on how there is different emphasis on the characters and different words used for Jesus. This is fine. Accept their answers, as it indicates deeper thinking about the meaning and purpose of the text, which is why we study narrative in Scripture.)*

**Help the students** explore what they notice about the two texts as literary devices. Consider how the narrative form helps us understand the purpose of the author and what the text might be saying about Jesus and particularly what it is telling us about God. (For assistance with this understanding refer to Appendix 11b page 72.)

**Invite the students** to join with another person who has read the same text and discuss the answer to the following question:

- If you did not know the rest of the story of Jesus' life and only had these beginnings, what do you think might happen next in Jesus' life? Explain why.

**Tell the students:** Record your answers in your workbook on page 42, in the space titled *What comes next?*

**Select one or two students** from the groups to share their response. (There is no right or wrong answer here, but encourage students' creativity.)

## End

*(10 minutes)*

**Gather the students** around the prayer focus with their workbooks.

**Catechist:** As we light our candle we remember that Christ is the light of the world, and is with us always.

**All:** In the name of the Father ...

**Catechist:** Let us listen to the story of Jesus' birth according to the Gospel of Luke.

**Reader:** *(Read the text from the workbook page 39. Conclude with:)* The word of the Lord.

**All:** Thanks be to God

**Catechist:** Let us pray:

**All:** Lord God, may we listen to your story so that we might know more about you. May we appreciate that the different narratives in the gospels help us understand what Jesus is telling us about you, God. May we return to your story, again and again, always seeking to know more.

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

**All:** Amen.

Collect the workbooks and dismiss the students as usual.

## Appendix 11a – Sections of the Infancy Narratives

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### Matthew

#### ***The Birth of Jesus the Messiah***

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, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

#### ***The Visit of the Wise Men***

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.'

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, 'Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.' When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

(Mt 1: 18 – 2: 12)

## Appendix 11a – Sections of the Infancy Narratives (continued)

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### Luke

#### ***The Birth of Jesus Foretold***

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.' But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?' The angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.' Then Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.' Then the angel departed from her.

#### ***The Birth of Jesus***

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

#### ***The Shepherds and the Angels***

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see – I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.' And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours!'

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.' So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

(Lk 1: 26–38 and 2: 1–20)

## Appendix 11b – Commentary

### Mt 1: 18 – 2: 12 and Lk 1: 26–38 and 2: 1–20

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#### Matthew

The annunciation in Matthew's Gospel narrative has the announcement made by an angel of the Lord, to Joseph. Mary does not come on stage at this point, we just hear about her. In this announcement Joseph (who was concerned to learn of Mary's pregnancy) is told by the angel that Mary has conceived her child through the Holy Spirit, that he is to take Mary into his home, and is to name the child Jesus 'because he will save his people from their sins' (Mt 1: 21). The name Jesus means 'God saves'. Joseph is told that all this is happening for God's good reasons, to fulfil the words of the prophet Isaiah:

'Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,' which means 'God is with us' (Mt 1: 23).

Matthew uses many of the Old Testament passages to convey important truths about Jesus. For instance the account of the wise men (from Gentile nations) who follow a star, bringing gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh is an allusion to the Book of the Prophet Isaiah Chapter 60: 1, 3, 5, 6, 16. Isaiah tells us of God's people (at the time of the exile in Babylon) being assured that people from all over the world will come to honor them, bearing gifts of gold and frankincense and heralding the praises of the Lord.

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The author also parallels the childhood of Moses, when an evil ruler killed all the young boys in the region, his mother put him in a papyrus basket and set it in the reeds on the bank of the river because she knew he was in danger of being killed by the ruler of the time. Joseph takes Mary and Jesus to Egypt because in a dream he is warned not to return to the country of Herod at this time as he was searching for the child, to destroy him.

## Appendix 11b – Commentary (continued)

### Mt 1: 18 – 2: 12 and Lk 1: 26–38 and 2: 1–20

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#### Luke

Luke, like Matthew includes an infancy narrative. In Luke's Gospel we fully meet Mary. We are told that after Mary was engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, the angel Gabriel appeared to her. The angel tells Mary that she will conceive through the Holy Spirit and bear a son. The angel then describes the significance of Jesus' birth. Mary is concerned because she is a virgin but, being obedient to God, she says, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according your word.' (Lk 1: 38).

In Luke's Gospel before the birth of Jesus is announced, we have Mary visiting Elizabeth, and the birth of John the Baptist.

In Luke 2: 1–20 we have the setting of the birth of Jesus and the circumstances of why they went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Bethlehem, also known as the City of David. We learn that Mary 'gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped in him bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger because there was no place for them in the inn' (Lk 2: 7). To fully understand this text and its significance we need to recognise the biblical texts to which it is alluding. The firstborn is a title given to Christ, as the firstborn of all creation (Col 1: 15–20 and Hebrews 1: 5–6). Luke teaches that Jesus is divine yet this divine person is wrapped in bands of cloth like every other human baby. In the Book of Wisdom, Solomon describes himself as an infant: 'I was nursed with care in swaddling cloths. For no king has had a different beginning of existence' (Wis 7: 4–5). By comparing Jesus to Solomon, Luke teaches that Jesus is fully human. Mary places the child in a manger, which is a feeding trough, a place where one puts food for the animals. This is Luke's way of teaching that Jesus is the Bread of Life. The Good News of the Saviour's birth is announced to shepherds, some of the most marginalised people in society. Like Mary the angel tells the shepherds to go in search of a sign: 'a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.' (Lk 2: 12).

The differences between the two accounts of the birth remind us that the gospels were written for different communities for different reasons.

Nutting Ralph, Margaret 2011, *The New Testament: The Good News of Jesus Christ*, Living in Christ Series, St Mary's Press, Winona, MN.

Kelly, Joseph F 2006, *An Introduction to the New Testament for Catholics*, Liturgical Press, Collegeville MN.

# The 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 (Mk 4: 33–34). 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 (Mt 13: 44–45, 22: 1–14). Words are not enough, deeds are required (Mt 21: 28–32). The parables are like mirrors for man: will he be hard soil or good earth for the word (Mt 13: 3–9)? What use has he made of the talents he has received (Mt 25: 14–30)? 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' (Jn 5: 36, 10: 25, 38). For those who stay 'outside', everything remains enigmatic (Mk 4: 11, Mt 13: 10–15) (CCC, n. 546).

A parable is a story that has a deeper meaning which the hearers are invited to interpret and apply in their own lives. Parables are a characteristic way that Jesus taught the people of his time. They are timeless stories, which remain a stimulus to faith and reflection for the Church today. Most of the parables use images or incidents from the agricultural/pastoral society in which Jesus lived but they are not difficult to understand even in a modern urban context. They are capable of being interpreted in endlessly different ways. An example is the parable of the sower who scatters seed over a variety of environments more or less receptive to it.

### Student Focus

Students of this age are highly imaginative. They tend to daydream and fantasise; therefore they relate very well to parables. They can understand Jesus using agricultural/pastoral examples. They still enjoy stories and can make meaning from what they hear. They enjoy working out what the parables mean and why Jesus might have used those particular stories to get his point across to his audience. They can understand that there is a message for today's readers in these parables.

### Teaching Point

The gospels contain many types of writing, such as parables, that help us understand Jesus' message.

### Remembering Point

The gospels contain parables that help us to understand the message of Jesus.

## PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: a coloured cloth, a candle and the Bible.
2. Definition of a parable in Appendix 12a, page 78.
3. List of parables in Appendix 12b, page 78.
4. A piece of A3 paper.
5. Workbooks.

## Beginning

(5 minutes)

**Welcome the students** as usual.

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

**Invite the students** to open them at page 43.

**All:** In the name of the Father ...

**All:** God our Father,  
May our time together today  
be fruitful in loving, knowing and serving you.  
May the Scriptures be a constant reminder and guide to  
live and love as Jesus did.  
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

**Tell the students:** Today we shall look at a couple of parables and try to establish a pattern to recognise other parables.

**Ask the students:**

- What is a parable? *(Encourage the students to respond from their own understanding. They have studied the parables in a previous lesson and will have some understanding of parables. A definition is available in Appendix 12a, page 78.)*
- What are some names of parables? *(Encourage the students to remember the parables from previous years. A list is available in Appendix 12b, page 78.)*

**Record the list** of parables on the whiteboard or on a piece of A3 paper displayed for students to see.

## Middle

(30 minutes)

**Tell the students:** Today we will listen to the parable of the sower in Matthew's Gospel. Our task is not to understand its meaning but rather to see what goes to make up a parable. We will be looking at its literary form as used in the gospel.

**Ask the students:** What other literary forms or genres are there in the gospels? *(Narratives, explanations, recounts, miracles, sayings, speeches, hymns, songs, poetry, prophecy, pronouncement stories, call stories, announcement stories. The students' answers may vary according to what has previously been taught. Do not be concerned if you get few answers. If the students don't know, then tell them about the other genres.)*

**Tell the students:** Let us read the Parable of the Sower, listening carefully to identify the parts of the parable. I'm not looking for the beginning, middle and end, but the things that are being discussed or talked about in the parable.

**Invite the students** to turn to page 44 and follow as you read. Alternately invite one of the better readers in the group to read the parable.

*Read Matthew 13: 1–8*

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the lake. Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. And he told them many things in parables, saying: 'Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Let anyone with ears listen!

**Ask the students:**

- Was there something that struck you about the parable?
- Were there any words or phrases that jumped out at you?
- What are some of the images or mind pictures that easily came to mind?
- What were some of the things that were discussed in the parable?
- Is there a pattern within this parable that we can identify? *(The students may be able to provide many interesting elements that are found in this pattern. Be open and accept what they share. If they do not present all the elements of a parable, then direct them to page 44 in their workbook.)*

**Tell the students:** In your workbooks on page 45 in the space titled, 'Parts of a Parable', write the examples from the parable of the sower that fit each criterion for a parable. For example: next to 'repetition' write the thing that is repeated, in this case 'sowing'. Do the same for each of the other four criteria.

(You might find it helpful to go through each criterion after the students have tried to provide their answer. The list of criteria is as follows:

**Repetition:** sowing

**Setting:** the field or place of sowing seeds

**Opposites and contrasts:** the soil; from no soil on the path to lots of soil in rich ground

**Use of three:** numbers hundredfold, sixty and thirty

**Rule of end stress:** the emphasis or climax, or concentration of the parable 'Listen anyone who has ears!')

**Tell the students:** Now I would like you to use these five criteria to identify another parable's structure. We shall look at the parable of the Good Samaritan. Let us read it together from page 46.

*Read Luke 10: 25–37.*

Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. 'Teacher,' he said, 'what must I do to inherit eternal life?' He said to him, 'What is written in the law? What do you read there?' He answered, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength,

## PREPARATION

## PREPARATION

and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself.' And he said to him, 'You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.'

But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, 'And who is my neighbour?' Jesus replied, 'A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan while travelling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, 'Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.' Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?' He said, 'The one who showed him mercy.' Jesus said to him, 'Go and do likewise.'

**Ask the students:** Does anyone have any questions about the parable or has anyone found something that may be challenging? *(Students may have trouble with understanding who a Samaritan may be or why the priest and the Levite walked away. A biblical commentary or dictionary will be helpful to answer some of these questions.)*

**Tell the students:** On your own, re-read the parable and apply the five criteria. Complete the activity titled 'Parts of a Parable' on page 47.

*(You may need to walk around the room to prompt students with their answers.)*

**Ask the students:**

- Would anyone like to share what you have answered or anything that struck you or that you found challenging?
- How has this helped you understand parables better? *(This is an open question with no right answer, take all the reasonable reflections that the students offer.)*

Collect the workbooks.

## End

*(5 minutes)*

Gather around the prayer focus.

**Catechist:** Let us offer a prayer of thanks to God for our time here today.

**All:** In the name of the Father ...

Glory be to the Father ...

Amen.

Dismiss the students as usual.

## Appendix 12a – Definition of Parable

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*This definition is for the catechist's information. It is not to be used in this form with the students. Consider writing a definition in your own words.*

Parable:

'At its simplest, a parable is a *metaphor* or *simile* drawn from *nature* or *common life*, arresting the hearer by its *vividness* or *strangeness*, and leaving the mind in sufficient doubt about its precise application to tease it into active thought.'

(Dodd, C H 1961, *The Parables of the Kingdom*, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, p. 5.)

## Appendix 12b – Some Parables

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Some examples of the parables:

- The Buried Treasure (Mt 13: 44)
- The Fine Pearl (Mt 13: 45–46)
- The Friend Asking for Help at Midnight (Lk 11: 5–8)
- The Good Samaritan (Lk 10: 30–35)
- The Labourers in the Vineyard (Mt 20: 1–16)
- The Lost Coin (Lk 15: 8–10)
- The Pharisee & the Tax Collector (Lk 18: 9–14)
- The Prodigal Father (Lk 15: 11–33)
- The Rich Fool (Lk 12: 16–20)
- The Rich Man & Lazarus (Lk 16: 19–31)
- The Unforgiving Servant (Mt 18: 23–35)
- The Unjust Steward (Lk 16 1–8)
- The Wedding Banquet (Mt 22: 2–14)
- The Weeds among the Wheat (Mt 13: 24–30)

# Miracles

## Background for the Catechist

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

### *Reflection/Doctrinal Reference*

The signs worked by Jesus attest that the Father has sent him. They invite belief in him (Jn 5: 36, 10: 25, 38). To those who turn to him in faith, he grants what they ask (Mk 5: 25–34, 10: 52). So miracles strengthen faith in the One who does his Father's works; they bear witness that he is the Son of God (Jn 10: 31–38) (CCC, n. 548).

The usual ways in which people come to know each other are through watching what they do and listening to what they say. This is also true of coming to know Jesus. It is through his words and in watching him respond to the people he encounters that we come to know him. The gospels present narratives of his life and work, including the miracles he performed. These miracles speak across the ages to us. We are invited to put ourselves into these stories and be brought into contact with Jesus and be touched and healed by him.

Jesus uses his miracles to show something of what God and the Kingdom of God are like. The miracle stories challenge conventional understandings of God: they both reveal and conceal the Divine. They also make demands on their human listeners and make us aware that the kingdom of God does not run according to the principles of human wisdom. Jesus' miracles are signs of what the kingdom of God will look like when God is all in all for us, and for the whole created order.

### **Student Focus**

Students at this age are learning to resolve the tensions between the imaginary and the real. They are decreasing their egocentricity and increasing their awareness of others. They recognise compassion and the love of Jesus for others and have a better understanding that miracle stories reveal Jesus' identity and that they are signs of the coming of the kingdom of God.

### **Teaching Point**

The gospels contain many types of writing, such as miracle stories, that help us understand Jesus' message.

### **Remembering Point**

The gospels contain miracle stories that help us to understand the message of Jesus.

## Beginning

(10 minutes)

**Welcome the students** as usual.

**Gather the students** round the prayer focus. **Distribute the workbooks** and ask the students to open them at page 48. **Invite them** to prepare for prayer by being still and quiet. **Ask a student** to light the candle.

**Catechist:** Let us pray together:

**All:** In the name of the Father ...

**Catechist:** Let us pray the prayer together:

**All:** May the Lord be in our minds, and on our lips, and in our hearts, as we begin our lesson. Amen.

**Ask the students:** What are some of the genres used in the gospels? *(Narratives, parables hymns, pronouncement stories, miracle stories, ...)*

**Tell the students:** Last week we looked at one of these genres, the parable. Today we will look at the genre of miracle stories in the gospels.

**Ask the students:** What do you think the word 'miracle' means? *(Accept students' responses. Don't worry if they have little or no understanding, as the aim of this lesson to help them gain or deepen knowledge of miracles.)*

**Tell the students:** Jesus did many things that were wonderful and powerful. We have come to call some of the more amazing ones, *miracles*. Like parables, the authors wrote them in a particular way.

**Ask the students:** Why do you think the authors chose to write about the special works of Jesus in a particular way? *(If the students are unable to give you an answer, or if they do and you would like to add to their contribution, you can tell them that the writers wanted to help people remember the message of Jesus. A good way to help people remember is to make the stories amazing and interesting, particularly when they first passed on the stories orally with nothing written down.)*

## Middle

(40 minutes)

**Tell the students:** We will be looking at two types of miracles that are in the gospels: healing miracles and nature miracles. On page 48 in your workbook you will notice the different patterns for the miracle stories.

Most healing stories follow the following pattern:

**Setting:** A description of the person and their illness.

**Cure:** The method used for the cure and then the cure performed.

**Acclamation:** The people praise God after they see the cure.

Nature miracles also have a similar form. There is a setting, the miracle occurs and the participants react in a certain way.

## PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: a cloth, a candle and the Bible.

2. Workbooks.

3. Copies of two different miracle stories, one for each student (texts other than those in the student workbook). Some suggested miracle stories would be:

- The bent woman (Lk 13: 10–17)
- The Syrophenician woman (Mk 7: 24–30)
- The centurion's servant (Mt 8: 5–13)
- Jesus walks on the water. (Mk6: 45–52)
- Jesus raises the widow's son at Nain (Lk 7: 11–17).

## PREPARATION

Miracle stories also speak to us in two ways:

The level of the senses – In the story of the ten lepers all of them heard Jesus say, 'Go show yourselves to the priests' and all of them saw and they were cleansed on the way.

The sign level – this is where the faith aspect comes in. One leper understands the power of God acting through Jesus in his cure and so returns praising God and thanking Jesus.

**Tell the students:** Your task is to read the two gospel texts (Mt 8: 23–27 and Mk 7: 31–37) with a partner and then answer these questions in your workbook in the space titled Venn Diagram – Similarities and Differences:

- Who is involved?
- Where did it happen?
- What happened?
- How did Jesus use his power?

List any similarities and differences in the Venn Diagram on page 50. (An example of the answers is provided in appendix 13a, page 83.)

When you have finished that activity, you will find two grids under the Venn diagram. Please complete the diagram titled 'Form of the Miracles' for the two miracles listed. (An example of the answers is provided in appendix 13b, page 83.)

While the students are working walk around the class giving encouragement and help when needed.

**Gather the students** around you at the front of the room with their workbooks.

**Ask the students:**

- What were the similarities and differences that you found?
- What 'form' did these two miracle stories have? How did they follow the pattern that we discussed earlier?
- What do you think these stories tell us about God? (*Accept students' answers and affirm them.*)

**Divide the class** into two. **Assign a miracle story** to each group. (See the list under Preparation on page 80).

**Distribute copies** of the miracle story to each group and **invite them** to read the story carefully. **Remind them** to look at the 'form' of the miracle as they did earlier.

**Ask the students:** What are some of the miracles we see in today's world?

**Invite each group** to turn to page 51 and rewrite their miracle for today using the original story as the template. (Remind the students to keep the 'form' of the miracle accurate.)

**Invite a selection of students** to share their contemporary miracle story, as time permits. (*Affirm each story as there is no one answer, and certainly no right or wrong answer.*)

## End

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*(5 minutes)*

**Gather the students** round the prayer focus with their books open at the prayer, page 51.

**Ask one of the students** to light the candle.

**All:** In the name of the Father ...

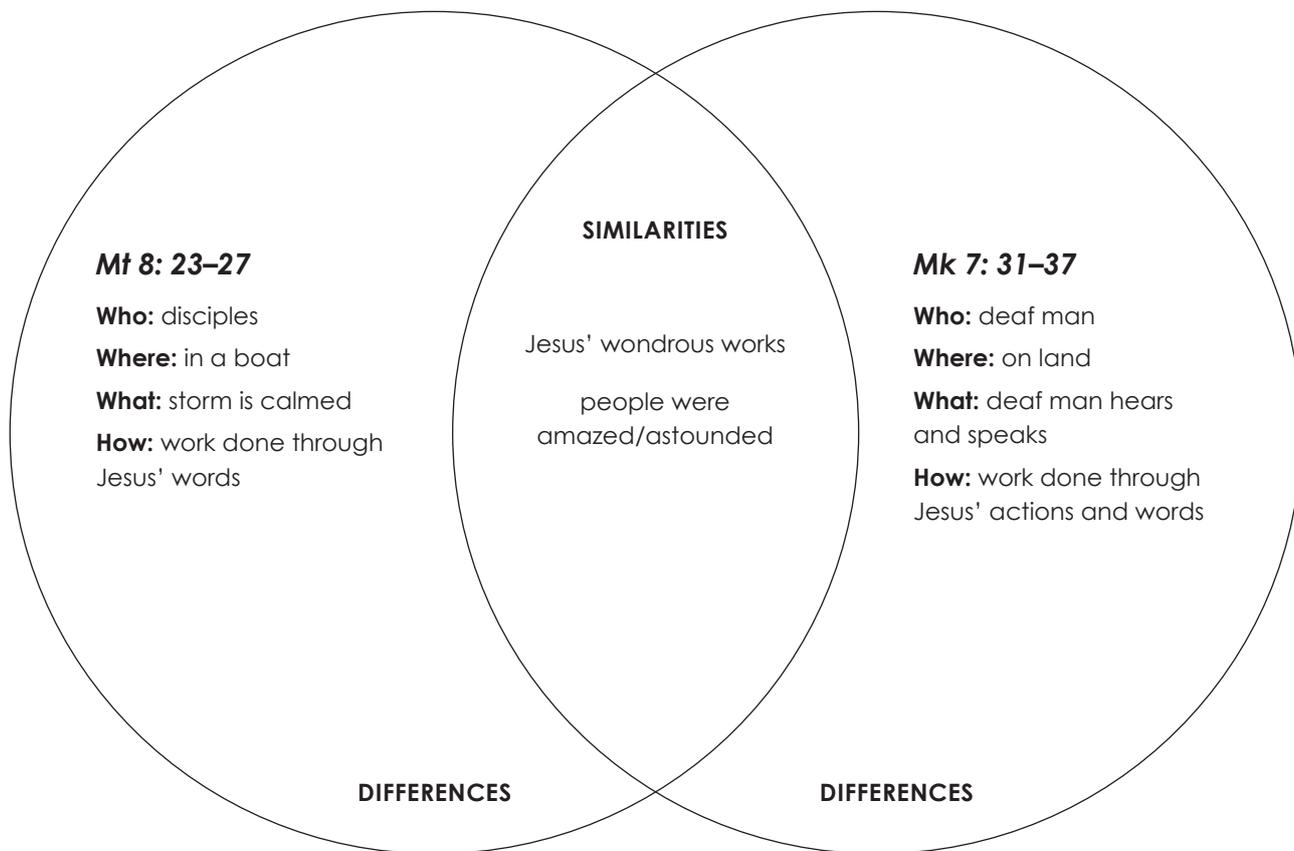
**Catechist:** Let us pause for a moment and think of how the people felt when Jesus healed anyone or performed a nature miracle. Let us think of some of the ailments that people suffer from today.

**All:** Lord Jesus, heal me,  
Heal me in whatever you see needs healing.  
Heal me of whatever might separate me from you.  
Heal my memory, heal my heart, heal my emotions,  
heal my spirit, heal my body and my soul.  
Lay your hands gently upon me and heal me through  
your love for me. Amen.

Collect the workbooks and dismiss the students as usual.

## PREPARATION

## Appendix 13a – Similarities and Differences



## Appendix 13b – Form of The Miracles

An overview of possible answers for these two miracle forms.

**Matthew 8: 23-27**  
**Jesus Calms the Sea**

**Setting:** In a boat on the sea

**Miracle Occurs:** Then he (Jesus) got up and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a dead calm.

**Reaction:** They were amazed, saying, 'What sort of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?'

**Mark 7: 31-37**  
**Jesus Cures a Deaf Man**

**Setting:** Near the Sea of Galilee

**Cure:** 'Ephphatha' that is, 'Be opened' and immediately his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly.

**Acclamation:** ...the more zealously they proclaimed it. They were astounded beyond measure ...

# LESSON 14

## Penance

### Background for the Catechist

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

#### **Reflection/Doctrinal Reference**

'The whole power of the sacrament of Penance consists in restoring us to God's grace and joining us with him in an intimate friendship' (Roman Catechism, 11, V, 18). Reconciliation with God is thus the purpose and effect of this sacrament. For those who receive the sacrament of Penance with contrite heart and religious disposition, reconciliation 'is usually followed by peace and serenity of conscience with strong spiritual consolation' (Council of Trent (1551): DS, 1674). 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 (Lk 15: 32) (CCC, n. 1468).

The sacrament of Penance (Reconciliation) celebrates the great mercy and love of God, which forgives sin. It also enables people to begin again, strengthened by the experience of having been forgiven. The sacrament involves looking honestly at life to identify where they are falling short of the gospel, and acknowledging failure before God and the Church. The sacrament offers people God's help and the support of the whole Church to start again. Through the sacrament, God's grace both repairs people and strengthens them to lead a more integral life.

#### **Student Focus**

Students at this age understand quite well that there are consequences to their actions and that they need to make reparation. They recognise love and compassion and are beginning to decrease their egocentricity and increase their awareness of others. They understand the hurt that comes from others doing wrong to them and their doing wrong to others.

#### **Teaching Point**

Through the sacrament of Penance, God forgives sin and gives us the grace to overcome our sinfulness.

#### **Remembering Point**

Through the sacrament of Penance, God forgives sin and strengthens me to do what is good.

## PREPARATION

1. Prayer Focus: a purple cloth, a candle, an arrow and the Bible.
2. Workbooks.
3. Activity Cards One and Two (see Appendix 14, page 87), enough for one per group of four.
4. A sheet of paper per group of four for the brainstorming activity.
5. If possible, a Bible for each group of four; otherwise provide a copy of each of the scripture stories.

## Beginning

*(5 minutes)*

**Welcome the students** as usual.

**Gather the students** around the prayer focus. Distribute the workbooks and invite the students to turn to page 52.

*As a student lights the candle,*

**Catechist:** We light our candle because Jesus is the Light of the world and he is always with us.

*As another student holds up the Bible before placing it on the cloth,*

**Catechist:** The Bible tells us of the life of Jesus, which shows us how to be in the right relationship with God and each other.

*As the third student places the arrow on the cloth*

**Catechist:** The Hebrew word for sin refers to the image of an arrow missing the target.

**Catechist:** Let us pray to God, who gives us the grace to live our lives in right relationship with each other.

**All:** Loving Father, I am sorry that I have hurt others by what I have said or done. I ask your forgiveness and the grace to act more lovingly in future.

Our Father ...

At the end of the prayer, **ask the students:** What might we be talking about today? (*The sacrament of Penance, the sacrament of Reconciliation, forgiveness ...*)

## Middle

*(50 minutes)*

**Invite the students** to get into groups of four and give each group a sheet of paper to record their answers.

**Tell the students:** Over the past years you have had quite a few lessons about the sacrament of Reconciliation. Today we are going to see what Reconciliation actually means for you.

First, I am going to give you one minute to write everything you can think of relating to Reconciliation. Any stories from the Bible, any particular things you learnt, what it's about, where you experience Reconciliation and so on. Brainstorm in your group, and record on the sheet of paper.

Then we will share what we know.

**Invite students** from each group to share what the group has remembered.

Briefly draw together what the students share with the class, adding the occasional omission.

**Select three Scripture stories** and record these on the whiteboard. Make sure that you select something that is accessible to the students' understanding. (*You could offer the familiar stories used for the preparation for the sacrament of Penance – The Good Samaritan, the Lost Coin, the Lost Son.*)

**Distribute to each group** of four either Activity Card One or Activity Card Two (see Appendix 14, page 87). Activity One is to write a short story that presents one of these scripture stories in a contemporary setting. Activity Two is to write a play that presents one of these scripture stories in a contemporary setting.

**Invite each group** to select one of the three stories on the whiteboard and record their own story/play in their own workbooks on page 53. (Depending on the number of groups you have, you could have more than one group for any one activity.)

Allow at least 30 minutes for the groups to complete their task.

**Invite a student** from each group to share what they have prepared.

**Ask them** to answer the following questions:

- What meaning were you trying to convey?
- What message did you want the audience to receive?

**Invite all the groups** to reflect together on each story and answer the following question:

- How do the stories and plays show that through the sacrament of Penance God forgives sin and strengthens us to do good?

**Invite the students** to open their workbooks to page 54 and write their reflection in the space titled The Sacrament of Penance.

## End

(5 minutes)

**Gather the students** around the prayer focus with their workbooks open at page 54.

**Invite the students** to think about what they have been doing during the lesson, what insights they have gained about Reconciliation.

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

**All:** In the name of the Father

**All:** Loving Father, I am sorry that I have hurt others by what I have said or done. I ask your forgiveness and the grace to act more lovingly in future.

