

Susan Morgan
Peter O'Reilly



fully alive 1



YEAR 8 KEY STAGE 3

CATHOLIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

PROGRAMME

CATHOLIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAMME

fullyalive

KEY STAGE 3
YEAR
8

Susan Morgan & Peter O'Reilly

VERITAS

First published 2004 by
Veritas Publications
7/8 Lower Abbey Street
Dublin 1
Ireland
Email publications@veritas.ie
Website www.veritas.ie

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2

ISBN 978 1 85390 788 3

Copyright © Irish Episcopal Commission
on Catechetics, 2004

Veritas would like to thank:

The teachers, students, principals and post-primary
diocesan advisers in Religious Education who assisted in
the piloting of this programme.

Those who offered hospitality and rooms for meetings:

St Mary's University College, Belfast
The Good Shepherd Centre (especially Joan), Belfast
CCMS, Dungannon (especially Geraldine)
Declan O'Loughlin

Consulters to the programme:

Marian Curran, St Mary's University College, Belfast
Frank Donnelly, Diocesan Adviser (Down & Connor)
Helen Fenton, St Joseph's High School, Coalisland
Maura Hyland, Director, Veritas
Naoishe Hampsey, Aquinas Grammar School, Belfast
Declan O'Loughlin, Diocesan Adviser (Armagh)
Eleain McIllduff, Our Lady's Grammar School, Newry
Bishop Donal McKeown, Auxiliary Bishop
(Down & Connor)
Venetta Trainor, St Brigid's High School, Armagh
Bronwyn Traynor, St Joseph's High School,
Crossmaglen

Theological Adviser: Fr Paul Fleming STL, PhD

Technical Assistance: Noel Morgan

Text Editor: Elaine Campion

Typesetting: Colette Dower & Niamh McGarry

Art Director: Bill Bolger

Printed in Ireland by WG Baird, Antrim

*Veritas books are printed on paper made from the wood pulp of
managed forests. For every tree felled, at least one tree is
planted, thereby renewing natural resources.*

The material in this publication is protected by copyright law.
Except as may be permitted by law, no part of the material
may be reproduced (including by storage in a retrieval system)
or transmitted in any form or by any means, adapted, rented or
lent without the written permission of the copyright owners.
Applications for permissions should be addressed to the
publisher.

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British
Library.

Acknowledgements:

The majority of the scripture quotes are from the *Children's Bible: Contemporary English Version* © American Bible Society, 1995. The remaining scripture quotes are from the *New Revised Standard Version Bible: Catholic Edition* © 1993 and 1998 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America; used with permission; all rights reserved. 'Afraid to Fly' is based on 'His First Flight' by Liam O'Flaherty, from *The Stories of Liam O'Flaherty* (New English Library, 1986). 'A School Day in Cambodia' is based on an activity from www.cafod.org.uk. 'I Have a Mission' is based on a prayer by John Henry Cardinal Newman. 'Fiorello la Guardia' story is adapted from *One Hundred Stories to Change your Life* by Pierre Lefevre (St Paul Publications, 1991). 'Mahmut's Story' is from *Refugees: We Left Because We Had To* by Jill Rutter (Refugee Council, 1996). 'Almost a Disaster' is abridged from *First Aid in English, Reader E* by Angus Maciver. 'Islanders Prefer Gannet to Turkey' is from www.washtimes.com. Ernest Shackleton's story is adapted from *Praying Each Day of the Year* by Nicholas Hutchinson FSC (Matthew James Publishing Ltd, 1997). 'The Nail's Story' is based on a story from www.semonillustrator.org. Verse of prayer 'The Love of God' is from *Open Gate* by David Adam, (SPCK/Triangle, 1994); used with permission. 'The Ten Wallets' is based on a report from *Heaven and Earth* (BBC). 'Whistling Love' is based on a story from www.faithweb.com. *Growing up in Canada* by Robert de Moor is from www.inquest.org; © Inquest Ministries, 2003. 'Are you listening?' is adapted from *The Heart of the Enlightened* by Anthony de Mello (Doubleday, 1991). English translation of Eucharistic Prayer II © 1969, 1971, 1973, 1975 International Committee for English in the Liturgy, Inc. (ICEL).

Pictures:

Photos pp 7, 19, 21, 27, 29, 32, 34-5, 46, 50, 54, 56-7, 59, 68, 75-6, 87-8, 91, 94, 100, 102, 105-6, 112, 114, 117, 121, 125, 131, 137, 139, 146, 149, 158-9 & 173 © Declan O'Loughlin; used with permission. Illustrations pp 8 & 134 © Bosquet Publications. Illustration p 14 © Collins Liturgical Publications. Illustrations pp 23, 33, 47, 66, 82, 95-6, 104-5, 112-13, 117-19, 123, 130, 144-6, 152-3, 163 & 176 by Jeanette Dunne. Illustrations pp 30, 41, 60, 62-3, 70, 93, 97, 101, 107, 127, 132, 141-2 148, 156-7, 167 & 169 by Bill Bolger. *Saint Mark the Evangelist* from a Byzantine Gospel Book, c. 110 AD, pp 40 & 155, reproduced by kind permission of the Trustees of the Chester Beatty Library. *The Annunciation* by Fra Angelico, p 67, Museo Diocesano, Cortona, Italy. Illustrations pp 83, 86 & 90 by Mary Cawley. *Christ Bidding Farewell to the Virgin* (Flemish School) (detail), p 124, and *The Last Supper* by Giovanni Lanfranco (detail), p 130, both reproduced courtesy of the National Gallery of Ireland. *The Trial Before Pilate* and *Jesus Dies on the Cross* (Stations of the Cross), pp 136 & 138, from *The Way of the Cross* by Donal Neary, illustrated by Frances Biggs (Veritas, 2002). Sketch of Pope John Paul II, p 168, © Dina Belloti, Rome.

Contents

Term 1

Lesson 1	New Beginnings	5
Lesson 2	Settling In	10
Lesson 3	Fully Alive	12
Lesson 4	Becoming a Class	14
Lesson 5	You are Special	16
Lesson 6	We Learn, We Grow	19
Lesson 7	The Bible	22
Lesson 8	The Old Testament	24
Lesson 9	The New Testament	27
Lesson 10	Using the Bible	28
Lesson 11	The Word of God through the Ages	30
Lesson 12	God with Abraham and Sarah; God with Us	33
Lesson 13	Stages in the Writing of the Gospels	36
Lesson 14	The Evangelists	38
Lesson 15	The Gospel according to Mark	40
Lesson 16	Remembering our Baptism	42
Lesson 17	The Meaning of Baptism	44
Lesson 18	Things used in Baptism	47
Lesson 19	Remembering our Confirmation	49
Lesson 20	Choices	52
Lesson 21	Choices and Morality	55
Lesson 22	Influences on our Sense of Right and Wrong	58
Lesson 23	Our Moral Vision and the Moral Vision of Jesus	60
Lesson 24	Advent	64
Lesson 25	Mary gets ready for the First Christmas	67
Lesson 26	The First Christmas	69

Term 2

Lesson 1	How Our Background Influences Us	74
Lesson 2	Tensions in the Land of Jesus' Birth	76
Lesson 3	The Land of Palestine in the Time of Jesus	78
Lesson 4	Getting to Know the Religious Background of Jesus	81
Lesson 5	The Temple in Jerusalem	84
Lesson 6	The Jewish Religious Leaders in the Time of Jesus	88
Lesson 7	A Typical House in Nazareth in the Time of Jesus	90
Lesson 8	Jesus at School	92
Lesson 9	The Teaching of John the Baptist	94
Lesson 10	The Baptism of Jesus	96
Lesson 11	Lent	99
Lesson 12	The Life and Ministry of Jesus	101
Lesson 13	Jesus Called Disciples	103

Lesson 14	Jesus Called Twelve Apostles	106
Lesson 15	An introduction to Parables	108
Lesson 16	The Parable of the Sower (1) – God is with us	111
Lesson 17	The Parable of the Sower (2) – Responding to God	113
Lesson 18	The Parable of the Seed Growing Secretly	115
Lesson 19	The Lost Sheep/The Lost Coin	116
Lesson 20	The Prodigal Son	118
Lesson 21	My Sense of What is Right	122
Lesson 22	Celebrating Reconciliation – Past and Present	124
Lesson 23	Jesus Shared Meals	126
Lesson 24	The Passover Meal	128
Lesson 25	The Last Supper	130
Lesson 26	In the Garden of Gethsemane – The Passion of Jesus Begins	132
Lesson 27	Jesus Before the Jewish Authorities	134
Lesson 28	The Trial Before Pilate	136
Lesson 29	Jesus Dies on the Cross	138

Term 3

Lesson 1	The Empty Tomb	140
Lesson 2	The Risen Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene	143
Lesson 3	The Risen Jesus Appears to the Eleven	145
Lesson 4	The Story of Pentecost	147
Lesson 5	The Holy Spirit	149
Lesson 6	Early Christian Celebrations of the Eucharist	152
Lesson 7	At Mass We Listen	154
Lesson 8	At Mass we give Thanks and Praise to God	156
Lesson 9	The Presence of the Risen Jesus at Mass	158
Lesson 10	The Mass and the Sacrifice of Jesus	161
Lesson 11	Living the Mass	163
Lesson 12	The Mass through the Ages	164
Lesson 13	Jesus Gave Leadership to the Church	166
Lesson 14	Bishops – Successors of the Apostles	169
Lesson 15	Getting to Know your Parish	172
Lesson 16	Parish – People who Love and Serve the Lord	174

Welcome!

Bienvenue!

Willkommen!

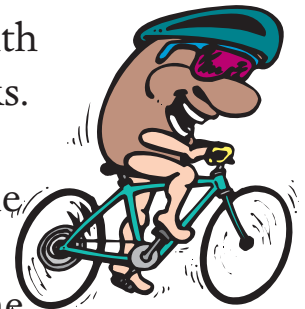
Bienvenida!

Fáilte!

Ciao!



So, here you are in your new school with your new bag and your new uniform and your new books. It's a beginning – a **new** beginning. Yet, it's not your first time to make a new beginning. Remember your first time on a bicycle? How did that feel? Remember the first time you played for a team? What was that like? Remember the first tune you played on your recorder? Were you proud of yourself? If you have ever moved house, do you remember how you felt on your first night in your new room? New beginnings bring with them a mixture of feelings.



This year you have made a new beginning in your new school. It's different from primary school. There you had the same teacher all year long. Now you have many teachers. Last year you were the oldest class in the school. This year you are the youngest. In primary school you had just a few familiar subjects. Is that how it is for you now? Hardly! And there are other changes too. So, how have you been doing with all these changes? How's it going for you?

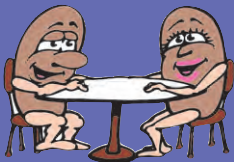
**LET'S GET
WORKING**

Check your workbook
for more to do with
this lesson.

Afraid to Fly



It had been twenty-four hours and he was still alone, alone on a cliff above a stormy sea. The young seagull was hungry too. The sun was blazing in a clear sky and all morning he had watched as his sisters and brother swooped and his parents circled, all proud of their newfound ability. Their success and ease seemed to make his fear appear more ridiculous. He paced back and forth on his own ledge, searching for the smallest scrap. At one stage, he even pretended to be asleep, hoping that one of them would leave him something. Again, no! The pangs of hunger gnawed all the more fiercely at him. 'Ga, ga, ga,' he cried, hoping that one of them would bring him something to eat. But no, no one came back with anything. Instead, he had to watch his brother catch his first fish.



LET'S TALK

1. What was the seagull afraid to do?

2. What was holding the seagull back?

3. Can you see any comparison between what the seagull faced and what you are facing in starting at your new school?

4. What might make this new beginning difficult for you?

5. What could help you or make it easier for you?

He saw his mother on another ledge. It was just out of reach. It was too far to hop. She held a tasty morsel, trimming it with her beak. Then, she rose with it into the air. Was she flying over to him? Yes, yes! Mercy at last! However, just in the final few inches, she held back. She was hovering in front of the ledge, just out of reach, the piece of fish held daintily by the tip of her beak. So mad with hunger that he no longer cared, the young seagull lunged forward. With a mighty cry, he dived at the fish and found himself in mid air, falling, falling. The sea was like a vast churning green wall rushing towards him!

Just when it seemed all was lost, instinct took over. He opened his wings and felt the wind gather under them, like a great cushion of sponge. He flapped his wings and, like a yo-yo reaching the end of its string, he sprung and soared upwards. Now they were all around him, cawing and cackling and calling: his mother, his father, his sisters and his brother. They cheered him down to the surface of the sea. Eventually he got his piece of fish, a just reward at the end of his first ever flight.

(Based on *His First Flight* by Liam O'Flaherty)



A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

As we begin our first year in post-primary school we remember that God is always with us. God watches over us in all sorts of ways. God watches over us through our friends and our family. God watches over us through our teachers. We remember another way that God watches over us as we pray together and say:

All

Angel sent by God to guide me,
Be my light and walk beside me;
Be my guardian and protect me;
On the paths of life direct me.

Teacher

A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew (6:25-26).

Jesus said to his friends: I tell you not to worry about your life. Look at the birds in the sky! They don't plant or harvest. They don't even store grain in barns. Yet your Father in heaven takes care of them. Aren't you worth more than them?

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

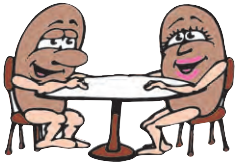
Teacher

We ask God to be with us on our journey through the year ahead, as together we say:

All

Arise with me in the morning,
Travel with me through each day,
Welcome me on my arrival.
God, be with me all the way. Amen.

Sign of the Cross



LET'S TALK

1. What does the story say about how Jesus was feeling on his first day at school?
2. 'It was one thing to look forward to this day, but now I had to face it.' What do you think this means?
3. What helped you during your first days at your new school?
4. How could you help others in your class during these days?



LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.



WHY DON'T YOU?

Read the prayer in 'A time to pray' (opposite page) quietly and make it your own.

Jesus Starts School

I woke up early that morning. For the first time in my life I saw the first light of the sun. There was no way I could go back to sleep. I got up, washed, dressed, refilled the lamp and had the fire going before anyone else stirred. When the animals saw that I was up, they wanted to be let out too. It must have been that noise that woke my mother. There was something in the way she hugged me that made me think she found this day difficult. For me, though, it was exciting, hugely exciting. This was to be my first day at school!



'Come on,' said Mother, 'You can't go without breakfast. What will they say about you if you faint on your first day?' I ate the breakfast at speed, then went outside to wait for Jacob and the other boys. Morning after morning I had watched them go by. Morning after morning I had longed to join them, longed to be older, longed to be more grown up.

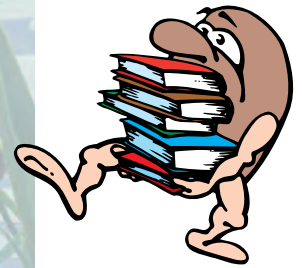
It was more than excitement that had me unsettled. It was one thing to look forward to this day, but now I had to face it. Suddenly I was nervous about the rabbi, the teacher. They said he was very strict. I was afraid of looking stupid. Would I be able for all the Hebrew? We spoke Aramaic at home but they had taught me a few Hebrew phrases.

It took just one boy to come out on to the street and soon there were more. The crowd gathered as quickly as a storm on the Sea of Galilee. I ran to join them. Just as we rounded the corner to the synagogue, I looked back and caught a glimpse of my mother standing at the door.

A time to pray

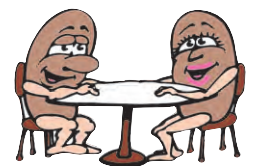
When Jesus and the other children arrived at school, the rabbi gathered them all together and prayed:

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation!
You made us.
You watch over us.
You guide us always.
Bless our time together.
May we learn the wonders of your work
and help one another.
Amen.



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Write your own prayer for the start of the new year. (You could include your feelings, e.g. excitement, doubt, etc., and ask for God's help and guidance.)



LET'S TALK

1. How is Sapala's day different from your own?
2. What do you think might help him to feel happy at school?



WHY DON'T YOU?

Help your teacher prepare a prayer board for the classroom. Your teacher could display your prayers and reflections there during the year.

Visit the CAFOD website at:
www.cafod.org.uk/schools

A School Day in Cambodia

Hi! My name is Sapala. I am ten years old. Five o'clock is my regular time for getting up. We start the day early in Cambodia. I get down to the river as quickly as I can to see if I've caught anything. Then I set the traps again to catch more fish. We have school four mornings a week. I walk there with my friends. We arrive for 7 a.m. I look forward to our breaktimes. We play with the buffalo, climbing up on their backs and going up and down the hill. Other times we play marbles. We dig a bit out of the ground and that's our target. We roll the marbles along the ground from our starting line. The first person to get a marble into the target is the winner! When I get home, I help my family by collecting wood so that we can light a fire for cooking. Most days, my mother cooks the fish with some rice. That's our main meal. It's really tasty! Afterwards, we help to tidy up. We chat a bit and at 9 p.m. it's time for bed. That's my day. Is yours much the same?



Term 1, Lesson 2

Settling In

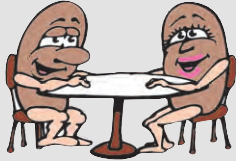
LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.



So, now you're beginning to settle in to your new school. You probably know more about the place than you did a few days ago. You certainly know more about your class. Do you know the names of the people sitting nearest you?

Have you met all your new teachers yet? Do you know the principal's name? Does your school have a chaplain? Has your school got a website? If so, have you had a chance to visit it yet? Does the school have a crest (or badge) and do you know what it means?



LET'S TALK

1. Why was John so confident on his first day at the new school?
2. How was Eileen feeling?
3. How did the assembly help Eileen?
4. On your first day, did you feel more like Eileen or more like John?

EILEEN'S FIRST DAY

Eileen had so longed for this day, but now she was getting more anxious by the minute. As she waited for the bus, she was very aware that she was on her own. When the bus pulled up and Eileen offered to pay, the bus driver scolded her. 'Where's your bus pass?' Before Eileen could answer, he went on, 'If you don't have it this evening, you won't be allowed on.' It was a bad start... unlike the start of John's first day at school. John's older brother, Gary, was a Sixth Form prefect. From the confident way John walked across town to school, you would not have known that it was his first day too.

After being put into different groups and shown their lockers, the new students were all brought to the hall for a special assembly. In the queue, Eileen asked the girl beside her about the bus pass. John overheard. 'My brother is a Sixth Form prefect,' he said. 'He helps Mr Woods to give out the bus passes.' 'But how will I know him?' asked Eileen. Before John could answer, they were all moved in to the hall to take their places. 'Talk later!' John whispered, with a wink.



Some forty people were sitting in rows on the stage. Mrs Bradley, the principal, stood at the centre. 'Good morning, everybody!' she began, 'and welcome to St Mary's. I know some of you may be feeling a little anxious as this is your first day in a new school. However, I would say to you, don't worry, as the staff and students will do everything we can to help you settle in. St Mary's is a place where people look out for each other. People work together here and, with the help of God, you will soon feel very much at home.' Mrs Bradley introduced the teachers who were gathered behind her. 'This is Mr Woods,' she began. Eileen jumped, but it wasn't because this was the bus-pass teacher. John was sitting behind her and had given her a thump on the shoulder. 'That's him,' he whispered.

When Eileen got home she told her mother about the day. She thought again about the impatient bus driver, and about John and how helpful and confident he was. She thought about Mrs Bradley and what she had said at assembly about St Mary's being a place where people look out for each other. 'Yes,' she thought, 'I think I am going to feel at home at St Mary's.'

5. Can you remember a time when someone at primary school showed care for you?

6. What has helped you to settle in and to make friends and to enjoy being in your new school?

7. Jesus said: 'Love one another as I have loved you.' What signs have you seen in your school so far of people doing as Jesus asked?

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

The Bible is full of stories about people who placed their trust in God. They looked back into the past and saw that God was with people from the beginning of time. The writer of Psalm 90 says: Our Lord, in all generations you have been our home.