**Catechist:** Thank you, God, for the sacrament of penance through which you forgive sin and strengthen us to do what is good.

**All:** Glory be to the Father ...

Collect the workbooks and dismiss the students as usual.

## PREPARATION

## Appendix 14 – Activity Cards

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Make enough copies for one card per group.

### Activity Card One – A Short Story

Select **one** of the **three** examples written on the whiteboard.

Write a short story that presents this example in a contemporary setting.

Remember that every story has a beginning, a middle and an end.

The text you write needs to convey the meaning and message of the example chosen.

Record your story in your workbooks on page 53.

### Activity Card Two – A Play

Select **one** of the **three** examples written on the whiteboard.

Write a play that presents this example in a contemporary setting.

Remember that every play has a beginning, a middle and an end.

The text you write needs to convey the meaning and message of the example chosen.

Record your play in your workbooks on page 53.

# Together with Christ

## Background for the Catechist

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

### **Reflection/Doctrinal Reference**

... The Eucharist is our daily bread. The power belonging to this divine food makes it a bond of union. Its effect is then understood as unity, so that, gathered into his Body and made members of him, we may become what we receive... This also is our daily bread: the readings you hear each day in church and the hymns you hear and sing. All these are necessities for our pilgrimage (St Augustine, *Sermo 57*) (CCC, n. 2837).

Just as spending time with other people deepens our relationship with them, so does spending time with Jesus Christ increase our union with him. Union with him inevitably means union with others who share faith in him – the Church, the Body of Christ. The most significant expression of this union is our participation in the Eucharist. Each Eucharist culminates in the reception of Communion in which believers receive the Body and Blood of Christ. This is the supreme moment of unity. Our struggle is to resist taking the Eucharist for granted and to open ourselves as fully as possible to this sacred act and so increase our union with Christ and each other.

Receiving Holy Communion is the culminating act of the Eucharist. We are also drawn into union with, and share in, Christ's presence by gathering together, by listening to the word of God and by assenting to the ministry of the priest, through whom we offer the sacrifice of Jesus and praise and thanks to God. The union with Christ and one another brought about by the Eucharist ought then to flow over into our lives beyond its celebration.

## Student Focus

Most of these students received their First Communion last year. Consequently, they will have some understanding of the Eucharist. The students of this age will be very familiar with friendships and the need to remain in contact with them in order to keep their friendships going. They are of an age when they will appreciate the deepening of understanding and connectedness with others that comes from being with, talking to and doing things with their friends.

## Teaching Point

Participation in the Eucharist increases our union with Christ and one another.

## Remembering Point

I grow in union with Christ and the community when I go to Mass.

## PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: a candle, a cloth, the Bible, a bread roll and a glass of blackcurrant juice.
2. An A3 sheet with EUCHARIST printed in the middle.
 

EUCHARIST
3. Strips of card, enough for one per group.
4. A copy of *The Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint Exupéry chapter XXI (21). Most local libraries would have a copy or you may wish to purchase your own copy.
5. Workbooks.
6. Blu-Tack.

## Beginning

(5 minutes)

**Welcome the students** as usual.

Have the elements of the prayer focus on a table close to the door.

**Invite the students** to line up outside the door (or at a distance from your gathering space) and hand out the candle, the cloth, the Bible, the bread roll and the glass of juice.

**Tell the students:** Today we are going to begin our prayer by processing with the elements of our prayer focus to our prayer space. The rest of the class will follow the procession to the prayer space and I invite you to sit in a circle. Could the person with the cloth put it on the floor (or table or stand, whichever you use and is most convenient). Then those with the other elements, place them on the cloth reasonably close together.

**Invite a student** to light the candle when you are all seated, while you comment upon the lighted candle reminding us of the presence of Christ.

**All:** In the name of the Father ...

**Catechist:** Grant, almighty God, that we may celebrate with heartfelt devotion these days of joy, which we keep in honour of the risen Lord, and that what we relive in remembrance we may always hold to in what we do. 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.

*(Collect taken from the Sixth Sunday of Easter, Year A. Alternately select the collect from the previous Sunday.)*

**All:** Amen.

**Invite the students** to go to their seats and **distribute the workbooks**.

## Middle

(45 minutes)

**Tell the students:** There is a story called *The Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. It is a story about a little prince who meets a pilot (the narrator) whose plane has crashed in the desert. The little prince comes from a tiny planet where he has been looking after a rose and taking care of his planet. The little prince has visited a number of asteroids and eventually arrives on earth and meets up with a number of people in his search for knowledge. While on his travels through the desert he meets up with the fox, who teaches him some things about friendship. Let us listen to this part of the story.

**Read chapter XXI (21)** of *The Little Prince*.

**Divide the group** into threes.

Invite the students to think about the story and then record their responses in the space provided in their workbook on page 56, titled 'Some Thoughts'.

**Tell the students:** You will each have the opportunity to share your thoughts with each other in your group. As you share with each other be sure to listen carefully to each person in turn as they share. Only when they have finished are you able to ask them clarifying questions. Each person is to share in response to the following questions:

- What might the author be trying to convey to the reader/listener?
- How does this speak to the friendship we can have with Jesus?
- What does it say about you sharing in the Eucharist?

**Invite the group** to agree on an answer to the last question and record it on a strip of card.

(Allow thirty minutes for this dialogue.)

**Invite feedback** from each group, accepting their answers.

**Display the large sheet** with the word *Eucharist* written in the middle. Ask a number of groups to stick on the sheet their response to what the story says about *sharing in the Eucharist*.

**Tell the students:** As you have shared, establishing and keeping friends requires work. Just as there are ways of doing things (rites) that help us consolidate the friendship, so too there are rites in the Mass. To strengthen our union with Christ we have to continue to meet Jesus in the Eucharist. We need to continue to be there, participate in the rites and to share with everyone in the community the special presence of Jesus Christ. We bring our lives just as we are as a gift, and we receive the special gift of Jesus.

When we go to Mass we go to meet Jesus. We are going to celebrate with the community and with the priest how God kept his promise and sent his son, Jesus to help us. This celebration offers us the greatest and best way to get to know Jesus better. One of the best ways to know someone is to spend time with them. When we go to Mass we have the opportunity to get to know Jesus in a special way and connect with him in our own way.

**Take up** the workbooks.

## End

(5 minutes)

Gather the students around the prayer focus.

**All:** In the name of the Father ...

**Catechist:** Lord, God,  
 As we ponder how we might come to know you better,  
 we understand more about the special gift of Eucharist.  
 As we share in this special opportunity to be with the  
 Christian community, we remember and celebrate the  
 person of Jesus Christ, and what he has done for us.  
 May we find that our knowledge and love of you is  
 deepened as we come to know Jesus more in the Mass.  
 We make this prayer, in your name, Lord, one God,  
 for ever and ever.

**All:** Amen.

## PREPARATION

# LESSON 16

## Ways of Praying

### Background for the Catechist

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

#### **Reflection/Doctrinal Reference**

Vocal prayer is an essential element of the Christian life. To his disciples, drawn by their Master's silent prayer, Jesus teaches a vocal prayer, the Our Father. He not only prayed aloud the liturgical prayers of the synagogue but, as the Gospels show, he raised his voice to express his personal prayer, from exultant blessing of the Father to the agony of Gethsemane (Mt 11: 25–26, Mk 14: 36) (CCC, n. 2701).

Because it is external and so thoroughly human, vocal prayer is the form of prayer most readily accessible to groups. Even interior prayer, however, cannot neglect vocal prayer. Prayer is internalised to the extent that we become aware of him 'to whom we speak' (St Teresa of Jesus, *The Way of Perfection* 26, 9). Thus vocal prayer becomes an initial form of contemplative prayer (CCC, n. 2704).

Song and music fulfil their function as signs in a manner all the more significant when they are 'more closely connected ... with the liturgical action' (SC 112, n. 3), according to three principal criteria: beauty expressive of prayer, the unanimous participation of the assembly at the designated moments, and the solemn character of the celebration. In this way they participate in the purpose of the liturgical words and actions: the glory of God and the sanctification of the faithful (SC, 112) (CCC, n. 1157).

The richness of the Church's prayer tradition encompasses the whole range of ways in which human beings can express themselves. From silent prayer to prayer expressed through the body in posture and in gesture, from contemplation and meditation to spoken prayer and prayer in song. These latter two ways are probably the ones we are most familiar with. Vocal prayers are usually our first experience of prayer. Children are introduced to prayer by learning, at first, short words of thanks and praise. Then, as they grow, they are introduced to the Lord's Prayer, the Hail Mary and the Glory be. They are introduced also to the prayers of the Mass and to prayers of intercession. Prayer in song is also an experience encountered from childhood as young people hear hymns and psalms at Mass and more formally when they learn them in religious education lessons. Singing has a remarkably unifying effect and also is capable of lifting and heightening fervour and helping people into the mystery they are celebrating.

## Student Focus

Students in Year 5 have had a number of lessons that explore prayer. For many, prayer will be an added extra that will not hold a high place in their daily life. For others, prayer will be a regular practice. Whichever students you have, all will be familiar with the necessity to put effort into their relationships. This will provide a good understanding of the value of prayer in establishing relationship with God.

## Teaching Point

There are various ways of praying: vocal prayer, prayer in song.

## Remembering Point

I can pray in many ways.

## Beginning

(15 minutes)

**Welcome the students** as usual.

**Gather the students** round the prayer focus and **ask one student** to light the candle.

**Catechist:** Let us pray together:

**All:** In the name of the Father ...

**Catechist:** There are many different ways of praying. We pray during Mass; we say prayers like the Hail Mary together; we think our prayers, that is say them in our hearts. One of the prayers we can say together is the Glory be. Let us all say this together:

**All:** Glory be ...

**Gather the students** in a circle round you at the whiteboard or the poster you have prepared. **Place on the floor** the set of cards with the names of traditional prayers and some blank cards.

**Ask the students:** What are the names of some prayers? (*Our Father, Grace before meals, prayer of sorrow, ... Accept all their answers.*)

**Invite the students** to find the card that matches their answer, and stick it on the whiteboard/chart or to write it on the whiteboard with a whiteboard marker. (Ask the students to write their answer on a blank card if it isn't in the set of cards.)

**Tell the students:** These are *traditional* prayers.

**Invite a student** to stick the 'traditional' strip at the top of the whiteboard or chart. (These strips are available in Appendix 16b, page 96.)

**Tell the students** we usually pray the traditional prayers out loud. That is why they are also called *vocal* prayers. **Invite a student** to stick the 'vocal' strip above the list of prayers.

**Tell the students:** When we pray these prayers together we can call them communal prayers. **Invite a student** to place the 'communal' strip above the list.

## PREPARATION

1. Prayer Focus: a cloth, a cross, a candle and the Bible.
2. Whiteboard and whiteboard marker or a sheet of A3 paper.
3. Blank cards.
4. Blu-Tack.
5. Paper for drafts.
6. Sheets of A3 paper for final prayer.
7. Names of traditional prayers on card, see Appendix 16a, page 95.
8. The words: 'Traditional', 'Vocal' and 'Communal' on card, e.g.

COMMUNAL

VOCAL

TRADITIONAL

(see Appendix 16b, page 96).

## PREPARATION

**Middle***(35 minutes)*

**Distribute the workbooks** and **invite the students** to return to their tables and to open their workbooks at page 58.

**Tell the students:** The Hail Mary is a traditional prayer that we say vocally and communally. One part of the prayer praises Mary; the other is where we ask Mary to pray for us.

**Invite the students** to draw a red circle around the part that praises Mary and a green circle around the part where we ask Mary to pray for us. **Invite them** to underline in red some of the things we praise Mary for (*grace, God's with her, blessed*). **Invite them** to underline in green what we ask for (*pray for us*). (Walk around the room, encouraging the students and giving help where necessary.)

**Divide the students** into two groups and pray the Hail Mary in the following way: those on the right say the first line, and those on the left say the next line, and so on.

**Invite the students** to think about what prayers are all about?

**Invite the students** to share with the person beside you.

Invite a few students to share their answer with the whole group. (*Thinking about God/Jesus/Mary, speaking to God/Jesus/Mary, praising God, asking God ...*)

**Tell the students:** I now want you to think carefully about all the things we have shared and talked about so far. With your partner write your own definition of prayer and record it in the space provided in your workbooks, titled 'Definition of Prayer'.

**Encourage the students** to use their own words and their own understanding. Remember to affirm the students' answers. This is an opportunity for the students to engage deeply in the topic.

**Invite the students** to share what they have written.

**Affirm the following with the students:** Yes, what you have written for your definition describes the richness of prayer. We can all pray at any time. Prayer is raising the heart and mind to God, thinking about God, speaking to God about anything and everything and at any time.

**Tell the students:** When we say prayers out loud we call it vocal prayer because we use our voices. When we sing a prayer it is a vocal prayer too and because singing can be a vocal prayer, we are now going to try to compose a prayer to a familiar song. It could be to a simple tune like *Three Blind Mice* or it could be to a popular tune (maybe just the chorus) or even a rap.

**Divide the class** into groups of two or three to complete the task. Hand out some paper for drafts. When they have completed their task ask them to write the song in the space provided in their workbooks on page 59.

**Remind the students** that this is a serious task. Walk around the class while they are doing it to be sure they are staying on task.

**Invite each group** of students to sing their prayer for the rest of the group. Ask the students to decide which two prayers they will use during their prayer at the end. Invite the students to write the prayer on a A3 sheet of paper, large enough for everyone to read.

## End

---

*(5 minutes)*

**Invite the chosen students** to bring the prayers and gather around you at the front in a circle. **Put the candle** in the middle of the circle and **ask one of the students** to light the candle.

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

**All:** In the name of the Father ...

**Catechist:** Lord, you have told us to pray often to God. Help us now to pray to God, our Father, in this song.

Invite the students who have written the songs to begin and everyone else join in as appropriate.

**All:** In the name of the Father ...

Collect the workbooks and dismiss the students as usual.

## PREPARATION

## Appendix 16a – Prayer Titles

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Photocopy and cut out a set.

Our Father

Hail Mary

Glory Be to the Father

Grace Before / After Meals

Prayer of Sorrow

## Appendix 16b – Types of Prayer

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Photocopy and cut out.

TRADITIONAL PRAYERS

VOCAL PRAYERS

COMMUNAL PRAYER

# LESSON 17

## The Spread of the Good News

### 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' (DV, n. 17, Rom 1: 16) which hand on the ultimate truth of God's Revelation. Their central object is Jesus Christ, God's incarnate Son: his acts, teachings, Passion and glorification, and his Church's beginnings under the Spirit's guidance (DV, n. 20) (CCC, n. 124).

The four gospels are at the heart of the New Testament, but as well as these four accounts of the life and work of Jesus and his passion, death and resurrection, the New Testament contains the letters of Paul and other disciples of Jesus and an account of the very early history of the Church called the Acts of the Apostles.

The Acts of the Apostles is full of stories about the early evolution of the Church, how believers were inspired to act to spread the gospel, how they prayed and worshipped together, how they grew in their understanding of the faith, resolved tensions and took initiatives. In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit as he undertook his ministry; in the Acts of the Apostles, the Spirit fills the Church (believers) and enables it to continue the work of Jesus in the world. The Acts of the Apostles focuses in a special way on the stories of Peter and Paul. Acts 9: 26–25 refers to the ministry of both these apostles.

### Student Focus

As students at this stage are highly imaginative they will no doubt be interested in the stories that show the spread of the Good News. It may be a revelation to some of them that 'Good News' could not be spread by social media.

### Teaching Point

The Acts of the Apostles and the letters of St Paul tell us about the spread of the Good News.

### Remembering Point

The Acts of the Apostles and the letters of St Paul tell us about the spread of the Good News.

## Beginning

(15 minutes)

**Welcome the students** as usual.

**Invite the students** to gather around the prayer focus.

**Catechist:** Let us make the Sign of the Cross, remembering that when we do this we are calling upon the holy Trinity – Father, Son and Spirit – to be with us in this lesson.

**All:** In the name of the Father ...

**All:** Our Father ...

**Send the students back** to their seats.

**Ask the students:**

- If we want to pass on information or tell each other about something good that has happened, what do we do? (We telephone, text message, tweet, or use the television, radio or newspaper ...)
- How do you think people passed on the message of Jesus in the first years after he died and rose again? (By word of mouth or by letter. Books as we know them were not around. People only wrote important documents such as legal or government documents on parchment and vellum and these were expensive and time-consuming to make and often needed a scribe.)

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**Tell the students:** In the early years after Jesus' death and resurrection and after Pentecost, there were a few people who passed on Jesus' teaching in a very organised and deliberate way. These were Jesus' disciples and apostles.

These disciples wanted everyone to know what Jesus taught. They wanted to carry out Jesus' instructions to spread the Good News to all nations. We can see what messages were passed on and how the disciples undertook to spread the Good News when we look at the books in the New Testament called The Acts of the Apostles and the Letters of St Paul and others.

**Demonstrate** where the Acts of the Apostles can be found in the Bible. (Refer to lesson 10 about the writing of the Bible and where the Acts and letters fit into the whole structure.)

**Place the frieze** on a table at the front of the group. *This will be added to throughout the lesson. If you have a large class you could divide students into two groups, each of which would work on a separate frieze.*

**Invite a student** to write the title, 'The Spread of the Good News', across the top of the frieze.

## PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: A cloth, a candle, some sandals or thongs, a Bible.
2. A frieze made from either three sheets of A3 paper stuck together lengthwise, or a strip of greaseproof paper 150cm in length, e.g.
3. A table to place the frieze on.
4. A copy of the drawing of Jesus in Appendix 17a, page 102, and copies of the maps in Appendices 17b, 17c, 17e, pages 103, 104 and 110.
5. Coloured felt-tip markers.
6. Workbooks.

## PREPARATION

**Middle***(30 minutes)***Part One**

**Tell the students:** Let's look at how and to where the message of Good News spread.

On the frieze let's put Jesus at the beginning.

**Invite one student** to paste the drawing of Jesus on the left-hand side of the sheet, making sure to leave space for writing on all side around the drawing. (See Appendix 17a on page 102.)

**Ask the students:** What is the message that Jesus wanted the disciples to spread? *(Take a series of answers that reflect the message of Jesus, words such as love of neighbour, help for the poor, prayer, feeding the hungry ...)*

**Invite the students** to take turns in writing these words around the drawing of Jesus to identify his message. *(Give the students a few minutes to complete this, but don't take too long.)*

Distribute the workbooks.

**Tell the students:** Now let's look at the Acts of the Apostles and see how and where this message or Good News spread in the early years. Open your workbooks to 'The Acts of the Apostles' on page 61.

Let us listen to this text from Acts. You can follow the passage as it is read.

When he [Saul] had come to Jerusalem, he attempted to join the disciples; and they were all afraid of him, for they did not believe that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him, brought him to the apostles, and described for them how on the road he had seen the Lord, who had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had spoken boldly in the name of Jesus. So he went in and out among them in Jerusalem, speaking boldly in the name of the Lord. He spoke and argued with the Hellenists; but they were attempting to kill him. When the believers learned of it, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him off to Tarsus.

Meanwhile the church throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and was built up. Living in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it increased in numbers. (Acts 9: 26–35).

**Tell the students:** This part of the story is speaking about Saul who later becomes known as Paul.

**Ask the students:**

- What was Saul doing? (Preaching. It upset the officials and the Greeks who lived in the area, also known as Hellenists.)
- Where did the message spread? (From Jerusalem to Caesarea, Judea, Galilee, Samaria and Lydda. The second and third paragraphs in the text offer the best reference.)

Using the map on page 62 of their workbook, **ask the students** to identify Jerusalem and all the places mentioned in the text. **Invite the students** to underline the places where the Church took hold.

**Ask the students:**

- What else can you tell from reading the passage? (*Accept the students' answers.*)

**Tell the students:** We will now record on our frieze where the gospel message spread.

**Invite one student** to paste near the drawing of Jesus on the frieze a copy of the same map they have been using in their workbooks. (See Appendix 17b on page 103).

**Tell the students:** After Pentecost, Peter, Paul and the disciples continued to spread the message of Jesus.

**Invite a student** to draw three arrows from the 'words round the drawing of Jesus' to the map (to indicate the spread of the Good News). **Invite another student** to draw an oval round the general area where the Good News spread in the short time after Pentecost. (*This oval will take in all the locations the students identified in the previous activity.*)

**Ask the students:** How far do you think Peter and others in the New Testament took the message of Jesus in the first 25 years after Pentecost? (*The students' answers will most likely be guesses. It might be an opportunity to remind the students that this was in the first century, approximately 2000 years ago, when transport and communication were very different from today.*)

**Refer the students** to the map of the world on page 63 of the workbook. This indicates the extent of the spread of the Good News in the first 25 years after Jesus was raised from the dead.

**Part Two**

**Tell the students:** The Good News of Jesus spread as disciples travelled across the countryside. Paul, in particular, travelled far and wide with the message of Jesus. He undertook three missionary 'Journeys' to spread the Good News. We can track them by using the Acts of the Apostles and some of his letters. Paul wrote to Christians in particular *churches* – the places where groups of Christians gathered, a house or often a city or town – for example, the people of the Church of Corinth known as the Corinthians, or the Church of Thessalonica where the Christians were known as Thessalonians. Paul constantly provided encouragement and spiritual support for these Christian communities, reminding them of the message of Jesus Christ and the promises and commitment they made at their baptism.

**Tell the students:** In your workbooks there are some summary texts from Acts that describe Paul's journeys. As different students read the texts, some others will be linking the underlined places on a map of the Mediterranean area.

**Invite a student** to paste a blank map of the Mediterranean area in the second section of the frieze. (See Appendix 17c, page 104.)

**Ask the students** to open their workbooks at page 64. **Invite a student** to read the summary of Paul's first missionary journey and to pause at each underlined location while a second student links the locations with a coloured felt-tip marker. (See Appendix 17d on page 108 for a map showing this journey.)

## PREPARATION

## PREPARATION

**Invite a different student** to read the second missionary journey on page 65 and pause at each underlined location while **another student** links the underlined locations with a different coloured felt tip marker. (See Appendix 17d to see a map showing the second journey.)

**Repeat this process** with the third journey.

**Tell the students** that Paul spread the Good News throughout the world as it was known then. Although he had to rely on relatively slow means of transport (sailing boat or walking) and although there were no telephones, TV, radio, internet or mobile phones, he covered a very large area in about 10 years.

**Invite one student** to write above the map of the Mediterranean area the heading: 'From 48 AD to 58 AD, and invite another to write below the map the remembering point: The Acts of the Apostles and the letters of St Paul tell us about the spread of the Good News.

### Part Three

**Invite a student** to paste a map of the world in the third section of the frieze. (See Appendix 17e on page 110.) **Explain** that Christianity is now in many parts of the world, on each continent. Point out the circled part, explaining that this is the spread of the Good News by the end of the first century.

**Place the frieze** where it is visible to all the students.

## End

*(5 minutes)*

**Gather the students** around you or back in their seats.

**Ask the students:** What have we learnt today? *(Take answers that reflect the teaching point and remembering point: We know about the spread of the Good News of Jesus by reading the Acts of the Apostles and the Letters.)*

**Invite the students to pray** from page 66 of their workbooks.

**Catechist:** Let us close our eyes and think about the task of spreading the Good News. Let us think about how much St Paul did to bring the message of Jesus to all the people he met. Let us acknowledge how lucky we are to have the New Testament to help us know and understand what the message of Jesus is and how it was spread.

To each of these prayers answer *Lord, hear our prayer*

**Student:** God, our Father, you gave us Jesus to bring us closer to you. We thank you for his message of your love. Help us to respond to you in love.

**All:** Lord, hear our prayer.

**Student:** God of all goodness, St Paul took your message and carried it across the countryside. May we be like Paul and carry your message with us to share with others.

**All:** Lord, hear our prayer.

**Catechist:** Together let us pray Jesus' words in the Lord's Prayer

**All:** Our Father ...

Collect the workbooks and dismiss the students as usual.

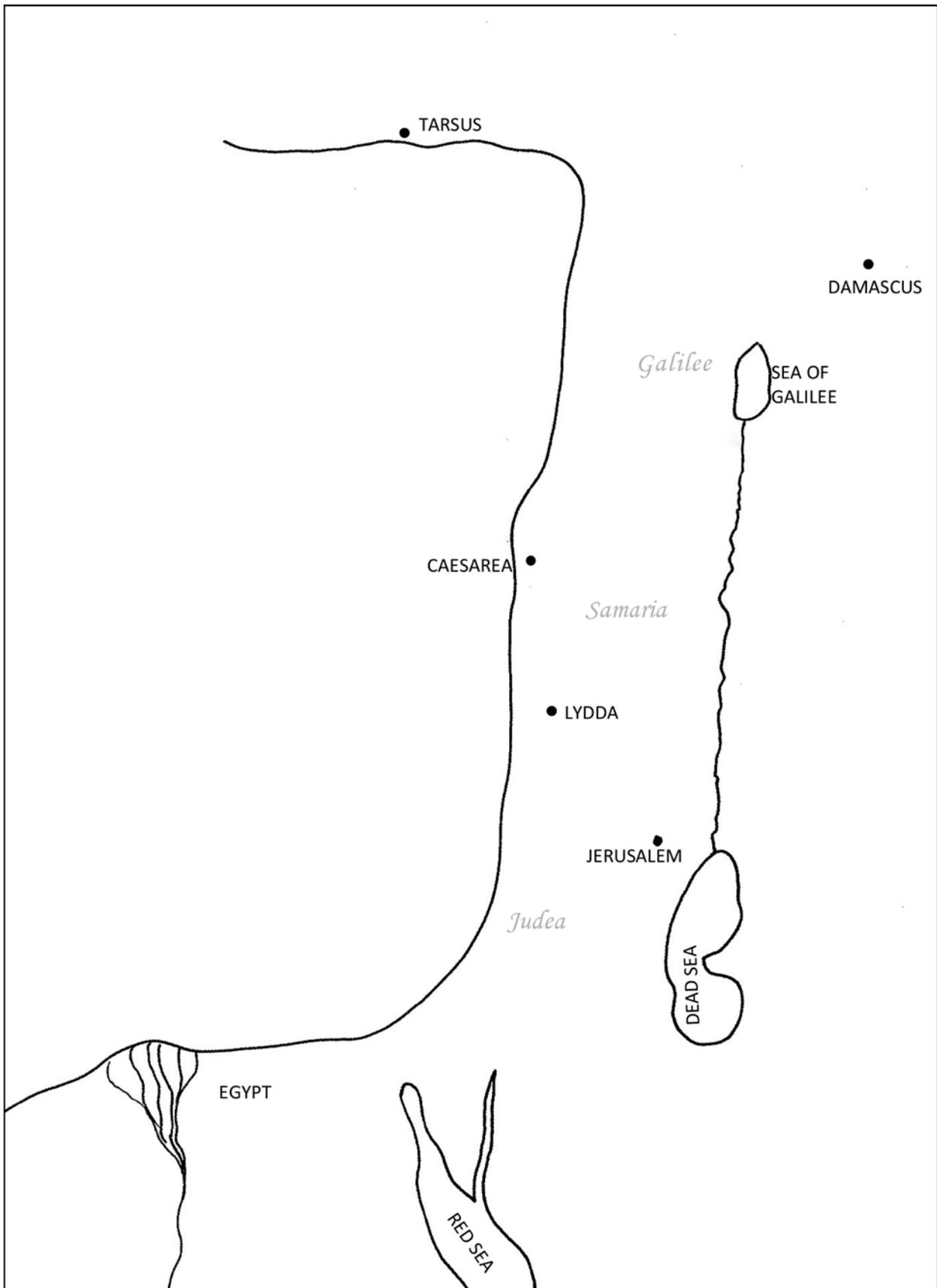
## Appendix 17a – A Drawing of Jesus

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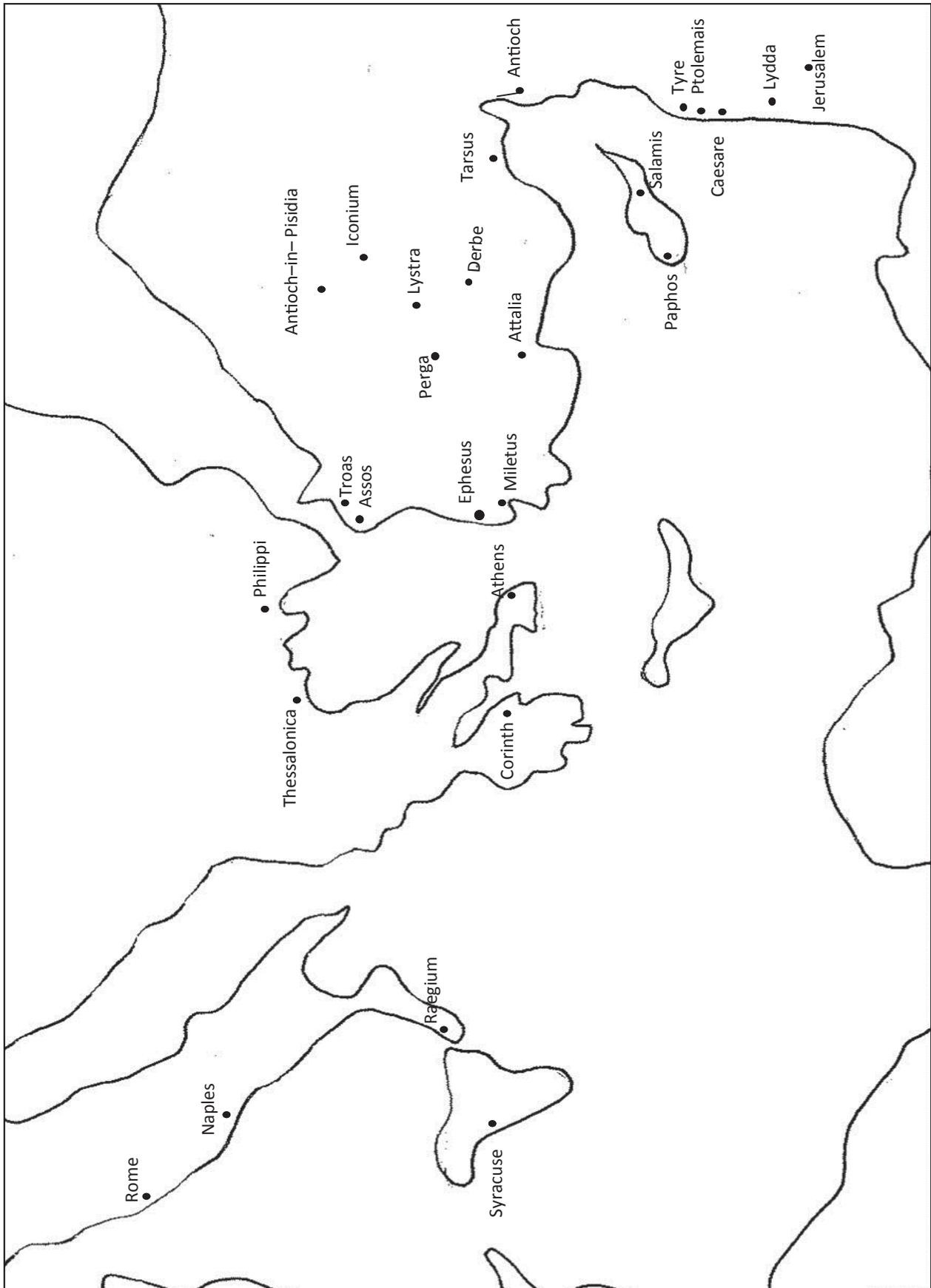
## Appendix 17b – The Spread of the Good News

Make a copy of this map to paste on the frieze.