You have always been God – long before the birth of the mountains, even before you created the earth and the world.

So, like the people who wrote the Bible, we will now use our memories to help us to pray.

First of all, we settle ourselves. (Pause)

We become quiet and still. (Pause)

We become aware of our breathing. (Pause)

We remember that God is with us. (Pause)

Now that we are quiet and still, we think back to last year.

We pick a happy time. We recall something that happened at school last year that was good.

(Pause)

We share it with God. (Pause)

We thank God for it. (Pause)

We will finish our prayertime now by praying the words Jesus taught us.

All

Our Father...

Sign of the Cross

Term 1, Lesson 3 Fully Alive

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

Today we celebrate being fully alive.
God has given us our life.
It is God's gift to us.
Life grows and develops.
It changes.
It turns up in new ways and new places.
Today, we praise God.
God makes life grow and develop.
God wants us to be fully alive.

Student Group 1

We have become more fully alive.
Years ago we were small.
Now we have grown bigger.
Years ago we did simple work.
Now we do harder things.
Years ago we played easy games.
Now our games are more difficult.
Our ability to be fully alive is God's gift to us.

Student Group 2

Each year the world of nature becomes more fully alive.
Seeds are planted.
Crops grow.
The harvest is gathered in.
We have food to eat and to share.
The ability to be fully alive is God's gift to the world.

Student Group 3

The world of science and technology helps us to be more fully alive.
Once upon a time we used simple low-tech ways to communicate.
Now we use new high-tech ways to communicate.

Once upon a time we had basic musical instruments.

Now we have new sounds and new instruments.

Once upon a time we listened to music one way.

Now we have new ways to listen to music.

God is with us as we find new ways to be fully alive.

Student Group 4

The world of art and design helps us to be more fully alive.

We find new ways to dress ourselves and to express ourselves.

Things are being made in new ways, with new materials.

Old pictures and posters get replaced with new designs.

New buildings, roads, tracks and bridges take the place of old ones.

God is with us when new art and design helps us to be more fully alive.

Student Group 5

The world of writing and story helps us to feel more fully alive.

Writers give us new books.

Film-makers give us new films and videos.

Television gives us new episodes of stories.

Poets give us new poems.

They bring excitement to our lives.

They also help us to notice life.

They help us to feel more fully alive.

This is what God wants for us.

Student Group 6

The world of politics helps people to be fully alive.



Politicians can make the world a fairer place.

The United Nations brings together people from all corners of the world. Trócaire and other agencies work for the poorest and most needy people. Television and political reporters keep us in touch with world events. God is with us when politics gives people a chance to be more fully alive.

Teacher

God is always with us, helping us to find new ways to be fully alive. The prophet Isaiah tells us this.

Reader 1

A reading from the prophet Isaiah (55:10-11).

Rain and snow fall from the sky. But they don't return without watering the earth that produces seeds to plant and grain to eat. That's how it is with my words. They don't return to me without doing everything I send them to do.

This is the word of the Lord.

All

Thanks be to God.

Teacher

God gives us people who help us to be fully alive.
We thank God for these people.
We also pray to God for others who need help to be fully alive.

Reader 2

We thank you, God, for the people who love us and who have helped us to grow. **(Pause)**

Help us, God, to assist each other by being kind, by being good listeners, and by including everyone. **(Pause)**

We remember people who find it hard to feel fully alive because they are sick or lonely. **(Pause)**

We are sorry, God, for the ways in which we have hurt other people, when we ignored them or said hard things to them.

Teacher

Now let us pray together as Jesus taught us.

All

Our Father...

Teacher

We bow our heads and ask God to bless us in the year ahead. **(Pause)**
May God bless us and keep us.

All

Amen.

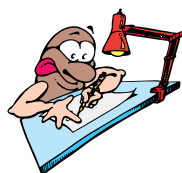
Sign of the Cross



Term 1, Lesson 4 Becoming a Class

So, you're finding your way around the school. You're getting familiar with the teachers. You know your list of subjects. You have most of your books by now. You're able to follow the timetable, well almost!

Now, how about the new class to which you belong? Do you know all the names yet? Take a look around the room. Have you spoken to everyone at least once? Are there some people to whom you haven't spoken yet? Would you know if anyone was missing? Isn't it time you got to know each other? Well then, try these...



LET'S GET WORKING

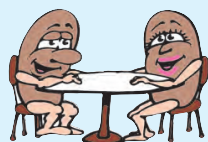
Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.

Quality initials: Everybody takes a turn. When it's your turn, say your name and then add two qualities based on your first two initials. For example, Claire Grant might say 'Hi, I'm Claire Grant and I'm cheerful and generous'.

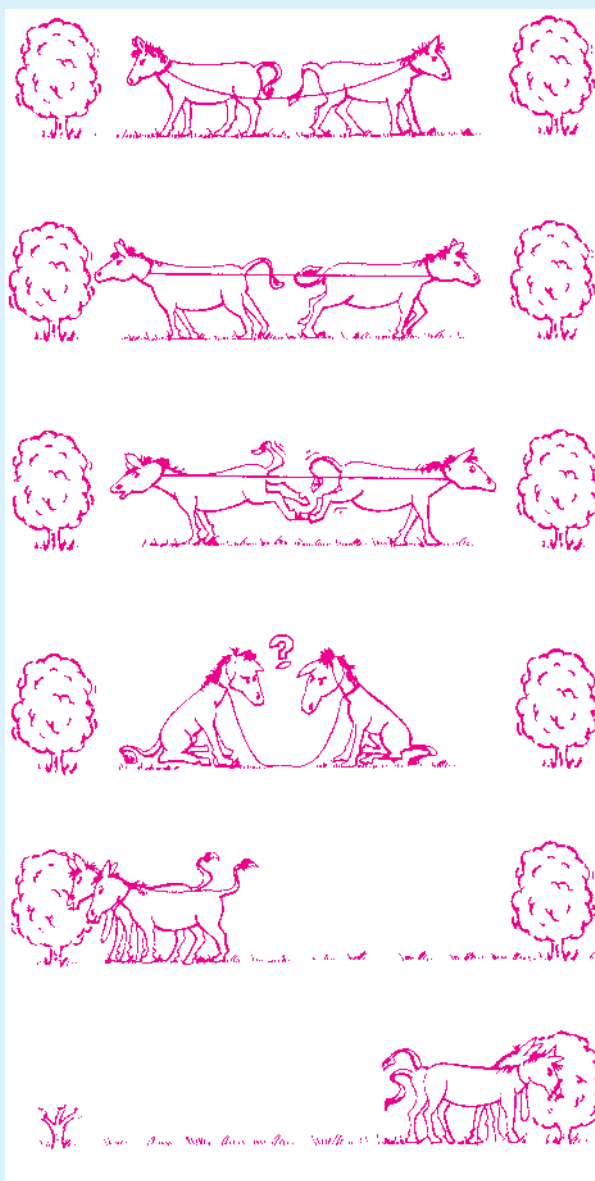
Non-verbal birthday line-up: Without talking, line yourselves up according to your date of birth. Remember: No talking! Use mime or any other form of non-verbal communication.

The Two Donkeys

LET'S TALK



1. What story do the pictures tell?
2. What was the problem in the story?
3. What made the problem worse?
4. What made it better?
5. Do people ever behave like the two animals in the story? If so, give some examples.
6. If two people behaved like that in this class, what would happen?
7. What helps a class to work well together?



A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

We make space and time for God who is with us always. We allow God to help us in the way we relate to each other. St Paul became a follower of Jesus. He wrote to the other followers of Jesus about how to treat others. He said:

Reader 1

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians (*1 Cor 13:4-8*).

Love is kind and patient, never jealous, boastful, proud, or rude. Love isn't selfish or quick-tempered. It doesn't keep a record of wrongs that others do. Love rejoices in the truth, but not in evil. Love is always supportive, loyal, hopeful, and trusting. Love never fails!

Teacher

Now let us reflect on what St Paul says.

Reader 2

St Paul says 'Love is kind'.

We can ask ourselves: Am I kind to others? Do I try to be helpful and to talk to others? **(Pause)**

Reader 3

St Paul says 'Love is patient'.

We can ask ourselves: Am I patient with people who are different from me? Am I patient when I find life difficult? **(Pause)**

Reader 4

St Paul says 'Love is not jealous'.

Do I have hard feelings about people who seem to have more than I have? Do I get annoyed when people seem to do better than I do? **(Pause)**

Reader 5

St Paul says 'Love is not boastful, proud or rude'.

Do I brag about myself? Do I look down on others? Do I put others down? **(Pause)**

Reader 6

St Paul says 'Love is not selfish or quick-tempered'.

Do I push to get my way? Am I selfish with my friends? Do I get moody or do I shout and give out when I don't get my way? **(Pause)**

Reader 7

St Paul says 'Love doesn't keep a record of wrongs'.

Do I hold grudges? Do I do things on others out of spite? **(Pause)**

Reader 8

St Paul says 'Love rejoices in the truth, but not in evil'.

Do I welcome the truth, even when it hurts me? Am I secretly happy when others make mistakes or have difficulties? **(Pause)**

Teacher

We tell God we are sorry for our sins, as we say the 'Act of Sorrow' together.

All

O my God, I thank you for loving me.

I am sorry for all my sins,

for not loving others and not loving you.

Help me to live like Jesus and not to sin again.

Amen.

Sign of the Cross



Term 1, Lesson 5
You are
Special



You are part of a new school and a new class. You've been here a while now. How are you? Still a bit nervous? Still feeling lost? Still forgetting names? Does it leave you feeling that you are a very small person in a very big place? It's time to remember that you are important too, because God made you and gave you the gift of life. Each one of us brings something special to our class and to our school. God has given everybody something to offer. Together we have all the gifts and abilities we need to do and to be our best.

The Little Puppy

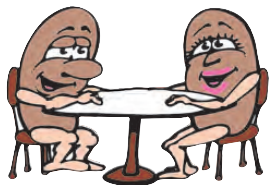
As soon as he arrived at his new farmhouse home, Pup bounded out of the cart and went darting about the place. (This was in the days before tractors and landrovers.)

First, Pup came to the corral where the horse was kept. 'You're new here,' said Horse. 'You will soon learn your place. The farmer loves and respects me. I do the heavy work around here, pulling the plough and other heavy loads. Compared to me, what are you worth?' 'Not much of a welcome there, then,' said Pup to himself.

Next Pup came to the dairy. 'You will soon learn your place,' Cow began. 'My milk goes to make the butter and the cheese. You can't match me!' Pup didn't stay.

'These characters are so full of themselves,' Pup thought, and he ran right into Sheep. 'Bark all you like,' Sheep began, 'but you're still nobody around here. You're no match for my wool that makes the clothes and blankets.'

'Is there no end to this?' Pup wondered. Sheep showed off its wool. Chicken boasted about its eggs. Cat bragged about catching mice. Each said that Pup would learn his place – not a very important place from the sound of it! Pup became downcast and slowed down just enough to be caught by the farmer. Once indoors, Pup jumped straight up on to the lap of the farmer's daughter. He was so excited. He turned round and round. He'd never seen a chair with such big wheels before. The daughter was delighted too. 'I can get milk and eggs and wool elsewhere on this farm,' she said, 'but you give me your company and brighten my day!' Pup felt at home from that moment on.



LET'S TALK

1. What sort of welcome did Pup get from the other animals?
2. Pup was told he was unimportant. Can you think of any ways in which a person can be made to feel like that?
3. What would help a person at a time like that?
4. Contrast the welcome given to Pup by the other animals with the welcome given to Pup by the farmer's family.
5. What makes someone valuable?
6. On what basis might God think you are valuable?

You are Special to God

Here is a list of phrases that are based on texts from the Bible. They express God's love and care for you. Decide which one you like best and why.

- 'I made you in my own image and likeness, and when I made you I saw that you were good.' (based on Genesis 1:27, 31)
- 'You are my work of art.' (based on Ephesians 2:10)
- 'You are my friend.' (based on John 15:15)
- 'I have called you by your name. You are mine.' (Isaiah 43:1)
- 'You are always in my presence, and I hold you by your right hand.' (Psalm 73:23-24)



You are going to be busy in the weeks and months ahead! There will be a lot of new things to learn. Sometimes this will be fun and easy; at other times it will be confusing and difficult. The prayer below will help you to remember something important: that you are special and that God has chosen you.

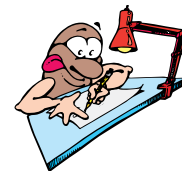
I Have a Mission

God has made me for a special reason.
Something has been given to me,
which God has given to no one else.
I have my mission.
I may not know everything about it just now;
But one day I will look back on life and see what it was.

God has not created me for nothing.
No matter who or what I am, I can never be put away.
Even if I am sick or unwell, I can do God's work.

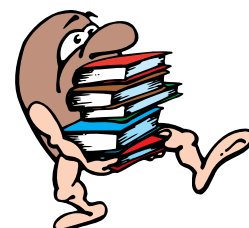
God's plans always work out.
God knows the right thing.
My friends may be gone.
The only people around me may be strangers.
I may feel depressed.
I may worry about the future.
Still God knows what is right.
So, I will trust in God.

(Based on a prayer by John Henry Cardinal Newman)



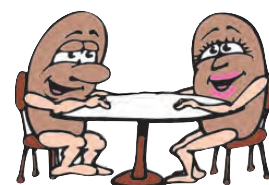
LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Copy your favourite one of the above phrases into your Religion journal under the title: 'The Word of the Lord to (your name)'. Decorate it. Underneath it, write what you think God might say to you now.



LET'S TALK

1. What is your favourite part of this prayer? Give a reason for your choice.
2. How might a person feel after praying this prayer? Why?
3. What do you think this prayer says about the way God sees you? How do you react to that?

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

The prophet Isaiah lived in Israel hundreds of years before Jesus. Times were tough. People thought God had forgotten about them. However, God answered them through Isaiah. We will listen now to God's word through Isaiah.

Reader

A reading from the prophet Isaiah (49:15-16).

God says:

Could a mother forget a child?

Could she fail to love an infant who came from her own body?

Even if a mother could forget, I will never forget you.

You are always in my thoughts! (Pause)

This is the word of the Lord.

All

Thanks be to God.

Teacher

Remember God's words: 'I will never forget you. You are always in my thoughts.'

Take time to treasure what God says to you. (Pause)

Teacher

We praise God together in the words of the 'Glory be' as we say:

All

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Sign of the Cross



Term 1, Lesson 6

We Learn, We Grow

The year is well started now and you've been to every class at least once. The school timetable has a range of subjects to help you to grow as a person in every way. It is important for you to grow in mind, in body and in friendship with God and with others. How are you coping with all the new subjects? Is it having an effect on you? Read the following poem.

Science, Maths,
PE and Art,
Geography, History:
And that's just the start!

English, French,
Music, Singing,
Spanish, Irish:
My head is spinning.

Home Economics,
German, IT,
Religion, Technology:
Now, where should I be?

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

This year you will have many different subjects.
We thank God for them today.

Pupil 1 (*holding up an English text*)
Through our study of English...

All

Help us, God, to grow in body, in mind and in friendship.

Pupil 2 (*holding up a Maths text*)
Through our study of Maths...

All

Help us, God, to grow in body, in mind and in friendship.

(Other subjects may be included here.)

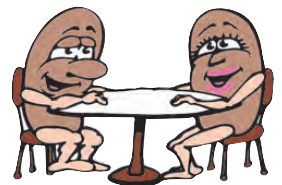
Teacher

We pray together now that our learning will help us to grow.

All

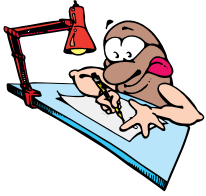
Bless us, O God, as we work together.
Bless the books we use each day.
Bless us with new kinds of learning.
May we learn to live in your way. Amen.

Sign of the Cross



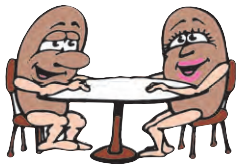
LET'S TALK

1. Which subjects help you to develop physically?
2. Which subjects help you to develop your creative side?
3. Which subjects help you to grow in friendship with God and with others?
4. What is your favourite new subject and why?



LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.



LET'S TALK

1. When you were younger, did anyone in your family ever tell you stories? Who was the story-teller in your family and what stories did they tell you?
2. Think of a family story and tell it to the person beside you.
3. Can you remember any stories that show us how to live?
4. Can you think of a story-teller who told us how valuable we are?
5. What subject at school deals with that story-teller?
6. How does that subject help people? What does it give them a chance to do?

Different subjects do different things. Some subjects deal with languages and the customs of different countries. Some subjects tell us how our world works and how our world might be in the future. Some subjects tell us about past events. Some tell us about people and places in the world.

In Religion class, we take time to reflect on the world and on life. This helps us to be more aware of the presence of God in the world. Through the story of Jesus, we learn more about how God wants us to live. We pray together. This allows the Holy Spirit to help us to live like Jesus.

The Seed That Flew Away

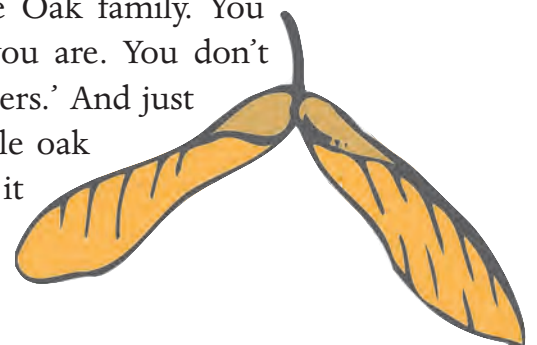
'Now, children,' said the tree to the seeds, 'when Autumn arrives it will be time for you to move on to a new life. The wind will catch you and spin you to sleep in the ground below. When Spring arrives, you will begin to grow and start the journey to becoming a tree in your own right. Then the other trees and I will be here to help you and to teach you.'

The seeds were both excited and nervous. 'Oh, I can't wait to live this new life,' said one little seed. 'I'm not so sure that I'm ready,' said another seed. 'How will I know what to do?' But the third seed spoke differently. 'I can't wait,' it said. 'I want to live my own life. I don't need anyone to tell me about life. I can be myself in my own way and do my own thing.'

The Autumn breezes blew into a storm and, sure enough, the three seeds were caught up and carried away. The first two spun themselves and aimed to land near the other trees, but the third seed aimed high and let the wind carry it far.

When Spring came, the third seed woke up and found itself alone. 'Good,' it said, 'just what I wanted.' It was fine at first as it enjoyed the freedom, the quiet and the space. But when it started to grow into a little tree, there were so many questions it could not answer. It wasn't sure what it would tell the new seeds that were growing on its branches. It didn't know what life was about.

Then Autumn winds started to blow again, and from far away lots of little seeds started to fly about. 'We have been sent to find you,' they said. 'You left without hearing the stories of the Oak family. You don't know how noble and valuable you are. You don't know the good that you can do for others.' And just before the Winter finally came, the little oak tree heard the stories that would carry it through the rest of its life.





A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

Let us listen to one of the stories told by the greatest story-teller.

Reader

'The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how. The earth produces of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. But when the grain is ripe, at once he goes in with his sickle, because the harvest has come.' (Mark 4:26-29)

Teacher

Imagine a seed. Picture its size and weight. Think of its shell. Imagine it in the soil. It starts to grow. It has been made so that it can grow. The earth surrounds it and helps it. As the little plant begins to develop, it splits the shell and begins to make its way up towards the light and heat.

Imagine your life is like the seed. It has a number of years in it. The life of each one of us is unique, different. Our lives have started to grow. God is with us to help us. Think of a hope or dream that you want God's help with... *(Pause)*

We pray:

All

God, we ask today that you will help us in our lives.

We are like seeds that are growing.

You have made us to grow.

By your gift, what has been hidden is becoming clearer.

We are getting to know ourselves.

We are getting to know others.

We are getting to know you.

Help us to grow well now through the choices we make.

Help us to make a good foundation

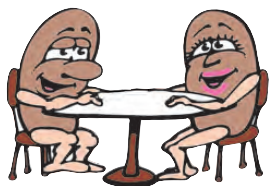
for what is yet to be,

for all that we may become.

Amen.

Sign of the Cross

Term 1, Lesson 7 The Bible



LET'S TALK

1. Can you name any of our best-known Irish stories? Can anyone in the class tell one of these stories?
2. What is your 'all-time' favourite story? See if the person beside you knows this story. If they don't, tell them a bit about it and why you have chosen it as your favourite.



LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.

In Religion class you take time to reflect on the world and on life. Stories can really help you to do this. People are always telling and collecting stories. The Bible contains many important stories about God, about people and about life.

The Jewish people and their special book



The Jewish people had their own stories too: stories told in family gatherings, around the table at mealtimes, around the campfire, along the way during journeys. They also had their own prayers. Eventually, these stories and prayers were collected and written down to become the core of the collection we know today as the Old Testament (or Jewish Scriptures).

The stories were about certain people and their relationship with God. In the Old Testament we read stories of people who responded to God's love with courage and bravery, sometimes in the face of great danger. We also read stories of people who failed to respond to God's love and who lived selfish lives. We read beautiful hymns of praise and thanks to God and psalms of sorrow for failure to respond to God's love and care.

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Let us settle ourselves now and relax. Sit comfortably and close your eyes. Become quiet and still. (Pause)

Picture yourself walking along an imaginary street. You turn down a lane and come to a door in a stone wall. Over the door is a notice that says 'The Garden of Jesus'. You go in. (Pause)

It is a lovely warm day. You feel the summer breeze on your face. In the garden there is a beautiful pool. You go and sit beside it. (Pause)

Imagine that Jesus comes to sit beside you. He asks you how you are. You take some time now to tell him how you feel. (Pause)

Jesus asks you about your favourite story. You tell him about it and why you like it. (Pause)

Listen to Jesus as he tells you that he likes stories too. He tells you that he loves the story of your life. He tells you that he is always with you, whether your story is happy or sad. (Pause)

It is time to leave the Garden of Jesus. Listen to anything else that Jesus has to say to you now. (Pause)

When you are ready, open your eyes again. Stretch and feel the energy that is in your body.

Sign of the Cross

The Bible

The word Bible comes from the Greek word 'biblia', meaning 'books'. The Bible is a very special book for all Christians as they believe that the Bible is the Word of God. The Bible was written by people who wanted to tell us about God and about God's love and care for all of us. God's Holy Spirit guided them as they wrote. The Church uses the term 'inspiration' to describe how God speaks to us through the words of human writers. God's Spirit inspired them so that what they wrote expressed the truth that God wanted to tell us. So the Bible is truly the Word of God. Through the stories we find in the Bible, we are shown, gradually, what God is really like. This is called revelation. For these reasons, we also call the Bible 'Sacred Scripture', which means sacred writings.



The Bible was written over many years, about 1,100 years in all. It was written by many different people from various backgrounds and walks of life. Among its authors we find Amos who was a farmer, Matthew who was a tax-collector, and Paul who was a tent-maker.



hasra dna habmraa



thur



sesmo



divad

A time to pray

Receiving your Bible

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

You will now receive a copy of the Bible, the Word of God.

I invite each of you to come forward, one at a time, to receive it.

As the Bible is handed to each pupil:

Teacher

Receive the Bible, the Word of God!

Pupil

Thanks be to God.

When all have received a copy of the Bible and have returned to their place:

Teacher

This is the Bible, the Word of God.

All

God's Word to guide us! God's Word to lead us!

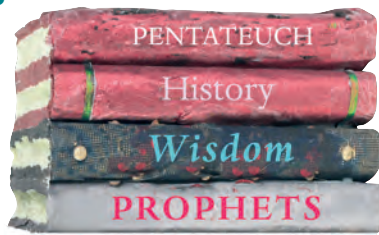
God's Word to direct us! God's Word to protect us!

Sign of the Cross

IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Unscramble the name(s) of the Old Testament character(s) in the pictures. Then write a few sentences about one of them.

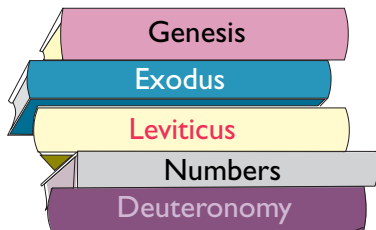
The Old Testament



Now you know that the Bible began with the Jewish people. God inspired the writers of the Bible so that you would learn from them what God wants you to know. Now, it's time to learn more about the first part of the Bible, which is called the Old Testament (or Jewish Scriptures).

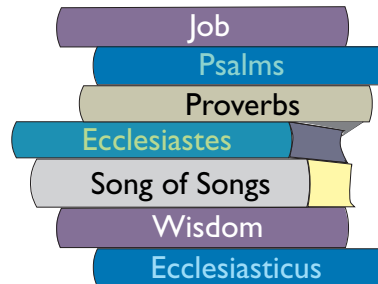
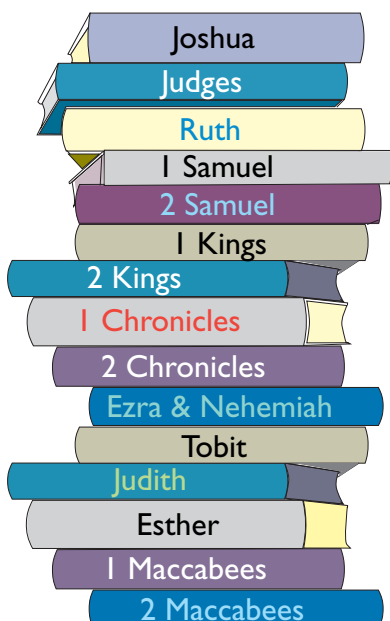
The Old Testament (or Jewish Scriptures)

The first part of the Bible contains forty-five books. These books are about God and the people of Israel before the time of Jesus.



The first five books of the Old Testament are called the **Pentateuch**. (In Hebrew, they are called the *Torah*.) In them we find the stories of Creation, of Adam and Eve, of Cain and Abel, of Abraham, of Joseph and his brothers, of Moses and of many others. They also contain the story of how God rescued the people of Israel from slavery and made them the 'Chosen People'.

The next section of the Old Testament contains **Historical Books**. They tell us stories about the great men and women among the people of Israel. They include, for example, the book of Ruth, the book of Joshua, the books of Samuel, the book of Judges and the books of Kings.



There are seven books in the next section of the Old Testament, known as the **Wisdom Writings**. They are made up of various writings, poems and proverbs. They include the book of Psalms, which contains hymns and prayers of praise and thanks to God.



The largest section in the Old Testament deals with the **prophets**. The prophets were people sent by God to speak out God's message to Israel. In this section we find the books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Amos and many more.

The Old Testament was written mostly in Hebrew. The Hebrew language is still spoken in the land of Israel today. Both Jews and Christians consider these Hebrew books to be holy and special.

The Dead Sea Scrolls

In 1947 a young shepherd boy was searching for a stray goat among caves near the Dead Sea, thirteen miles east of Jerusalem. He picked up a stone and threw it through the opening of one of the caves to see if the goat would come out. Instead, he heard the sound of breaking pottery. He was scared and went away, but he returned the following day with his cousin. When they looked inside they found many old pottery jars. The jars were 21 inches high and just over 9 inches wide and they contained what looked like rolls of wallpaper. These scrolls were very fragile and broke easily into tiny pieces. When experts began to examine the pieces they realised that they had found the oldest copies of parts of the Hebrew Scriptures (sacred writings). Since then, this has become a place of major importance. Other caves have also been explored and more pottery jars with scrolls inside have been discovered.



These scrolls, known today as the Dead Sea Scrolls, are extremely important for scholars who wish to study early versions of the Old Testament.

Interview with Mazra, the shepherd boy, for the *Jerusalem Herald*



What's your name? What do you do?

My name is Mazra. I am a shepherd boy.

Tell us how you found the scrolls.

I was out with my herd of animals. They were grazing where we could see the Dead Sea. It was time to go home. I counted the animals as I always do and I found that one of the goats was missing. So I went to look for it.

And did you find the scrolls then?

No. I didn't find the goat either. I noticed some caves high up on the hillside. I thought the goat might have climbed in there. So I aimed a stone high up into the

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

God loves the world and all the people in it. God has always worked with people to make the world a better place. We praise God together now as we say:

All

From beginning to end, from age to age, you love us, O God. You are with us always.

Teacher

We thank God for the stories of the Pentateuch: the stories of Creation, the stories of Abraham, the stories of Moses.

We thank God for the history stories of the Bible: the stories of Samuel, the stories of David, the stories of the people.

All

From beginning to end, from age to age, you love us, O God. You are with us always.

Teacher

We thank God for the wisdom of the Bible: for its psalms of thanks and praise, for its prayers of sorrow and joy, for its proverbs and wise sayings.

We thank God for the words of the prophets: for the way they spoke for God and for the poor.

All

From beginning to end, from age to age, you love us, O God. You are with us always.

Teacher

We praise God as we say:

All

Glory be to the Father...

Sign of the Cross

air. I have a great aim. The stone went into a cave and I heard the sound of pottery breaking. That frightened me. My mother is always giving out to me for breaking things. So I hurried home.

Why did you go back to the caves?

I told my cousin about it that night, when I got home. I was afraid to tell anyone else. He said that he would come with me next day to take a look. He's a better climber than I am so he got there first. We couldn't believe what we saw inside the cave – rows and rows of jars! There were scrolls inside the jars.

How did you know they were scrolls?

I had seen scrolls like them in our place of prayer, but I had never seen so many scrolls before. Only

important people have scrolls. Very few of us are able to read and write. So, my cousin and I knew straightaway that these scrolls were very important. We told our parents when we got home and that's how it all happened.

The Book of Daniel
Second-century
papyrus written in
Greek

WHY DON'T YOU?

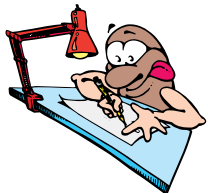
Draw a picture to illustrate the story of the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Act out the interview between Mazra and the reporter for the *Jerusalem Herald*.

Write down five questions for which the answer is 'The Dead Sea Scrolls', e.g. What was found in caves near the Dead Sea in 1947?

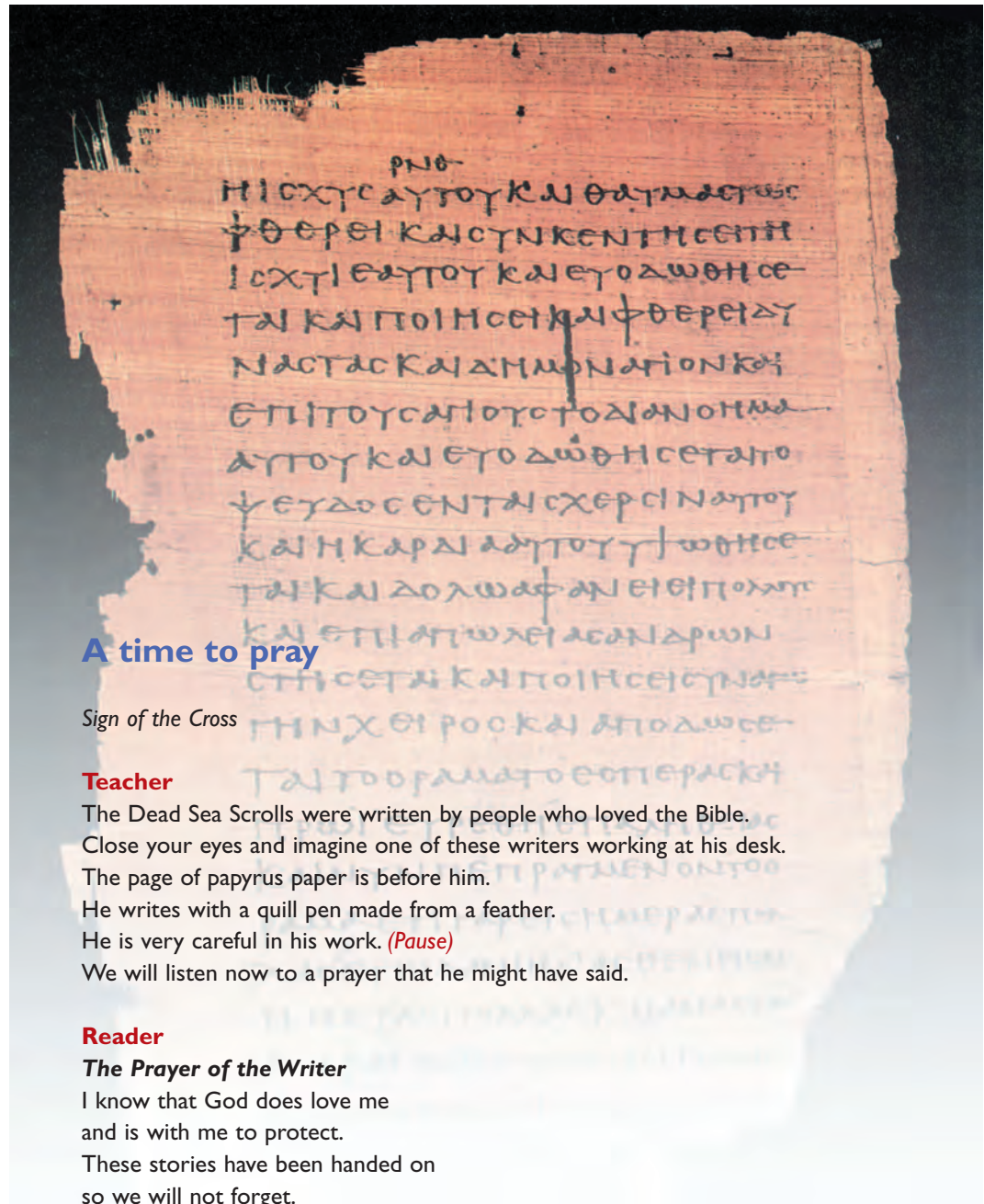
Go on-line and visit www.centuryone.com/ds/sjar.html to see a picture of a pottery jar that contained one of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Type the phrase 'Dead Sea Scrolls' into an Internet search-engine and see what else you can find out.



LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.



A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

The Dead Sea Scrolls were written by people who loved the Bible. Close your eyes and imagine one of these writers working at his desk. The page of papyrus paper is before him. He writes with a quill pen made from a feather. He is very careful in his work. *(Pause)* We will listen now to a prayer that he might have said.

Reader

The Prayer of the Writer

I know that God does love me
and is with me to protect.
These stories have been handed on
so we will not forget.
I truly love these stories
So I copy them with care,
For others have to hear them too
and know that God is there.

Teacher

We thank God for the people who went to a lot of trouble to tell and copy out the Bible stories. Because of them, we know more about God's love today.

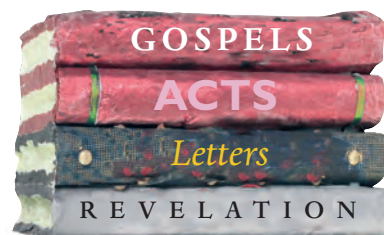
All

Glory be to the Father...

Sign of the Cross

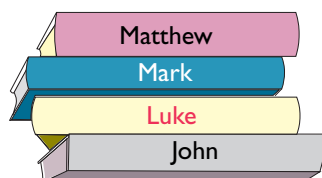
Term 1, Lesson 9 The New Testament

You've taken a look at the Old Testament. Now it's time to look at the other part of the Bible, which is called the New Testament (or the Christian Scriptures).



The New Testament (or Christian Scriptures)

The New Testament contains twenty-seven books. The first four of these are the four **Gospels**. The word Gospel comes from the Greek word 'euangelion', meaning 'good news'. These tell us the good news of Jesus' life, death and resurrection. They also tell us about those who followed Jesus.



The book known as the **Acts of the Apostles** comes next. This tells us the story of the first people to belong to the Church and how they continued to spread the message of Jesus.



Most of the rest of the New Testament is made up of **letters** by St Paul and others to the various Christian communities. These letters explained the message of Jesus to the early followers and helped them to understand what it means to be a friend and follower of Jesus.



The last book of the New Testament is known as the **book of Revelation**. It is also known as the Apocalypse. It is a strange and mysterious book. It uses many unusual images to tell about the end of the world and the victory of Jesus.

Revelation

The New Testament was written in Greek, a language many people knew and used at the time of Jesus.

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

The New Testament is the story of Jesus and of the people who first followed him. These people loved Jesus. They wrote Gospels and letters so that others would get to know about Jesus, even after they were gone. We remember what they loved about Jesus as we listen to the reading.

Reader

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark (4:1-2).

When Jesus taught beside the Sea of Galilee, a big crowd gathered. It was so large that he had to sit in a boat out on the lake, while the people stood on the shore. He used stories to teach them many things. *(Pause)*

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Teacher

Close your eyes and imagine the scene.

It is evening time and people have heard that Jesus is around. It is a sunny evening. See the crowds gathering beside the Sea of Galilee. *(Pause)*

They have had their evening meal. But they are hungry for something else. See their faces focusing on Jesus with interest. *(Pause)*

At first the group is small. But then so many people gather that they cannot get close. See how Jesus reacts. He really wants them to hear him. *(Pause)*

Someone suggests using the boat. Jesus is delighted. See his happy face as he tells his stories about God's love. *(Pause)*

We pray to God in the way passed on to us by the friends of Jesus who wrote about him. Together, we say:

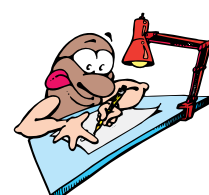
All

Our Father...

Sign of the Cross

LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.



Term 1, Lesson 10
Using the Bible

The Bible has two parts: the Old Testament (or Hebrew Scriptures) and the New Testament (or Christian Scriptures). You know how each of the two parts is made up of books or letters. Now it's time to see how each book or letter is divided into chapters and verses. Knowing this will give you a handy way of finding any story or saying in the Bible.

The books of the Bible are divided into chapters and verses

The Bible contains many different books and letters, each of which has a name. The books and letters are divided into chapters and these chapters are numbered. Each chapter is further divided into verses. There are big numbers and small numbers on each page of the Bible. The big numbers tell us the chapter and the small numbers tell us the verse. If you are looking for a story or a prayer in the Bible, it helps if you have the correct Bible reference.

A full Bible reference contains the name of the book, the chapter and verse. Here is an example: Mark 1:4. The first word 'Mark' is the title of

The diagram illustrates the structure of a Bible page. A red box labeled 'The Title of the Book' points to the title 'The Gospel according to Mark'. Another red box labeled 'Number of Chapter' points to the chapter number '1' under the heading 'CHAPTER 1'. A third red box labeled 'Number of Verse' points to the verse number '4' at the start of a verse. The page content is as follows:

The Gospel according to
Mark

CHAPTER 1

1 This is the good news about Jesus Christ, the Son of God. 2 It began just as God had said in the book written by Isaiah the prophet, 'I am sending my messenger to get the way ready for you.'	3 In the desert someone is shouting, "Get the road ready for the Lord! Make a straight path for him." 4 So John the Baptist appeared in the desert and told everyone, "Turn back to God and be baptised! Then your sins will be forgiven."
---	---

the book. The number '1' is the number of the chapter and the number '4' is the number of the verse.

Often, the name of the book is abbreviated (or shortened). For example, Mark is shortened to 'Mk' and Luke is shortened to 'Lk'.

Here is another example: 2 Cor 9:6-11. The 'Cor' is the short form of the name 'Corinthians'. This is the name of the letter of St Paul to the Corinthians. The 2 at the front means that it is Paul's second letter to them. The 9 is the number of the chapter of this second letter and '6-11' tells us to read from the sixth to the eleventh verse.

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

Let us place our Bible on the desk before us as we pray together:

All

Prayer on Opening the Bible

Bless me, O God, so that
in opening this Bible
I may open my mind and my heart
to your Word.

May your Word nourish me
as it nourished Jesus.

Teacher

Quietly and reverently, we open our Bible now. We go to Psalm 36,
Verse 7. *(Pause to allow time to find this.)* We will read it aloud together.