## Appendix 17c – Saint Paul's Journeys

Enlarge and paste onto the frieze for students to record the three journeys of Saint Paul.



## Appendix 17c – Saint Paul's Journeys (continued)

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A *synopsis* of Saint Paul's First Journey

### **St Paul's First Journey (Acts 13: 1 – 14: 28)**

Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a member of the court of Herod the ruler, and Saul. While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.' Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off.

So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia; and from there they sailed to Cyprus. When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. And they had John also to assist them. When they had gone through the whole island as far as Paphos, they met a certain magician, a Jewish false prophet, named Bar-Jesus. He was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, an intelligent man, who summoned Barnabas and Saul and wanted to hear the word of God. But the magician Elymas (for that is the translation of his name) opposed them and tried to turn the proconsul away from the faith. But Saul, also known as Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him and said, 'You son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, full of all deceit and villainy, will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord? And now listen – the hand of the Lord is against you, and you will be blind for a while, unable to see the sun.' Immediately mist and darkness came over him, and he went about groping for someone to lead him by the hand. When the proconsul saw what had happened, he believed, for he was astonished at the teaching about the Lord (Acts 13: 1–13).

Then Paul and his companions set sail from Paphos and came to Perga in Pamphylia. John, however, left them and returned to Jerusalem.

Paul then travelled from Perga to Antioch in Pisidia where he and his companions preached about Jesus to the people they met. The Jewish leaders in the region did not like the way Paul spoke to the Jews, so they worked on the crowd to drive them out. Paul and Barnabas 'shook the dust off their feet in protest against them and went to Iconium' (Acts 13: 51). In Iconium the same thing happened but they decided to stay longer. Eventually, when they heard that they were going to be mistreated they fled to Lystra.

While in Lystra the Jews from other towns came and stirred up trouble amongst the gentiles, who eventually stoned Paul. They thought him dead, but he got up and went to a disciple's home. The next day, he and Barnabas went on to Derbe. After they had proclaimed the good news in Derbe Paul and his companions went back by way of Lystra, Iconium and Antioch in Pisidia. In each place they encouraged those who had believed. They appointed leaders for the Church and then continued on their journey. They passed through Pisidia, Pamphylia and Perga on to Attalia. From there they sailed back to Antioch in Syria.

## Appendix 17c – Saint Paul's Journeys (continued)

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A *synopsis* of Paul's Second Journey

### **St Paul's Second Journey (Acts 15: 22 – 18: 22)**

The Council of Jerusalem sent Paul, Barnabas, Judas called Barsabbas and Silas to carry a letter to the gentile churches. They left Jerusalem for Antioch in Syria. After a while in Antioch, Paul and Barnabas part company. Paul and Silas set out by land through Syria to Derbe and Lystra. While in Lystra, Paul took Timothy with him as one of his disciples. As they moved from town to town they read the letter from the Council to each Church. Paul, Silas and Timothy went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, travelling down to Troas as the Holy Spirit directed them.

While in Troas Paul had a dream that a Macedonian man was calling them to go to him and help them know more about Jesus. When Paul awoke, he and his companions set sail for Macedonia stopping at Philippi.

While in Philippi Paul met Lydia, a believer in God. She was a merchant who dealt in expensive purple cloth. Paul baptised her and then went to her home.

One day, as we were going to the place of prayer, we met a slave-girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners a great deal of money by fortune-telling. While she followed Paul and us, she would cry out, 'These men are slaves of the Most High God, who proclaim to you a way of salvation.' She kept doing this for many days. But Paul, very much annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, 'I order you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.' And it came out that very hour.

But when her owners saw that their hope of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the market-place before the authorities. When they had brought them before the magistrates, they said, 'These men are disturbing our city; they are Jews and are advocating customs that are not lawful for us as Romans to adopt or observe.' The crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates had them stripped of their clothing and ordered them to be beaten with rods. After they had given them a severe flogging, they threw them into prison and ordered the jailer to keep them securely. Following these instructions, he put them in the innermost cell and fastened their feet in the stocks.

About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was an earthquake, so violent that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were unfastened. When the jailer woke up and saw the prison doors wide open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, since he supposed that the prisoners had escaped. But Paul shouted in a loud voice, 'Do not harm yourself, for we are all here.' The jailer called for lights, and rushing in, he fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. Then he brought them outside and said, 'Sirs, what must I do to be saved?' They answered, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.' They spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. At the same hour of the night he took them and washed their wounds; then he and his entire family were baptised without delay. He brought them up into the house and set food before them; and he and his entire household rejoiced that he had become a believer in God (Acts 16: 16–34).

## Appendix 17c – Saint Paul's Journeys (continued)

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That morning they were released from the prison and encouraged to leave the town. From Philippi they travelled to Thessalonica where Paul preached in the synagogue. Once again this caused an uproar and Paul and his companions had to leave. Trouble followed Paul wherever he preached. So much so that the believers sent him away to the coast and on to Athens to await Silas and Timothy, who stayed behind. After preaching in Athens Paul went to Corinth where he met Priscilla and Aquilla, who were tentmakers. Since Paul was also a tentmaker, he decided to live and work with them. Paul preached regularly on the Sabbath in the synagogue and after quite a while left Corinth. On his journey back to Jerusalem, Paul stopped off in Ephesus where he preached in the synagogue and promised them that he would return. Paul then set sail for Caesarea. After he landed there 'he went up to Jerusalem and greeted the church, and then went down to Antioch' (Acts 18: 22).

A **synopsis** of Paul's Third Journey

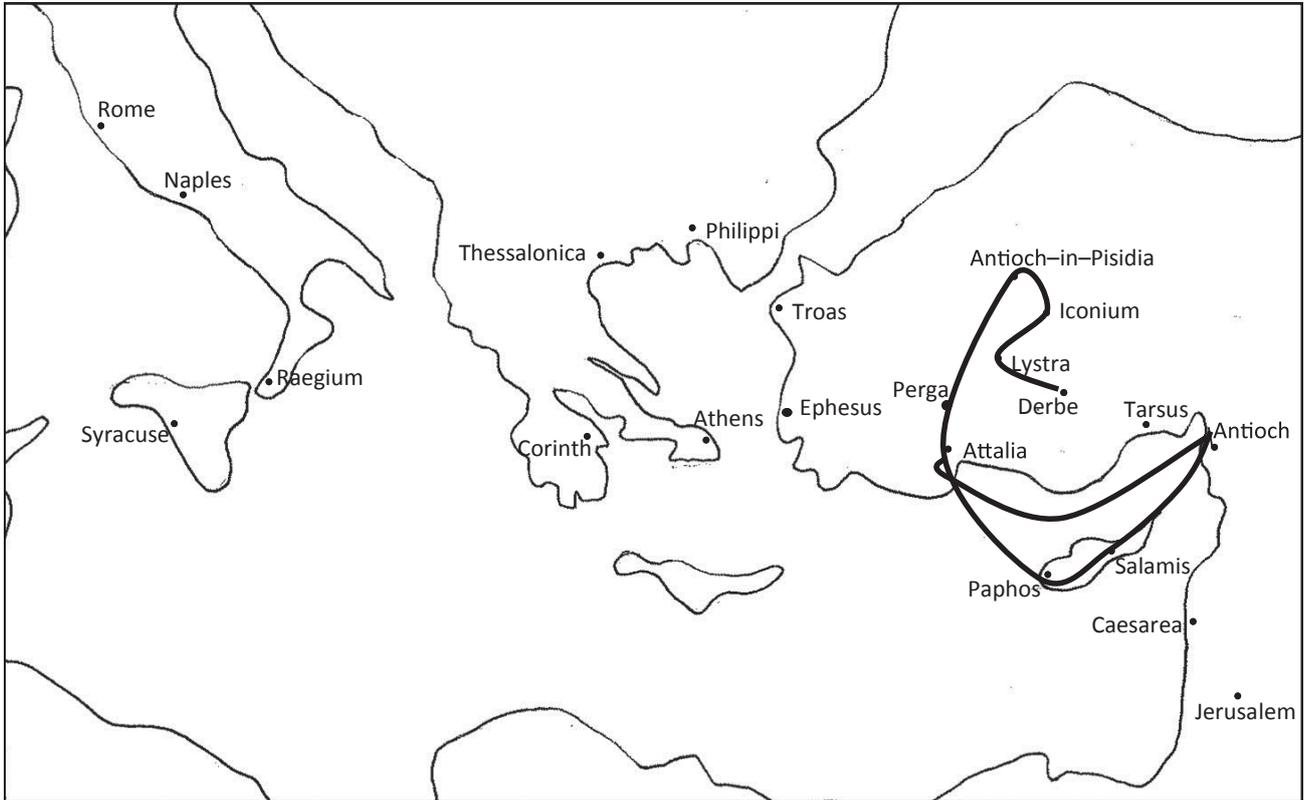
### **St Paul's Third Journey (Acts 18: 23 – 21: 14)**

Paul left Antioch and revisited many of the places where he had established churches on his previous journeys. He travelled through Galatia and Phrygia and stopped in Ephesus. After some time in Ephesus and the regions around the city, Paul and his companions caused a disturbance among the silversmiths of Ephesus, who believed that Paul's teaching would take away their business. When the people had been persuaded that their temples were still going to require silver and that Paul and his companions were not 'temple robbers or blasphemers' the town clerk dismissed the gathering (Acts 19: 37).

After the uproar had ceased, Paul sent for the disciples; and after encouraging them and saying farewell, he left for Macedonia. When he had gone through those regions and had given the believers much encouragement, he came to Greece, where he stayed for three months. He was about to set sail for Syria when a plot was made against him by the Jews, and so he decided to return through Macedonia. He was accompanied by Sopater son of Pyrrhus from Berea, by Aristarchus and Secundus from Thessalonica, by Gaius from Derbe, and by Timothy, as well as by Tychicus and Trophimus from Asia. They went ahead and were waiting for us in Troas; but we sailed from Philippi after the days of Unleavened Bread, and in five days we joined them in Troas, where we stayed for seven days. When Paul had finished preaching in Troas he travelled to Assos where he met the boat to take him to Miletus avoiding Ephesus. Paul called the leaders of the Ephesian church to him so that he might speak with them. When he had finished he set sail for Caesarea, keeping to the right of Cyprus. Paul and his companions stopped first at Tyre and then Ptolemais and then finally at Caesarea (Acts 20: 1–6).

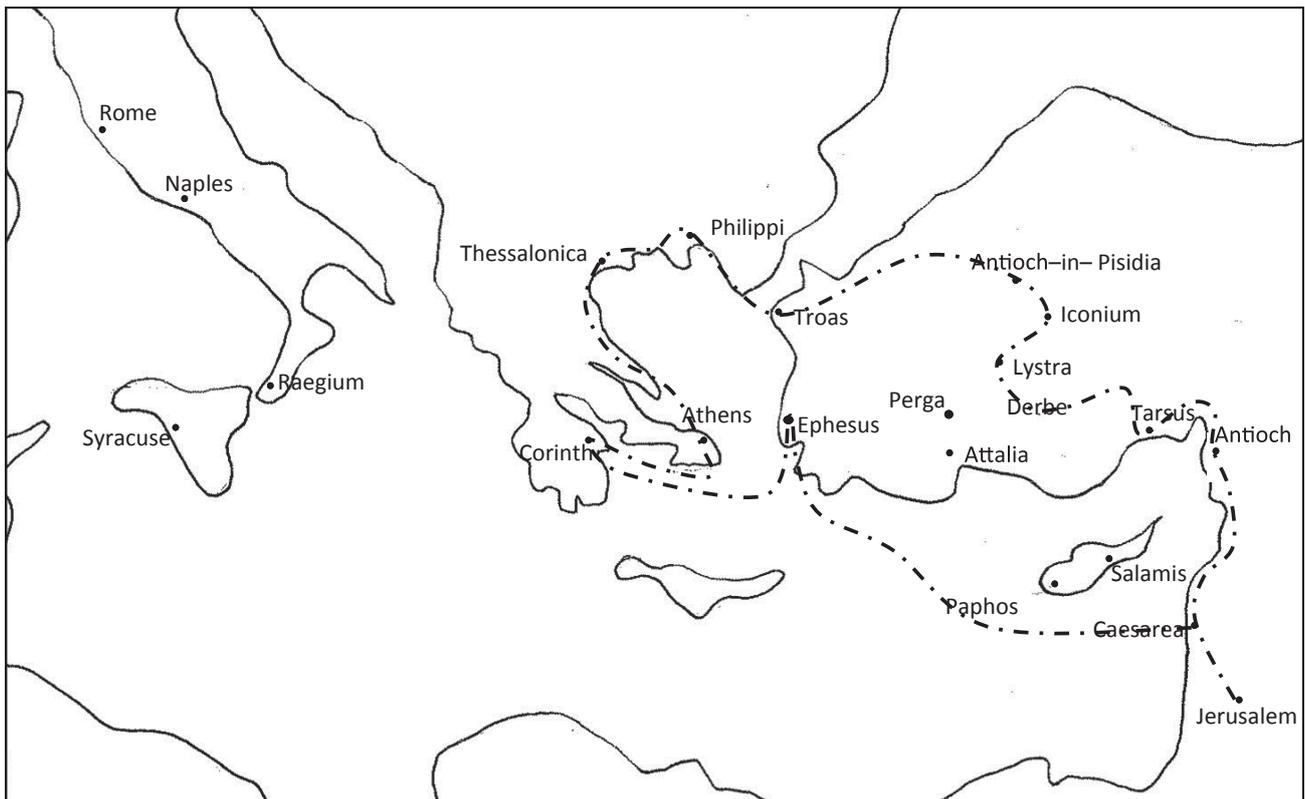
## Appendix 17d – Maps of Paul’s Journeys

### Paul’s First Journey Spreading the Good News



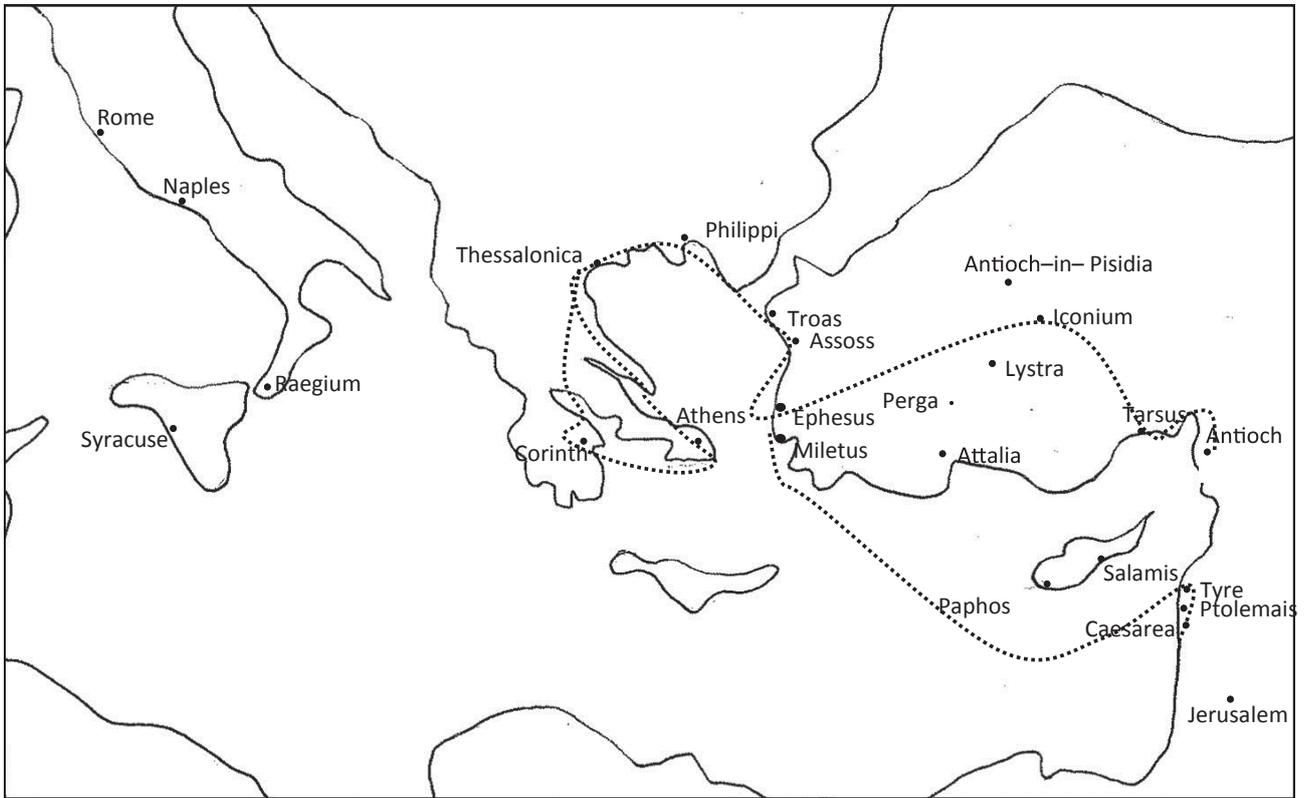
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### Paul’s Second Journey Spreading the Good News



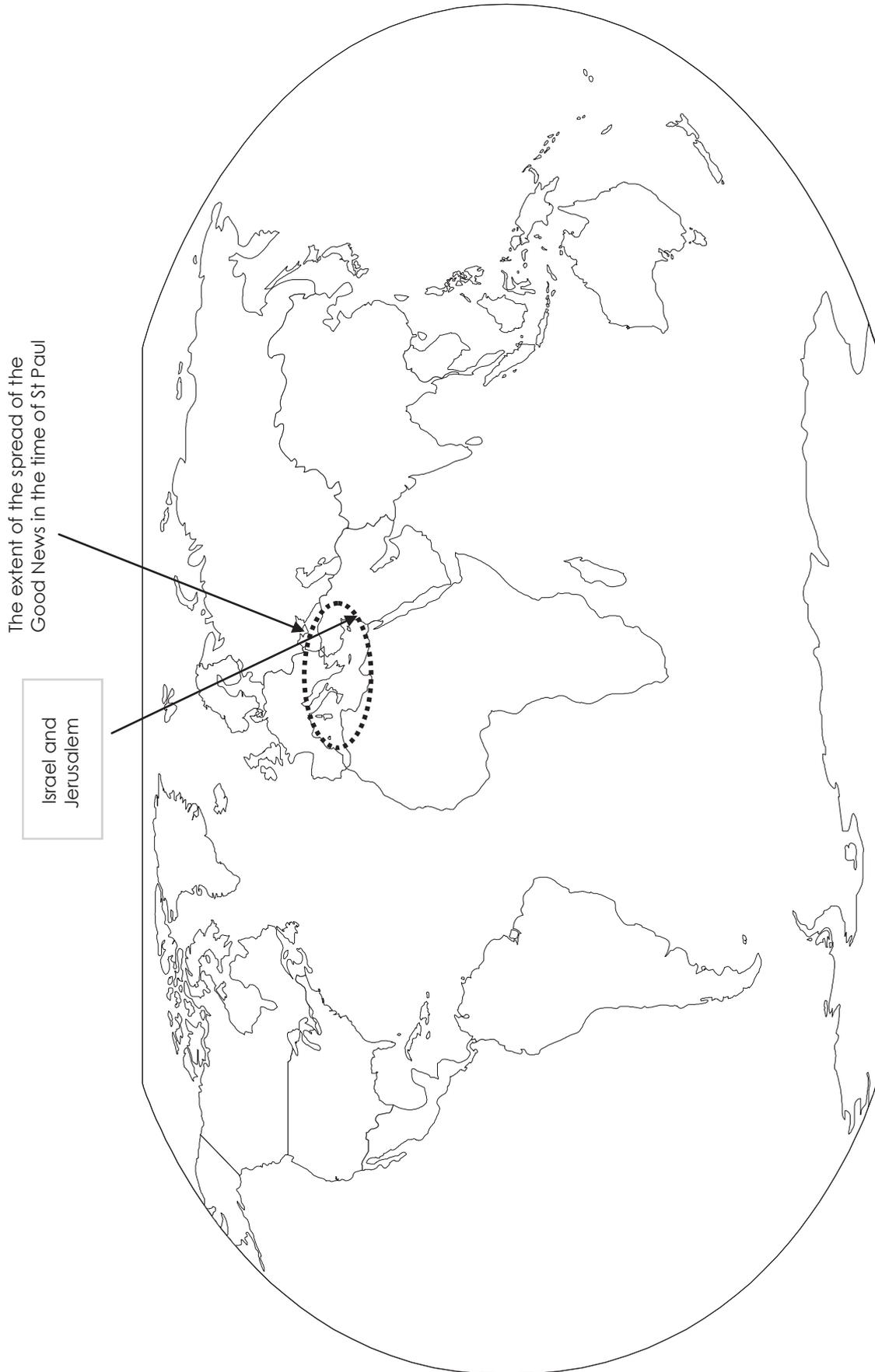
**Appendix 17d – Maps of Paul’s Journeys (continued)**

***Paul’s Third Journey Spreading the Good News***



## Appendix 17e – Map of the World

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# Jacob's Dream

## Background for the Catechist

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

### Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

After the unity of the human race was shattered by sin God at once sought to save humanity part by part. The covenant with Noah after the flood gives expression to the principle of the divine economy toward the 'nations', in other words, towards (people) grouped 'in their lands, each with [its] own language, by their families, in their nations' (Gen 10: 5; 9: 9–10, 16; 10: 20–31) (CCC, n. 56).

After the patriarchs, God formed Israel as his people by freeing them from slavery in Egypt. He established with them the covenant of Mount Sinai and, through Moses, gave them his law so that they would recognise him and serve him as the one living and true God, the provident Father and just judge, and so that they would look for the promised Saviour (DV, n. 3) (CCC, n. 62).

The Old Testament relates the story of Israel's unfolding relationship with God and how God gradually reveals the plan of salvation for the world and its peoples. The core event of the Old Testament is Israel's realisation that God is a God who acts to free people and to call them into fullness of life. This is clearest in the Exodus account of the deliverance of Israel from slavery in Egypt and the giving of the Law on Sinai. God calls the people into a covenant, a formal agreement. God promises to be faithful to the people and in return they are called upon to be faithful to God's Law. 'I will be your God; you will be my people'.

This covenant builds on the earlier revelations and convictions about God's relationship to the world and to Israel conveyed in the stories of the Fall, the Flood, the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and Joseph and the chosen people in Egypt.

After the Exodus and the covenant on Sinai, the meaning and demands of the covenant underlie the accounts of the kings of Israel, especially David and Solomon, and echo through the words of all the prophets right down to the time of Jesus, who concludes a new and eternal covenant between God and humankind in his body and blood.

### Student Focus

The word *covenant* will be new to most of these students. So it will be necessary to spend time helping them understand. Students of this age do know what a promise is and how important it is to keep promises. They will also understand to a limited extent, the notion of contract. Many could have had work contracts for their school work or their behaviour.

### Teaching Point

The stories of the Old Testament tell us about God's covenant with the people of Israel.

### Remembering Point

The stories of the Old Testament tell us about God's covenant with the people of Israel.

## Beginning

(10 minutes)

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

**Invite the students** to be still, to quieten themselves and to think over their day.

**Catechist:** Today we have all been busy. You have spent time at school working at various things. Let us now thank God for the gift of the day, the people we spent time with, our friends and our teachers. Let us thank God also for all that we have learnt.

So together let us pray the Our Father.

**All:** Our Father ...

**Invite the students** to gather around a table or alternately spread the letters of the word COVENANT on the table or floor.

**Give the students** a couple of minutes only to put the word together. (Help the students with clues if they are finding the word difficult. Tell the students the word if they are having difficulty putting it together.)

**Tell the students:** Today we are going to explore the meaning of the word *covenant*, how God made a special covenant with God's chosen people, the people of Israel.

**Explain to the students:** **Covenant** means to make a special promise that is as strong and binding as a legal contract today. Each person in the covenant agreement has obligations to the other party in the covenant. It is more than just a promise – it is binding across generations. Let's look at the covenant God made with the people of Israel in the story of Jacob's Dream.

*(A covenant is a formal agreement or treaty between two groups or individuals with each party having some obligation to the other. It might also be imposed by a greater power upon those of lower status. The greater power demands loyalty and in return, commits to protecting those of lesser status. In the Old Testament, God made a covenant with Abraham, David and Moses (Harpers Bible Dictionary pp.190–192).*

**Ask the students:**

- When have you made a special agreement with someone? Your parents maybe, or at school?
- What did you agree to?
- What did the agreement require of you and the other person?

## PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: A cloth, a Bible, some flowers, the 'Contract' from Appendix 18a on page 116.
2. The letters that spell COVENANT, cut out large enough for students to write inside each letter.
3. Workbooks
4. A large sheet of paper or two sheets of A3 paper taped together with the Story Analysis Chart drawn up as in the example below:

List of characters in the story	List the main actions	List the significant words used

5. Prayer introductory words and response on a sheet of A3 paper. Example below:

**Begin your prayer with:**

We remember your covenant promise God and know you are present through...

**Response:** We give thanks for your covenant, Lord

## PREPARATION

**Middle***(25 minutes)*

**Distribute** the workbooks. **Read the story** of Jacob's Dream and invite the students to follow the text on page 67.

Jacob left Beersheba and went towards Haran. He came to a certain place and stayed there for the night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place. And he dreamed that there was a ladder set up on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. And the LORD stood beside him and said, 'I am the LORD, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring; and your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and all the families of the earth shall be blessed in you and in your offspring. Know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.' Then Jacob woke from his sleep and said, 'Surely the LORD is in this place – and I did not know it!' And he was afraid, and said, 'How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.'

So Jacob rose early in the morning, and he took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up for a pillar and poured oil on the top of it. He called that place Bethel but the name of the city was Luz at the first. Then Jacob made a vow, saying, 'If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and clothing to wear, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then the LORD shall be my God, and this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house; and of all that you give me I will surely give one-tenth to you' (Gen 28: 1–22).

You might tell the story using puppets. You could use a felt board or paper cut-outs. Using something that gives a picture of the story as you tell it offers another dimension for the students.

**Tell the students:** Turn to page 68 in your workbook and complete the Story Analysis Chart with a partner. Read over the text again and complete the chart as quickly as possible. Try not to write the sentences from the passage, keep your entries simple. In the last column write only single words.

When the students have completed the activity, **invite one person** from each pair to give an answer and record it on the chart which you have placed in a position where all students can see it clearly.

**Tell the students:** The actions and words used by God to Jacob are very significant to the people of Israel. For Christians, for us, this promise is also important. It tells us about how God will act in our lives.

It tells us that we are also included in this promise. (*We are included in the offspring.*) God tells us, 'Know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back ...' God will keep the agreement with us – we are called to keep our agreement with God.

**Allocate the students** in groups of four.

**Ask the students:** What might be the agreements we have made with God or have been made for us? *(Our baptismal promises – we become a member of the family of God, we take up the agreement made many years before. We say the same as Jacob... You will be our God!)*

**Tell the students:** In your groups of four, think about the two questions in your workbook on page 69 entitled 'Our Agreement with God'.

- How might God fulfil God's part of the agreement for us today?
- What can we do to fulfil our part of the agreement?

When I indicate to start, take turns in sharing your answer to the first question. Everyone else is to listen carefully. Each person is to have a turn talking. When everyone has had a turn then you can respond to what other people have been saying. After 15 minutes you are to agree on one suggestion of how God fulfils his part of the agreement and record it in your books in the space provided. I will let you know when you are near the 15 minutes. You will use the same process for the second question.

**Select one student** from each group to share their answers to the questions with the whole group. Encourage the students and affirm their answers.

**Tell the students:** We can see in this text that God has continued the promise to be with his chosen people and Jacob commits himself to be faithful to God. God has chosen Jacob and Jacob has made a vow to God.

This is just one of the stories that tell us about God's promises made to the people of Israel.

**Ask the students:** Why is it important for us to know about the promise made by God to the people of Israel? *(Knowing about the promises God made to the people of Israel reminds us that God loves us and makes the same commitment to us. This commitment is repeated and confirmed down through history. Even in Jesus we are reminded of this special promise. God sent his Son to be with us, God's chosen people – the people of God. Therefore when we follow Jesus we are fulfilling our part of the agreement – the covenant made between God and Jacob and ultimately with each of us.)*

Collect the workbooks.

## PREPARATION

## PREPARATION

**End***(10 minutes)*

**Hand out the letters** from the word COVENANT again. Invite the students to write inside the letter something that shows God is with us. **Direct the students** to think about some way that they can identify God's presence. *(You might suggest to the students some possibilities such as – the friendship they have with their school friends, things around them that show God is with us etc.)*

**Invite the students** to pray.

**Ask the students** to put their letter down and read out what they have written beginning with:

**Student:** We remember your covenant promise God and know you are present through...

*Respond after each letter:*

**All:** We give thanks for your covenant, Lord.

*Conclude with:*

**All:** Our Father...

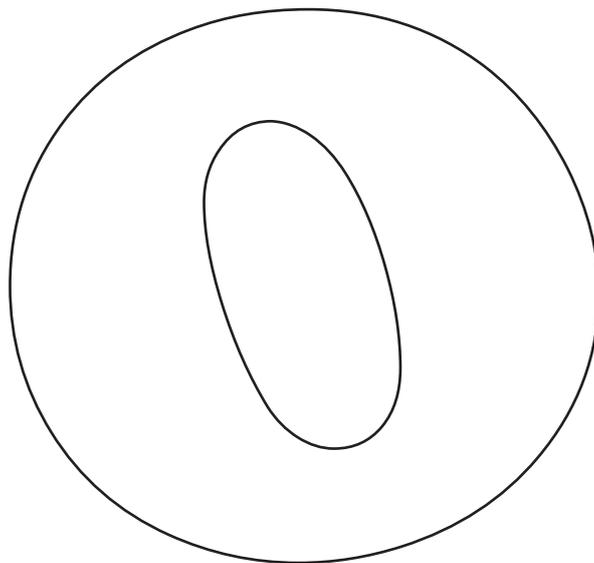
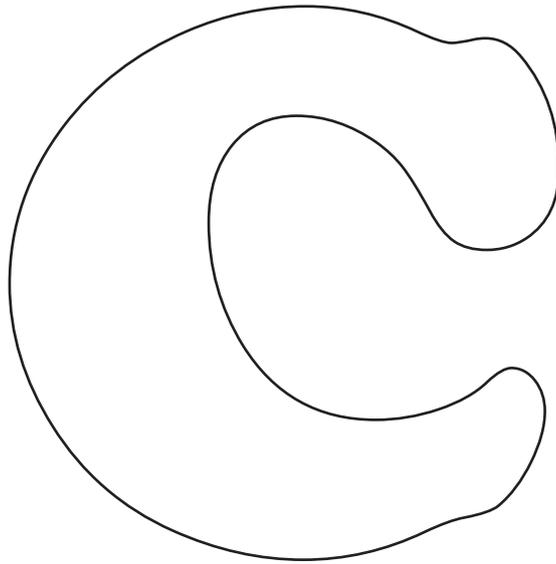
Dismiss the students as usual.



## Appendix 18b – Letters for COVENANT

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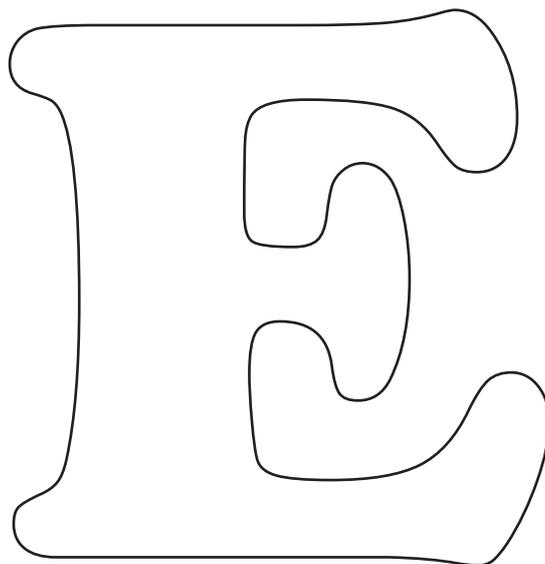
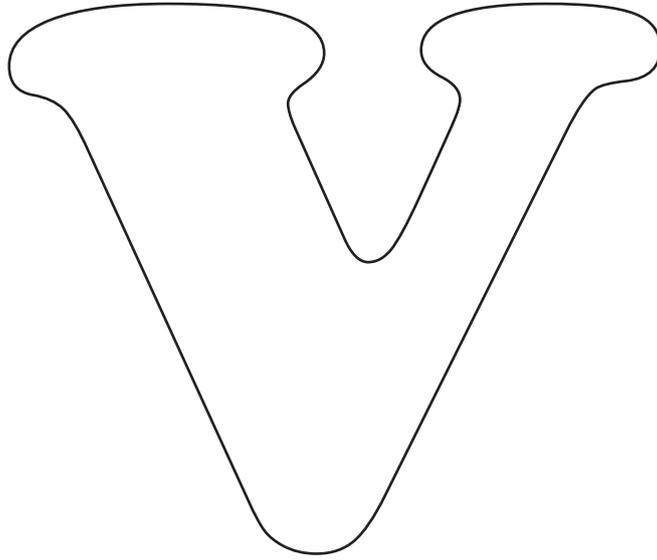
Enlarge these letters to three times this size and cut them out for the students to use.



## Appendix 18b – Letters for COVENANT (continued)

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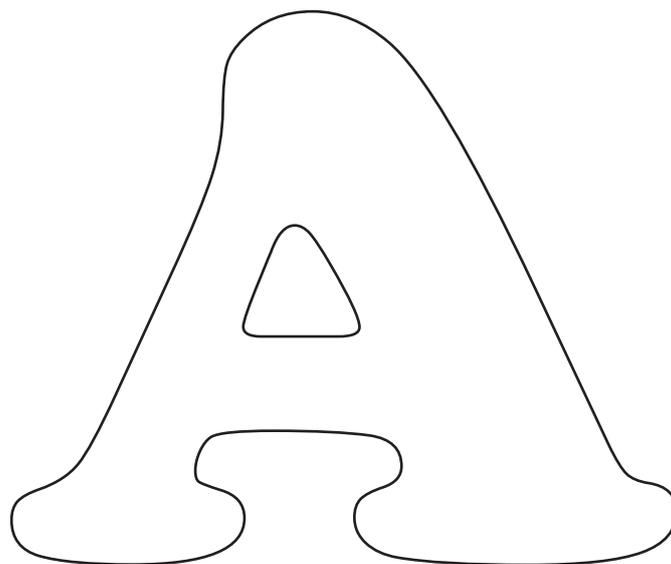
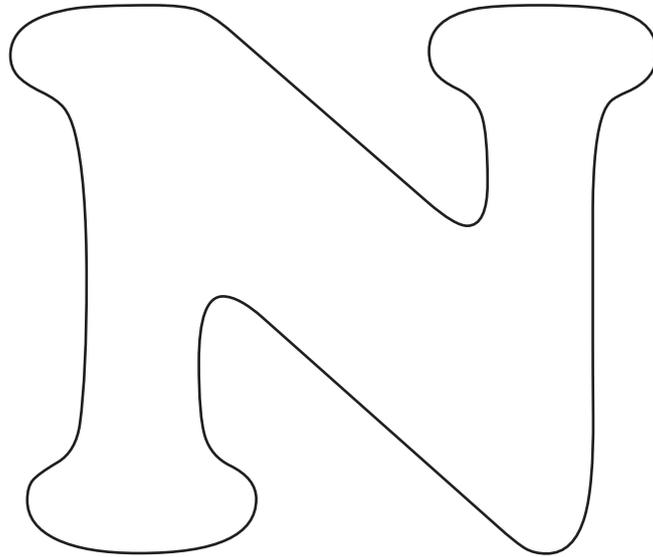
Enlarge these letters to three times this size and cut them out for the students to use.



**Appendix 18b – Letters for COVENANT (continued)**

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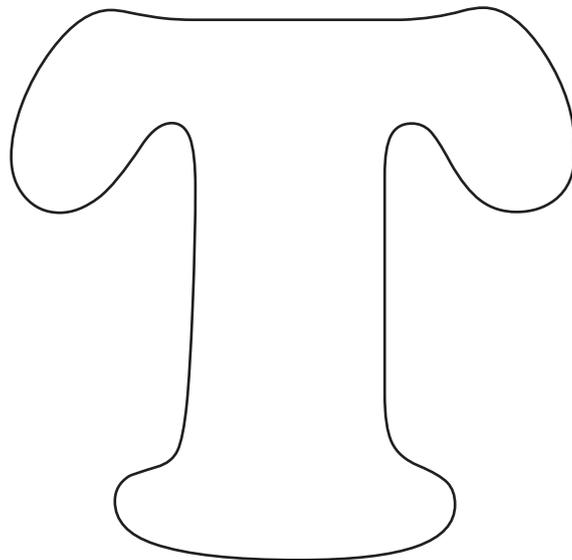
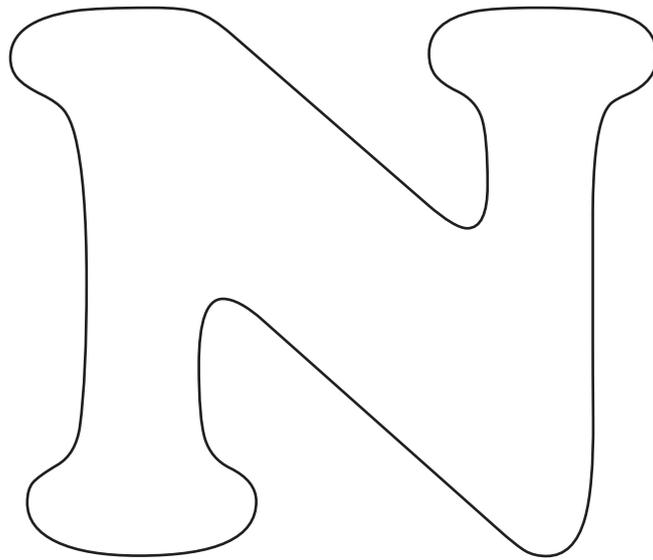
Enlarge these letters to three times this size and cut them out for the students to use.



## Appendix 18b – Letters for COVENANT (continued)

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Enlarge these letters to three times this size and cut them out for the students to use.



# People Reveal God to Us

## Background for the Catechist

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

### **Reflection/Doctrinal Reference**

[Human beings] with their openness to truth and beauty, sense of moral goodness, freedom and the voice of conscience, with [their] longings for the infinite and for happiness, question [themselves] about God's existence. In all this [they] discern signs of [their] spiritual soul. The soul, the 'seed of eternity we bear in ourselves, irreducible to the merely material' (GS 18, n.1), can have its origin only in God.

The world, and [humanity], attest that they contain within themselves neither their first principle nor their final end, but rather that they participate in Being itself, which alone is without origin or end. Thus, in different ways, [human beings] can come to know that there exists a reality which is the first cause and final end of all things, a reality 'that everyone calls God' (CCC, nn. 33–34).

While the revelation of God to human beings through the Scripture are of key importance to human understanding of who God is and who we are, God is also revealed to human beings through the events and circumstances of their own lives and through their reflection on their own reality.

At the bottom of every human heart is the longing for happiness and fulfilment and this urge towards the good drives the human search for meaning. Human nature is fundamentally good, though flawed, and everyone longs to be free, to know the truth, to love and to be loved. These fundamental yearnings reveal to us that we are made for something more than the world can give.

There are also plenty of intimations of the divine in the world around us and in our relations with people that also reveal God to us. The beauty and order of the natural world, the experience of freedom, the daily simple gifts of family and friendships (even though these are sometimes fraught), food, shelter, a home are all powerful intimations of the Source of these good things. This is why the lack of these good things is a constant challenge to people of faith and why the Church's priority is for those who lack the things that serve to reveal the goodness of God. Their absence cries out for justice. If there was no God, if the events of the world were truly random, we would not expect justice but as we do, this expectation powerfully asserts that God indeed exists.

## Student Focus

Students in Year Five are able to look beyond the surface and discover truths about the world and God. Drawing attention to aspects of life that reveal God to us will not only help them to see God in others, but also encourage them to look for God in the world around them.

## Teaching Point

The people and events of our time reveal God to us.

## Remembering Point

The people and events of our time reveal God to us.

## Beginning

*(15 minutes)*

**Welcome the students** as usual.

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

**Invite the students** to answer some analytic or personalised questions that review the previous week's learning such as, 'where do you see the Covenant promise with God in our world today?'

**Place the photos** on a table at the front of the learning space.

**Invite the students** to select a photo and share with the group what they think is happening in the picture and what they know about the people or places from looking at the picture.

**Place the Insight Grid** (see Appendix 19a) where it can be seen by all the students. **Record on it** the students' insightful comments about the people, the place and what caused the event or what might happen as a consequence. Paste the picture beside the information you have collected.

## Middle

*(35 minutes)*

**Tell the students:** We can always tell something from the pictures we see in the paper, on television and in magazines. We know something about the people, where the event is happening, and sometimes we know how people are feeling. If we take time to look carefully at the images and to think about what they might mean we can know something more than what we first might think we know.

Let's look at these pictures again and see what more they might be saying.

**Distribute** the workbooks.

**Allocate the students** to groups of four and nominate two pictures per group. **Invite the students** to answer the question below for both pictures.

**Ask the students:** What do these pictures tell us about God?

## PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: Cloth of any colour, the Bible, a candle, two or three of the photos (see below) to be used at the beginning of the lesson.
2. A variety of photos (from newspapers or magazines) that tell a story, e.g. AFL Grand Final, hurricane, earthquake, mother and baby, celebration of significance, a good-news story ...
3. Insight Grid (see Appendix 19a page 124), enlarged or copied and to be placed in a location that can be clearly seen by students.
4. Workbooks.

## PREPARATION

**Tell the students:** You are to spend the next 15 minutes talking about what you see in the pictures and what more each picture is saying. Ask yourselves the question: What does this picture tell me about God?

**Invite the students** to turn to page 70 in their workbooks.

**Tell the students:** Each of you is to record your group's answer for each picture, in your workbook in the space provided titled 'The pictures tell me this about God'.

When the students have finished this activity, **invite them** to move back to their seats and turn to the activity titled 'This person reveals God to me'. **Invite each student** to sit quietly and think about a member of their family, a friend or someone they admire or know reasonably well.

**Ask the students** to consider what this person reveals about God. After about two minutes, **invite the students** to write a cinquain poem in the space provided on page 71. Directions and an example for this type of poetry are in Appendix 19b on page 125.

**Invite as many students** as possible in the time available to share their poems. You might like to make them into a booklet of poems, or have the students rewrite them to take home.

**Tell the students:** In the space marked 'Something to Remember' write the following: We can come to know about God in the people and events of our world.

## End

*(5 minutes)*

**Select one** of the students' poems and **invite the student** to read it during the prayer.

**Gather the students** round the prayer focus.

**Catechist:** Through the generosity of people, we know you are generous in your love. Let us now listen to ..... poem.

**Student:** (reads poem)

**All:** Praise and thanks to you, Lord God.

**Catechist:** Through the beauty of people, we know you are beautiful.

**All:** Praise and thanks to you, Lord God.

**Catechist:** Through the way people love others, we see your love.

**All:** Praise and thanks to you, Lord God.

**All:** Amen.

Collect the workbooks.

Dismiss the students as usual.

## Appendix 19a – Insight Grid

Enlarge or reproduce this grid for your own use with the first activity. Glue the images into the first box and then record the students' responses in the box beside the image.

IMAGE	INSIGHT – WHAT WE KNOW
<p>e.g</p> 	<p>The people in the picture are .....</p> <p>The event is in ..... (country)</p> <p>..... happened first,</p> <p>followed by .....</p>

## Appendix 19b – Cinquain Poetry

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Invite the students to prepare a cinquain poem after they have reflected on the significant person in their life. Below is a description of how a cinquain poem is constructed.

A cinquain poem is a 'mini poem' that describes something in five lines.

- 1st line: one word – that is the title of the poem
- 2nd line: two words – that describe the title
- 3rd line: three words – that express action
- 4th line: four words – that express a feeling
- 5th line: one word – a synonym (or another word) for the title

For example:

**Sister**  
**Thoughtful, kind**  
**Shares with everyone**  
**Considerate of each person**  
**Susan**

# Marriage

## Background for the Catechist

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

### Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

God who created [human beings] out of love also calls [them] to love – the fundamental and innate vocation of every human being. For [human beings are] created in the image and likeness of God who is himself love. Since God created [them] man and woman, their mutual love becomes an image of the absolute and unfailing love with which God loves [humanity]. It is good, very good, in the Creator's eyes. And this love which God blesses is intended to be fruitful and to be realised in the common work of watching over creation: 'And God blessed them, and God said to them: "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it"' (Gen 1: 27) (CCC, n. 1604).

Holy Scripture affirms that man and woman were created for one another: 'It is not good that the man should be alone' (Gen 1:28). The woman, 'flesh of his flesh,' ... his equal, his nearest in all things, is given to him by God as a 'helpmate'; she thus represents God from whom comes our help (CCC, n. 1605).

Everyone, regardless of whether they are married or not, is called to love, but the love of husband and wife reflects in particular the fruitfulness of God's love and its passionate, self-giving and faithful qualities. The couple in love would do anything, each for the other. Their love enables them to transcend selfishness and to live, and occasionally even to die, for the other. It is this 'ultimate' quality of the love between man and woman that St Paul sees as the image of the love Christ has for the Church for whom he died. Of course men and women are only human and the sin and sadness that are a part of human reality sour even the most loving relationships from time to time. Nevertheless this sacrament affirms the spousal love of men and women, pronounces it very good and encourages and strengthens the mutual generosity and selflessness which ought to characterise all human relationships.

### Student Focus

Students will have many and varied experiences and understandings of marriage from among their family and friends. It will be necessary to identify with the intention of marriage as the affirmation and sacramental aspect of the love shared by the husband and wife. Students may raise issues about divorce, separation and pre-marital cohabitation. It is not the place to pass judgments on any examples given by the students, but rather to emphasise what the Church teaches: that the 'mutual love [between husband and wife] becomes

## PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: Candle, the Bible and a wedding photograph.
2. The response: 'God bless them and strengthen them' on a large A3 sheet of paper for all the students to see, e.g.
 

God bless them and  
strengthen them
3. A whiteboard or a large sheet of paper (join two A3 sheets of paper together) to record the responses from the introductory activity.
4. Invite a married couple to speak to the students about the experience of marriage and their wedding day. Invite them to share what marriage means to them.
5. Workbooks.

an image of the absolute and unfailing love with which God loves humanity' (CCC, n. 1604) and that in coming together in the sacrament of Marriage, the couple is acknowledging this and committing themselves to this mutual generosity and selflessness.

### Teaching Point

In the sacrament of Marriage, the Church celebrates God's love reflected in the love between husband and wife.

### Remembering Point

Marriage is a sacrament in which husband and wife reflect and share God's love.

### Beginning

*(15 minutes)*

**Welcome the students** as usual.

**Gather the students** around the prayer focus.

Ask the students: Why do you think I have a picture on our prayer focus today? *(Take whatever answers the students offer.)*

**Invite the students** to prepare for prayer.

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

**All:** In the name ...

**Catechist:** Today we pray for all married people and those who are preparing to be married.

**All:** God bless them and strengthen them.

**All:** In the name of the Father ...

**Ask the students:** Who has been to a wedding and what did you notice when you were there? *(Take all the answers from the students, encouraging them in their sharing.)*

**Invite the students** to share with the person beside them responses to the following questions:

- How did you prepare for the wedding?
- What do you think is easy and what do you think is hard about being married?

**Invite one person** from each pair to share, with the whole group, one thing that they think is easy and one thing they think is hard about being married.

**Record the answers** on a whiteboard or on a large sheet of paper which the students can see.

**Help the students** prepare four or five questions to ask the visiting couple about the experience of being married and **ask four or five students** to ask the questions. **Prepare one student** to thank the couple at the end of their sharing and the question time.

## Middle

(30 minutes)

**Welcome the married couple** and **invite the students** to be attentive.

**Invite the married couple** to share a little about their wedding day, how they prepared for the wedding day and what it meant to them both. **Ask the couple** to share what they understand about the sacrament of Marriage.

**Invite the students** to ask the questions and allow the couple time to answer.

When the question time is over, **invite the students** to thank the couple for sharing with the class about their experience of marriage.

**Tell the students:** Marriage is the only sacrament where the main celebrant is not the priest. The couple marry each other; the priest is the representative of the Church, present to witness the sacramental event and give the blessing of the Church.

A Catholic wedding is usually held in a church before the community. There are three official witnesses: the priest and two others. Through this sacramental moment the community rejoices in the loving commitment being made by the couple, and recognises the presence and action of God. The sacrament strengthens the couples' generosity and blesses them with hope. The community offers their ongoing support. Marriage is a symbol of God's love for us because it demonstrates this love.

**Distribute the workbooks** and **invite the students** to turn to page 73 and look at the picture of the couple at their wedding. **Invite them** to complete the activity below the picture by answering the question, 'This couple is getting married. What might this mean for them and for the community?' (You will have discussed this aspect of the community witnessing to the love they have for each other and the love God has for them and for us.) When the students have completed this task, **invite them** to turn the page and complete the 'Who's who?' activity.

**Tell the students:** Identify the participants in the photo and what is happening. Then complete the sentence: When a couple gets married ... in the space provided.

**Invite two or three students** to share their responses to these two activities.

Collect the workbooks.

## End

(5 minutes)

Invite the students to gather around the prayer focus for the final prayer.

**Catechist:** We thank you, Lord, for the gift of this time together. We have learnt that the Church celebrates God's love shown to us in the love between husband and wife. Encourage us all to build loving relationships with those around us.

We make this prayer through Christ, our Lord.

**All:** Amen.

Dismiss the students as usual.

## PREPARATION

# Ordained Leaders of the Church

## Background For Catechist

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

### Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

'The bishops, as vicars and legates of Christ, govern the particular Churches assigned to them by their counsels, exhortations, and example, but over and above that also by the authority and sacred power' which indeed they ought to exercise so as to edify, in the spirit of service which is that of their Master (LG 27) (CCC, n. 894).

The Good Shepherd ought to be the model and 'form' of the bishop's pastoral office. Conscious of his own weaknesses, 'the bishop ... can have compassion for those who are ignorant and erring. He should not refuse to listen to his subjects whose welfare he promotes as of his very own children. ... The faithful ... should be closely attached to the bishop as the Church is to Jesus Christ, and as Jesus Christ is to the Father' (LG 27, n.2) (CCC, n. 896).

The meaning and message of Jesus Christ so perfectly and concretely expressed in his life and teaching and in his dying and rising did not come to an end with the conclusion of his earthly life but were taken up by his followers and spread in an extraordinary way through the Greco-Roman Empire and into the world beyond.

In order to do this the Church assumed visible structures of leadership to maintain unity and to form teachers and preachers in the faith of the apostles. The Acts of the Apostles and the letters of Paul and others in the New Testament attest to the early development of these leadership roles within the early Church. These refer to *episcopoi* (overseers), presbyters and deacons. These later developed into the orders of bishops, priests and deacons which we still have.

The Church, as well as being the Body of Christ, is a human society and has the same need for coherent leadership that any human group has. But the role of the bishop is not simply a political or administrative role but a deeply pastoral one. Bishops, priests and deacons have the responsibility for teaching and guiding the members of their churches in such a way that no one is lost. They are to continue, in every era and in every place, the kind of teaching, leadership and authority grounded in service which Jesus demonstrated in his ministry.

### Student Focus

The students may know the parish priest but may never have seen or met a bishop or a deacon. They will however, understand the need to have leadership within an organisation. They will be familiar with specific tasks and roles associated with positions, from their school experience of 'Head Student' or 'Sports Captain'. From these experiences they will be able to reflect upon the necessity for, and the difference between, the leadership roles in the Catholic Church.

## Teaching Point

Bishops and priests are to continue Jesus' leadership in the Church.

## Remembering Point

The Pope (Bishop of Rome), bishops and priests continue Jesus' leadership.

## Beginning

(10 minutes)

**Welcome the students** as usual and distribute the workbooks.

**Gather the students** on the floor or seated in a circle around the prayer focus. Invite them to open their workbook at page 75.

**Catechist:** Let us prepare ourselves to pray.

**All:** In the name of the Father ...

God, our Father,  
 you call all who believe in you to grow perfect in love by  
 following in the footsteps of Christ your Son.  
 May those whom you have chosen to serve you as  
 shepherds and deacons fill your Church with the spirit of  
 courage and love.  
 We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

(Adapted from the *Roman Missal: Masses for Priestly and Religious Vocations*)

**Tell the students:** Today we will look at some of the different roles of the ordained ministers in the Church. You might know some of them.

*Ordained* ministers are people who have been called to serve the people of God, the Church, in a particular way. Through the sacrament of Ordination they are welcomed into this special ministry to the people of God. They have been trained and are blessed by the bishop of the diocese and sent to serve, usually in a parish.

**Ask the students:**

- What is a ministry? (*A service undertaken for the members of the faith community – within our Church.*)
- What are some of the ministries in the Church? (*The students might recollect a lesson from Year 3 when they listed the ministries in the parish. If not, you might have to help the students to create the list. Alternately give them a list of possible ministries in the parish.*)

**Tell the students:** Through baptism all members of the Church can participate in the ministry of the Church. However, today we will look at those people who are *ordained ministers* and are called by God to continue Jesus' leadership in the Church today. These people are deacons, priests and bishops.