All read the verse aloud.

Teacher

Now, silently and respectfully, read the verse to yourself.

Think of what it means.

God is with you now as you read this verse.

Allow God to inspire you and to teach you in this quiet time. *(Pause)*

Now we close our Bible and we pray:

All

Prayer on Closing the Bible

Bless me, O God,
so that in closing this Bible
I may enclose your Word
in my heart and in my mind
as Jesus enclosed it in his. Amen.

Sign of the Cross

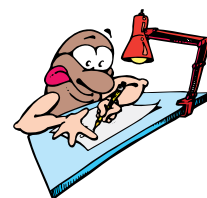


WHY DON'T YOU?

Design a Bible bookmark. You might like to include on it your favourite piece of scripture. Perhaps you might use one of the pieces of scripture used in Lesson 5, or one of the sayings of Jesus.

or

Design what you think would be an appropriate cover for a copy of the Bible.



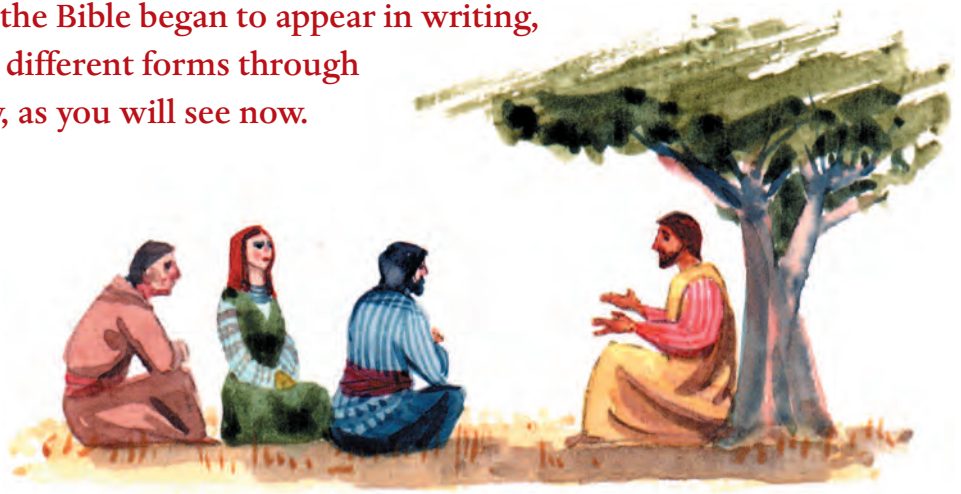
LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.

Term 1, Lesson 11
**The Word
of God
through
the Ages**

The stories of the Jewish people were told on journeys, at mealtimes, around the campfire, long before they were written down. These stories became the core of the Bible.

When the Bible began to appear in writing, it took different forms through history, as you will see now.



The Bible through the Ages

- Bible stories were first written on clay tablets.
- Much of the Old Testament had been written by 300 BC. It was copied on to pages made from papyrus, a reed that grew in Egypt. These pages were sewn together into scrolls, like lengths of wallpaper. They were used during prayer in the synagogues. When scrolls became too worn, they were placed in jars and hidden or buried. Such sacred texts were never destroyed.
- By early in the second century AD, the New Testament had been completed.
- By the sixth century AD, monks were making handwritten copies of the whole Bible. They wrote on pages made from parchment (sheep skin) or vellum (calf skin). These pages were made into books. Beautiful examples still exist: the Book of Kells, the Book of Durrow and the Lindisfarne Gospels.
- In 1450 Johann Gutenberg printed the whole Bible for the first time. He made only 150 copies, but, as printing got better and quicker, people everywhere could get to see a copy of the Bible.
- The Bible became the world's best selling book. More people have read at least some part of the Bible than any other book in history. It has been translated into about two thousand different languages. It is a special book for Christians, who read it at home, in school and in Church.
- Nowadays the Bible can be read at several websites. You could even download it on to your Palmtop computer!



WHY DON'T YOU?

Listen to the Bible
being read at
www.audio-bible.com

Do a Bible search
on-line at
www.biblegospel.com.net

Look up the Bible in
another language at
www.olivetree.com

Christians love and reverence the Bible because it is the Word of God.

Through the ages, Christians have gone to a lot of trouble to give others the chance to have a Bible. This is because they love the Bible; they believe it is the Word of God.

Copying anything by hand is a slow process at the best of times.



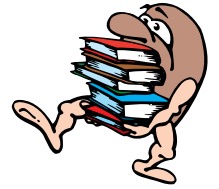
However, when you have to make your own ink and writing material, it is even harder. Groups of monks in monasteries made copies of the Bible in this way. They spent years making one copy. Some of them might have died before the work was finished. They wrote with quills made from feathers and they wrote on vellum (specially prepared calfskin).

Before he began his work, Brother Brendan prayed: 'God, give me clear eyes and a steady hand, that my work today may honour you. Amen.'

Handwritten books took years to produce. Few people could afford to own a Bible. Eventually, Johann Gutenberg found a way of copying that didn't use handwriting: he invented the printing press. First, a large metal page of print was prepared. Ink was rolled on to the metal print; then it was pressed on to a damp page of paper. When the paper was peeled away the ink stuck. Johann's machine was slow by today's standards, but he could make many copies of the same page in much less time than it took to write one.



Johann Gutenberg made it possible for everyone to see the Word of God.



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Choose one of your favourite stories from the Bible – a story about Jesus healing someone might be a good choice. Take a sheet of A4 paper and carefully copy out your chosen story. Take your time, as no mistakes are allowed. If you make a mistake, you must start again. When you have finished, stick the page into your journal and answer this question: what did you learn from doing this exercise?

or

Take the letter 'J' of the name Jesus (or the first letter of your own name) and decorate it using a spiral or Celtic design. Use a variety of colours. The results could be put together in a class display.

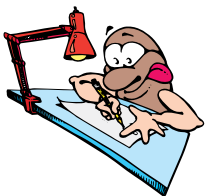


WHY DON'T YOU?

Go to <http://prodigi.bl.uk/gutenberg/background.asp> and click on the images there for a close-up look at Gutenberg's work.

Read more about Johann Gutenberg at http://paramail.pwacss.sa.edu.au/ret/Stoeckel/Graphic_Design/TYPEFACE/GUTEN.HTM

Contact a modern printing company and ask them to send you information about printing today.



LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

Down through the centuries people have loved and revered the Bible. We will join with them in our prayertime today. (*Teacher picks up the Bible and holds it aloft and continues*) We love and reverence the Bible!

All

Because it is the Word of God.

Reader

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John (1 Jn 4:7-12).

My dear friends, we must love each other. Love comes from God, and when we love each other, it shows that we have been given new life. We are now God's children, and we know him. God is love, and anyone who doesn't love others has never known him. God showed his love for us when he sent his only Son into the world to give us life. Real love isn't our love for God, but his love for us. God sent his Son to be the sacrifice by which our sins are forgiven. Dear friends, since God loved us this much, we must love each other. No one has ever seen God. But if we love each other, God lives in us, and his love is truly in our hearts.

This is the word of the Lord.

All

Thanks be to God.

Teacher

Together, we praise God's Word as we say:

All

God's Word to bless us!

God's Word to protect us!

The Word of God to guide and direct us! Amen.

Sign of the Cross

Why did people write the Bible? Why did people gather all its writings together? They wanted us to know that God is with us. The Bible tells the story of how people came to know that God is with us. Over time, people came to realise that we are always being invited to have a special relationship with God. This is as true for us today as it was for people centuries ago.

Term 1, **Lesson 12**
God with
Abraham
and Sarah;
God with Us

God's relationship with Abraham and Sarah

People often make agreements with one another. There are always two sides involved. Both sides decide together about something and then do what is needed to make sure that this will happen. Sometimes agreements are made by word of mouth. Sometimes they are made in a more serious way. Another word for agreement is **covenant**.

The Bible tells the story of the first agreement between God and people: this was the agreement between God and a man called Abram and his wife Sarai. It happened nearly four thousand years ago. There were two sides to the agreement: God promised to look after Abram and his family; Abram and his family promised to respect God and to do what God asked.



The Story of Abram and Sarai

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, God appeared to him and said, 'I am El Shaddai.' Abram bowed to the ground. God said to him, 'Here now is my covenant with you. You will no longer be called Abram; your name shall be Abraham. I will make you the father of many nations. I will be your God and the God of your people after you.'

God said to Abraham, 'As for Sarai, your wife, you will not call her Sarai, but Sarah. I will bless her and you will have a son.'

Abraham bowed to the ground. He laughed, thinking to himself, 'How can a child be born to a man one hundred years old? How can Sarah have a child at the age of ninety?'

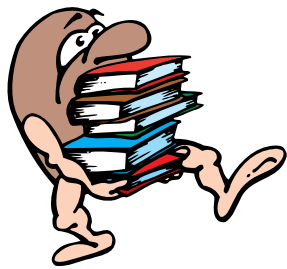
But God replied, 'Sarah will have a son and you will call him Isaac. I will be his God and the God of his people after him.'

God was good to Sarah. She gave birth to a son as God had promised. Abraham named his son Isaac. Then Sarah said, 'God has given me cause to laugh, and all those who hear of it will laugh with me.'

WHY DON'T YOU?

Look up Genesis 17:1-9, 15-19 to find the story of Abraham and Sarah.

Act out a conversation between Abraham and Sarah in which they share the news of God's invitation.



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Imagine you are Sarah, wife of Abraham, in the story. Write your diary entry for the day Abraham heard God's invitation.

God invited Abraham and Sarah to make a special agreement. It was the beginning of a very special relationship between God and the Jewish people. The Old Testament records many stories about the Jewish people and their attempts to answer God's invitation. Apart from Abraham and Sarah, can you think of any other characters from the Old Testament with whom God made a special agreement? How would you explain the term 'agreement' to someone who didn't know what it meant?

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

Through Abraham and Sarah, God promised to be with people always. God has been with us right from the beginning, taking good care of us. So, together, we can say:

All

God has taken good care of us.

Teacher

From the time of Abraham and Sarah...

All

God has taken good care of us.

Teacher

From the time of David and Solomon...

All

God has taken good care of us.

Teacher

From the time of the apostles and friends of Jesus...

All

God has taken good care of us.

Teacher

From the time St Patrick came to Ireland...

All

God has taken good care of us.

Teacher

From the time we were baptised...

All

God has taken good care of us.

Teacher

Bow your head and let God bless you with what you need for today. (Pause)

Sign of the Cross



Relating to others; Relating to God

Look at the pictures. What kind of relationships do you see?



What are the main relationships of your life now? Can you give an example from one of these relationships of one thing that is good about the relationship? What helps to make it good? Does this teach you anything about relationships?

On the other hand, are there times when our relationships can get strained or go wrong? What helps to sort things out at times like that? Does this teach you anything about relationships?

Like Abraham and Sarah, we too are invited into a relationship with God. What sort of things help you to feel close to God? Who are the people that are most likely to influence your relationship with God? When are you most likely to pray and talk to God?

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

Let us settle ourselves now and relax. *(Pause)*

We become quiet and still. *(Pause)*

We become aware of our breathing. *(Pause)*

Today we will silently pray the words: 'You are my child; live in my love'.

We allow ourselves to be aware that God is speaking to us in this prayer. *(Pause)*

On the in-breath, we will silently pray the words: 'You are my child'.

On the out-breath, we will silently pray: 'live in my love'.

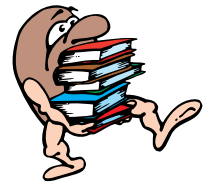
(These words are repeated a number of times to ensure that everyone has time to remember them. The prayertime continues in silence for a suitable time. The teacher concludes:)

When you are ready, say a quiet word of thanks to God.

Then open your eyes once more and stretch.

Feel the energy of life that God gives to you.

Sign of the Cross



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Write about a time when a relationship was good and the things that made it good.

or

Write about a time when a relationship went wrong for you. What would have helped to sort it out?

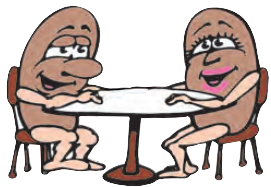


LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.

Term 1, Lesson 13

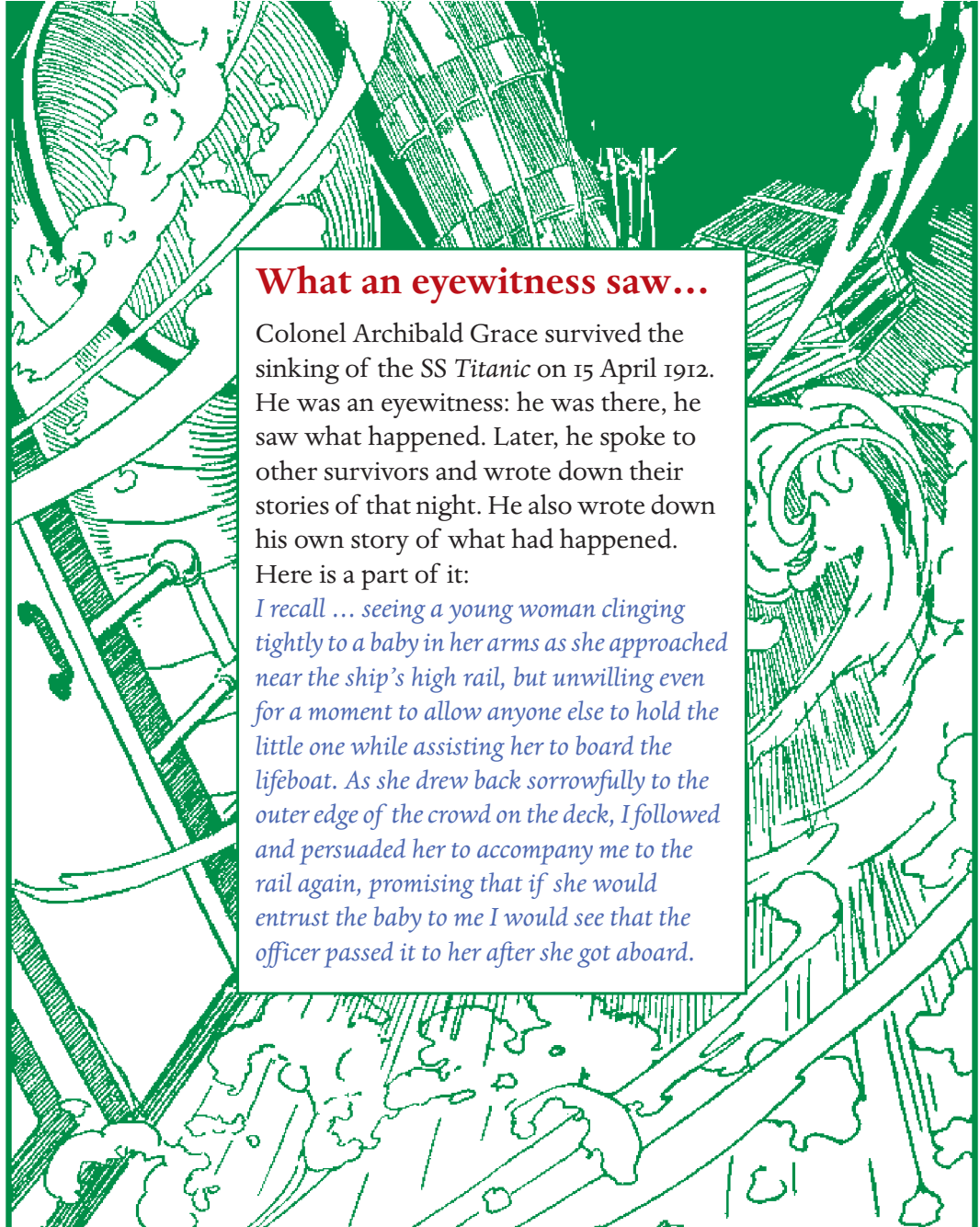
Stages in the Writing of the Gospels



LET'S TALK

1. How many years is it since the *Titanic* tragedy?
2. If you were writing a book or making a film about it, where would you get your information?
3. Can you remember any other more recent tragedy involving such a huge loss of life?
4. What part did eyewitnesses play in telling us about it?
5. Have you ever watched or listened to the News on TV or radio? Did it include eyewitness reports?
6. Why do you think the News might include eyewitness reports?

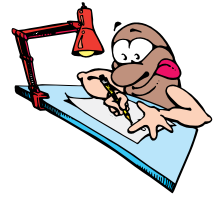
In the previous lesson you learned about Abraham and Sarah. Their story comes from the first part of the Bible: the Old Testament (or Jewish Scriptures). Now it's time to look at the second part of the Bible: the New Testament (or Christian Scriptures). Do you know anything about how the Gospels came to be written? It's time to find out...



Stages in the writing of the Gospels

The Gospels tell the story of Jesus. Yet, Jesus did not write the Gospels – other people did. How did the life and words of Jesus become the story told in the Gospels? What was the chain of events that made this happen? Were there eyewitnesses? Were there reporters? What was their part in the making of the Gospels? Reports of historical events, like the sinking of the SS *Titanic*, are often based on what eyewitnesses can recall. Writers or reporters piece their statements together to make a whole story.

There were three stages in the making of the Gospels. Firstly, the friends of Jesus listened to what Jesus said and saw what he did. Secondly, the friends of Jesus began to pass on stories about Jesus to people who never met him; for example, St Peter spoke to the people on Pentecost Day. Finally, in the third stage, a number of writers gathered all these individual stories together to make books, which we call Gospels.



So, the stages in the making of the Gospels can be summarised as follows:

Stage 1. THE LIFE, DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF JESUS

Eyewitnesses see and hear Jesus; they are there when events happen.

Stage 2. THE APOSTLES TELL OTHERS ABOUT JESUS

The stories about Jesus are passed on from person to person.

Stage 3. THE EVANGELISTS WRITE THEIR GOSPELS – AD 65

The story of Jesus begins to be recorded for all time and all people.

LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.



What led from one stage to another?

It all began with the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. Then, after Pentecost Day, the Holy Spirit helped the friends of Jesus to tell others about him. Jesus' friends loved him and they wanted others to love him too. So they told stories about him. They told about what he did and what he said. Many people did not want to hear about Jesus or to live in a new way. They treated the friends of Jesus badly. Peter the apostle was arrested in Rome. So too was Paul. Along with many other followers of Jesus, they were put to death. It was a time of great sorrow.

The followers of Jesus began to ask themselves: how will we remember the stories of Jesus now that Peter is gone? Without Peter to check the stories, mistakes could now be made as they were handed on by word of mouth. So they began to write the stories down – the Gospels began to be written. They also wrote down the story of Paul and of how the Church began. They made and kept copies of the letters that Paul and the other apostles wrote. Years later, these Gospels and letters and other stories were gathered together and became the New Testament.

WHY DON'T YOU?

Play a game of 'Chinese Whispers'. Then discuss whether 'word of mouth' is the best way to make sure information gets passed on. Does this tell us anything about why the Gospels were written?