**Invite the students** to return to their seats and open the workbook at page 75.

Tell the students: In the 'Ministers to my parish' space, write the names of the parish priest, the Archbishop, regional bishop and the deacon (if there is a deacon appointed to the parish).

## PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: cloth, the Bible, a candle.
2. A3 sheets of paper, enough for one per group.
3. A large sheet of paper or a whiteboard.
4. Workbooks.

## PREPARATION

**Middle***(35 minutes)*

**Tell the students:** In a moment, we will move into groups of three. Each group will read the roles of the three ordained members of the Church – the bishop, the priest and the deacon – found in your workbook on pages 76–78. Your task is to compare and contrast the three roles and represent your findings on the Venn diagram on page 79.

**Invite the students** to get into groups of three.

**Tell the students:** You will need to read all the information first and then discuss as a group what information you will put into your Venn diagram. Work together discussing where the information belongs and then record it in your own workbook. You might like to use different colours for each person (bishop, priest, deacon).

(Allow approximately 15 minutes to complete the activity. Move around the groups encouraging their answers and keeping the groups on track.)

**Invite the students** to nominate one person to share their graphic organiser, the Venn Diagram.

**Tell the students:** The role of bishop is the last of the 'holy orders' or ordained roles that a person can receive.

**Ask the students:** How might we represent the leadership of these main people?

**Hand out** an A3 sheet of paper to each group. **Invite the students** to design a graphic which represents the leadership between the three groups. Ensure that they show how each group is related to each other, and are able to explain that relationship. (If you have more than 10 students, you might find this activity is more effective and easier to handle if the students form two groups.)

**Ask the students:**

- Why have you designed your graphic like this? *(Take all the answers from the students.)*
- Where might the 'ordinary' faithful people of the parishes fit into your diagram? *(Again, accept the students' answers.)*

**Tell the students:** What you have shown through this diagram is that there is a relationship between these three sets of people. They have a number of common focuses in their leadership role in the Church. We remember from what we have read that their leadership is not just for themselves. They are called to their ministry in service of the Church. We know every organisation needs leaders to organise the group and to undertake different tasks. The Church is the same. We have these three groups to help us on our journey towards Jesus. The priests, deacons and bishop within our diocese are there to guide and lead, to organise and to spiritually nourish each of us.

**Tell the students:** There are other 'bishops' of the Church who have particular roles in addition to the ones we have looked at. The most important one is the Bishop of Rome, the Pope. The pope is also called

'supreme pontiff', 'vicar of Christ' and 'successor of Peter'. Jesus is the head of the whole Church in heaven and earth. The pope is the Vicar, or representative, of Christ. He is the visible head of the Church on earth.

**Ask the students:** What tasks might the pope do that are extra to his role as bishop? (You might ask the students to think of the things Pope Francis has been doing. Create a list similar to the ones in Appendix 21, pages 133–135.)

**Record the tasks** on a large sheet visible to all the students and compare with the bishop's tasks. **Ask the students:**

- Is there anything that you need explained a little further?
- What did you find interesting?
- What surprised you? (Take all responses from the groups.)

## End

(5 minutes)

**Invite the students** to gather around the prayer focus with their workbooks opened at page 80.

**Catechist:** Let us pray together, remembering particularly the leaders of our Church. (Pause)

Let us pray for Father ..... (add the parish priest's name): may he be strengthened in his service of the people in the parish. Lord, hear us.

**Students:** Lord, hear our prayer

**Catechist:** Let us pray for Pope Francis, may the Holy Spirit guide and assist him in his decision-making and guidance of the Church. Lord, hear us.

**Students:** Lord, hear our prayer

**Catechist:** Let us pray for our Archbishop ..... (add the Archbishop's name): may the Holy Spirit inspire and strengthen him in his leadership and care for the people in his diocese. Lord, hear us.

**All:** Our Father ...

Dismiss the students as usual.

## PREPARATION

## Appendix 21 – Roles and Tasks of Ordained Ministers

### Fact Sheet – Bishop

The bishop is the person ordained to guide, teach, lead and serve the people of God in a particular geographical area. The bishop has been ordained into the position after having been through ordination as deacon and then as a priest.

The bishop is ordained to serve the people of God as prophet, priest and shepherd. The bishop functions as prophet when he speaks on behalf of God, as priest when he takes on the responsibility for how the sacraments and the liturgy are celebrated within his diocese, and as a shepherd through his care for the people in the diocese in which he serves. The bishop is acting as shepherd when he follows in the footsteps of Jesus in caring for the poor, the suffering and the marginalised members of the community. The bishop uses a 'crosier' that looks like a shepherd's crook, as the special symbol of his authority and service to the people.

A list of some of the roles and tasks of the bishop is found below.

#### ***Roles and Tasks***

A bishop:

- is responsible for a diocese
- ordains bishops, priests and deacons
- celebrates the Sacrament of Confirmation
- celebrates the sacrament of Anointing
- celebrates the sacrament of Baptism
- can officiate at the sacrament of Marriage
- celebrates the Sacrament of Penance
- celebrates the Mass
- celebrates the Rite of Christian Burial
- proclaims the Gospel
- preaches the homily
- gives an episcopal blessing
- blesses objects and people
- prays the Prayer of the Church (Liturgy of the Hours)
- is a spiritual leader of the faithful in his diocese.



*A shepherd's crook*

## Appendix 21 – Roles and Tasks of Ordained Ministers (continued)

### Fact Sheet – Priest

When a priest is ordained he is taking on the responsibility to serve the people of God. A priest shares this ministry with the bishop, seeking to fulfil his responsibility to God's people as Jesus would. The priest has responsibility for the people in his parish, delegated by the bishop to care for their needs. The priest serves the people by celebrating the sacraments and by preaching the word of God, Jesus' message. The priest is the leader of the community of the faithful, modelling the life and teachings of Jesus. The list below provides some of the tasks and the role of the priest.

#### **Roles and Tasks**

The priest:

- celebrates the Mass
- blesses people and objects
- celebrates the sacrament of Baptism
- celebrates the sacrament of Penance
- celebrates the sacrament of Anointing
- officiates at the sacrament of Marriage
- celebrates the Rite of Christian Burial
- represents the bishop in a local parish
- is responsible for a parish or assists in a parish
- can be a member of a religious congregation, order or community
- proclaims the gospel
- preaches the homily.
- prays the Prayer of the Church (*Liturgy of the Hours*).



## Appendix 21 – Roles and Tasks of Ordained Ministers (continued)

### Fact Sheet – Deacon

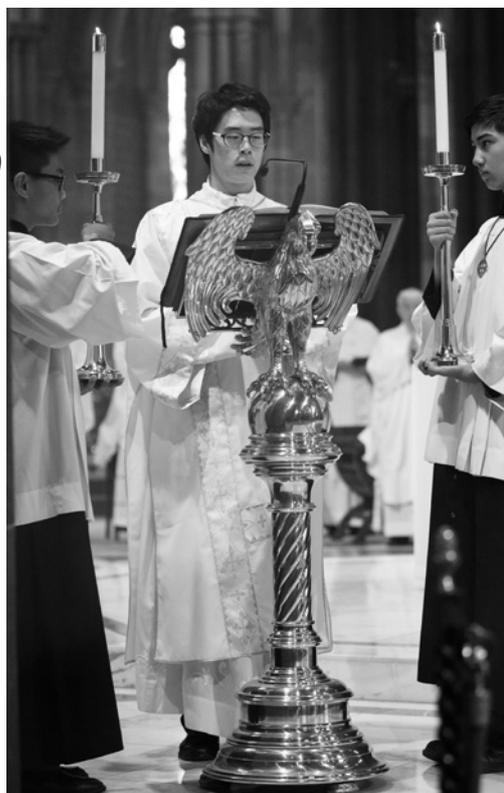
A deacon is ordained and welcomed into the service of the Church, by the bishop of the diocese in which he will serve. The deacon might have chosen to become a 'permanent' deacon in the diocese, serving the bishop. Alternately, the ordination as a deacon is also one of the stages on the journey to becoming a priest.

After being ordained, a deacon serves the Church through the ministry of the word, through worship, through pastoral care and charity. The role of the deacon is to support the bishop of the diocese in service of the people. Below is a list of some of the tasks undertaken by a deacon. The deacon cannot preside over the Eucharist or give absolution in the sacrament of Penance.

#### **Roles and Tasks**

The deacon:

- assists the bishop or priest
- serves through pastoral care and charity
- prays the Prayer of the Church (*Liturgy of the Hours*)
- celebrates the sacrament of Baptism
- officiates at the sacrament of Marriage
- celebrates the Rite of Christian Burial
- proclaims the Gospel
- can preach the homily
- distributes Holy Communion
- blesses objects and people
- can be a member of a religious congregation, order or community
- leads the community in prayer.



# Anointing of the Sick

## Background for Catechist

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

### *Reflection/Doctrinal Reference*

By the sacred anointing of the sick and the prayer of the priests the whole Church commends those who are ill to the suffering and glorified Lord, that he may raise them up and save them. And indeed she exhorts them to contribute to the good of the People of God by freely uniting themselves to the Passion and death of Christ (CCC, n. 1499).

Christ's compassion toward the sick and his many healings of every kind of infirmity are a resplendent sign that 'God has visited his people' (Lk 7:16) and that the Kingdom of God is close at hand. Jesus has the power not only to heal, but also to forgive sins; he has come to heal the whole man, soul and body; he is the physician the sick have need of. His compassion toward all who suffer goes so far that he identifies himself with them: 'I was sick and you visited me' (Mt 25:36). His preferential love for the sick has not ceased through the centuries to draw the very special attention of Christians toward all those who suffer in body and soul. It is the source of tireless efforts to comfort them (CCC, n. 1503).

No one who reads the gospels can fail to notice Jesus' care and compassion for the sick and suffering and how frequently the sick are singled out to be cured as a sign of the Kingdom of God inaugurated in the ministry of Christ. The Church, continuing the example of Jesus, has a special engagement with the sick and suffering; she sees them not only as people deserving of every kindness and compassion but as people who have a unique opportunity to be witnesses to the Kingdom by the way in which they carry the cross of their illness.

The sacrament of Anointing has this dual function of extending consolation and healing and also of strengthening those who are sick. The sacrament reminds them and those who are with them that we are all called to embrace our suffering so that we might always carry in us the life and death of our Lord Jesus.

### **Student Focus**

Many students will have experience of seriously ill relatives or friends and elderly grandparents. The desire to want these people who are ill to be 'made well' again might lead to questions about why God lets this happen to the people we love. Helping the students to understand that death and dying are very much part of our lives is an important part of

## PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: white cloth, very small bowl of scented oil (you only need about a tablespoon of oil), crucifix, candle, Bible.
2. Prayers from the Rite of Anointing of the Sick (see Appendix 22, page 140). Copy the prayers and paste each prayer on a separate card, enough for one for each student.
3. Workbooks.
4. Prayer response written on Whiteboard: 'God of love and compassion, hear our prayer'.

growth. It is important with these concerns uppermost in the students' minds that this sacrament is not presented as 'magic' or something that will cure all ailments. The students will need careful support and an attentive listening to their concerns when you are discussing these issues and exploring this sacrament.

### Teaching Point

The sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is a sign which communicates through the Church Christ's love and care for the sick.

### Remembering Point

Those who are sick can share in Christ's love through the sacrament of Anointing.

### Beginning

*(12 minutes)*

**Welcome the students** as usual.

**Gather the students** round the prayer focus and invite them to get ready for prayer by being still and quiet.

**Catechist:** Today we are going to consider how Jesus cared for the sick and how the Church continues his work today.

**All:** In the name of the Father ...

**Catechist:** Let us pray in the words Jesus gave us:

**All:** Our Father ...

**Invite the students** to return to their tables and **distribute the workbooks**.

**Tell the students** that the seven sacraments celebrate Jesus' life and work and that they mark particular stages of life. The sacrament of Anointing of the Sick marks those times when we struggle to follow Jesus because of grave illness, serious surgery or old age.

The sacrament of Anointing of the Sick celebrates Jesus' care for the sick. Invite the students to open their workbooks at page 81.

**Tell the students:** When Jesus called the disciples to follow him he initiated them into his way of living and teaching. Luke describes how the followers of John the Baptist went to Jesus and asked him if he was the one who was to come or should they wait for another.

**Invite a student** to read aloud Lk 7: 18–23 while everyone else follows.

The disciples of John reported all these things to him. So John summoned two of his disciples and sent them to the Lord to ask, 'Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?' When the men had come to him, they said, 'John the Baptist has sent us to you to ask, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?"' Jesus had just then cured many people of diseases, plagues, and evil spirits, and had given sight to many who were blind. And he answered them, 'Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk,

the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offence at me' (Luke 7: 18–23).

**Invite the students** to rule a line under the question the disciples asked Jesus.

**Ask the students:** What usually happens when we ask a question? *(We're usually given an answer.)*

**Tell the students:** Now look for Jesus' answer. *(Go and tell John what you have seen and heard ...)*

**Have the students** work in pairs to analyse Jesus' answer and record a list of signs that Jesus is 'the one who is to come' in their workbook in the space marked 'Jesus answers the disciples'. *(The blind receive their sight ...)*

**Invite a number** of students to tell you one of the things that John's disciples saw or heard Jesus doing.

## Middle

*(25 minutes)*

**Tell the students:** When the disciples had been with Jesus for some time, observing everything that Jesus said and did, Jesus sent them out to do what he did. Turn to page 82 in your workbook and follow as we listen to more examples of what the disciples did.

**Invite a second student** to read Mk 6: 6a–18 aloud while everyone follows.

Then [Jesus] went about among the villages teaching. He called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. He ordered them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts; but to wear sandals and not to put on two tunics. He said to them, 'Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave the place. If any place will not welcome you and they refuse to hear you, as you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them.' So they went out and proclaimed that all should repent. They cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them (Mk 6: 6a–18).

**Ask the students:**

- What did the disciples do? *(called people to repent, anointed with oil, cured the sick.)*

**Invite the students** to record their answers in the space provided in their workbooks titled 'The Disciples go out'.

**Tell the students** that today the Church celebrates the sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. The Church has written a variety of prayers to suit all sorts of people and situations.

**Distribute a copy** of two prayers to each pair of students.

## PREPARATION

## PREPARATION

**Invite the students** to read the prayers and to list the following in the space titled 'Praying for the Sick' on page 83 of the workbook:

- title of the prayer
- the title for God
- how the sick person is described
- what we ask for the sick person
- what words or phrases appeal to them? Why?

## End

---

*(15 minutes)*

**Invite the students** individually to write a prayer for someone who is sick on page 84. They can use the ideas in the prayers they have examined. Students record their prayer in the space marked 'Prayer for the Sick'. Walk around the class, helping and encouraging students as required.

**Invite two or three students** to read their prayers when the class gathers round the prayer focus.

**Gather the students** round the prayer focus with their workbooks and **invite them** to prepare for prayer.

**Catechist:** God of love and compassion, your Son, Jesus, cared for the sick. Today we offer our prayers for the sick.

*(Selected students read their prayers.)*

**All:** God of love and compassion, hear our prayer.

Take up the workbooks.

Dismiss the students as usual.

## Appendix 22 – Prayers for the Sick

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Photocopy these sheets and distribute two prayers to each pair of students.

### ***Prayer One for a Sick Person***

Father in heaven,  
through this holy anointing  
grant N. comfort in his/her suffering.  
When he/she is afraid, give him/her courage,  
when afflicted, give him/her patience,  
when dejected, afford him/her hope,  
and when alone, assure him/her of the support of your holy people.  
We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

### ***Prayer Two for a Sick Person***

Lord Jesus Christ, our Redeemer,  
by the grace of your Holy Spirit  
cure the weakness of your servant N.  
Heal his/her sickness and forgive his/her sins;  
expel all afflictions of mind and body;  
mercifully restore him/her to full health,  
and enable him/her to resume his/her former duties,  
for you are Lord for ever and ever. Amen.

### ***Prayer for a Person Extremely or Terminally Sick***

Lord Jesus Christ,  
you chose to share our human nature,  
to redeem all people, and to heal the sick.  
Look with compassion upon your servant N.,  
whom we have anointed in your name  
with this holy oil for the healing of his/her body and spirit.  
Support him/her with your power,  
comfort him/her with your protection,  
and give him/her the strength to fight against evil.  
Since you have given him/her  
a share in your own passion,  
help him/her to find hope in suffering,  
for you are Lord for ever and ever. Amen.

### ***Prayer for a Person before Surgery***

God of compassion,  
our human weakness lays claim to your strength.  
We pray that through the skills of surgeons and nurses  
your healing gifts may be granted to N.  
May your servant respond to your healing will  
and be reunited with us at your altar of praise.  
Grant this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## Appendix 22 – Prayers for the Sick (continued)

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### ***Prayer for a Very Old Person***

God of mercy,  
 look kindly on your servant who has grown weak  
 under the burden of years.  
 In this holy anointing  
 he/she asks for healing in body and soul.  
 Fill him/her with the strength of your Holy Spirit.  
 Keep him/her firm in faith  
 and serene in hope,  
 so that he/she may give us all an example of patience  
 and joyfully witness to the power of your love.  
 We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

### ***Prayer for a Child***

God, our Father,  
 we have anointed your child N.  
 with the oil of healing and peace.  
 Caress him/her, shelter him/her,  
 and keep him/her in your tender care.  
 We ask this in the name of Jesus, the Lord. Amen.

### ***Prayer for a Young Person***

God, our healer,  
 in this time of sickness  
 you have come to bless N. with your grace.  
 Restore him/her to health and strength,  
 make him/her joyful in spirit,  
 and ready to embrace your will.  
 Grant this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

# St Patrick's Cathedral

## Background For Catechist

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

### **Reflection/Doctrinal Reference**

Salvation comes from God alone; but because we receive the life of faith through the Church, she is our mother: 'We believe the Church as the mother of our new birth, and not in the Church as if she were the author of our salvation.' Because she is our mother, she is also our teacher in the faith (CCC, n. 169).

The Church who, as Mother, has borne the Christian sacramentally in her womb during his earthly pilgrimage, accompanies him at his journey's end, in order to surrender him 'into the Father's hands.' She offers to the Father, in Christ, the child of his grace, and she commits to the earth, in hope, the seed of the body that will rise in glory. This offering is fully celebrated in the Eucharistic sacrifice; the blessings before and after Mass are sacramentals (CCC, n. 1683).

All the Catholics of Melbourne belong to the Church of Melbourne, which is an Archdiocese within the wider Catholic Church. Dioceses are administrative areas within the Church. Dioceses are always led by a bishop. Large dioceses are called archdioceses and are led by an Archbishop. St Patrick's Cathedral contains the Archbishop's chair or cathedra which is a sign of his role as leader and chief teacher of the Church of Melbourne. Because there are so many people in the Melbourne Church it is divided up into parishes which also have churches attached to them. But while we might attend our local parish church for Mass each Sunday and pray and celebrate the sacraments there, we all still belong to the wider Church of Melbourne and St Patrick's Cathedral is rightly called the mother church of the Archdiocese of Melbourne.

The Church itself (not its buildings) is also often referred to as a mother because we receive our life as Christians through it. It is through the Church that we are born into the Christian faith at Baptism. Like a mother the Church cares for and instructs her sons and daughters. She feeds them at the Eucharist and through the other sacraments binds and unites them to Christ throughout their lives.

### **Student Focus**

Many students would not know where St Patrick's Cathedral is located. Some might know what a cathedral is, but may never have been inside St Patrick's. If you can actually take the students to the cathedral,

## PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: a green cloth, a candle and a Bible, a picture of St Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne (see Appendix 23b, page 146).
2. See Appendix 23a, page 145 for suggested word knowledge as a necessary pre-requisite for student understanding.
3. Pictures of St Patrick's Cathedral and its features (see Appendix 23b, page 146). Copy, and if possible, laminate these.
4. Flashcards of the following words: STRENGTH, LIGHT, WITNESS, TABLE, WORD, PEOPLE, (See Appendix 23c, page 152).
5. Fact Cards 1–6 (see Appendix 23e, page 154).
6. Workbooks.

this lesson could be conducted in the vicinity and adjusted accordingly. However, for most situations, a visit is not possible. Most students will understand the concept of 'head office' or the location of the main organising body of a sport such as the Australian Football League (AFL) located at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG).

## Teaching Point

St Patrick's Cathedral is the mother church of the Archdiocese of Melbourne.

## Remembering Point

St Patrick's Cathedral is the mother church of the Archdiocese of Melbourne.

## Beginning

*(10 minutes)*

**Welcome the students** as usual.

**Invite the students** to gather around the prayer focus and make the Sign of the Cross, reminding them that when we do this we are calling upon the Holy Trinity – Father, Son and Spirit – to be with us in this lesson. Pray the Our Father together.

**Show the students** a picture of St Patrick's Cathedral.

**Ask the students:**

- What is the name of this church? (*St Patrick's Cathedral*)
- Has you ever been there? (*If they answer 'yes' invite them to tell you something about it.*)

**Tell the students:** This church, St Patrick's Cathedral, is the 'mother' or first church of the region known as the Archdiocese of Melbourne. Today we're going to learn about what this cathedral building symbolises.

## Middle

*(30 minutes)*

Scatter the pictures of the Cathedral and the flashcards on the floor.

**Tell the students:** These pictures illustrate different aspects of St Patrick's Cathedral. I invite you try to match the words and pictures. (See Appendix 23d, page 153, for the answers. Help the students where necessary to match the images with the correct title on the flashcard.)

**Distribute the workbooks** and **direct the students** to turn to page 85.

**Form the students** into six groups and give each group one of the illustrated Fact Cards (see Appendix 23e on pages 154–156).

**Invite the students** to read the text and answer the questions, recording their answers in their workbooks in the spaces provided under the title: The Cathedral.

When the groups have finished the task, **invite one student** from each group to share the group's answers.

**Tell the students:** Each of these pictures is a sign of God's presence in our world. The *strong protecting* cathedral is a sign of God's strong and protecting love for us. The *golden light* of the cathedral is a sign of the *Holy Spirit living among us*. Jesus and the saints are witness to God and their images *show us the way to God*. The table or altar reminds us of the spiritual nourishment that the Eucharist offers us. The *word of God*, the Scriptures, is a sign of God's *truth*. All the *people* who gather around the Archbishop in the eucharistic celebration are signs of *God's saving love*.

## End

(10 minutes)

**Ask the students:** What have we learnt today? (Take answers that reflect the teaching point and remembering point: 'St Patrick's Cathedral is the "mother" or first church of the Archdiocese of Melbourne'.)

**Write** the Remembering Point on the board or a sheet of paper and invite the students to record the remembering point in their workbook on page 87 in the space titled: Something to Remember.

**Gather the students** around the prayer focus, or alternately allow the students to remain in their seats. **Ask them** to open their workbooks at page 87.

**Invite the students** to pray:

**Catechist:** Let us close our eyes and think about the people who built St Patrick's Cathedral and all those who have prayed there since the beginning. Let us call on the Holy Trinity to be with us as we make the Sign of the Cross.

**All:** In the name of the Father ...

**Catechist:** Let us pray:  
Bless us, your people, O God.

**Students:** May the strong walls of our cathedral always be a sign of your protecting love.

**Catechist:** May the golden light which fills it be a sign of your Holy Spirit living among us.

**Students:** May the witness of Christ and the saints show us the way to you.

**Catechist:** May the table around which we gather as your Church be a sign of the nourishment you give us.

**Students:** May the book of your word be a sign of your truth among us.

**Catechist:** And may all people who gather in that holy place be a sign of your saving love in the midst of our world.

We make this prayer through Christ, our Lord.

**All:** Amen.

Collect the workbooks and dismiss the students as usual.

## PREPARATION

## Appendix 23a – Word Knowledge

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### Word Knowledge

*Cathedral* comes from the Latin word *cathedra* meaning a chair. The cathedral is the place of the chair from which the bishop governs his diocese and presides at the liturgy.

*Archdiocese* comes from two Greek words: *archos* meaning chief and *dioikesis* meaning district. The *Archdiocese* of Melbourne, led by the Archbishop, is the chief or leading district of the Victorian province, which includes the dioceses of Ballarat, Sandhurst and Sale.

## Appendix 23b – St Patrick's Cathedral (continued)

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Copy and laminate if possible.



## Appendix 23b – St Patrick's Cathedral (continued)

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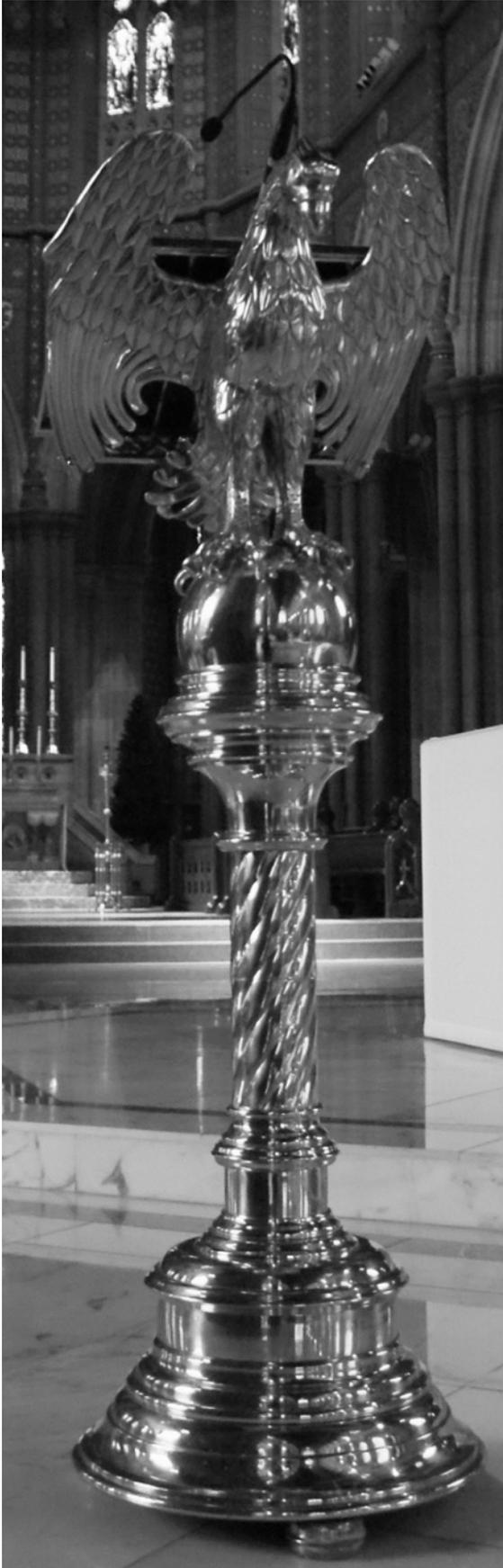
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## Appendix 23b – St Patrick's Cathedral (continued)

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Copy and laminate if possible.



## Appendix 23b – St Patrick's Cathedral (continued)

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Copy and laminate if possible.



## Appendix 23b – St Patrick's Cathedral (continued)

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Copy and laminate if possible.



## Appendix 23b – St Patrick's Cathedral (continued)

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Copy and laminate if possible.



**Appendix 23c – Flash Cards**

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Photocopy and enlarge these flash cards

STRENGTH

LIGHT

WITNESS

TABLE

WORD

PEOPLE

## Appendix 23d – Matching Activity Answers

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Below are the answers for the matching activity.

<b>STRENGTH</b>	Picture of the cathedral
<b>LIGHT</b>	Picture of the windows in the cathedral
<b>WITNESS</b>	Picture of St Ambrose
<b>TABLE</b>	Picture of the altar
<b>WORD</b>	Picture of the lectern
<b>PEOPLE</b>	Picture of people in the pews

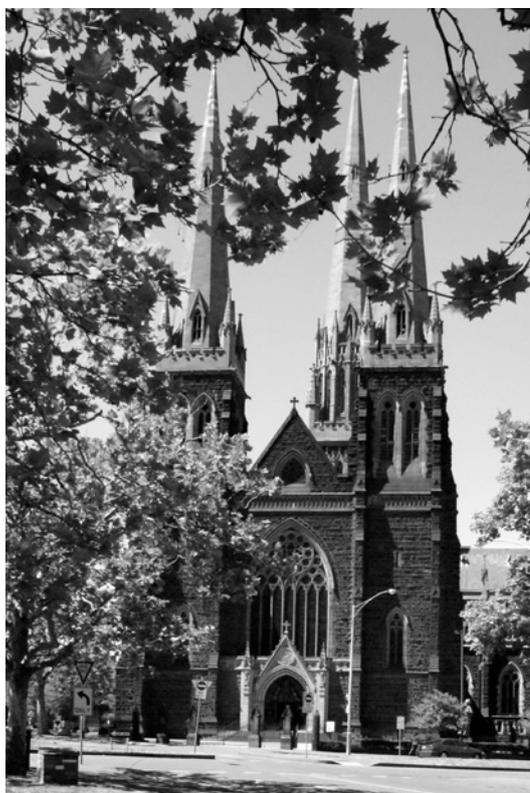
## Appendix 23e – Fact Cards

### 1

In 1858 Bishop James Goold announced plans to build a cathedral for the diocese of Australia Felix (as Victoria was then called). It is more than 100 metres long and 20 metres wide. It is big enough for about 2000 people to sit in the pews. The main spire with cross is over 100 metres high. The cathedral is a strong building, with very thick, strong walls. It is a strong, protecting building, and reflects God's strong protecting love for us.