A time to pray

Teacher

Let us close our eyes. In our imagination, we are going to travel back in time... back to Rome in the year AD 65. A man named Mark is leaving Rome on foot. He is frightened. See how he walks, trying not to draw attention to himself. *(Pause)*

There is trouble. Emperor Nero has blamed the Christians for the recent fire that burnt much of Rome. Mark's great friend, Peter the Apostle, has been executed. Imagine how Mark feels in his heart. *(Pause)*

At last, Mark gets to the safety of a friend's house. The others are there before him. He hears the brutal news of how other Christians have died. He is overcome with grief. *(Pause)*

After a while, they pray. Someone asks Mark to say a few words. After all, he knew Peter best. Mark gives thanks to God for Peter, his friend. *(Pause)*

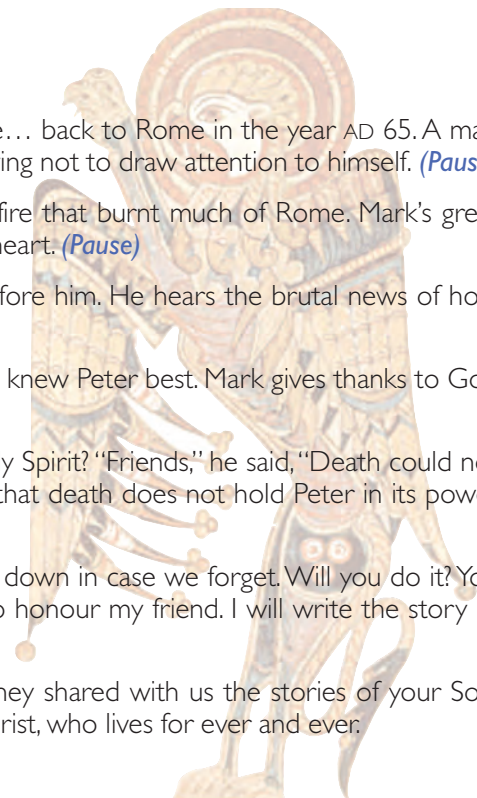
Mark says, 'Do you remember what Peter said on the day God sent the Holy Spirit? "Friends," he said, "Death could not hold Jesus in its power." And I believe,' Mark continued in a stronger voice, 'that death does not hold Peter in its power either. He is alive in heaven with Jesus.' *(Pause)*

Afterwards, the friends talk to Mark. They say, 'Someone has to write all this down in case we forget. Will you do it? You knew Peter best.' Mark thinks of his friend, Peter, and says, 'Yes, I will do it to honour my friend. I will write the story of Jesus.' *(Pause)*

God our Father, the first friends of Jesus opened their hearts and minds. They shared with us the stories of your Son, whom you sent. May we open our hearts and minds to your Word, Jesus Christ, who lives for ever and ever.

All

Amen.



Term 1, Lesson 14

The Evangelists

An evangelist is someone who tells the good news about Jesus Christ. In writing their Gospels, the evangelists wanted to tell people about Jesus and to help them understand the meaning of Jesus' life, death and resurrection. There are four Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. These are the names of the four evangelists.



LET'S TALK

Have you ever heard two people describe the same event differently? How is that possible?

WHY DON'T YOU?

Pick an event (e.g. sport, music, TV) that you and some of your school friends saw or took part in recently. Get each person to write an account of the event and then compare your accounts. Will there be any differences? If so, why do you think this might be? Could such differences give you a hint as to why the four evangelists (writers of the Gospels) tell the story of Jesus differently?

WHY DON'T YOU?

Draw and colour in the symbols of the four evangelists on four separate cards. They will be used during the prayertime.

Symbols for the Evangelists

The early Christian Church used four symbols to represent the four Gospel writers: **Matthew is represented as a man** – perhaps because his Gospel begins by tracing the human ancestry of Jesus (his family tree).

Mark is represented as a lion – a symbol of his faith and courage in writing his Gospel for persecuted Christians in Rome.

Luke is represented as an ox – perhaps because his Gospel account of the life and teaching of Jesus portrays Jesus' gentleness and patience with the poor and the oppressed.

John is represented as an eagle – a beautiful bird with huge wings that can swoop upwards faster and higher than any other bird. This suggests that John's Gospel shows a deeper understanding of the life and teaching of Jesus.

Key Points about the Evangelists

- The evangelists wrote at different times and for different communities.
- All four evangelists told the story of Jesus. They based what they wrote on eyewitness information. Most likely, they did not see these things themselves.
- They got their information from different sources. This explains the differences in the way each Gospel tells the story.
- The first Gospel to be written was the Gospel according to Mark. It was written some time between AD 65 and 75.
- Mark was writing for Greek-speaking Gentiles in Rome. A Gentile is someone who is not Jewish. This word is used in both the Old and New Testaments.
- The Gospel according to Matthew and the Gospel according to Luke were written next, some time between AD 80 and 90.
- Matthew wrote for Jews who had become Christians.
- Luke wrote for Gentiles who had become Christians.
- The Gospel according to John was the last of the four Gospels to be written. It was probably finished between AD 90 and 100.

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

The symbols of the evangelists may be carried by four students.

Teacher

There are four Gospels:

Matthew (student holds up the 'man' symbol for Matthew)

Mark (student holds up the 'lion' symbol for Mark)

Luke (student holds up the 'ox' symbol for Luke)

and John (student holds up the 'eagle' symbol for John)

The students lower their symbols. Each one is raised in turn during the reading of the passage from the corresponding Gospel.

Teacher

We remember Matthew's picture of Jesus as teacher:

Reader 1

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew (cf. Mt 5:3-10).

Be dependent on God and be blessed!
Be mindful of those who have died and be blessed!
Be close to the earth and be blessed!
Be just and fair and be blessed!
Be compassionate and be blessed!
Be genuine and true and be blessed!
Be a peacemaker and be blessed!
Be prepared to stand up for what is right and be blessed!

Teacher

We remember Mark's very human picture of Jesus.

Reader 2

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark (1:40-41).

A man with leprosy came to Jesus and knelt down. He begged, 'You have the power to make me well, if only you



wanted to.' Jesus felt sorry for the man. So he put his hand on him and said, 'I want to! Now you are well.'

Teacher

We remember how Luke shows Jesus praying.

Reader 3

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke (6:12).

Jesus went off to a mountain to pray, and he spent the whole night there. The next morning he chose his apostles.

Teacher

We remember how John shows Jesus as our light.

Reader 4

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John (8:12).

Jesus said, 'I am the light for the world! Follow me, and you won't be walking in the dark. You will have the light that gives life.'

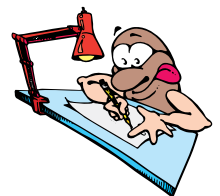
Teacher

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Sign of the Cross



LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.

Term 1, Lesson 15

The Gospel according to Mark

You know that there were four evangelists: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Now you're going to have a chance to learn more about one of these: Mark.

How the Gospel according to Mark describes Jesus

Here is a list of some of the things that this Gospel tells us about Jesus. The Bible references are in brackets after each one. Check them out.

- Jesus is the Son of God (1:1)
- Jesus teaches with divine authority (1:22)
- Jesus feels pity (1:41)
- Jesus works amazing miracles (1:44)
- Jesus feels anger (3:5)
- Jesus wonders (6:6)
- Jesus is tired (6:31)
- Jesus feels compassion (6:34)
- Jesus feels annoyance (10:14)
- Jesus feels love (10:21)
- Jesus is hungry (11:12)
- Jesus feels deep fear (14:33)
- Jesus feels alone on the cross (15:34)

Mark

Fact-File on the Gospel according to Mark

Author:

Not known for sure. Probably Mark, who was secretary for Peter, the apostle.

Date:

Around AD 65-75. First Gospel to be written.

Target audience:

Greek-speaking Gentile (non-Jewish) people of Rome.

Source of information for this Gospel:

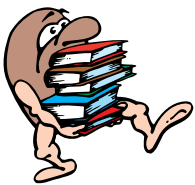
Peter, the apostle.

Main point of Gospel:

Jesus is the Son of God. It's in the very first sentence. Peter says it in the middle of the Gospel. The centurion says it again after Jesus has died on the cross.

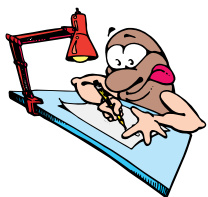
Things left out:

The birth of Jesus and Jesus growing up.



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Look up Mark 1:1. Copy it into your Religion journal. Then pick out your favourite description of Jesus from the list opposite. Copy it into your journal and write about why you chose it.



LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.



Jesus cures the man with leprosy

Find Mark 1:40-45 in your Bible and read it quietly.

Imagine the scene. What kind of a day is it? Is it late or early? Who is there? What are they saying/ doing?

Picture the leper. What is he wearing? How does he look? What does the man with leprosy do? What does he say? How do the people react?

Concentrate on Jesus. What does Jesus say? How does the man respond to Jesus? What happens next?

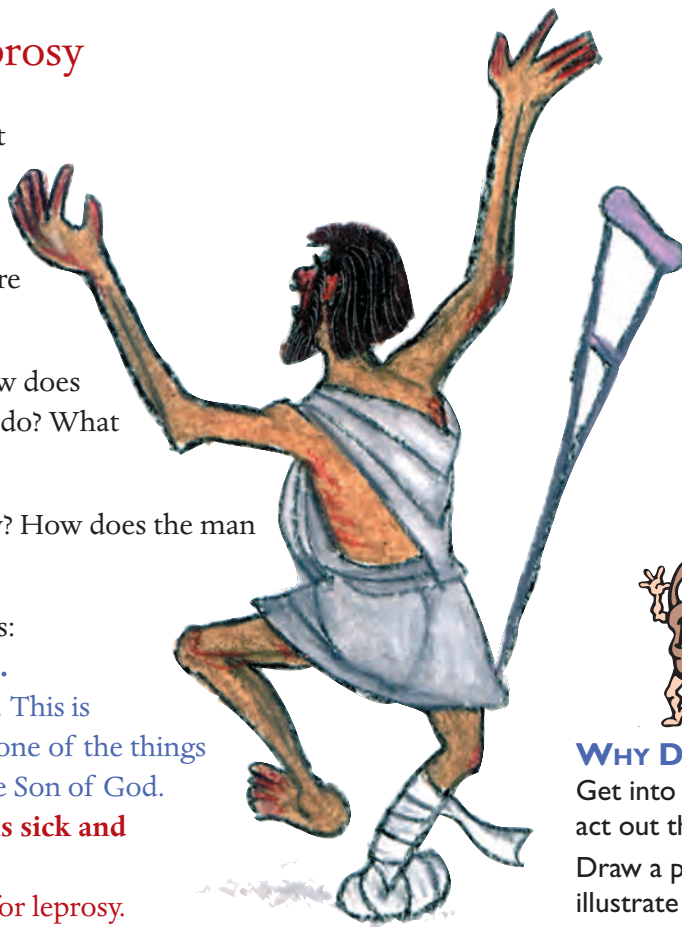
This story shows us two things about Jesus:

1. The power Jesus has to work miracles.

With a word, Jesus makes the man well. This is amazing. Jesus has great power. This is one of the things Mark highlights to show that Jesus is the Son of God.

2. His strong reaction to someone who is sick and suffering.

In the time of Jesus, there was no cure for leprosy. Those with leprosy had to keep away from others. People threw stones at them to keep them away. Mark tells us a story about how Jesus treated a leper. Jesus does not flinch or draw back. He does not hesitate. Jesus reaches out and touches the leper. He is tender and kind. He sees past the sickness to the person inside.



WHY DON'T YOU?

Get into groups and act out the story.

Draw a picture to illustrate the story.

Pretend that you are an eyewitness to the story of Jesus and the leper. You are being interviewed for a local radio station. Tell what you saw in your own words.

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

Now that we have heard about what Jesus is like, we will pray to him.

All

Jesus, you are our friend.

You care for us.

You will not turn away from us.

You will always be with us.

You want us to let you be a part of our lives.

You bring God's power and love to us.

Give us confidence in you.

You went through hard times.

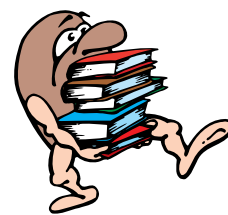
Help us, when times are hard, to

remember that you are with us.

Help us, like you, to be kind to others when they are in trouble.

Amen.

Sign of the Cross



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Imagine that you are a journalist reporting for the *Galilean Times*.

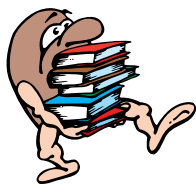
What questions would you ask the man who was cured of leprosy?

What points do you think the man cured of leprosy might want to make in the interview?

Write up the article.

Term 1, Lesson 16

Remembering our Baptism



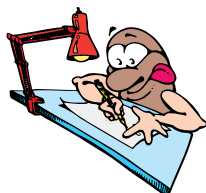
IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Design and fill in a Baptismal Remembrance Certificate. Make sure that it contains the following details: your name, your date of birth, your date of Baptism, your sponsors, the name of the church or place where you were baptised, and the name of the priest who baptised you.



WHY DON'T YOU?

Find out how your name was chosen, if you don't already know. See if your baptismal candle is still at home. You might like to light it and say a short prayer.



LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.

In the Bible we hear stories from the past of God being with people. God is with us today too, through the world and through the people around us.

God is also present in those special celebrations that we call sacraments. There are seven sacraments in total.

You have probably celebrated four of them so far: Baptism, Reconciliation (Confession), Eucharist (Communion) and Confirmation.

A sacrament is a visible sign of an invisible gift from God.

Most of you were baptised as babies. Later in your life, when you were more grown up and developed, there were other

important celebrations: your First Confession (Reconciliation), your First Communion (Eucharist) and your Confirmation. If you have been very seriously ill, the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick may also have been celebrated with you. Later, you will hear about the other two sacraments: Marriage and Holy Orders.

In this lesson we remember what happens when we celebrate the sacrament of Baptism. Have you seen any photographs of your Baptism? Did any of the people there have a special role (or job) that day? Can you remember any of the things that happen at a celebration of Baptism?



The Rite of Baptism for Children

Here are the main moments of the celebration of Baptism:

1. Welcome at the Door

The priest welcomes everybody at the door of the church. The parents give the baby's name. The baby is welcomed. The priest asks the parents and godparents to help the baby to be a follower of Jesus. They make the sign of the cross on the baby's forehead.

2. The Word of God at the Ambo (reading place)

All listen to the scripture readings. In the Prayer of the Faithful, everyone prays for the baby and its parents.

3. Preparing for Baptism

The priest anoints the baby with blessed oil. He says a special prayer, asking God to protect the baby.

4. Celebration of Baptism at the Font

The priest blesses the water for the Baptism. The parents and godparents promise to live like Jesus. The priest baptises the baby by pouring water over its head. He says, *'I baptise you, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.'*

5. After the Baptism

The priest puts chrism on the baby's head. The baby is wrapped in a white garment. The baptismal candle is lit. The priest blesses the baby's ears and mouth.

6. Final Prayers and Blessing at the Altar

All go to the altar where they say the Lord's Prayer (Our Father). The priest blesses the parents and all present.

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

Let us settle ourselves now and relax. Become quiet and still. Allow yourself to become aware of your breathing. Focus for a moment on each breath that you take.

(Pause)

Focus on each breath as a gift from God to you. *(Pause)*

Let yourself be more aware of God's closeness to you. *(Pause)*

We will now listen to a prayer for a newborn baby.

As you hear it, imagine that it is being said over you.

Allow yourself to be more aware of God's gift of life in you now, today.

Reader

Prayer over a Newborn Baby

You are a gift from God.

God has given you the gift of life.

In every breath, God's gift of life!

In every heartbeat, God's gift of life!

In every move of hand or foot, God's gift of life!

In every flicker of the eyelid, God's gift of life!

In every gulp and swallow, God's gift of life!

In every call and cry, God's gift of life!

God knows you.

God watches over you.

God guides you.

God will keep you safe through
this life to the new life of forever.

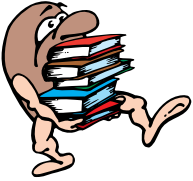
Sign of the Cross



Term 1, Lesson 17
**The
Meaning of
Baptism**

Now that you know what happened at your Baptism, it's time to remember what Baptism means. Baptism is a joyful occasion that celebrates God's gift of new life and God's love for us. The Risen Jesus told his friends: 'Make disciples (followers) of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit' (Mark 28:19).

What does Baptism do for us?



**IN YOUR RELIGION
JOURNAL**

Imagine yourself doing one of the following at a particular place or time, and then draw a picture about it:

- (a) Living as a follower of Jesus.
- (b) Behaving as a member or part of the Body of Christ.
- (c) Allowing the Holy Spirit to help you to choose.

At Baptism we become **followers of Jesus**. As we grow older, we get to know more about him. We are helped to pray to him. We learn what it means to live like Jesus – loving others and treating them with respect.

Through Baptism we become **members of the Church and part of the Body of Christ**. We are connected with the Risen Jesus and with other Christians as brothers and sisters. We gather with them to celebrate God's love for us. We can support and learn from each other. Each week we come together at Mass to give God thanks and praise.

At Baptism we receive the **Gift of the Holy Spirit**. The Holy Spirit helps us to live like Jesus and to remember the words of Jesus. The Holy Spirit is with us to guide us. The Holy Spirit helps us to turn away from sin.

Baptism for adults

Most Catholics are baptised as babies, but some people are baptised and become Catholics when they are adults. They spend about two years preparing for Baptism. They have a sponsor to help them. Adult Baptism is usually celebrated at the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday night, that is, the night before Easter Sunday.



Are all Christians baptised?

All Christians are baptised, whether they are, for example, Presbyterian, Methodist, Church of Ireland or Roman Catholic.

Baptism: A way of life

As well as doing things for us, Baptism also asks something from us. It asks us to be followers of Jesus in the way we live. It asks us to show that we are members of the Church and part of the Body of Christ in the way that we treat others. It tells us to expect the Holy Spirit to guide us and it asks us to do as the Holy Spirit suggests. How might all this happen? Here is an example:

A Quiet Evening

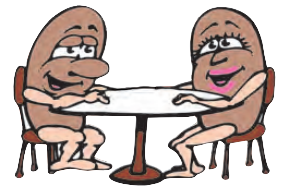
Eoin woke up really exhausted. He hated the thought of having to get out of bed and go to work in the local supermarket. At least he had no school: it was Saturday. He hoped he would be on the checkouts rather than sorting deliveries in the back store. He had played three hours of football the night before. His arms and legs ached. Tonight would definitely be a quiet night: a chicken chow mein on the way home and the latest James Bond movie on DVD.



Eoin was put on the checkouts, as he had hoped. The day was passing quickly. At five o'clock, Eoin thought, 'Good! Only sixty more minutes and then home!' That was when young Jimmy McCann arrived. 'Hey Eoin,' Jimmy began, 'would you do a big favour for us? Coach Maguire can't do referee because his mother is in hospital. Would you do it?' Tired, hungry, wanting to get home, Eoin said, 'Ah Jimmy, not this evening! I'm wrecked after the match last night.' Refereeing under-12s wasn't part of Eoin's plans. Jimmy's face was a picture of disappointment. Eoin thought again. He remembered how Coach Maguire was always telling the team to do the right thing, to do the decent thing. And here Eoin was faced with a decision: how could he not do the decent thing? 'Look Jimmy,' Eoin said, 'I...'

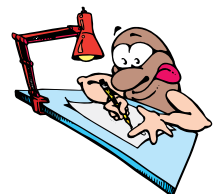
WHY DON'T YOU?

Use the CD-ROM *The Christian Church* to look up information on Baptism in another Christian denomination. Write an account of it in your Religion journal.



LET'S TALK

1. Why was Eoin so tired?
2. What did Jimmy ask Eoin to do?
3. What was Eoin's first reaction?
4. Who else did Eoin think about when making his decision?
5. What did Coach Maguire always say to the team? Why?
6. Would you follow Coach Maguire's way if you were Eoin?
7. Where do you think Coach Maguire might have got his ideas on how to treat others?
8. When it comes to making decisions, what influences you?



LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.



A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Student 1

When people are impatient with us, when our work is very hard for us, when friends say hurtful things to us, when others seem to be jealous of us, when we lose confidence and are unsure of ourselves, then, at such times, we are also called by God to forgive.

Student 2

When we have to do without things that we would like, when we envy others for what they can do, when others don't notice us in the way we would like, when we find it easy to be cruel to others, when we find it hard to resist doing the wrong thing, then, at such times, we are also called by God to treat others well.

Student 3

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Colossians (Col 3:15).

Each one of you is part of the body of Christ, and you were chosen to live together in peace. So let the peace that comes from Christ control your thoughts. And be grateful.

This is the word of the Lord.

All

Thanks be to God.

Teacher

Let us now take some quiet time to allow God to communicate with us. (Pause) Is there someone that God is asking us to forgive? (Pause) Is there someone that God is asking us to help? (Pause) Let us pray as Jesus taught us.