#### **Reflect**

How does God's love protect you?



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### 2

Towards the end of his life Jesus promised the disciples that he would send the Holy Spirit to be their advocate or helper. At the first Pentecost the Holy Spirit descended on the disciples in the form of tongues of fire. When William Wardell designed St Patrick's Cathedral he ordered amber glass for all the windows (except for the stained glass ones). As the sun shines through these amber windows it fills the space with *golden light*. This light can symbolise the *Holy Spirit*.

#### **Reflect**

How is the Holy Spirit your helper or advocate?

How is the Holy Spirit's action in your life like a golden light?



## Appendix 23e – Fact Cards (continued)

### 3

There are many images of Jesus and the saints in the Cathedral. They are in the genres of painting, sculpture and stained glass. This is a painting of Saint Ambrose who was a bishop and died in 397. He was a faithful and staunch witness to God in times of great trial. He and all the saints are witnesses to God – they tell us about God and direct us or show us the way to God.

#### **Reflect**

How do you witness to God?

How do you show the way to God?



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### 4

Archbishop Frank Little, the sixth Archbishop of Melbourne, oversaw the restoration of St Patrick's Cathedral between 1977 and 1996; it was completed by Archbishop George Pell in 1997, the centenary of its consecration. As part of the restoration a new free-standing marble altar was placed in the extended sanctuary beneath the crossing. This altar or table represents the table of the Last Supper where Jesus gave us his body and blood in the form of bread and wine. The Archbishop gathers the people of Melbourne around this table to receive the nourishment of Jesus in the Eucharist. Thus the table of the Eucharist is a symbol of the nourishment that the Eucharist offers us.



#### **Reflect**

How does the Eucharist nourish me?

**Appendix 23e – Fact Cards (continued)**

**5**

William Wardell designed the eagle-shaped brass lectern based on the symbol for the gospel writer John. The lectern is the place from which we hear the word as revealed in the Scriptures and in the Archbishop's homily. The lectern bears the word which reveals God's truth to us.

**Reflect**

How does my life reveal God's truth to others?



**6**

In 1851 about 5,600 Catholic people were living in Melbourne. Twenty years later there were about 111,500 Catholics in Melbourne. Since St Patrick's Cathedral was consecrated in 1897 many thousands of people have gathered around the Archbishop to celebrate the Eucharist and to continue the mission of bringing God's *saving love* to all in our world.



**Reflect**

How do I continue the mission of bringing God's saving love to the people in my life?

# St Thérèse of Lisieux and St Thomas More

## Background for the Catechist

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

### *Reflection/Doctrinal Reference*

By canonising some of the faithful ... the Church recognises the power of the Spirit of holiness within her and sustains the hope of believers by proposing the saints to them as models and intercessors. 'The saints have always been the source and origin of renewal in the most difficult moments in the Church's history' (CL, nn. 16, 3) (CCC, n. 828).

The saints show us how to live like Jesus in the context of our own lives and circumstances. Each of us lives in a very different time and in a very different world than that of Jesus. Therefore it is both helpful and inspiring to see how Jesus' followers throughout history took him at his word and tried to live lives modelled on his.

Two popular but very different saints are St Thérèse of Lisieux and St Thomas More. Thérèse of Lisieux grew up in a comfortable middle-class home with her father and sisters in a small town in northern France in the late 19th century. She joined the Carmelite Convent when she was 15 years old. Thérèse knew she was not destined for greatness but decided to live like Jesus by doing even the smallest things as well as she could: Thérèse's 'little way'. Her smiles when things went wrong for her, her willingness to do the most menial jobs well, her kindness to others, her attention to her prayers, her gratitude for the small delights of life all added up to making her renowned, firstly among her Sisters in the convent, but eventually throughout the whole Church.

Thomas More lived through the difficult and troubled time of King Henry VIII. He was an important lawyer, the Lord Chancellor of England and King Henry's good friend. However, when Henry wanted to divorce his wife and remarry, and later when he split away from the Pope and established the Church in England, Thomas could not take the required oath. He tried all he could, gifted man as he was, not to directly provoke the king (just as Jesus did not deliberately provoke the authorities in his time) but he could not betray his conscience nor his faith and eventually was beheaded. He died 'the king's good servant but God's first'.

### **Student Focus**

Students of this age are familiar with heroes and heroines. They know about the value of having people who guide us or coach us to achieve our best in sport or in life. It is this idea of coach, following what the saint has done to show us how to live like Jesus, that will best assist the students to make connections with this lesson.

## Teaching Point

St Thérèse of Lisieux and St Thomas More show us how to live like Jesus.

## Remembering Point

St Thérèse of Lisieux and St Thomas More show us how to live like Jesus.

## Beginning

(10 minutes)

**Welcome the students** as usual.

**Invite the students** to gather at the prayer focus. **Distribute their workbooks** and have the students open them to page 88.

**Tell the students:** Today our lesson focuses on two saints of the Church, St Thérèse of Lisieux and St Thomas More.

**Catechist:** Let us prepare for prayer by being still and quiet. *(Pause)*

**All:** In the name of the Father ...

**Catechist:** We place the coloured cloth in our prayer space because we are celebrating God's love. *(Student 1 arranges the cloth.)*

**All:** We celebrate your love, O God.

**Catechist:** We place the Bible on the cloth remembering that it contains the word of God. *(Student 2 places the open Bible on the cloth.)*

**All:** Help us to remember your word, O God.

**Catechist:** We place the candle and light it, remembering that Jesus wants us to spread the light of God's word. *(Student 3 places the candle and lights it.)*

**All:** Help us to spread the light of your word, O God.

**Catechist:** We place images of St Thérèse of Lisieux and St Thomas More on the cloth because they lived as Jesus did. *(Students 4 and 5 place the images.)*

**All:** Help us to learn from St Thérèse of Lisieux and St Thomas More to live as Jesus did, O God.

**Catechist:** Hear our prayers, O God, and help us to be faithful to you. We make our prayer in the name of Jesus, your Son.

**All:** Amen.

**Ask the students** if they have heard of these two saints before. If any have, invite them to tell us what they know. If no one has or if they cannot remember, tell them that today we will learn more about these two saints.

## PREPARATION

1. Have these items ready for placing on the prayer focus: coloured cloth, the Bible, a candle, images of St Thomas More and St Thérèse of Lisieux (See Appendices 24a and 24b, page 161 and 163).
2. Workbooks.
3. Before the lesson begins, invite five students to 'build' the prayer focus as you introduce the above-mentioned elements in the prayer.
4. Concluding prayer on a large sheet of paper.

## PREPARATION

**Middle***(30 minutes)*

**Invite the students** to return to their places and to turn to the next page in their workbooks. **Choose two students** (other than those who 'built' the prayer focus) to read aloud the story of St Thérèse of Lisieux while the rest of the group follows in their workbooks. (The text is also in Appendix 24a.)

**Ask the students:** What did you wonder about St Thérèse as you read her story? *(Take all their responses and affirm them.)*

**Direct the students** to turn to the story of St Thomas More on page 90.

**Invite another two students** to read aloud the story of St Thomas More while the rest of the group follows in their workbooks. *(The text is also in Appendix 24b.)*

**Ask the students:** What did you wonder about St Thomas as you read his story? *(Take all their responses and affirm them.)*

**Divide the class** into two groups. Assign St Thérèse to one group and St Thomas to the other.

**Tell the students:** You can choose one of three activities to complete for the saint you have been allocated. The activities can be found on pages 91–93. Re-read the saint's story to try to understand how the saint lived like Jesus. Then write about a day in the saint's life or design a logo or create an acrostic that answers the question:

- How did St Thérèse or St Thomas live like Jesus?

If you finish early you can complete the other activities.

Walk around the class as the students complete their tasks, giving encouragement, and help where necessary.

**Ask two students** who worked on St Thérèse to share their work with the whole group. Then, **ask two students** who worked on St Thomas to share their work with the whole group.

**End***(5 minutes)*

**Tell the students** that the lives of St Thérèse Lisieux and St Thomas More show us how to live like Jesus. **Ask the students** to complete the sentence on page 93: 'I can live like Jesus by ...'

**Collect the workbooks** and **gather the students** around the prayer focus.

**Catechist:** Let us pray together:

**All:** O God, our Father, thank you for the people whose lives show us how to live like Jesus. Help us to follow their example. We make this prayer through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Dismiss the students as usual.

## Appendix 24a – St Thérèse of Lisieux

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### **St Thérèse of Lisieux (1873–1897)**

Thérèse Martin was born in 1873 in Alençon in the north of France, the youngest of five daughters. When Thérèse was four her mother died. The family moved to Lisieux and her sister Pauline became Thérèse's second mother. In 1882 when Thérèse was nine, Pauline left the family to become a Carmelite nun at the monastery in Lisieux. Thérèse was very sad. One day she was looking at a statue of Mary and she suddenly realised that Mary was her spiritual mother, who would never leave her.

When Thérèse was 13, her sister Marie entered the Carmelite monastery at Lisieux. There were then only Léonie, Céline and Thérèse at home with their father. When she was 14, Thérèse decided she too wanted to be a Carmelite nun. When she was 15 she entered the Carmelite monastery at Lisieux where she was welcomed by her two sisters.

At first Thérèse was a novice (beginner). There were lots of strict rules, times to pray, times to work, and times to eat and relax. The most difficult was the rule of enclosure, which meant she was not able to leave the monastery, even to visit her father when he became very ill. Yet, Thérèse was very happy. In 1890, when she was 17, her time as a novice was over and Thérèse professed her vows, giving her whole life to God.

Thérèse always imagined herself as a little child in God's loving arms. She trusted God's love totally and wanted to show her love for God by loving others as she loved God. She decided to do lots of little things for God because she was convinced that she could never do big things. She called it her 'little way'. It included:

- showing friendship to those who annoyed her
- doing the jobs nobody else wanted to do
- helping those who never said thank you
- keeping cheerful even when she was sick
- sharing her time and ideas with everyone.

She decided that she would be love for all people. She prayed especially for missionaries all over the world, including those working here in Australia.

Thérèse's sister, Pauline, was the prioress (in charge) of the monastery. She asked Thérèse to write the story of her life. Thérèse called it *Story of a Soul*. That is how we know so much about her. The next year (1896) Thérèse was given the important job of looking after the novices, teaching them how to live as nuns.

During that same year she became very ill. Not being able to pray as she had before, she gave all the pain to God so God could turn it into prayer. She did everything as an act of love. This was her Little Way of praying for missionaries, priests, brothers and sisters, who were working in other parts of the world. She died on 30 September 1897 when she was only 24, saying, 'My God, I love you'.

On 17 May 1925 Pope Pius XI declared her a saint and proclaimed her a universal patron of the missions. We now celebrate St Thérèse of Lisieux on 1 October.

**Appendix 24a – St Thérèse of Lisieux (continued)**

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## Appendix 24b – St Thomas More

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### **St Thomas More (1478–1535)**

In 1478 Thomas More was born in London, England. His family was well off and he was very well-educated and studied at Oxford University. Obeying his father's wishes, Thomas left Oxford and studied law in London. In 1502 he was called to the bar.

As a young man, Thomas considered becoming a monk and often joined the monks as they prayed. However, he decided to be a layman and when he was 27 he married Jane Colt. Together they had four children, Margaret, Elizabeth, Cicely and John. They had been married for only six years when Jane died. Thomas then married Alice Middleton, a widow, but they did not have any children together. He was a loving father who made sure that all his children learnt to read and write and were educated in Latin and Greek. At this time, education was a privilege and usually only boys of rich families were educated. His daughter, Margaret, proved to be the most scholarly of his children. Thomas wrote a letter to his family whenever he was away and encouraged them to write to him.

In 1504 Thomas was elected to Parliament. He was appointed undersheriff of the City of London in 1510 and four years later he was appointed Privy Councillor. In 1516 Thomas wrote a book called *Utopia*, which became famous, and important people began to take notice of him. King Henry VIII appointed him to a number of important positions and missions. He was secretary to the king and also his personal adviser. In 1521 Thomas was knighted and became known as Sir Thomas More. In that same year he was made the under-treasurer of the Exchequer (Treasury). In 1523 Thomas was elected the Speaker of the House of Commons.

About this time, Martin Luther had begun his revolt against the Catholic Church and wrote a number of works promoting his position. In 1521 King Henry VIII, with Thomas' assistance, published a response criticising Luther. Later, Thomas wrote a number of articles and books defending the Catholic Church and attacking the position of the reformers. Subsequently, Thomas came to believe that the Reformation was dangerous, not only to the Catholic faith, but to society in general.

In 1529 Henry VIII appointed Thomas More the Lord Chancellor. King Henry wanted to annul his marriage to Catherine so that he could marry Anne Boleyn. When the Pope would not grant an annulment, Henry refused to recognise the Pope's authority. Thomas More found he could not be loyal to the King and still be faithful to the Catholic Church. Therefore Thomas refused to take the Oath of Supremacy acknowledging Henry as superior to the Pope. This led him to resign from the Chancellorship. When he refused to give allegiance to the Act of Succession, King Henry imprisoned Thomas in the Tower of London. In 1535 Thomas was tried and found guilty of treason. On the scaffold he said that he was 'the king's good servant, but God's first'. He was beheaded on 6 July 1535.

In 1935 Pope Pius XI declared Thomas More to be a saint. We now celebrate St Thomas More on 22 June.

**Appendix 24b – St Thomas More (continued)**

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# The Holy Spirit

## Background for the Catechist

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

### Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

[The Holy Spirit] gives us a special strength ... to spread and defend the faith by word and action as true witnesses of Christ, to confess the name of Christ boldly, and never to be ashamed of the Cross (CCC, n. 1303).

'If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit' (Gal 5: 25). In this assent to the Holy Spirit the Father gives us strength. 'No testing has overtaken you that is not common to [all]. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your strength, but with the temptation will also provide the way of escape, so that you may be able to endure it' (1Cor 10: 13) (CCC, n. 2848).

Sometimes when we hear accounts of the saints, or hear stories of heroic faith and service to God in our own time or, occasionally even in reflecting on our own lives, we can think: 'Where did they (or I) get the strength to do that?' The answer is of course through the power and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, who is at the base of every unselfish action for others, every service of God, every prayer, every act of resistance of evil that we make. The Holy Spirit is not some far-off entity that needs to be especially invoked before we can act, but the Spirit of God living at the heart of our hearts, who inspires our prayer, our desire for good, our willingness to forgive, our work for others and so on. What we must do is train ourselves to respond to the Holy Spirit, to become more and more attuned to the Holy Spirit within us, so that we are strengthened to make good and faithful decisions not only in key moments but from day to day. In this way, in all the circumstances of life, we can not only resist temptation but 'spread and defend the faith by word and action as true witnesses of Christ'.

## Student Focus

Students are aware at this stage of their lives that they cannot always achieve things on their own and often need help or strength from another source. This knowledge can be extended to come to an understanding that the power and inspiration of the Holy Spirit is at the base of many unselfish acts carried out by people.

## Teaching Point

The Holy Spirit helps deepen our faith.

## Remembering Point

The Holy Spirit helps deepen our faith.

## PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: a red or white cloth to put on table or on the floor, a red candle, the Bible and cut-out flames.
2. Enough cut-out flames for one per student (Appendix 25, page 168).
3. A very large sheet of card or paper with the words: 'The Holy Spirit helps to deepen our faith' written across the top.
4. Blu-Tack.
5. Workbooks.

## Beginning

(5 minutes)

**Welcome the students** as usual. **Gather them around** you on the floor or on chairs in a circle around your prayer focus. (Have a red or white cloth on the floor or on a table in the centre. Place a red candle on the cloth with a Bible and cut-out flames – enough for one per student).

**Distribute the workbooks** and invite the students to turn to page 94.

**Invite the students** to pray:

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

**All:** In the name of the Father ...

**Catechist:** We received the Holy Spirit at baptism that we might always have someone to help us on our journey of faith.

May we always call upon the Spirit in times of doubt, believing that the Spirit will help us deepen our faith.

Let us pray:

**Student 1:** Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful

**All:** and kindle in them the power of your love.

**Student 2:** Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created

**All:** and you will renew the face of the earth.

Hand out a flame to each student and invite them to hold it in their hands.

## Middle

(30 minutes)

**Ask the students:** What do you think of when you see a flame? (Cooking food, bushfires in summer time, destruction of buildings, warming our homes etc. Explore the possibilities.)

**Tell the students:** When we look at the flame in our hands today we are reminded that it symbolises more for us and our faith. We are reminded that a flame can destroy as well as help. A flame can run through a field very quickly, burning everything in its path. We know that fire is passed on from one thing to another only when the other item can accept the flame, or is *flammable* – *able to be burnt*.

We use the flame to represent or symbolise the Holy Spirit and when we do this we make connections with what we know a flame – or fire – can do.

Therefore we can think of the Holy Spirit as powerful, as moving through groups very quickly – often beyond our control. The Holy Spirit can be passed on from one person to another most effectively when the other person is able or ready to receive the Spirit. We often say that the person is 'open' to the Spirit in their lives.

At our baptism we were open to the Spirit. If we were baptised as a baby, our parents welcomed the Spirit into our lives. As a result we are able to draw on the power of the Spirit to help us in our lives and help us with our faith.

**Invite the students** to go to their tables.

**Tell the students:** Let's look at how the Holy Spirit can help us. Jesus told us a few things about the Holy Spirit. We find this in the Gospel of John. Open your workbooks at page 94 and locate the passage from Gospel of John, chapter 14, verses 25 and 26. *(Read it to the students)*

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 (Jn 14: 25–26).

**Ask the students:**

- According to Jesus, how will the Holy Spirit help us? *(By teaching us everything we need to know and reminding us of what Jesus said.)*
- How might this help deepen our faith? *(Don't wait too long on this question. If students are unable to give you an answer, then provide the thoughts below.)*

**Tell the students:** The Holy Spirit helps to deepen our faith by helping us understand the message of Jesus. When we forget what Jesus said and call upon the Holy Spirit for help, our understanding and faith are often strengthened. When we trust and believe in the message of Jesus we are strengthening our faith with the help of the Holy Spirit.

**Tell the students:** Think about the times you have helped others when you didn't have to. Think about the times when you've said sorry for doing something that you knew to be hurtful. Think about the times you have been kind – in the playground, the classroom or at home. *(Remind the students that all of these times are moments when the Holy Spirit is working in them helping them to remember what Jesus said and did. It is at these times that our faith is deepened.)*

**Tell the students:** Pair up with the person beside you and talk about your experience – making sure you take turns.

**Invite the students** to write in their workbook on page 95, in the space titled 'The Holy Spirit helps me each day', one of their examples.

*Blu-Tack the large sheet of card or paper headed with 'The Holy Spirit helps to deepen our faith' to the whiteboard or another suitable place.*

**Invite the students** to take up the flame shape again and write or draw one of the moments they shared on one side.

When they are finished, **gather the students** round the large sheet. invite the students to share with everyone what they have written or drawn and then place their flame on the large sheet.

## PREPARATION

## PREPARATION

**End***(10 minutes)*

Revisit the main teaching of the lesson.

**Ask the students:** How does the Holy Spirit help to deepen our faith?  
*(By helping us remember the words and actions of Jesus and by helping us to live Jesus' message as best as possible.)*

**Tell the students:** In preparation for next week I invite you to spend some time being aware of acting in the way Jesus would want you to act.

In the next few minutes of silence I want you to think about and decide on at least one thing you can do during the week. It might be to help out at home, it might be to pray every night to the Holy Spirit for help.

When you have thought and decided, write your decision in the space titled, 'This week I will ...' in your workbook on page 95.

Invite the students to gather around the prayer focus.

**Catechist:** Let us pray today, remembering that the Holy Spirit is with us each day. Let us listen now to the words of Jesus from the Gospel of John.

**Catechist:** 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 (Jn 14: 25–26).

**Catechist:** The word of the Lord.

**All:** Thanks be to God.

**Catechist:** Our response to the prayers is: Be with us, Holy Spirit.

**All:** Be with us, Holy Spirit.

**Catechist:** That we will do our best to carry out our task this week.

**All:** Be with us, Holy Spirit.

**Catechist:** That the Holy Spirit will always be there to strengthen our faith.

**All:** Be with us, Holy Spirit.

**Catechist:** We make this prayer through your name, Jesus, the Lord.

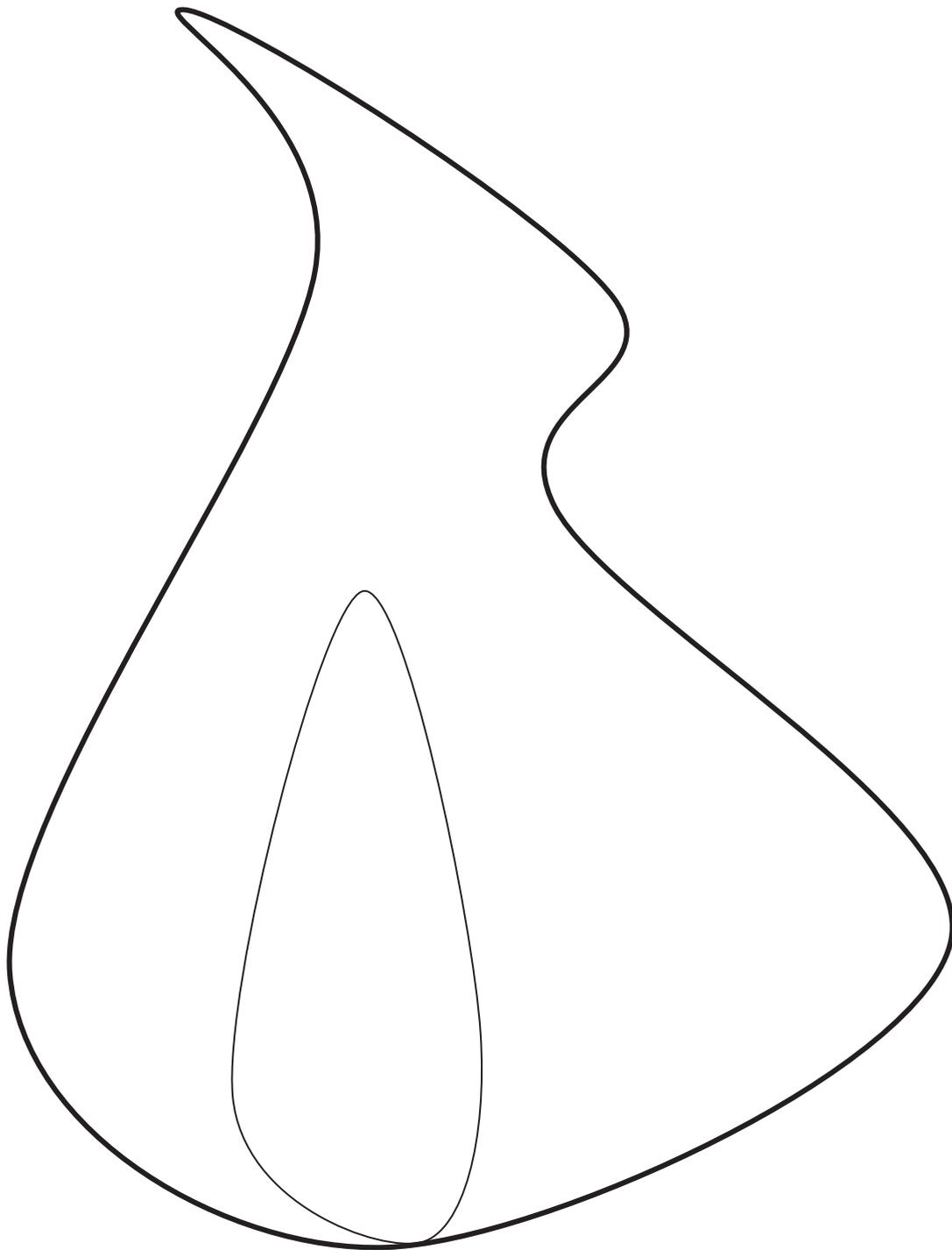
**All:** Amen.

Dismiss the students as usual, reminding them to continue their task in the coming week.

## Appendix 25 – Holy Spirit Flame

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Photocopy the image and cut out enough for one per student.  
You might consider printing on coloured paper.



# The Gift of the Spirit in Mission

## Background for the Catechist

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

### Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

The Holy Spirit is the protagonist, 'the principal agent of the whole of the Church's mission' (RMiss, n.21). It is he who leads the Church on her missionary paths. 'This mission continues and, in the course of history, unfolds the mission of Christ, who was sent to evangelise the poor; so the Church, urged on by the Spirit of Christ, must walk the road Christ himself walked, a way of poverty and obedience, of service and self-sacrifice even to death, a death from which he emerged victorious by his resurrection' (AG, n.5) (CCC, n. 852).

The Church's mission is not an addition to that of Christ and the Holy Spirit, but is its sacrament: in her whole being and in all her members, the Church is sent to announce, bear witness, make present, and spread the mystery of the communion of the Holy Trinity (CCC, n. 738).

The Holy Spirit is not at work simply in the individual lives of people but also in their lives together as members of the Church, whose mission is to proclaim Christ to the world, starting from this moment and in the very place and among the very people where we find ourselves. For us catechists, the mission of Jesus presents itself in the young ones we are given to instruct. The Holy Spirit inspires the desire to encounter these young people, to get to know them and their questions, to share our own experiences of faith and service in following Christ and to invite them to share in his mission too. This is not an easy task and, as the Catechism suggests, to walk the road that Christ himself walked is to walk 'a way of poverty and obedience, of service and self-sacrifice'. While this kind of approach to living life is not undemanding, it is ultimately tremendously rewarding and leads to life just as Jesus' life of self-giving, even to death, led to life.

### Student Focus

The students will have been exposed to people in Australia and around the world doing volunteer work or others who work with people who have been affected by natural disasters. Through Project Compassion they have heard stories of people continuing their mission of helping others less fortunate than themselves.

### Teaching Point

The Holy Spirit enables the people of God to continue Jesus' mission.

### Remembering Point

The Holy Spirit enables the people of God to continue Jesus' mission.

## Beginning

(10 minutes)

**Welcome the students** as usual.

**Gather the students** around the prayer focus and divide them into two groups.

**Hand out the workbooks** and **direct the students** to open them at the prayer on page 96.

**Tell the students:** For our prayer today we will pray the psalm on alternate sides, with those on my left reading the first paragraph and those on my right reading the second paragraph, continuing in this vein for the whole prayer.

**Invite one student** to light the candle.

**Catechist:** As we light this candle we are reminded that Christ is present with us always.

**All:** In the name of the Father ...

**Catechist:** As we gather today to understand more about the love of God, we pray in thanksgiving and praise that in Jesus we have the example to follow, and the gift of the Holy Spirit to strengthen us on our mission.

**Ps 138: 1–6, 8**

**Left side:** I give thanks, O Lord, with my whole heart; before the gods I sing your praise; I bow down toward your holy temple and give thanks to your name for your steadfast love and your faithfulness; for you have exalted your name and your word above everything. On the day I called, you answered me, you increased my strength of soul.

**Right side:** All the kings of the earth shall praise you, O Lord, for they have heard the words of your mouth. They shall sing of the ways of the Lord, for great is the glory of the Lord.

**Left side:** The Lord will fulfil his purpose for me; your steadfast love, O Lord, endures forever.

**Right side:** 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.

**All:** Amen.

**Tell the students:** You might remember last week's lesson where we talked about how the Holy Spirit helps us deepen our faith. Today we are going to look at how the Holy Spirit helps us continue the mission of Jesus in our lives and in the lives of others.