All

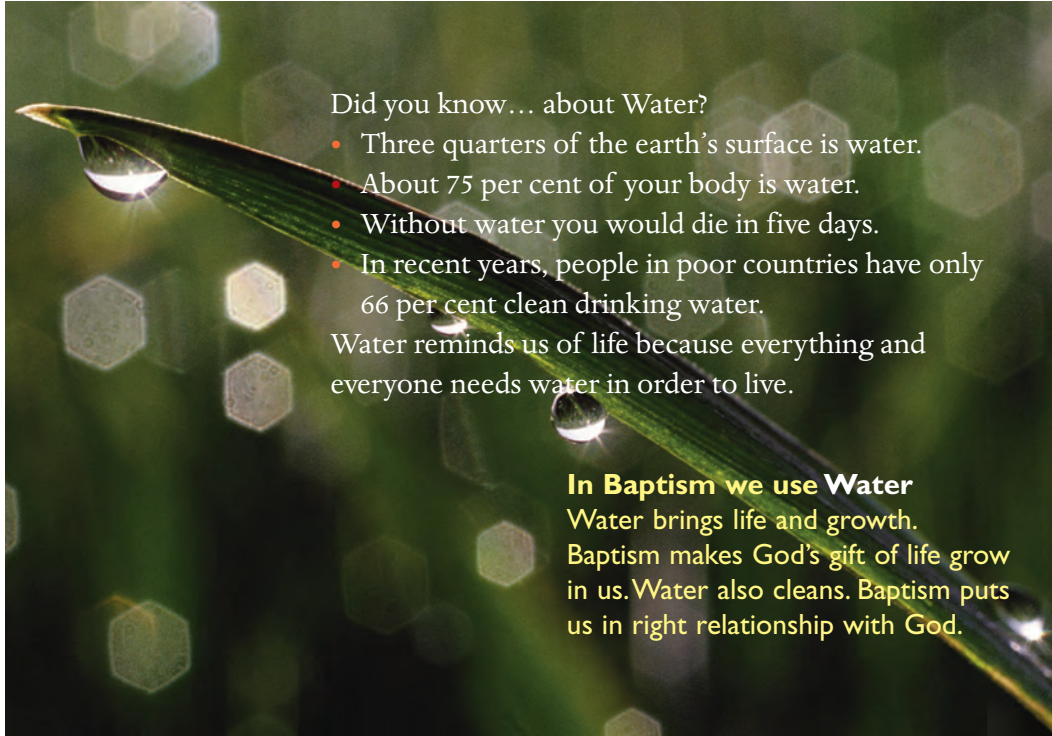
Our Father...

Sign of the Cross

When a Baptism is taking place, various things are used.
Do you know what they are?
Do you know how they are used?
Do you know why they are used?
It's time to find out...

Term 1, Lesson 18

Things used in Baptism




Did you know... about Water?

- Three quarters of the earth's surface is water.
- About 75 per cent of your body is water.
- Without water you would die in five days.
- In recent years, people in poor countries have only 66 per cent clean drinking water.

Water reminds us of life because everything and everyone needs water in order to live.

In Baptism we use Water
Water brings life and growth. Baptism makes God's gift of life grow in us. Water also cleans. Baptism puts us in right relationship with God.



Did you know... about Cloth?

- In ancient times people used animal skins as clothes.
- Flax was grown and used to make linen clothes in Egypt by about 5000 BC.
- The Chinese made silk cloth about 4700 years ago.
- Cotton has been grown and spun into cloth in India for about 4000 years.
- Australia produces the most wool for the clothing industry.

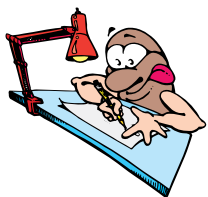
As well as keeping us warm, clothes protect our bodies and our dignity.

In Baptism we use White Clothing
We wear special clothes for special occasions. For our Baptism Day, a special white garment is put on us to show our new life as followers of Jesus and members of the Church. St Paul says, 'And when you were baptised, it was as though you had put on Christ in the same way you put on new clothes' (Galatians 3:27).



WHY DON'T YOU?

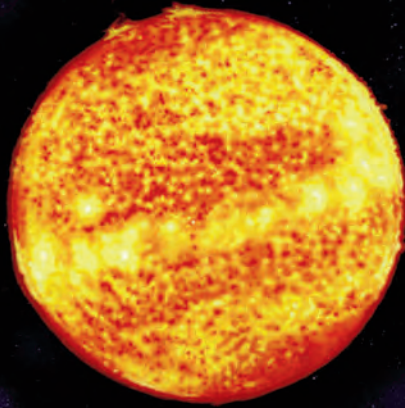
Divide into four groups. Each group prepares a simple poster-size graphic to represent the things we use in Baptism: water (Group 1), oil (Group 2), white garment (Group 3), baptismal candle (Group 4). These can be displayed on the prayer board or noticeboard around an image of a Baptism.



LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.

Did you know... about Light?



- The sun is a source of both heat and light.
- Light travels at 12 million miles a minute.
- Thomas Edison invented the electric light bulb in 1879 after many attempts.
- The Romans used beeswax candles.

We use candles for all kinds of ceremonies. Candlelight helps create a calm atmosphere.

In Baptism we use a **Baptismal Candle**

The baptismal candle is lit from the Easter candle. The Easter candle represents the Risen Jesus, who said 'I am the light of the world' (John 8:12). Jesus brings light to our lives by telling us of God's love and teaching us to love one another.

Did you know... about Oil?

- Roman soldiers and gladiators used oil to protect their skin against infection.
- Ancient peoples used oil, mixed with perfume, to anoint kings and leaders.
- Today people use scented oils for massage and for making a room smell inviting.

Rubbing oil on to our skin protects, soothes, strengthens and relaxes us.

In Baptism we use **Oil**

Before the Baptism the baby is anointed with blessed oil, called oil of catechumens. The priest prays that Christ will strengthen the baby with goodness. After the Baptism the baby is anointed with chrism, a sweet-smelling perfumed oil. This reminds everyone of how God loves the baby.



A time to pray

Note: If you have made the graphics as suggested, you might like to use them for this prayertime.

Teacher

Every time we bless ourselves, it connects us with our Baptism. At our Baptism the priest poured water on our head. He said the words that we use when we bless ourselves. As we reflect on Baptism now, we bless ourselves slowly as we say:

All

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

Teacher

Other things were used at our Baptism as signs of what was happening. We recall these things now.

Group 1 Representative (holding up 'Water' graphic)

Water cleans and gives life. At Baptism God gives us new life.

All

Thanks be to God.

Group 2 Representative (holding up 'Oil' graphic)

At Baptism we are marked with oil as a sign of God's mark on us.

All

Thanks be to God.

Group 3 Representative (holding up 'White Garment' graphic)

For our Baptism we are specially dressed, as a sign that we follow Jesus.

All

Thanks be to God.

Group 4 Representative (holding up 'Candle' graphic)

At Baptism our baptismal candle is lit to show that Jesus is our light.

All

Thanks be to God.

The teacher displays the graphics in a cross-shape, with the baptismal image at the centre of the cross.

All

May God watch over our life!

May we follow Jesus, the light of the world!

May the Holy Spirit help us to live like Jesus! Amen.

Now that you know about Baptism, the first sacrament celebrated with you, it's time to move on to Confirmation, the sacrament you celebrated most recently. You know that these two sacraments are connected, because during Confirmation you renew our baptismal promises. Begin by taking some time to remember your Confirmation day.

Term 1, Lesson 19
Remembering
Our
Confirmation

Remembering our Confirmation Day

Teacher

We're going to spend a while now remembering our Confirmation day. So, before we begin, let's take a moment to settle ourselves. Close your eyes now and become quiet and still. (Pause)

Go back in your mind to the morning of your Confirmation. What sort of weather was there? Picture it. (Pause)

Everyone was getting ready. Was it rushed? Was it busy? Was everyone ready on time? What was it like? (Pause)

You travelled to the church. Who was with you? Remember the journey. (Pause)

You arrived at the church. In your memory, recall going into the church and taking your place before the start. (Pause)

The celebration began. There was singing. The bishop came in. (Pause)
After the readings, the bishop spoke. Then your name was called. (Pause)

The bishop asked the whole group to renew their baptismal promises. You all answered together. (Pause)

The bishop and priests prayed with their hands held out over you all. They prayed that the Holy Spirit would be with you always. (Pause)

Finally, you went, one by one, to the bishop. Your sponsor went with you. Ask God to bless your sponsor. (Pause)

The bishop put chrism on you. Now you were marked forever with the Gift of the Holy Spirit. (Pause)

Then the celebration in the church finished. Afterwards, there were photographs. Remember what that was like. (Pause)

You left the church to continue celebrating with your family. Spend a moment remembering some of that celebration. (Pause)

When you are ready, open your eyes again and stretch. (Pause)

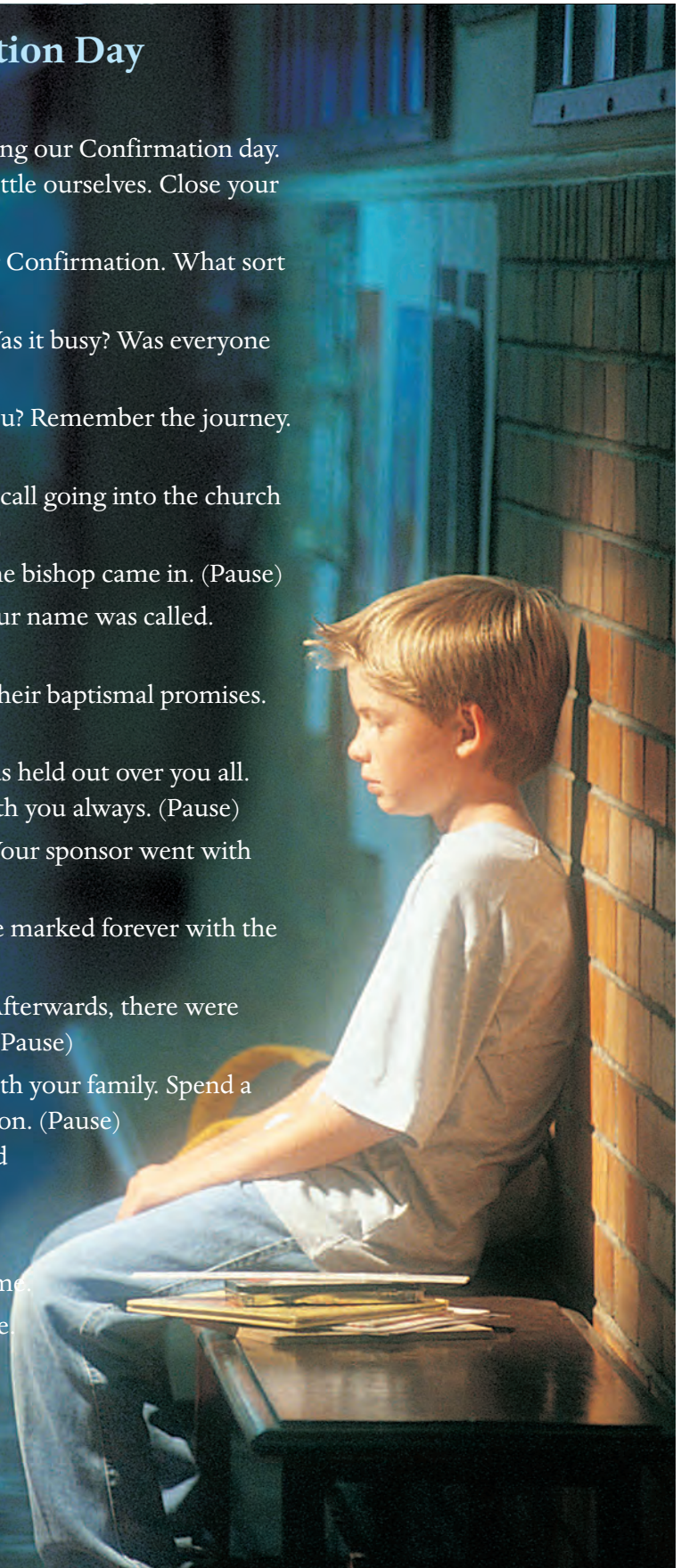
All

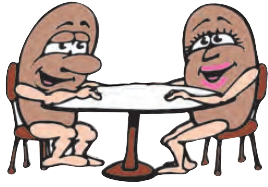
Holy Spirit, I want to do what is right. Help me.

Holy Spirit, I want to live like Jesus. Guide me.

Holy Spirit, I want to pray like Jesus.

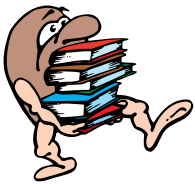
Teach me. Amen.





LET'S TALK

1. What event is this song about?
2. What question does the song ask? What does this question mean?
3. When people 'receive the Holy Spirit', what difference might that make? Would you see any difference in them? Why? Why not?
4. 'Following Jesus and living like him is not difficult for a twelve- or thirteen-year-old.' Discuss.



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Write an account of your own Confirmation day. You could include:

- who was chosen as your sponsor and why;
- how you got ready in Religion class and in your parish;
- the celebration in the church and your part in it;
- how you and your family continued the celebration afterwards.

After Confirmation – where do we go from here?

You may be familiar with the song 'Been There, Done That' from your last year in primary school. Here are the words.

Been There, Done That

We've been there, done that,
Bought the clothes,
Collected all the money
And we smiled for the photos.
Been there, done that,
Lessons learned,
Ceremony celebrated,
– it's been confirmed!

We've received the Holy Spirit loud and clear,

But where, oh where, oh where do we go from here?

We've been there, done that,
Got the chrism,
Renewed all the promises they
Made for us in Baptism.
Been there, done that,
Hands laid on,
Confirmation done and dusted,
Bishop been and gone.
We've received the Holy Spirit loud and clear,

But where, oh where, oh where do we go from here?

We've been there, done that,
Filled the church
For the day – tomorrow will we
Leave it in the lurch?
We've been there, done that,
So what?
Don't feel any different.
I guess that's that!
We've received the Holy Spirit loud and clear,

But where, oh where, oh where do we go from here?

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

St Paul tells us that the Holy Spirit can have an effect in us. God's Holy Spirit can change us. St Paul compares the effect with a fruit tree that produces fruit.

Reader

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Galatians (Gal 5:22).

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, trustfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Teacher

Quietly read over St Paul's list of the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

There have been times when you showed one or more of these qualities. For example, you might have treated an animal with gentleness or you might have showed self-control when you were angry.

Quietly read over St Paul's list again and pick out one that you can easily see in yourself.

(Pause)

Now, thank God for that gift and give God time to tell you about being pleased with you.

(Pause)

Now look at that list again. Was there a time when you did not show one of those things? For example, was there a time when you were not patient with someone at home or when you were not good to a friend? (Pause)

Remember that time and ask God to help you to do things differently next time. (Pause)

We pray together:

All

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful.

Enkindle in us the fire of your love.

Send forth your Spirit, and we shall be created,

And you shall renew the face of the earth.

O God, who has taught the hearts of the faithful

By the light of the Holy Spirit,
Grant us in the same spirit to be truly wise,
And ever to rejoice in his consolation,
Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

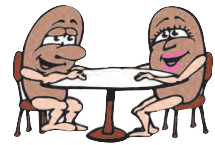
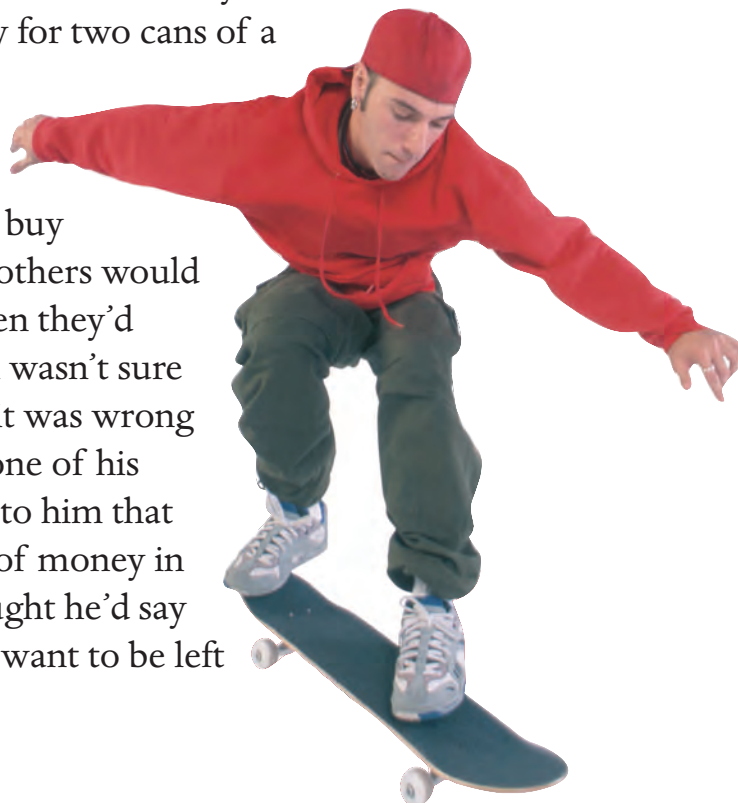
Sign of the Cross

How is Paul doing after Confirmation?

Paul celebrated his Confirmation last year. He began post-primary school in September. A number of his pals from primary school go to the same school and he has made some new friends. He really enjoys a few of the subjects. Take English, for example. Paul never found it easy to write essays. So when he got his first essay to do, he put in lots of effort. He got a very good grade and was delighted. Geography, though, is another story. Paul finds it boring. So during Geography class he and his friends usually sit at the back of the room. They send text messages and read teen magazines and sometimes they try to distract other students.

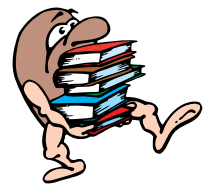
Paul's father has started working the night shift at the local factory. Sometimes things can be quite difficult for his mother. Paul helps out a bit. When his mother has to go out at night, he looks after the younger children. The baby of the family, John, is just four. If Paul can get him to bed early, it's not hard to manage. Sometimes Paul slips away to meet his friends without telling his mother where he is going. Mostly they would go skateboarding in the evenings, but Paul has another reason for going. He doesn't want to get too many extra jobs to do at home. 'She can't give me jobs to do if I'm not there,' he thinks.

One night recently, Paul and his friends stopped at the local shop on the way home. Between them they had only enough money for two cans of a fizzy drink. One of Paul's friends suggested that one of them would buy two cans while the others would steal two more. Then they'd have one each. Paul wasn't sure about this. He said it was wrong to steal. But when one of his friends pointed out to him that shops make plenty of money in other ways, he thought he'd say no more. He didn't want to be left out of the group.



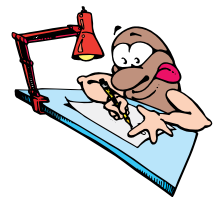
LET'S TALK

At Confirmation Paul renewed his baptismal promises. He stated his belief in God; he promised to reject sin and to choose to do what is good; he promised to live as a follower of Jesus and be his witness in the world. How well do you think Paul is succeeding in living out his Confirmation promises?



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Ask yourself: What do I do to show that I live up to my Confirmation promises at home, at school, with my friends? Write some examples in your Religion journal.

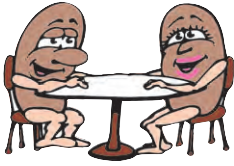


LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.

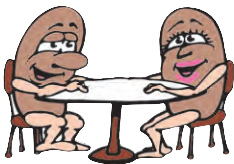
Term 1, Lesson 20

Choices



LET'S TALK

1. What do you think 'Tempted' should do?
2. What would you do?
3. If 'Tempted' wanted to do the right thing, what would that be?
4. If 'Tempted' did the wrong thing, what would that be?
5. What effect might 'Tempted' have if they go ahead and spread the gossip?
6. What effect might this have on 'Tempted'?
7. Which of the gifts of the Holy Spirit might help 'Tempted' in this situation?



LET'S TALK

1. What sort of advice does the reply to 'Tempted' contain?
2. Does it cover everything you talked about in your group?
3. Does it include anything that you did not talk about earlier?

So, you've been reminded about Baptism and Confirmation. Now it's time to take a deeper look at how you put them into practice. How do you know when you are living like a person who is baptised and confirmed? Look at the choices you make and you will know if you are living as a follower of Jesus. It is not always easy to make good choices, as you will see if you read the letters below.

A letter from 'Tempted'

*I need your help. I have heard some brilliant gossip about a girl I don't like at school. I am not sure whether it is true or not. It's about her parents, and I would like to tell a few people in our class. What would you do?
Tempted!*

A reply to 'Tempted'

Dear Tempted,

Put yourself in the place of the girl. How would you feel if someone passed on gossip about you or your parents? How would you feel if you knew that people were talking about you behind your back? If you spread gossip about someone, what might it do to their reputation?

You are not sure if the information is actually true. If you go ahead and spread it anyway, what name would people give to that? What would people think of you when they found out that it was not true?

Why would you enjoy spreading this gossip? Why do you need to spread it?

What kind of person do you want to become? Does gossiping with others fit in with this? If other people described you as a gossip who did harm to others, would you be surprised?

Please help me to choose...



I need your help. My friends bought cigarettes at the supermarket last Saturday, even though they are underage. John, one of the fifth years, served them. I have to work on the tills this Saturday and I know what's going to happen: my friends will ask me to let them buy cigarettes too. What will I do? I don't want to lose my friends and I don't want to lose my job.
Afraid!

I need your help. My end-of-term exams are coming up next week and I haven't done any revision for them. If I'm honest, I haven't done any school-work all term. My parents will go mad if I come home with a bad report. A classmate has offered to show me how he cheats in his exams. He says it's easy and he has never been caught. I don't know what else to do.
Confused!

I really need your help. I started a new school in September and I have been bullied by a third-year student and his gang from the very first week. I don't know why they picked on me, but they are making my life hell. They make fun of me, take my dinner money and push me into doors and bins. They travel on the same bus as me and last week they prevented me from getting off at my stop. It took me an hour and a half to walk home. They said they would really 'sort' me if I tell anyone. I don't know what to do. I feel really scared and alone!
Really Scared!

WHY DON'T YOU?

Choose **one** of the letters from this problem page. Get into groups of four or five. Each group writes a response to the problem and then shares this with the whole class. Was your advice the same? What was similar about the advice you gave? Read again your answers to the letters. Why do you think you gave this particular advice?



WHY DON'T YOU?

Think back to a difficult choice that you had to make. Not sure what to pick? The following list might help you:

- Taking what didn't belong to you.
- Doing damage to someone else's property.
- Not owning up when you were to blame.
- Telling a lie to get out of trouble.
- Not doing as you were asked.
- Avoiding your share of the work.
- Not being fair.
- Taking more than you deserved and leaving less for others.

What decision did you make?

How did you feel about your decision at that time?

How do you feel about your decision now?

Was it a good or bad decision, as you see it now?

Why was it a good or bad decision?

What happened to you as a result of your decision?

What happened to others as a result of your decision?

What kind of person did you become as a result of your decision?

How do you feel about yourself as a result of the decision you took?

Is the way you feel about something at the time a good enough basis for making decisions?

Write the story of your choice or draw a picture about it.

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

We pray for people who have big choices to make today.

Student 1

For people in government,
that selfishness may not spoil the way they do their work.
(Pause)

Student 2

For leaders of the Church,
that they may have the courage to do what Jesus asks.
(Pause)

Student 3

For people to whom bad things have happened,
and for people who are badly treated because of who or what they are,
that they may still choose to believe in God's love for them. (Pause)

Student 4

For people who are making choices about what to do with their life,
that they may find joy in what they do. (Pause)

Student 5

For the poor, hungry and homeless people of the world who have so few choices,
that they may be treated fairly. (Pause)

Student 6

For people who have problems with alcohol, drugs, depression,
that they may have the courage to ask for help and that others may respond to them. (Pause)

All

Father in heaven, you love me.
You are with me night and day.
I want to love you always in all I do and say.
I'll try to please you, Father.
Bless me through the day. Amen.

Sign of the Cross

All choices matter, but some matter more than others. Certain choices can affect your whole life and the lives of others. Why are some choices so different from others? Why are some choices so vital?

Term 1, Lesson 21

Choices and Morality

Choices! Choices!

*Socks or no socks?
Tea or coffee?
Slice of cake or a biscuit?
Video or DVD?
Popcorn or Ice Cream? Both?
Trainers or shoes?
Giving money to Trócaire or buying concert tickets?
Share a book or tell them to get their own?
Letting someone copy my homework or not?
Gossip about a friend: will I share it or will I not?
It doesn't belong to me: will I take it or will I not?
Forgiving my friend or not for telling lies about me?*



Morality

You have to make choices. Every day you decide about all sorts of things: tea or coffee? To cheat or not to cheat? Some choices involve right and wrong; these choices can affect others and can affect the kind of person you become.

Choices that are about right and wrong are called **moral** choices. We say that someone is **moral** when they try to do what is right and reject what is wrong. The Holy Spirit gives us strength to resist what is wrong and to choose what is right. The basis for making choices between good and bad has a special name: **morality**.

The more we follow Jesus and choose what is right, the more fully alive we become.

Morality is the basis for choosing between good and bad; it affects the kind of person we become.

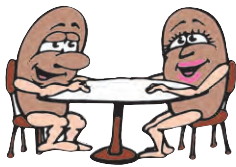
The Little Red Purse

Sheila was washing her hands at the sink when she spotted the little red purse. She quickly glanced around to see if its owner was near. No. She was alone. She picked it up. It felt light. 'Probably empty,' Sheila thought. She unzipped it and peered down at the notes all neatly rolled up inside. Sheila gasped. 'There must be at least fifty pounds in here...'



WHY DON'T YOU?

Make a list of things that might happen next in the story. Divide into groups. Each group takes one possible decision, works out a role-play, and presents it to the class.



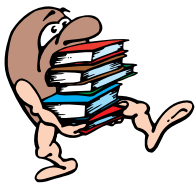
LET'S TALK

1. In the story about the purse, which of these guidelines would have helped Sheila to make a good choice?
2. Pick one of the guidelines. Give an example of a time when someone used it to make a good choice. Give an example of a time when someone made a bad choice because they did not follow that guideline.



WHY DON'T YOU?

Get into groups. Each group picks a situation where a person has to make a moral choice. Do a role-play about it.



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Copy out the 'Guidelines for Making Good Choices'. Choose one and give a practical example of a person following it. Say why following that guideline led to a good choice.

Guidelines for Making Good Choices

Here are some guidelines for making good choices.

Love God.

Respect God's name.

Pray.

Respect yourself.

Respect others.

Be truthful.

Be honest.

Share with others.

Wish everybody well.

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

In the Gospel according to Mark, there is a story about a young man. Jesus asked the young man to make a choice. He asked the young man to follow him, but the young man chose not to follow Jesus.

Reader

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark (10: 17-22).

As Jesus was walking down a road, a man ran up to him. He knelt down, and asked, 'Good teacher, what can I do to have eternal life?' Jesus replied, 'You know the commandments.' The man answered, 'Teacher, I have obeyed all these commandments since I was a young man.' Jesus looked closely at the man. He liked him and said, 'There's one thing you still need to do. Go and sell everything you own. Give the money to the poor, and you will have riches in heaven. Then come with me.' When the man heard Jesus say this, he went away gloomy and sad because he was very rich.

Teacher

Let us pray:

All

Risen Jesus, we face many choices.

Sometimes we do things just to be the same as others.

Sometimes people put pressure on us to do the wrong thing.

You ask us to follow you.

You were not afraid to suffer for doing what was right.

Give us some of your courage.

Make us more like you.

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

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Sign of the Cross

Our choices show us our morality

The way you choose shows the way you think. Your choices show the basis on which you make decisions about right and wrong. Here is a story about people making a choice.

In February 2002 a retired County Monaghan farmer heard how Ireland was changing over to the new Euro currency. He wondered what to do. He always kept all his money at home. He never used the bank. However, now, with the change, all this old Irish money was going to be no use. Listening to the News on the radio one day, he heard how there was only a short time left for changing the old money into the new. He had to act. So, he gathered up all the old pressed notes. He stuffed them into a bag and slung it over the back of his bicycle.

Off he went. But something made him fall off his bicycle – probably a pothole. He gathered himself up quickly and pressed on, unaware of the commotion that he was about to leave in his wake. For the bag at the back had torn in the fall and the notes started to fall out. Cars were stopping everywhere along the road. People were rushing to pick up the money from the hedges and trees. But one motorist figured out what was happening. He caught up with the farmer and told him. Together, they went back and gathered up what was left. When they added it up, it seemed that £10,000 was missing. Perhaps it was still up in the trees, but it seems more likely that it was in someone else's pocket.

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

Here is a story about being able to see things from someone else's point of view.

Reader

Fiorello La Guardia was mayor of New York City for twelve years. One day he took the place of the police-court judge. It was an icy cold winter's day. A shivering old man was brought before him. The charge: taking a loaf of bread from a bakery. The man told of how he had no job and how his family were poor and starving. 'I have to punish you,' La Guardia said. 'The law is the law. I have to fine you ten dollars.' But then he pulled out some money and said, 'Here's ten dollars to pay the fine.' He then spoke to everyone else there: 'I fine everyone here fifty cents for living in a town where folk must steal bread to survive. Sergeant, collect the money at once and hand it over to the man.' The hat went round and the amazed old man left the court with forty-seven dollars and fifty cents in his pocket.

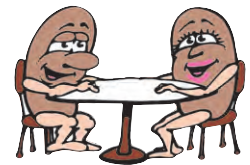
Teacher

Close your eyes and picture someone you know whom you treat badly. (Pause) Remember a time when you treated them badly. (Pause) Try to see it from their point of view. Imagine how they feel after what you do. (Pause)

All

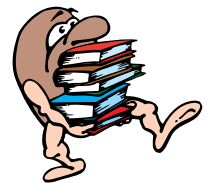
O my God, I thank you for loving me.
I am sorry for all my sins,
For not loving others and not loving you.
Help me to live like Jesus and not to sin again. Amen.

Sign of the Cross



LET'S TALK

1. What is your reaction to this story? Do you feel sorry for the farmer? Why? Why not?
2. How would you have reacted if you found some of that money? Would you have tried to find its owner? Why?
3. This story was reported on the national News: would you have returned the money to the local police when you heard the News report? Why?
4. What do you think Jesus would have done?



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

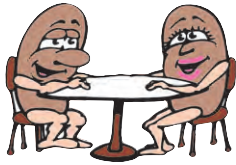
Imagine you are the farmer in the story. Write down the main points you would make if you were retelling the story. How would you feel about what happened to you? What are the consequences for you? Now imagine that you are one of the people who found and kept the money. Write down the main points you would make to explain why you kept it. The farmer sees things one way; the person who found and kept the money sees them another way. Compare these two different points of view.

WHY DON'T YOU?

Have a class debate: 'Finders Keepers, Losers Weepers.'

Term 1, Lesson 22

Influences on our Sense of Right and Wrong



LET'S TALK

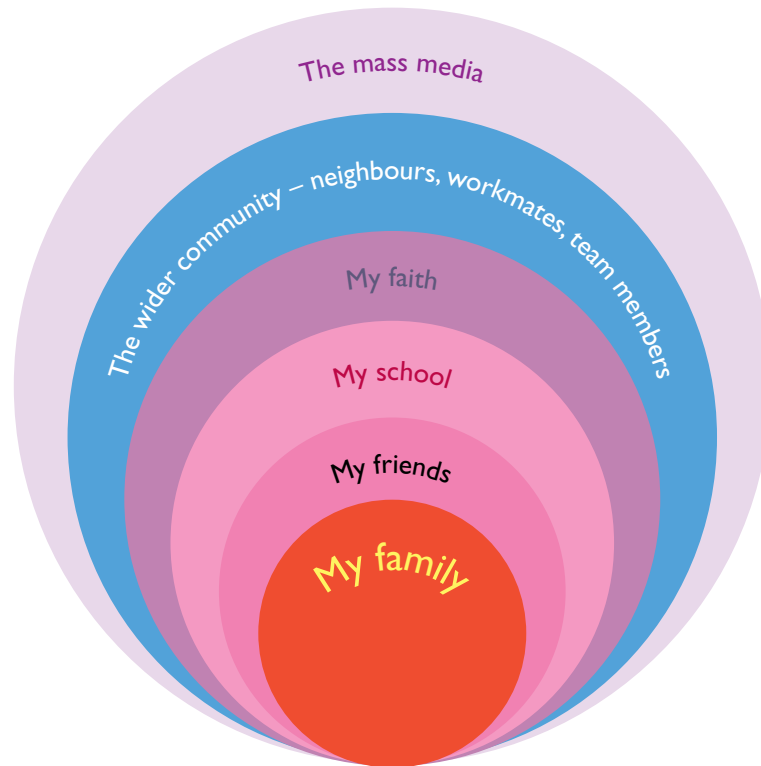
Read the two stories below and ask yourself:

- What are the choices facing Tom and Fiona?
- What might the following people say to them: parents, teachers, friends, police, faith community?

You might find it helpful to do this in groups and to share your answers.

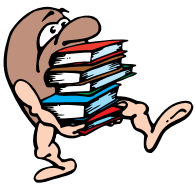
You have a sense of right and wrong. For example, you know the kind of choices that God would want you to make. As well as that, you probably know what others might say about a choice you were about to make. In this lesson you will see who influences your sense of right and wrong. You will also explore the extent to which they influence you.

Here is a diagram that shows the influences in your life. Name one influence that each of the people referred to in this diagram have had on your sense of right and wrong. Which is the strongest influence for you at the moment and why?



After the Match

Tom and his best friend John are on their way home from their 'Under 15s' football training. As they walk past the park they spot a group of young people drinking alcohol under a big oak tree. John recognises one of the lads and insists on going over. A bottle of vodka is being passed around the group. It is offered to Tom. He looks unsure, but then...



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Write a letter to Tom or Fiona giving your reaction to the choice you think they made.

The Collection

Fiona could still hear the words of praise from her form teacher. Her class had raised £250 for Trócaire. It was the largest sum raised by a first-year group. Fiona now stood in front of the filing cabinet. The money was inside. The key to the filing cabinet lay on the teacher's desk. It was the end of the school day and she was alone in the room. No one would ever suspect her – the class prefect. She knew where the key was and exactly how she could spend the money. Fiona paused for a moment and then...

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

Let us close our eyes and become quiet and still.

We will use God's gift of imagination: imagine a tree!

See it clearly in your mind's eye.

What kind of tree is it? What size is it?

How old is it? What shape is it? (Pause)

Take a moment now to imagine all that has influenced that tree...

the person who planted it (Pause)

the sun that shone on it and gave it energy (Pause)

the ground that held it and

nourished it (Pause)

the rain that washed it and watered it (Pause)

the wind that swayed it and bent it (Pause)

the other trees around it that sheltered and shaped it (Pause)

Now imagine all that influences you in a good way...

your family (Pause)

your friends (Pause)

your neighbours (Pause)

your school (Pause)

your country (Pause)

your TV and media programmes

(Pause)

your faith and your beliefs (Pause)

All

Spirit of God in the heavens.

Spirit of God in the seas.

Spirit of God in the mountain-tops.

Spirit of God in me.

Spirit of God in the sunlight.

Spirit of God in the air.

Spirit of God all around me.

Spirit of God everywhere.

Spirit of God in my family.

Spirit of God in my friends.

Spirit of God in my parish.

Spirit of God whom God sends.

Spirit of God in my neighbours.

Spirit of God day and night.

Spirit of God in Jesus

Showing us what is right.

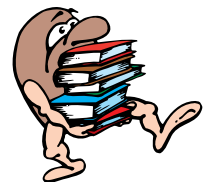
Holy Spirit, Spirit of God, help me.

Amen.

Sign of the Cross

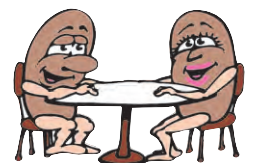
WHY DON'T YOU?

Make a class display called *The Greatest Influences in the World Today*. Each person could bring in a few images, e.g. from magazines, newspapers and the Internet. When it is complete, take a few minutes to discuss it.



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Write out the second part of the 'Spirit of God' prayer from the prayertime. Then write the name of one person in your life through whom the Holy Spirit helps you today. Give an example of a time when they had an effect on the way you behave.



LET'S TALK

1. What extra influences does Mahmut have in his life?
2. Do you think Mahmut's experience has had an effect on his sense of right and wrong? How?
3. What influence do you think Mahmut would have on you if you met him? Why?



Mahmut's Story

I am Kurdish. I am thirteen years old. I speak Turkish and I understand Kurdish but I can't read or write them. I came to London from Turkey when I was eight. I've been in six different schools in four years and lived in five different houses. Each time I changed schools I had to make new friends, which was very hard. I used to get really hurt when other children teased me and made me look stupid because I didn't know English. When you're new you get picked on a lot. We came to London because of the political situation in Turkey. People were always harassing and terrorising Kurdish people. I wish people understood more about refugees and had more respect for their different backgrounds.

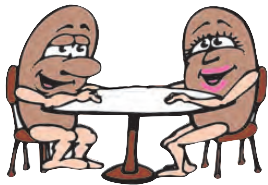
Term 1, Lesson 23
Our Moral
Vision and
the Moral
Vision of
Jesus

So, you make choices and, yes, lots of people might influence you, but in the end it's YOU that gets to choose. You have your own inner sense of right and wrong. It guides you. It's a bit like a compass that helps you to figure out what way to go. We have a special name for that sense of right and wrong and we're going to find out more about it in this lesson.



Almost a Disaster

When people first built railways, they often made wooden bridges to carry the track across rivers. In springtime when snow melted and rivers flooded, these bridges were sometimes washed away. This happened to a particular bridge in Western Virginia one stormy night during the last century. Two women heard it happen. The night train was due to pass that way. It had to be stopped. The only way was to light a fire on the track. Here is the rest of the story:



LET'S TALK

1. What happened to the railway bridge? What was likely to happen to the train?
2. What did the women decide to do? Why?
3. Do you think it took them a long time to decide what to do? Give a reason for your answer.
4. How would you describe these women as a result of this story?

The pile of wood, which the old woman had gathered for the winter fires, was almost exhausted. Her eyes finally rested on the old bedstead and the well-worn chairs. The younger woman chopped. The older woman gathered the bits of wood and carried her load to the middle of the railway track. She tried to light the pile, but this was easier said than done, owing to the strong, blustery wind. The fire had no sooner begun to blaze than the distant rumble of the train was heard. Nearer and nearer came the train. Both women now waved frantically, and to their great joy and relief they heard the noise of the brakes.

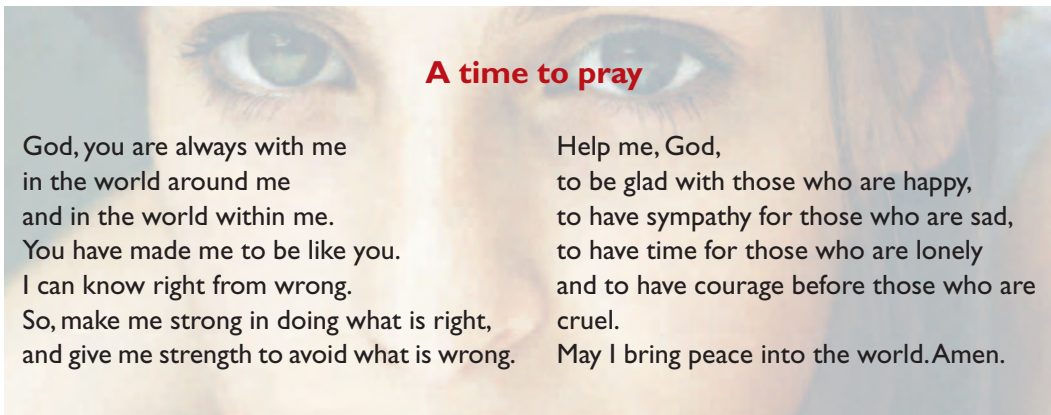
The driver questioned the old woman and her daughter. They were all appalled by the sight of the wrecked bridge. One of the passengers drew attention to the burnt furniture and the two women told their story. The listeners recognised that this was an act of self-sacrifice. A few weeks later, the old woman and her daughter received news that the Railway Company had decided to build them a little cottage, and that the passengers, who had been aboard that night, had gathered a sum of money, which would keep them in comfort for many a long day.