## Middle

(30 minutes)

**Tell the students:** The Holy Spirit was sent by Jesus at Pentecost and helped his disciples spread the word far and wide. There are accounts of how they did this in the book of the New Testament called the Acts of the Apostles, and you might remember a lesson earlier that looked at the spread of the Good News.

## PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: a cloth, a candle, the Bible.
2. Workbooks.
3. If you have access to a computer and data projector show the students some of the various websites that advertise the work done by the volunteers, e.g. Caritas, St Vincent de Paul. Alternately, make a display of pictures of people helping others in various situations. This will help those who are visual learners.
4. A sheet of coloured card for each student.
5. A large sheet of coloured paper with 'The Holy Spirit enables the people of God to continue Jesus' mission', written at the top. Keep this sheet to revisit in lesson 29.

## PREPARATION

Baptised members of the Church are also called to carry on Jesus' mission. You might recall the first lesson this year which looked at the special mission from God that all the baptised receive. What is important is how they live this mission. They are not alone in this task. Just like the disciples of Jesus, they too have the Holy Spirit to help us fulfil this task.

**Tell the students:** Turn to page 97 in your workbook and read the accounts of *Pentecost* (Acts 2: 1–4) and *Life among the Believers* (Acts 2: 43–47)

**PENTECOST**

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability (Acts 2: 1–4).

**LIFE AMONG THE BELIEVERS**

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 goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved (Acts 2: 43–47).

**Invite the students** to answer the following question in the space titled 'The Holy Spirit after Pentecost'.

- How was the early Church influenced by the Holy Spirit after Pentecost?

**Divide the group** into threes and **invite the students** to share their response to this question. **Encourage the students** to add any other points that they become aware of during their sharing time.

**Select a student from each group** to share their answer. **Thank the students** for their insightful comments and thoughts.

**Invite the students** to share with you what they did last week at home to deepen their faith. (Allow them to speak freely but do not press those who do not wish to speak.)

**Tell the students:** Now we are going to take this one step further.

Point to the display of pictures from the various aid and Catholic social service groups on display for the students to see, or show the various websites on the data projector.

**Ask the students:**

- What might be happening in these pictures, and what else do we know about these organisations and how they help others?
- What sorts of actions do you think we can do as a class or individually?

- How might we show that the mission of Jesus is being carried out by his people? *(Let the students come up with their own ideas but if they are having difficulty, suggest collecting tins of food or clothing and blankets for the St Vincent de Paul Society or for a local refugee centre. If there is a crisis at the time of the lesson, let them come up with a way that they could be of help. If there is an aged care centre within walking distance, you might consider (if the students and parents agree) organising a visit to the elderly people in the centre.)*

**Organise the students** into groups of three and **invite them** to discuss and then write down in their workbooks, in the space provided on page 98, what the group thinks is an appropriate task they could perform in the next three weeks that responds to the Holy Spirit active in their lives.

In the large group, **invite representatives** from each group to share what they decided.

**Ask the students:** In what ways might you make an accurate record of what you have each achieved? *(Students might suggest that they take photographs of what they achieved. The students might bring with them any communications they received from the groups they helped. Remind the students that they are not doing these actions to receive thanks but to assist the recipients and to fulfil their own baptism promises.)*

**Tell the students:** When you have each completed the agreed task, write a reflection on what completing the task meant to you and how your action was continuing the mission of the Church with the help of the Holy Spirit.

**Hand out** a piece of coloured card for each student to record their reflection.

**Tell the students:** In three weeks' time when you have completed your task, bring your reflection and photographs or other items to class and we will share with each other.

## End

*(5 minutes)*

Invite the students to gather around the prayer focus with their workbooks opened to the prayer on page 98.

**Catechist:** Let us now pray together and ask the Holy Spirit to help us fulfil the task that we have set ourselves.

**All** In the name of the Father ...

**All:** Spirit of right judgment and courage, guide us and make us firm in our baptismal decision to follow Jesus' way of love and to carry on his mission in the world. Spirit of knowledge, help us to see the lasting value of justice and mercy in our everyday contact with one another. Spirit of God, spark our faith, hope and love into new action each day.

**All:** Amen.

**Collect the workbooks** and **remind the students** about their task for the coming weeks.

Dismiss the students as usual.

## PREPARATION

# Love One Another

## Background for the Catechist

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

### **Reflection/Doctrinal Reference**

Jesus says: 'I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing' (Jn 15: 5). When we believe in Jesus Christ, partake of his mysteries, and keep his commandments, the Saviour himself comes to love, in us, his Father and his brethren, our Father and our brethren. His person becomes, through the Spirit, the living and interior rule of our activity. 'This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you' (Jn 15: 12) (CCC, n. 2074).

The friend of Jesus wants to live life as much as possible in the way that Jesus himself did. In one way, this is a tall order because Jesus possessed the unique ability to know the hearts and minds of those he encountered and to know exactly what it was they most needed: consolation, encouragement, reproof, healing. But through Baptism and Eucharist we share Jesus' life – he compared us to the branches of the vine which is himself – so we too can, and must, live our lives modelled on his. While it is not so easy for us to know how to respond to others as Jesus did, it is an absolute requirement that we try.

So, as much as possible, Christians ought to approach others recognising them first of all as fellow sons and daughters of God, intrinsically deserving respect and love and secondly, remembering how Jesus approached others without being judgmental but with understanding and with compassion. Jesus went to his death rather than compromise on the loving way he lived his life. Most of us will not be called upon to love to the point of death but Jesus' model of self-giving love is the benchmark for Christians.

### **Student Focus**

Year Five students will most likely have completed previous lessons that look at love of neighbour and love of others. Even if they haven't, most will be familiar with how they are expected to respond to others, how helping and caring for others is seen as a part of the Australian culture. Helping others is seen as an important part of friendship and will be a familiar concept for students. There might be a challenge to understanding how all the baptised are called to extend this friendship to all people, regardless of race, nationality or religion.

## Teaching Point

Jesus asks us to love one another as he has loved us.

## Remembering Point

Jesus asks us to love one another as he has loved us.

## Beginning

(5 minutes)

**Welcome the students** as usual.

**Remind the students** about their decision from last week. If they decided to collect food, **invite them** to place it in the box you have prepared.

**Gather the students** around the prayer focus.

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

**All:** In the name of the Father ...

**Catechist:** Join me as I sing the hymn, 'A New Commandment'. I will play it twice so you might like to join me during the second time.

**All:** A new commandment I give unto you that you love one another as I have loved you. That you love one another as I have loved you.

By this shall all know that you are my disciples, if you have love one for another.

**All:** In the name of the Father ...

If you prefer not to sing, you can invite the students to say the words along with you.

## Middle

(35 minutes)

**Invite the students** to go to their tables and **hand out** the workbooks.

**Tell the students:** The story from the New Testament that we will be looking at today is from the Gospel of John. You have heard this passage before. This passage comes after Jesus has had a meal with his disciples and he has washed their feet. They were a little confused as to why Jesus was washing their feet and so Jesus responded with this comment. Follow the passage in your workbooks on page 99.

**Read John 13: 33–35:**

Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, 'Where I am going, you cannot come. I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.'

## PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: A cloth, a candle and a Bible.
2. If some students decided last week to collect food to give to St Vincent de Paul or similar organisation, you might need to have available a collection box in which students can place their items.
3. A CD of the hymn, 'A New Commandment', which you can use to help you sing with the students in the opening prayer.
4. Have the words of the hymn, 'A New Commandment', displayed in a place where it can be clearly read.
5. See Appendix 27 on page 177 for an example of the combined drawings of the Church in the World.
6. A large sheet of paper to build up the drawing of the Church in the World.
7. Sheets of A4 paper for writing drafts.

## PREPARATION

**Ask the students:**

- What do you think Jesus is telling the disciples? (*Encourage the students to answer what they think, not what they think you want. Take their answers and affirm them. You might elaborate on their answers, or ask further clarifying questions, but do not negate what they are offering.*)
- What do you think Jesus is telling us? (*Take all the answers, affirming the students.*)

**Tell the students:** Yes, this is a very important passage of Scripture. We can learn a lot from this. It will mean different things for different people, so we can learn from how other people understand this passage.

What I want you to do now is to work with the person beside you and rewrite this passage in more detail as if Jesus was speaking to you today. You need to be very specific and clearly say what 'loving one another' really means for you, today. Write the text as if you are trying to make it clear for someone to understand what Jesus wants. Then each of you can put your rewritten text into the box marked 'Jesus' New Commandment' in your workbook on page 100.

**Tell the students:** You might remember that last week we looked at how we can continue the mission of Jesus just as the disciples did.

This week we are going to look at how we can love those around us in the playground or in the classroom, or even in the world, as Jesus told us. This can sometimes be difficult when someone is teasing us or talking about us behind our backs. We often meet people who come from different cultural backgrounds to ours and sometimes we see people making fun of them.

**Invite the students** to tell you how they would deal with a situation like this at school if it was happening to them or they saw it happening to their classmates. (*Let the students talk freely and congratulate them on their suggestions.*)

**Draw a simple outline** of a church (see Appendix 27, page 177) on the whiteboard or a large sheet of paper.

**Ask the students:**

- What do we do at church? (*Pray, read the gospels, attend Mass ...*)
- Who is present at church? (*God, Christians, my family, etc.*) (*Write the responses in the church outline.*)

**Draw a circle** around the church. (See Appendix 27, page 177).

**Tell the students:** This circle represents the world, all the people and places.

**Ask the students:**

- Name some problems that affect people or communities in the world.' (*Poverty, wars, sickness, ...*).
- What do you think the image of the church inside the circle might mean? (*Accept the various answers that the students offer.*)

**Write the responses** to these questions in the area inside the circle but outside the church.

**Tell the students:** One thing that we can tell from this image (*point to the picture of the church inside the circle*) is that the church exists inside the world. This means that we who are members of the church are fully part of the world.

Finally, **draw a heart** that encompasses both the Church and world. See Appendix 27, page 177.

**Ask the students:** What do you think the heart represents? (*Accept all the answers.*)

After a number of responses, **tell the students:** The heart represents two things. First is the great love that God has for the world and for all the people in it. Second, the heart reminds us that as disciples, we are called to imitate Christ's love by extending his love to all. The Church exists within the world, and so we are concerned about all the problems that God's children all over the world have to deal with. As disciples of Christ, we are called to love God, and we are also called to love our neighbor, who is both near us and far away.

**Invite the students** to think about how they might be the Church to others, how they might imitate God's love to others in the little ways, each day.

**Tell the students:** Now I would like you to turn to page 100 in the workbook and complete the section titled, 'Living the love of Jesus', by writing how you might be the Church to others.

**Invite one or two students** to share their writing with the whole group.

## End

*(5 minutes)*

**Invite the students** to gather around the prayer focus with their workbooks open at the prayer (page 100).

**Catechist:** Let us pray together.

**All:** In the name of the Father ...

**All:** Loving Father, we thank you for calling us to be disciples of your Son, Jesus Christ. Spirit that guides us, help us to be disciples who put love into action. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

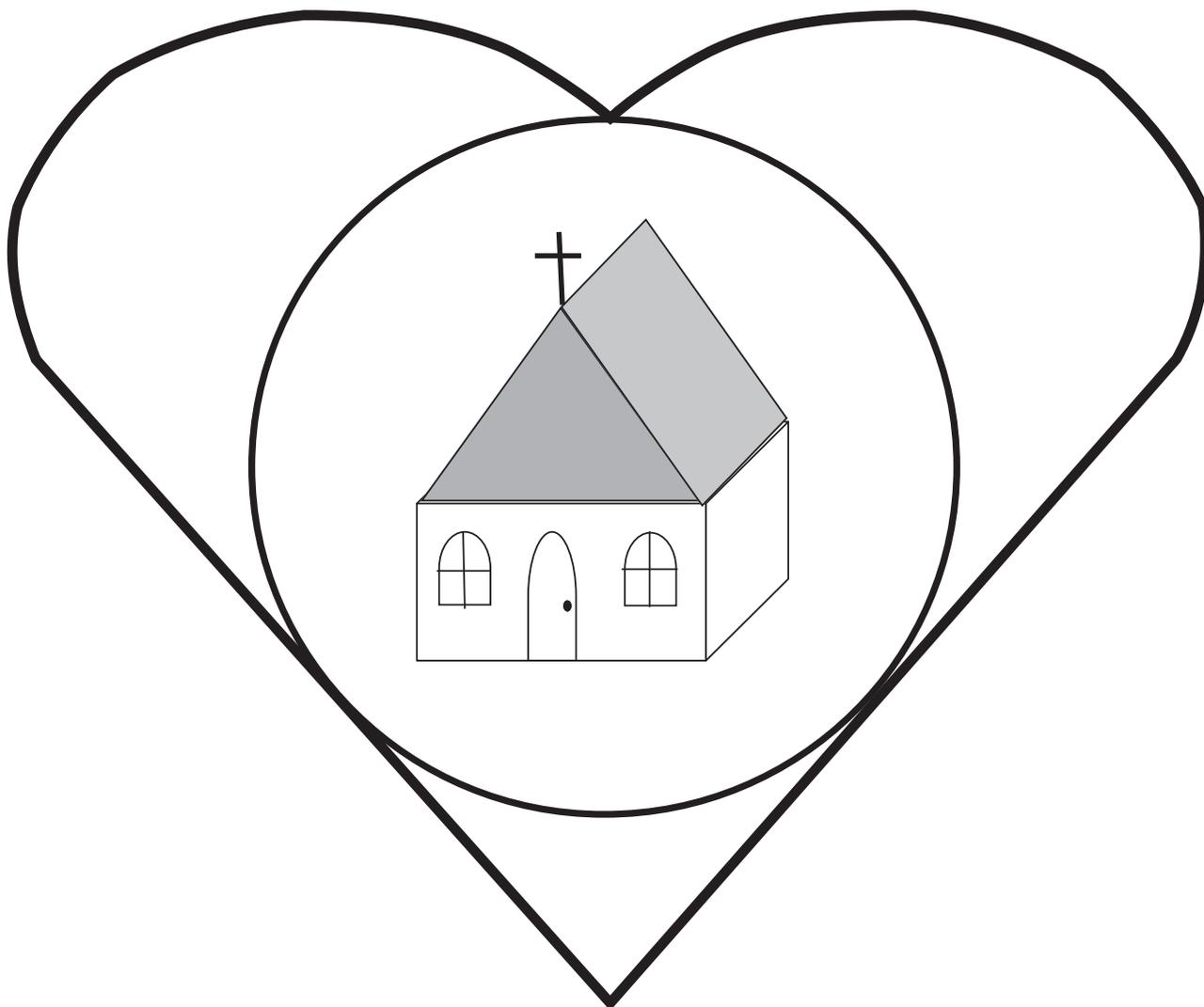
Collect the workbooks and dismiss the students as usual.

## PREPARATION

## Appendix 27 – The Church in the World

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During the lesson, draw each of these elements, building up the image:  
First the church, then the circle, then the heart.



# The Church is the Body of Christ

## Background for the Catechist

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

### Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

The comparison of the Church with the body casts light on the intimate bond between Christ and his Church. Not only is she gathered around him; she is united in him, in his body. Three aspects of the Church as the Body of Christ are to be more specifically noted: the unity of all her members with each other as a result of their union with Christ; Christ as head of the Body; and the Church as bride of Christ (CCC, n. 789).

The Church is this Body of which Christ is the head: she lives from him, in him, and for him; he lives with her and in her (CCC, n. 807).

The Church is the Body of Christ. Through the Spirit and his action in the sacraments, above all the Eucharist, Christ, who once was dead and is now risen, establishes the community of believers as his own Body (CCC, n. 805).

Probably few Christians would feel that they are closer and more intimately joined to the person of Jesus than the disciples who shared his earthly ministry or the crowds who followed him through Judea and Galilee. Yet the fact is that we who are baptised are called his Body. We are not simply gathered around him as the disciples and the crowds were, but 'we are united in him in his body' as the Catechism notes. St Paul talks a great deal about the Church as the Body of Christ in his letters to the early Church. Paul, formerly Saul, had been a fervent opponent of the Christian party and was trying to purify Judaism when he had a radical conversion experience on the Damascus road. According to the account of his conversion in the Acts of the Apostles, the voice of Jesus is heard to say 'Why are you persecuting me?' Jesus' words of self-identification with the believers being persecuted are developed in Paul's letters into a theology of the Church as the Body of Christ. The sacraments of the Church, especially the Eucharist, bind each Christian into the Body of Christ, into communion with Christ and with each other. St Augustine, speaking of the Eucharist, the Body of Christ, tells his people, 'Be what you see, and receive what you are'.

### Student Focus

Often students belong to clubs as many of them have been involved in sporting activities. They understand that when they are missing from their team for a match that the whole team is affected. It is important for them to be part of the team and to do their best for their team.

### Teaching Point

The Church is the Body of Christ.

### Remembering Point

We are the Church, the Body of Christ.

## PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: A cloth, a candle, the Bible, an outline of a person, prayer of St Teresa (Appendix 28a, page 182).
2. Body outline cut up into a jigsaw enough for one puzzle between 3 or 4 children. Remove 1 piece from each jigsaw (a different piece for each jigsaw ensuring you have pieces to make up a full image), template in Appendix 28b, page 183.
3. Students' workbooks.

## Beginning

(15 minutes)

**Welcome the students** as usual.

**Gather round** the prayer focus. **Invite the students** to pray.

**All:** In the name of the Father ...

**Catechist:** Let us pray the words taught to us by Jesus:

**All:** Our Father ...

**Send the students** back to their desks, **inviting them** to form into groups of three.

**Hand out** the jigsaw puzzles and let the children create the jigsaw picture. They will discover that there is a piece missing.

**Ask the students:**

- How important is the missing part to the whole body?
- Can the body function without the missing part? ('Yes' or 'No', depending on the part, but not as well as with it.)
- What parts of your body do you need to live your everyday life such as playing footy, eating your dinner, riding your bike or skateboard?
- If you broke your leg, lost your sight, lost the use of an arm, how would you cope?

Using the pieces that you removed from the puzzles **make up a complete body**.

**Tell the students:** All these parts come together to make one body. Each of us is a part of the Body of Christ and we are all important and necessary to the effective working of the Body of Christ.

**Give the students** the missing pieces to complete their puzzle.

**Tell the students** that the Church is often called the 'Body of Christ'.

## Middle

(35 minutes)

**Hand out** the workbooks and ask the students to open them at page 101.

**Tell the students:** to help us understand what being called the 'Body of Christ' means, we will read what St Paul wrote in his first letter to the Corinthian Church in the first century.

**Read 1 Cor 12: 12–27.**

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptised into one body – Jews or Greeks, slaves or free – and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot were to say, 'Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body', that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear were to say, 'Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body', that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many members, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you', nor again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you.' On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and those members of the body that we think less honourable we clothe with greater honour, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honour to the inferior member, that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together with it.

Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it (1 Cor 12: 12-27).

**Invite students** to read the text again for themselves.

**Ask the students:**

- What is the Body of Christ? (*They will probably say, 'Eucharist'*)
- When we take part in the Eucharist what are we doing? (*The students will have completed a lesson earlier this year about the Eucharist and should be able to provide a variety of answers. Accept all answers.*)

**Tell the students:** When we come together as people of faith we are coming together as members of Christ's Body. As the Body of Christ, the Church, we learn and grow together. We share ourselves and our gifts with one another.

**Ask the students:**

- Who is the head of the Body of Christ? (*Jesus is the head of the Body of Christ.*)
- Who is the representative of Body of Christ, here on earth? (*The pope is the representative here on earth.*)

**Invite the students** to form groups of three and to talk about how they might be part of the Body of Christ, how they might respond as baptised members of the Church. **Remind the students** that we are all baptised in Christ through the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which makes us members of the Body of Christ.

**Tell the students:** Turn to page 102 in your workbook and the outline of the person titled 'I am part of the body of Christ'. In the space inside the outline write all the ways you have discussed, that you can respond as a baptised member of the Church.

## PREPARATION

## PREPARATION

**End**

*(5 minutes)*

**Invite the students** to gather around the prayer focus with their workbooks.

**Catechist:** Let us pray together the prayer of St Teresa which is in your workbook on page 103.

**All:** Christ has no body now on earth but yours;  
No hands but yours;  
No feet but yours;  
Yours are the eyes through which the compassion of Christ must look out on the world;  
Yours are the feet with which he is to go about doing good;  
Yours are the hands with which he is to bless his people.  
Amen.

Collect the workbooks and dismiss the students as usual.

## Appendix 28a – Prayer of St Teresa

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Photocopy and laminate this prayer.

Christ has no body now on earth but yours;  
No hands but yours;  
No feet but yours;  
Yours are the eyes through which the compassion  
of Christ must look out on the world;  
Yours are the feet with which he is to go about  
doing good;  
Yours are the hands with which he is to bless  
his people.  
Amen.

## Appendix 28b – Person outline

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Photocopy and paste onto card or laminate enough of these outlines for one per group of three students. Cut along the lines to form the jigsaw. Remember to keep back a different piece from every set to make the catechist's jigsaw.



### Background for the Catechist

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

#### **Reflection/Doctrinal Reference**

The world: starting from movement, becoming, contingency, and the world's order and beauty, one can come to a knowledge of God as the origin and the end of the universe. As St Paul says of the Gentiles: 'For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. Ever since the creation of the world his invisible nature, namely, his eternal power and deity, has been clearly perceived in the things that have been made' (Rom 1: 19–20). And St Augustine issues this challenge: 'Question the beauty of the earth, question the beauty of the sea, question the beauty of the air distending and diffusing itself, question the beauty of the sky ... question all these realities. All respond: "See, we are beautiful". Their beauty is a profession [confessio]. These beauties are subject to change. Who made them if not the Beautiful One who is not subject to change? (CCC, n. 32)' (Sermo 241, n. 2) (CCC, n. 32)

God speaks to man through the visible creation. The material cosmos is so presented to man's intelligence that he can read there traces of its Creator. Light and darkness, wind and fire, water and earth, the tree and its fruit speak of God and symbolise both his greatness and his nearness (CCC, n. 1147).

One of the ways in which we can get some inkling of what God is like is through our experience of the created world. It is the universe that cradles earth, the earth in all its array and in all it contains plants, animals, birds and especially human beings. The sheer magnitude of the universe suggests the limitless transcendence of God: if what is created defies the limits of our understanding and imagination, how much more does the Creator exceed our comprehension. Conversely, the intricacy and yet perfect order of the atoms that compose matter excite our wonderment. Beauty and order characterise creation and these attributes characterise the One who is their origin and end. But there is also surprise and the 'dearest freshness deep down things' (Hopkins). Somehow creation is also ever new and always in the process of change and renewal – another insight into the dynamism of the Creator. The magnificent diversity of earth, and its creatures, plants, animals, birds and fish, and the processes by which they have evolved and developed stretch human appreciation and prompt us to ask in wonder and awe, 'What kind of God has made and sustains all this?'

## PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: a green cloth, a white candle, the Bible, a picture of an object that reflects creation.
2. Workbooks.

## Student Focus

Students are at the age where they can appreciate the beauty of the earth around them. They also may have younger siblings at home and or have seen them either in the hospital when they were born or when Mum and Dad brought them home. The wonder of new life, whether human or animal, is a wonder to every child.

Students are also inquirers and may ask why the two accounts are different. It is important that the catechist emphasises that the creation accounts are stories with a religious meaning – they are not scientific reports.

## Teaching Point

We explore what God's creation shows us about God.

## Remembering Point

We explore what God's creation shows us about God.

## Beginning

*(7 minutes)*

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

**Invite the students** to pray.

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

**All:** In the name of the Father ...

**Catechist:** In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, 'Let there be light!'; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness (Gen 1: 1–4).

**All:** You, God, created all things and yes it is indeed good.

**All:** Glory be to the Father ...

## Middle

(35 minutes)

**Hand out** the workbooks and **divide the class** into two groups.

**Assign** a different creation reading to each group (page 104 and 105).

**First account of the Creation** (Gen 1: 1–27 )

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

And God said, 'Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.' So God made the dome and separated the waters that were under the dome from the waters that were above the dome. And it was so. God called the dome Sky. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

And God said, 'Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.' And it was so. God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. Then God said, 'Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it.' And it was so. The earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seed of every kind, and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

And God said, 'Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth.' And it was so. God made the two great lights – the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night – and the stars. God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth, to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

And God said, 'Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky.' So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm, and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. God blessed them, saying, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.' And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

And God said, 'Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind.' And it was so. God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind, and the cattle of every kind, and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good.

## PREPARATION

## PREPARATION

Then God said, 'Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.'

So God created humankind in his image,  
in the image of God he created them;  
male and female he created them (Gen 1: 1–27).

**Another Account of the Creation** (Gen 2: 4–22)

In the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens, when no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up – for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no one to till the ground; but a stream would rise from the earth, and water the whole face of the ground – then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being. And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed. Out of the ground the Lord God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

A river flows out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it divides and becomes four branches. The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one that flows around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; and the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one that flows around the whole land of Cush. The name of the third river is Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, 'You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.'

Then the Lord God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner.' So out of the ground the Lord God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said,

'This at last is bone of my bones  
and flesh of my flesh;  
this one shall be called Woman,  
for out of Man this one was taken.'

**Invite the students** to read their text carefully and to underline, in different colours, two of their favourite sentences.

**Invite a number** of students to share their sentences.

**Ask the students:**

- Why did you choose those particular sentences?
- What did you learn?
- What sort of person might have written it, and why? *(Accept the students' answers, encouraging them to think broadly. There are no right answers.)*

**Tell the students:** Let's look a little more closely at these passages from Scripture. We will do this deeper analysis by comparing the creation stories from Genesis and completing the activity on page 106 titled 'Exploring the Text'.

The task is as follows. You are to read through both passages and complete the columns in the grid. Identify the reference, the 'where', 'what God created', the 'when' and 'how'.

**Invite the students** to look over their completed grid and to think about the differences, considering what the differences might tell them.

**Invite the students** to pair up with the person beside them and share the similarities and differences that they noted and what they thought about them.

After about five minutes, **ask the students:**

- What do these stories tell us about God?
- Why might the two versions have been written?

*(Take all the answers and encourage the students to respond. This is a very important part of the lesson as it helps the students to engage with a text and respond with insight.)*

Collect the workbooks.

## End

*(5 minutes)*

**Tell the students:** Now we will consider how we might praise God for creation.

**Invite the students** to close their eyes and think about creation and about words that describe God who is obvious to us in nature. You might think of the lovely sun, the sand and the ocean; with these thoughts words such as awesome, gigantic, warming, embracing, might come to mind.

**Tell the students:** Think about the word that you think best describes God present to us in creation, and hold that word in your mind ready to use it during our prayer. When I say 'we admire the ...', I will invite you each in turn to share your word.

## PREPARATION

## PREPARATION

**Invite the students** to gather around the prayer focus.

**All:** In the name of the Father ...

**Catechist:** Creator God,  
We praise you, we thank you, we glorify you for your great goodness.  
We admire the ... (each student adds their word that describes God) ...  
as well as the complex nature of your creation. Continue making us in your image so that we become generous, thoughtful, delicate, awesome, complex people who are a gift to the world.

**All:** Amen

Dismiss the students as usual.

# Mary, First Among the Saints

## 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 realisation' (typus) of the Church (LG 53; 63) (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 hidden-ness. 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, 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 Mary as the first among the saints.

## Teaching Point

Mary, Mother of God, first among the saints.

## Remembering Point

I can live my life like Mary, first among the saints.

## PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: A white cloth, a candle, the Bible, an image of Mary such as an icon, or a statue or a picture that depicts Mary as an ordinary woman at the time of the first century Judea. An example is in Appendix 30, page 194.
2. A whiteboard or a large sheet of paper.
3. Sheets of A4 paper for students to write their role play.
4. Workbooks.

## Beginning

*(10 minutes)*

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

**Tell the students:** We all know Mary is the mother of Jesus, and today we will deepen our understanding of who Mary is in the life of the Church. For us, Mary is also first among the saints.

**Ask the students:** Who are 'the saints'? *(You might have to tell the students that St Paul called all of those who were baptised saints, therefore we are all saints because we are baptised.)*

**Tell the students:** Mary is first of all the baptised, the saints. She shows us how to live. She is the best example of living as Jesus wants us to live. So today we will begin our lesson by praying the Hail Mary.

**All:** Hail Mary ...  
In the name of the Father ...

**Ask the students:** If you were going to tell someone who had never heard of Mary what she was like, how would you describe her?

**Record the answers** on the whiteboard or on a large sheet of paper. As the students share their descriptions **ask them** why they think that describes Mary. **Record their reasons** beside the description.

## Middle

*(35 minutes)*

**Distribute the workbooks** and **send the students** back to their desks.

**Ask the students:** What can we learn from Mary? *(Take a couple of answers. The students may not be able to provide you with very 'deep' answers – this is fine and the purpose of the following activity.)*

**Invite the students** to turn to pages 107–109 in their workbooks and the activity titled Mary in Scripture. **Invite the students** to work with a partner.

**Tell the students:** First you are to read your allocated passage from Scripture, then in the space beside the text, write the characteristics of Mary highlighted in what you have read. For example: If we read the first story of the Annunciation, we can see that this story highlights Mary's response to God, among other things.

**Allocate the scripture** texts to the students, two to each pair. If they finish, they can start on the other texts.

After 15 minutes **invite the students** to share their answers with the class.

**Tell the students:** Now, having heard different answers from others, complete the grid with the answers from the other students.

**Invite each pair** to join another pair and make a group of four and discuss the answers to the following questions.

- How might we be like Mary?
- How are we like Mary and display these same characteristics?
- What activities in school or at home might give us the opportunity to respond like Mary?

After five minutes discussing these questions, **invite the students** to write/ create a short role play that shows a situation where they are like Mary in their life.

If there are only a few groups, then **invite all of them** to share their role play, otherwise, **invite one or two** groups to share.

## End

*(5 minutes)*

**Invite the students** to turn to the page in their workbook with the space titled 'I can live like Mary ...'.

**Tell the students:** Now that you have had the opportunity to explore in some ways how Mary lived her life and how her life is a model for us, you are invited to complete the sentence: 'I can live like Mary ...' in your workbook.

**Invite a few students** to share their answers, as time permits.

**Gather the students** round the prayer focus with their workbooks open to page 110 and the Litany in Praise of Mary, Mother of God.

**Tell the students:** We will pray a special type of prayer recognising Mary as first among the saints. It is called a Litany. A litany is simply a prayer in which someone says a line of the prayer and then we all respond with the same response each time. The litany uses different names and descriptions for God and for Mary.

**Catechist:** Let us make the Sign of the Cross, which reminds us that God is with us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

**All:** In the name of the Father ...

**Catechist:** Lord, have mercy on us. **All:** Christ, have mercy on us.

**Catechist:** Lord, have mercy on us. **All:** Christ, have mercy on us.

God the Father of Heaven, **All:** Have mercy on us.

God the Son, Redeemer of the world, **All:** Have mercy on us.

God the Holy Spirit, **All:** Have mercy on us.

Holy Trinity, one God, **All:** Have mercy on us.

Holy Mary, **All:** Pray for us.

Holy Mother of God, **All:** Pray for us.

Mother of divine grace, **All:** Pray for us.

Mother most pure, **All:** Pray for us.

Mother most chaste, **All:** Pray for us.

Mother most admirable, **All:** Pray for us.

## PREPARATION

## PREPARATION

<b>Catechist:</b>	Mother of our Creator,	<b>All:</b>	Pray for us.
	Mother of our Saviour,	<b>All:</b>	Pray for us.
	Mirror of justice,	<b>All:</b>	Pray for us.
	Seat of wisdom,	<b>All:</b>	Pray for us.
	Cause of our joy,	<b>All:</b>	Pray for us.
	Mystical rose,	<b>All:</b>	Pray for us.
	Morning star,	<b>All:</b>	Pray for us.
	Refuge of sinners,	<b>All:</b>	Pray for us.
	Comforter of the afflicted,	<b>All:</b>	Pray for us.
	Help of Christians,	<b>All:</b>	Pray for us.
	Queen of angels,	<b>All:</b>	Pray for us.
	Queen of patriarchs,	<b>All:</b>	Pray for us.
	Queen of prophets,	<b>All:</b>	Pray for us.
	Queen of apostles,	<b>All:</b>	Pray for us.
	Queen of all saints,	<b>All:</b>	Pray for us.
	Queen conceived without Original Sin,	<b>All:</b>	Pray for us.
	Queen assumed into Heaven,	<b>All:</b>	Pray for us.
	Queen of the most holy Rosary,	<b>All:</b>	Pray for us.
	Queen of peace,	<b>All:</b>	Pray for us.

**All:** Almighty Father of our Lord, Jesus Christ,  
 You have revealed the beauty of your power by raising  
 Mary, a lowly young woman of Nazareth, and making her  
 the mother of our Saviour and first among the saints.  
 May her example guide us so that we may grow ever  
 closer to you.  
 We make this prayer through Christ, our Lord.  
 Amen.

Collect the workbooks and dismiss the students as usual.

## Appendix 30 – Mary of Judea

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# Advent

## Background for the Catechist

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

### Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

When the Church celebrates the liturgy of Advent each year, she makes present this ancient expectancy of the Messiah, for by sharing in the long preparation for the Saviour's first coming, the faithful renew their ardent desire for his second coming. By celebrating the precursor's birth and martyrdom, the Church unites herself to his desire: 'He must increase, but I must decrease' (Jn 3: 30) (CCC, n. 524).

Advent is a season of four weeks set aside by the Church in preparation for the celebration of Christmas, God coming among us as one of us. The word 'advent' comes from the Latin for 'coming' which, in turn, translates the Greek word *parousia* which refers to Jesus' coming in glory at the end of time. So Advent has two emphases: it is an expression of our longing for the coming of Jesus in the fullness of time; it is also a season when we recall the long centuries during which the chosen people longed for the appearance of the Messiah. During this time the liturgical colour is violet, the colour that characterises the penitential seasons preceding the great feasts of the Church. Many domestic customs have grown up around the Advent season. The Advent Wreath is one custom which increasingly has been incorporated into the liturgical life of the Church. It is a rich way to explore the meaning of the season. Its circular shape, symbolises the life of God who is without beginning or end; the greenery represents the ever-fresh offer of God's love to us; the candles mark the progression of the weeks of the season and are lit one by one as the Sundays of the season come around until, on the fourth Sunday of Advent, all are lit. Some people and parishes further enrich the lighting of these candles with prayer and Scripture.

### Student Focus

Students are well aware of the time of preparation before Christmas. Often this is because the department stores start decorating their buildings with Christmas decorations from as early as mid-November. This will help in understanding the anticipation surrounding Advent and the necessity to prepare for the coming of Jesus, which we celebrate at Christmas.

### Teaching Point

We use symbols to help us understand and celebrate the season of Advent.

### Remembering Point

The symbolism of the Advent wreath helps us understand Advent.

## Beginning

(10 minutes)

**Welcome the students** as usual.

**Gather the students** around the prayer focus.

**All:** In the name of the Father ...

**Catechist:** As we gather today in the hope of learning more about our faith, we pray:

Father in heaven, our hearts desire the warmth of your love and our minds are searching for the light of your word.

Give us the strength to grow in your love and prepare for your coming again.

We make this prayer through Christ, your Son.

**All:** Amen.

(Adapted from the opening prayer for First Sunday of Advent from Glenstal Bible Missal, 1983)

**Tell the students:** Today we are going to explore something about the symbols we use during Advent to help us understand how to prepare for Christmas. Very soon we will be entering this special time of the Church's year.

**Display** a liturgical calendar and use it to show where Advent occurs.

**Tell the students:** Advent is the beginning of the Church's year. The beginning of Advent (usually late November or early December) marks the change from the end of one Church year into the new Church year. The Church follows a three-year cycle for Sundays, designating them Cycle A, B or C. This year will be year.....

Advent is the time the Church, and therefore all of us, prepares for Christmas and the celebration of the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem. We do many things during Advent to help us remember and deepen our understanding of what we are celebrating and for what we are preparing. Today we will look at some of the symbols we use during Advent and what they mean.

The Advent Wreath is full of symbolism that helps us remember particular things about Jesus and our faith. Today we will explore what the symbols of the Advent Wreath mean and how we can use the wreath to help us prepare for celebrating Jesus' birth.

## Middle

(30 minutes)

**Hand out** the workbooks.

**Place the items** for making the wreath on a table.

**Gather the students** around the table with the items for the wreath.

## PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: violet cloth, a Bible, a violet candle, some greenery such as ivy.
2. A Liturgical Calendar. (See Appendix 31a, page 200.)
3. Items for an Advent wreath: A circle of wire, Styrofoam or Oasis, greenery such as ivy, three violet candles, one rose candle, one white candle, candle holders.
4. Advent prayer to send home, (See Appendix 31b, page 201.) Make enough copies for one for each student.
5. Workbooks.

## PREPARATION

This is an opportunity to construct the wreath together, as well as time to explain the symbolism. Take up each item in turn and explain the symbolism and the importance to Advent.

**Tell the students:** Today we will make an Advent Wreath. The wreath is made up of a circle of evergreen foliage with four candles representing each Sunday of Advent. Each time we come to class we will light another candle as we prepare for Christmas.

**Pick up** the wire, styrofoam or 'Oasis' and **invite the students** to interweave the greenery around it until the surface is completely covered.

**Tell the students:** All these items are used because they can mean more than what they seem. For instance, this circle of wire/Styrofoam/Oasis could be just a circle, but for us preparing this wreath it symbolises something more.

**Ask the students:** Why do we use a circle and not a square or a triangle? *(Explore with the students the idea that this might reflect the endlessness of God. That God has no beginning and no end the same as the circle. Accept any reasonable answer – symbolism allows for deeper and more complex meaning.)*

**Tell the students:** When we look at the green leaves we remember the hope we have in God. We are reminded that we need to prepare ourselves for the renewal that is promised and into which we enter each Advent in preparation for Christmas.

**Invite the students** to open their workbooks at page 111 and the 'Advent Wreath Symbolism' activity.

**Tell the students:** Next to the picture of the wreath write your description of what the circle and green leaves symbolise.

When the students have completed writing, **place the wreath** on the prayer focus. **Take up** the four coloured candles and their holders and **invite one or two** students to place the candles in their holders inside the wreath.

**Tell the students:** The candles have special meaning too. We use four candles, one for each of the Sundays in Advent. This reminds us of the time of waiting, the opportunity we have to prepare ourselves spiritually for Jesus' coming into our lives at Christmas.

**Ask the students:** Why do we have three **violet** candles? *(During Advent the candles and fabric are coloured violet. The colour reminds us of the need for repentance at this time.)*

**Tell the students:** We remember John the Baptist's call to the people of Jesus' time to repent and be ready for the Messiah. We take the time during Advent to prepare ourselves. We are reminded that this is a special time. The lighting of the candles helps us anticipate Jesus' birth.

**Ask the students:** Why do we have a **rose** or pink-coloured candle? *(The rose coloured candle reminds us that it is a day of rejoicing.)*

**Tell the students:** It is like saying 'We are almost there, let's make sure we are heading in the right direction'.

**Ask the students:** What might this **white** candle symbolise? *(In this context it is intended to remind us of the presence of Christ. Students might also give it other spiritual meaning. This is acceptable.)*

**Tell the students:** When we use it here in the Advent Wreath it particularly reminds us of Jesus' birth at Bethlehem. This is lit at the end of Advent, usually Christmas Eve or Christmas Day.

The sequence of lighting of candles is as follows: The first candle is lit on the First Sunday of Advent and represents prophecy, expectation and hope. The second candle is lit on the Second Sunday of Advent and represents peace. The rose candle representing Joy is lit on the Third Sunday of Advent and the fourth candle is lit on the Fourth and last Sunday of Advent and represents love.

When we look at the wreath during Advent we are told a lot about our faith. We are reminded, through the circle of evergreens, about the new, everlasting life promised to us through Jesus the Christ, the eternal Word of the Father. We remember that it is God's son who entered our world, becoming the man Jesus whose passion, death, and resurrection saved us. The lighting of the candles is another reminder of the presence of Christ – the light of the world.

**Invite the students** to complete the remainder of the 'Advent Wreath' activity by describing the symbolism of candles in the Advent Wreath. When they have completed this task, invite the students to complete the sentence: 'The Advent Wreath is a valuable symbol for Advent because ...'

*(Walk around the students as they work, giving assistance where necessary.)*

**Invite two or three students** to share their completed sentence.

## End

*(10 minutes)*

**Gather the students** round the prayer focus with their workbooks open at the Advent prayer on page 112. Give the students a copy of this prayer to take home.

**All:** In the name of the Father ...

**Catechist:** As we come closer to Christmas,  
we look on these symbols of light and green branches.  
We recall the promise God made to our world:  
that Christ, our light and our hope, will come again.  
Let us listen to the words of the prophet Isaiah as he calls  
the people of Israel, and us, to be aware of the great event  
about to happen in the birth of Jesus.

## PREPARATION

## PREPARATION

**Student:** A reading from the prophet Isaiah  
 The people who walked in darkness  
 have seen a great light;  
 those who lived in a land of deep darkness –  
 on them light has shined.  
 You have multiplied the nation,  
 you have increased its joy;  
 they rejoice before you  
 as with joy at the harvest,  
 as people exult when dividing plunder (Is 9: 2–3).

**Catechist:** Let us think about these words, what they might mean  
 for us as we set out on this time of waiting.

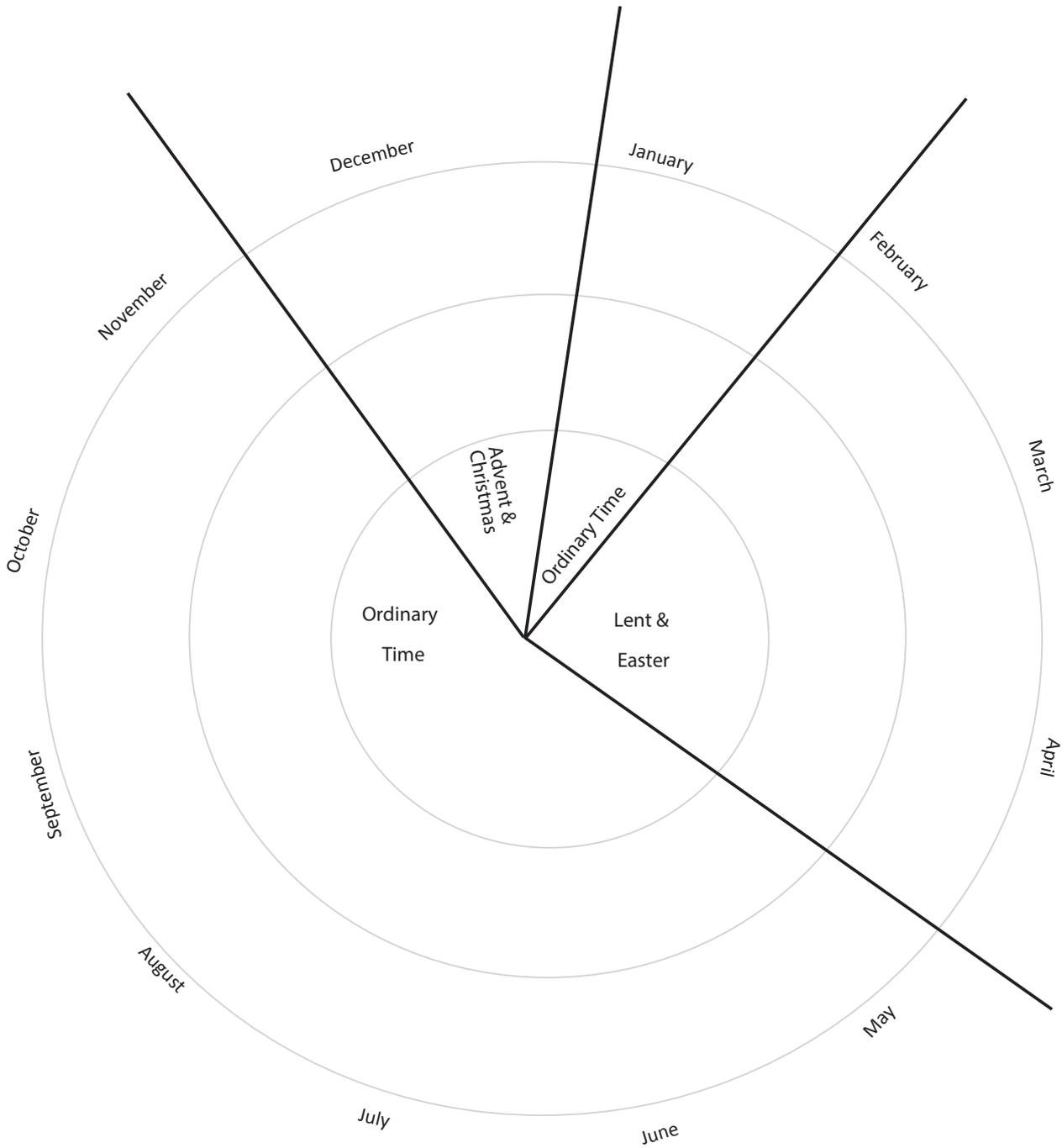
*Light the first violet candle.*

**All:** O God,  
 we remember your promise to send us your Son, Jesus.  
 As we light this candle,  
 may your blessings come upon us,  
 brightening our way  
 and guiding us in your truth.  
 May this light remind us that Christ, our Saviour,  
 brings life into our world,  
 and to us, as we wait for his coming.  
 We ask this through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.  
 Amen.

Dismiss the students as usual.

## Appendix 31a – Liturgical Calendar

Use a photocopier to enlarge to A3 size.



## Appendix 31b – Advent Wreath Prayer

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Photocopy enough copies for each student to take a copy home.

### **Advent Prayer and Lighting the Candles of the Advent Wreath**

**All:** In the name of the Father ...

**Leader:** As we come closer to Christmas,  
we look on these symbols of light and green branches.  
We recall the promise God made to our world:  
that Christ, our light and our hope, will come again.  
Let us listen to the words of the prophet Isaiah as he calls the people of Israel,  
and us, to be aware of the great event about to happen in the birth of Jesus.

**Reader** A reading from the prophet Isaiah.  
The people who walked in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
those who lived in a land of deep darkness –  
on them light has shined.  
You have multiplied the nation,  
you have increased its joy;  
they rejoice before you  
as with joy at the harvest,  
as people exult when dividing plunder (Is 9: 2–3 ).

**Leader:** Let us think about these words, what they might mean for us as we set out on this time of waiting.

*Light the first violet candle.*

**All:** O God,  
we remember your promise to send us your Son, Jesus.  
As we light this candle,  
may your blessings come upon us,  
brightening our way  
and guiding us in your truth.  
May this light remind us that Christ our Saviour brings life into our world,  
and to us, as we wait for his coming.  
We ask this through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.  
Amen.

Each day you might like to pray this prayer and light the first candle of the Advent Wreath. On each Sunday of Advent light the next candle. Remember on the 3rd Sunday of Advent, light the rose-coloured candle.

You might like to just pray the last part of the prayer and light the candle. If you wish, use one of the ones below for each new week of Advent.

#### **First Week of Advent**

O Emmanuel, Jesus Christ,  
hope of every nation,  
you are our saviour,  
come and dwell among us.

#### **Second Week of Advent**

O King of kings, Jesus Christ,  
only joy of every heart,  
come and save your people.

#### **Third Week of Advent**

O Key of David, Jesus Christ,  
you open the gates of heaven,  
come and help us on the way to salvation.

#### **Fourth Week of Advent**

O Wisdom, Word of God, Jesus Christ,  
everything is in your hands,  
come and help us on the way to salvation.

# The Christmas Season

## Background for the Catechist

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

### Reflection/Doctrinal Reference

Jesus' obedience to his mother and legal father fulfils the fourth commandment perfectly and was the temporal image of his filial obedience to his Father in heaven. The everyday obedience of Jesus to Joseph and Mary both announced and anticipated the obedience of Holy Thursday: 'Not my will ...' The obedience of Christ in the daily routine of his hidden life was already inaugurating his work of restoring what the disobedience of Adam had destroyed (CCC, n. 532).

During the greater part of his life Jesus shared the condition of the vast majority of human beings: a daily life spent without evident greatness, a life of manual labour. His religious life was that of a Jew obedient to the law of God, a life in the community. From this whole period it is revealed to us that Jesus was 'obedient' to his parents and that he 'increased in wisdom and in stature, and in favour with God and man' (Lk 2: 52), (CCC, n. 531).

During the Christmas season, the Church celebrates a number of feasts, solemnities and special days that focus on the early life of Jesus and the special place of Mary, the Mother of God. It is particularly valuable for this lesson to focus on the feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph celebrated on the first Sunday after Christmas day (if it isn't New Year's Day).

The celebration of the Holy Family provides us with an opportunity to recognise and celebrate the richness and importance of family life. We are also reminded very clearly that Jesus was like us in all things (but sin). Jesus grew up in a family. Mary was his mother and Joseph his 'legal father'. We are challenged to remember and not forget, even after all the festivities of Christmas, that we can live the 'expectation of God', who sent Jesus, God's only Son, born of a woman, to live among us (Gal 4: 4).

This feast of the Holy Family celebrates the human necessity and richness of an ordinary family life. Jesus lived his early life in relative obscurity. We read little about this part of Jesus' life. We know he lived with Mary and Joseph in Nazareth. We know he lived the life of a Jew, each year going up to Jerusalem for Passover with his parents. What we can be sure of is that Mary and Joseph continued to worry about Jesus getting into trouble, just as any parent would. Jesus' family life was no different to any other; just note the story of Jesus in the Temple (Lk 2: 41–51). What we take away from these early stories of the Good News of Jesus is that the Incarnation of God in Jesus gives us the confidence to live our ordinary lives in ways that recognise God's presence.

## PREPARATION

1. Prayer focus: A coloured cloth, a Bible, a candle and a small nativity setting.
2. A whiteboard or two large sheets of paper to record students' answers (join two A3 sheets together to create a larger sheet.)
3. Workbooks.

## Student Focus

Students of this age will probably know some of the stories associated with Jesus' early life but may not have thought about Jesus' family life in any detail. All students have an experience of family, good or not so good. What is good for one may not be seen as beneficial for another. Life, however, is always greener on the other side of the fence. It is important to recognise that many students may not have two parents and presenting the Holy Family as the perfect family without the recognition of the human context could cause distress for some. Help the students see the life of Jesus as very human and real, that Jesus had to deal with anxious parents as well as normal living situations.

## Teaching Point

During the Christmas season the Church celebrates a number of feasts that help us understand more about Jesus.

## Remembering Point

During the Christmas season the Church celebrates the Holy Family of Jesus.

## Beginning

*(15 minutes)*

**Welcome the students** as usual.

**Gather the students** in the usual space for prayer and **invite individual students** to help you prepare the prayer focus. **Place** the cloth in the space, a candle and the Bible. **Place** the nativity scene either set up or individually with each character; Mary, Joseph, Jesus and all the extras. **Talk about** what the students are creating as they place each item.

**Tell the students:** We now have a family setting, or as we generally call it, a nativity scene of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. So let us now pray together.

**All:** In the name of the Father ...

**Catechist:** Father in heaven, creator of all,  
 you created the earth to bring forth life,  
 and blessed its goodness  
 by creating the family.  
 When you decided the time was right  
 you sent your Son to live on earth in our world.  
 Teach us to respect each other and ,  
 show us the value of family life.  
 Help us to live in peace with each other  
 that we may share in your life forever.  
 We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

**All:** Amen.

**Send the students** back to their seats.

**Tell the students:** Not all families are the same.

**Ask the students:** What would be the characteristics of the perfect family?

**Record the responses** on the sheet of paper or on the whiteboard.

**Ask the students:** Why don't we all live in a perfect family? (*Families are made up of people who all have their own personality and each person is different ...*)

**Distribute the workbooks** and invite the students to turn to page 113.

**Invite the students** to think about their own family.

**Tell the students:** In the space titled 'My Family' write down six great, fun and / or interesting things about your family. You might say 'our Christmas celebration; because we all get together and play fun games'. Remember to include a reason for the great or fun thing.

## Middle

*(30 minutes)*

**Invite two or three** students to share one or two of their responses.

**Highlight** in your responses the difference between the students' experiences.

**Tell the students:** Soon we will be celebrating Christmas Day, the day when a couple, Mary and Joseph, welcomed into their family a new baby whom they named Jesus.

**Ask the students:** What do you know about that first Christmas?

*Take students' answers until you have a good description of the basic events. You will probably receive answers that come from both accounts in Matthew and Luke. Remember to remind the students that the shepherds are in the Lucan story and the wise men in the Matthean account.*

**Tell the students:** It doesn't matter which story we use. There is one thing that is common to both: Jesus belonged to a family. Mary was his mother and Joseph was his legal father, just like many children today who have their biological mother and step-father, foster-father or adoptive father, or those who might have their biological father and step, foster or adoptive mother.

During the Christmas season the Church recognises the family by giving a special feast day called the Holy Family. This feast day is celebrated on the first Sunday after Christmas Day unless Christmas Day falls on a Sunday: then it is celebrated on 30 December.

**Organise the students** into groups of three.

**Ask the students:** Who spends Christmas with the extended family, grandparents, aunts uncles?

**Invite the students** to discuss the following two questions in their threesome for five minutes.

- Why do you think being together at Christmas is important to your family?
- What might family life have been like for the family of Jesus?

## PREPARATION

## PREPARATION

**Invite the students** to record their answers in the space headed, 'The importance of Christmas'.

**Invite the students** to turn to pages 114–115 in their workbooks and allocate one of the three texts to each group.

**Text 1 – Mt 2: 13–15, 19–23**

Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.' Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, 'Out of Egypt I have called my son.' When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child's life are dead.' Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, 'He will be called a Nazorean.'

**Text 2 – Lk 2: 22–40**

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, 'Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord'), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, 'a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons.'

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

'Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,  
according to your word;  
for my eyes have seen your salvation,  
which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,  
a light for revelation to the Gentiles  
and for glory to your people Israel.'

And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, 'This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed – and a sword will pierce your own soul too.'

There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband for seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshipped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favour of God was upon him.

### Text 3 – Lk 2: 41–51

Now every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. Assuming that he was in the group of travellers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends. When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, 'Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety.' He said to them, 'Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?' But they did not understand what he said to them. Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart.

**Invite one of the students** to read the text to the other two, who will listen attentively, following the story in their workbook.

**Tell the students:** When you have read the story, identify the characters and record what they did and said in the chart provided in your workbooks on pages 116–117. Work together as a group and each of you record your answers in your own book.

When you have completed this for all the characters then discuss with the other students in your group the question below the chart: What does this story tell me about Jesus' parents and family life?

Record your groups answer in the space provided. (*Each student to record in their own workbook.*)

Allow 15 minutes for this whole activity.

**Invite one person** from three groups that have a different story to share their insight about Jesus' family life.

**Record the responses** on a sheet of paper or the whiteboard.

**Ask the other groups** to offer any further insight that hasn't been mentioned. Record this on the sheet or whiteboard.

## PREPARATION

## PREPARATION

**Tell the students:** These three texts are used during Mass in different years to help us celebrate the feast of the Holy Family. We have just looked at each of them to discover what insight they might give us about Jesus' family life. One thing that stands out is how the family lived quite an ordinary life. They weren't rich and they were like any other Jewish family in the first century AD. We see them following the Jewish law and presenting Jesus in the Temple, and going up to Jerusalem each year to celebrate the Passover. We also know Joseph, Jesus' legal father, was a protective of Mary and Jesus as any father would be, when he escaped into Egypt to avoid capture by Herod. We also learn that all of them, Jesus, Mary and Joseph, trusted in God, and celebrated God in their lives.

## End

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*(10 minutes)*

**Invite the students** to sit quietly for a few moments thinking about the following question.

**Ask the students:** What insight or learning can we take from this about family life in general and about our own family in particular?

**Tell the students:** Record your answer in the space titled: 'Family Life' on page 118.

**Collect** the workbooks.

**Gather the students** around the prayer focus.

**Invite the students** to pray:

**All:** In the name of the Father ...

**Catechist:** God, our Father,  
We want to live as Jesus, Mary, and Joseph,  
in peace with you and one another.  
Unite each of our families in your name.  
We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

**All:** Amen.

**All:** In the name of the Father ...

Dismiss the students as usual.

## Abbreviations

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AG	<i>Ad gentes</i>
CCC	<i>Catechism of the Catholic Church</i>
CL	<i>Christifideles laici</i>
DS	<i>Denzinger-Schonmetzer, Enchiridion Symbolorum, definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum (1965)</i>
DV	<i>Dei Verbum</i>
LG	<i>Lumen gentium</i>
GS	<i>Gaudium et Spes</i>
SC	<i>Sacrosanctum Concilium</i>

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