Moral Vision

The women in the story reacted quickly to save the train and all the people on it. They didn't spend a long time wondering what to do. They set to work immediately. They acted out of their sense of right and wrong.

Sometimes, we too will act out of our sense of right and wrong. For example, if we see someone in trouble in a swimming pool, we don't wait: we throw in a lifebelt or we tell the lifeguard; when we see someone seriously injured, we don't spend a long time wondering what to do: we go to help and, if necessary, we phone for an ambulance. We have a special name for the sense of right and wrong that has been given to us: **moral vision**.

Our moral decisions (i.e. our choices between good and bad) are based on our moral vision (i.e. our sense of right and wrong).



A time to pray

God, you are always with me in the world around me and in the world within me. You have made me to be like you. I can know right from wrong. So, make me strong in doing what is right, and give me strength to avoid what is wrong.	Help me, God, to be glad with those who are happy, to have sympathy for those who are sad, to have time for those who are lonely and to have courage before those who are cruel. May I bring peace into the world. Amen.
--	--

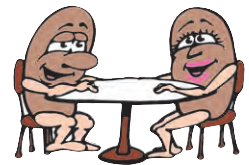
Our moral vision can be seen in our choices

We get to know what a person is like when we see what they do. We get to know what a person's moral vision is like when we see the choices they make. We can find out about the moral vision of Jesus through the stories we read in the Gospels. Here is a story about a leper and what Jesus did for him. It is based on Mark 1:40-45.

The Leper's Story

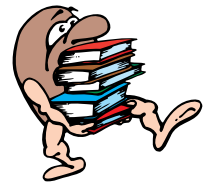
The moment I saw the sores on my skin, I knew I had leprosy. In that moment, my world fell apart. It was the end of my work. That was bad enough; it had taken ages to build up my business. Ah, but the most cruel thing was being forced to leave my home, my family and my friends. Our Jewish laws say that we have to do this. It's horrible, but it stops others from catching this sickness.

What a life I had from then on. My friends couldn't speak to me. I couldn't meet my family. They used to leave things out for me to eat, but even that stopped as I got worse. Only Reuben, my youngest son, kept in touch. We had to stand well apart, on opposite sides of the road, when we met. If the others found out, they might have turned him out as well. One day he told me a story about a man who had blessed him, a man who loved children, a man who had cured other lepers. I had long lost hope of a cure. Reuben encouraged me. 'Go on!' he said. 'At least, give it a try!' So, I watched where the crowds were going, but I had to be careful to keep my distance. The Jewish laws were so strict that others would have thrown stones at me to force me away. Then one day I got lucky. Jesus was going along with just a few people. So, I took my chance. Yes, they could have thrown rocks at me, but things couldn't have been much worse anyway.



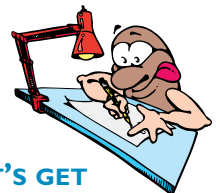
LET'S TALK

Recall the story of the farmer whose money fell out on to the road on his way to the bank. 'The person who went to tell him what was happening to his money had one moral vision; those who took the money they found without asking any questions had a different moral vision.' Would you agree? What was the difference?



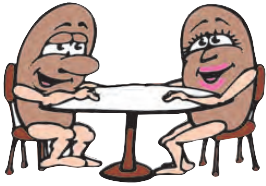
IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Write about a time when you acted out of your sense of right and wrong. Describe the situation and explain why you think you acted the way you did.



LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.



LET'S TALK

1. What way did people treat lepers at that time?
2. How was Jesus' treatment of the leper different?
3. What does this tell us about Jesus?
4. Imagine you are the leper who was cured in the story. How has it changed you as a person?



You probably know the rest of the story. Jesus was just as my son had said. Rather than chase me away, he said that he wanted to help. He reached out to me. That was the first human touch in years. And here I am today: a cured man. I'm changed in other ways too: inside myself. I feel differently. I think differently. My friends say that I see things in his way now. I feel sorry for others whom I see suffering. I do things to help them.

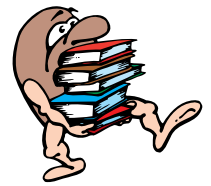
The Moral Vision of Jesus

We see the moral vision of Jesus in his sense of right and wrong. He felt it was wrong that no one looked after the leper. He thought it was wrong for people to throw rocks and stones at lepers to chase them away. He knew it was wrong not to care for them. God does not want people to behave in this way. God wants people to have a different way of treating other people. God wants people to have the same sense of right and wrong – the same moral vision – as Jesus.

Jesus spells out his sense of right and wrong in what he says. He says: 'You must love God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength; and love your neighbour as yourself.' (See Mark 12:29-31)

In these words Jesus shares his moral vision with you. He gives you a way of measuring what is right and what is wrong. Before you make a decision, you can ask yourself: 'If I do this, will I be loving God? If I do this, will I be showing love to my neighbour?'

When you pray, you spend time being with God who loves you. It also gives God the opportunity to let you know how you can show love. Prayer can change your way of seeing what is right and what is wrong. It can change your moral vision.



The Commandments of Jesus:

Love God with your whole heart and love your neighbour as yourself.

You are a faithful follower of Jesus if these words guide your choices.

IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Write about a time when someone changed your sense of right and wrong. Here's a sentence to start you off: 'I used to think it was all right to...'. And here's a sentence to finish: 'That was the effect that (name of person) had on me.'

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

Jesus taught us how to look at life. He taught us how to live.
Let us listen to his words.

Reader

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark (12:29-31).
'You must love God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength; and love your neighbour as yourself.'
This is the Gospel of the Lord

All

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Teacher

Let us pray together:

All

Jesus, Son of God,
asking us to see God's care,
inviting us to enjoy your Father's love,
in our life today.

Jesus, Son of Mary,
calling us to be fully alive,
pointing us towards the needs of others
in our life today.

Jesus, our brother,
sharing with us the Holy Spirit,
showing us the way to a better world
in our life today.

Sign of the Cross

Advent

Prayer Service for the Beginning of Advent Lighting the First Candle of the Advent Wreath

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

Today we light the first candle of the Advent wreath. Before we do, we remember what the Advent wreath tells us.

Reader 1

The circle of the Advent wreath calls to mind the love of God. Just as a circle has no start or finish, God has no beginning or end. God is eternal, always loving us, always guiding creation, always calling us to live in love.

Reader 2

We use the branches from an evergreen tree. The evergreen tree does not change like other trees. God's love does not change.

Reader 3

The colour purple is a sign of repentance. We acknowledge that we do not always live in the way that God wants. The purple candles stand for how we want things to improve.

Reader 4

The colour pink stands for the joy and happiness we feel in knowing that Jesus has shown God's love to us. Jesus was sent by his Father and he taught us all that we could call God 'Our Father'.

Teacher

Now we light the first purple candle of the Advent wreath.

(Student lights candle. Pause.)

All

Jesus, light of the world,
you were sent to brighten our darkness.
When we lose confidence and when our fears are great,

help us to remember that God is always with us.

In our times of difficulty and doubt, remind us of how much God loves us. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Teacher

The prophet Isaiah tells what God's Messiah will be like.

Reader 5

A reading from the prophet Isaiah (11:1-4a).

Like a branch that sprouts from a stump, someone from King David's family will some day be king.

The Spirit of the Lord will be with him to give him understanding, wisdom and insight.

He will be powerful, and he will know and honour the Lord.

His greatest joy will be to obey the Lord. This king won't judge by appearances or listen to rumours.

The poor and the needy will be treated with fairness and with justice.

(Pause)

This is the word of the Lord.

All

Thanks be to God.

Teacher

Jesus taught us to call God our Father and so we pray:

All

Our Father...

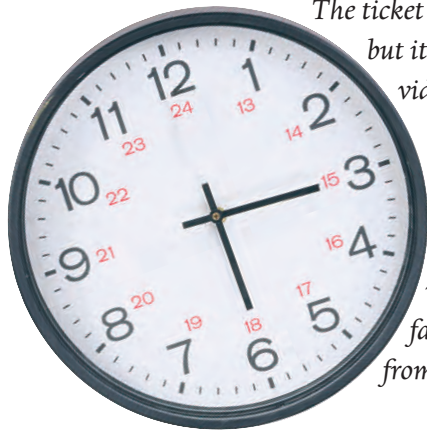
Sign of the Cross

Time to get ready

Christmas is coming. It's time for lights on the streets, cards in the post, spending in the shops, decorations in the home, and gifts under the tree. You're counting down the days! Waiting! It's the time Christians call Advent. So what is this lead-up to Christmas all about?

Waiting, waiting, waiting!

Jerry stomped his feet, he was freezing. It seemed like forever since he had joined this queue. The ticket shop didn't open until 8.00 a.m. and it was still only 6.30 a.m., but it would be worth the wait. He'd bought the CD; he'd seen the video. It should be an excellent concert.



Margaret slowly lifted herself from the chair. The baby was due any day now and she found it hard to get around. The days seemed to pass by so slowly. She thought back to happy times when she was growing up. She really looked forward to having a family of her own. The thought of returning home with the baby from hospital kept her going.

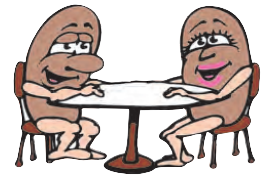
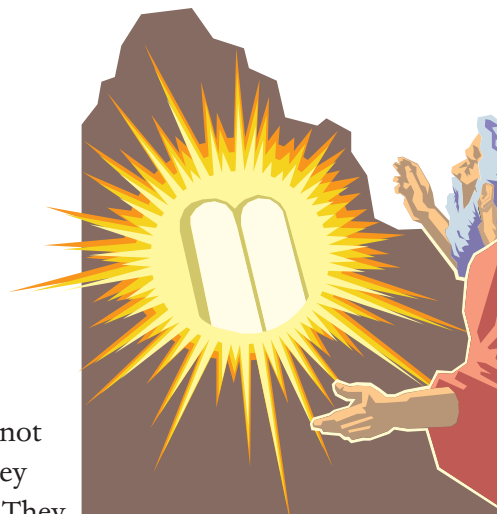
Patricia's mum shouted from the kitchen. 'Come away from that window. You can't force the post to arrive!' she said. Patricia's school report had been due yesterday; all her friends had received theirs. Patricia's last report had been terrible. She'd worked really hard since. Now she didn't know if she was looking forward to, or dreading, the arrival of the post.

Advent – Remembering and looking forward

Moses led the people to freedom from their slavery in Egypt. He brought them to their own land. With God's help, the people were free. God gave Moses the Ten Commandments so that the people would continue to be free.

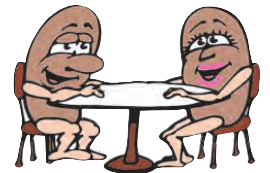
Life did not go smoothly for them. They did not always follow God's way. More than once, they were attacked and their land was taken over. They knew that God was still with them. They believed that God would help them just as God helped their people hundreds of years earlier. They began to look forward to a new leader, who would be like Moses. With God's help, this new leader would set them free once again. They would suffer no more and their land would be at peace. They had a special title for this new leader: the Messiah.

During Advent, which begins four Sundays before Christmas, we remember how the Jewish people waited for the Messiah to bring them to freedom. As Christians we believe that Jesus is the Messiah who was born at Christmas. During Advent we also look forward to the day when Jesus will set us free from fear, from sin and from death.



LET'S TALK

1. What is each of these people looking forward to?
2. What are they remembering?
3. Who is most excited?
4. Who is waiting impatiently?
5. How many different feelings can you associate with times of waiting?
6. Name three times when you have waited on something. How did you feel?



LET'S TALK

1. Why do you think Moses was so important to the Jewish people?
2. What was the special title for the new leader that the Jewish people expected?
3. What did they believe that this new leader would do for them?
4. What do Christians remember during Advent?
5. What do Christians look forward to during Advent?

Mary's Dream

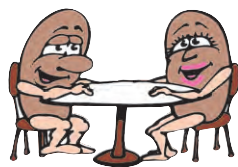
One night Mary had a dream. Next morning she told Joseph about it:

I had a dream, Joseph, a strange dream I don't fully understand. I think it was about a birthday celebration for our son Jesus. The people had been preparing for it for about four weeks. They had decorated the house and bought new clothes. They'd gone shopping many times and bought beautiful gifts.

It was peculiar, though, because the presents weren't for our son. They wrapped them in fancy paper and tied them with lovely bows and stacked them under a tree. Yes, a tree, Joseph, right in their house! They'd decorated the tree also. The branches were full of bright and sparkling ornaments. There was a figure on the top of the tree. It looked like an angel. Oh, it was beautiful.

Everyone was laughing and happy. They were all excited about the gifts. They gave the gifts to each other, Joseph, not to our son. I don't think they even knew him. They never mentioned his name. Doesn't it seem odd for people to go to all that trouble to celebrate someone's birthday if they don't know him?

I had the strangest feeling that if our son had gone to this celebration he would have been in the way. Everything was so beautiful, Joseph, and everyone so full of cheer, but it made me sad. How odd for Jesus not to be remembered at his own birthday celebration. I'm glad it was only a dream. Wouldn't it be terrible, Joseph, if it were real?



LET'S TALK

1. How did Mary feel about her dream? Explain your answer.
2. What do you look forward to at Christmas?
3. What do you remember at Christmas?
4. What preparations do you see taking place at home, at school, in the neighbourhood/parish/ local church?
5. Now that you know the Christmas story, would you suggest any changes to the Christmas preparations in your neighbourhood/parish/ local church?

WHY DON'T YOU?

Discuss: 'You don't need religion to have Christmas.'

WHY DON'T YOU?

Light the candle(s) on the Advent Wreath for prayertimes during Advent in your classroom.

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

During Advent we remember how people waited long ago for the Messiah to be born. We too wait for Christmas, when we will celebrate the birth of Jesus. Today we remember people around the world who are also waiting.

We remember the people affected by floods this year.

They are waiting to return to their homes. *(Pause)*

We remember the people who suffered because of fires this year.

They are waiting to begin again. *(Pause)*

We remember the people who are suffering from wars this year.

They are waiting for freedom and for peace. *(Pause)*

We remember the people who are suffering because they have no food.

They are waiting for help. *(Pause)*

We remember the people who were sick because they have no clean water.

They are waiting for rain and for proper wells. *(Pause)*

We remember the people who have no homes because they have no one to care for them.

They are waiting for love and for hope. *(Pause)*

All

Jesus, you were sent to tell us of God's love.

You call people to be friends and to help each other.

Thank you for the people who help others all over the world.

Bless their work to make the world a better place. Amen.

Sign of the Cross

Mary is a key figure in the story of Christmas. She looked forward to the first Christmas in a particular way. She was waiting for her baby son, Jesus, to be born.

The Annunciation

This story from the Gospel according to Luke will help you to remember how Mary was asked to be the mother of Jesus.



One month later God sent the angel Gabriel to the town of Nazareth in Galilee with a message for a virgin named Mary. She was engaged to Joseph from the family of the King David. The angel greeted Mary and said, 'You are truly blessed! The Lord is with you.' Mary was confused by the angel's words and wondered what they meant. Then the angel told Mary, 'Don't be afraid! God is pleased with you, and you will have a son. His name will be Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of God Most High. The Lord God will make him king, as his ancestor David was. He will rule the people of Israel for ever and his kingdom will never end.' Mary asked the angel, 'How can this happen? I am not married!' The angel answered, 'The Holy Spirit will come down to you, and God's power will come over you. So your child will be called the holy Son of God. Your relative Elizabeth is also going to have a son, even though she is old. No one thought she could ever have a baby, but in three months she will have a son. Nothing is impossible for God! Mary said, 'I am the Lord's servant! Let it happen as you have said.' And the angel left her. (Luke 1:26-38)

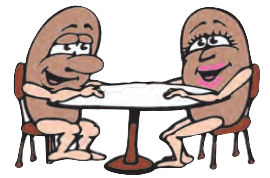
The Visitation

Here is another story of what Mary did during the time before Jesus was born. It is also from the Gospel according to Luke.

A short time later Mary hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea. She went into Zechariah's home, where she greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, her baby moved within her. The Holy Spirit came upon Elizabeth. Then in a loud voice she said to

Term 1, Lesson 25

Mary gets ready for the First Christmas



LET'S TALK

Put yourself in Mary's position in the story and answer these questions:

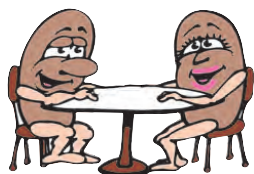
1. What do you think her first reaction might have been?
2. What questions might she have had?
3. What difficulties might she have faced?
4. Overall, what did Mary most want to do?



WHY DON'T YOU?

Go on the Internet and find some images of the Annunciation. For example, go to www.google.com/imghp and type in the word 'annunciation'. For some large pictures, you might try <http://www.artcyclopedia.com/index.html>. Enter the word 'Annunciation' in the search box beside 'Artworks by Title'. Do you think these pictures suggest any of the things you mentioned about Mary?

Mary: 'God has blessed you more than any other woman! He has also blessed the child you will have. Why should the mother of my Lord come to me? As soon as I heard your greeting, my baby became happy and moved within me. The Lord has blessed you because you believed that he will keep his promise.' (Luke 1:39-45)



LET'S TALK

1. Imagine that you are Mary in the story and answer these questions.

- How does Elizabeth react to seeing you?
- Do Elizabeth's words come as a surprise or not? Explain your answer.

2. What does this story tell us about Mary?

3. What does this story tell us about Jesus?

4. Elizabeth was much older than Mary and was already six months pregnant. Mary wanted to help her. What kind of help might Mary have given to Elizabeth?

5. Mary also wanted to tell Elizabeth her good news and talk to her about what God had asked of her. Make a list of the kinds of things you think the two women would have talked about?

6. What qualities of Mary are highlighted in the stories of the Annunciation and the Visitation?

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary...

All

And she conceived by the Holy Spirit.

Teacher

Hail Mary, full of grace,

The Lord is with thee.

Blessed are thou among women

And blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

All

Holy Mary, mother of God,

Pray for us sinners,

Now, and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Teacher

Behold the handmaid of the Lord...

All

Be it done unto me according to thy word.

Teacher

Hail Mary, full of grace,

The Lord is with thee.

Blessed are thou among women

And blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

All

Holy Mary, mother of God,

Pray for us sinners,

Now, and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Teacher

And the Word was made flesh...

All

And dwelt among us.

Teacher

Hail Mary, full of grace,

The Lord is with thee.

Blessed are thou among women

And blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

All

Holy Mary, mother of God,

Pray for us sinners,

Now, and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Teacher

Pray for us, O holy Mother of God...

All

That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Lord,

fill our hearts with your love,

and as you revealed to us by an angel

the coming of your Son as man,

so lead us through his suffering and death

to the glory of his resurrection

for he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,

one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Sign of the Cross

The First Christmas

Christmas Drama

Characters: Six narrators, Joseph, Mary, Young Boy, Innkeeper, Shepherds, Angels, Herod, Servants, Royal courtier, Three wise men

Scene 1

Narrator

Hello. I would like to welcome you to our story of the first Christmas. Our story begins with Joseph – busy as usual in his workshop. He is about to hear that the Emperor Augustus has ordered that a census be taken. This means that everyone has to go to their own hometown to sign their name in a great big book. It lets the Emperor know who's who and what's what! Let's join Joseph now to hear the news.

Place: Joseph's Workshop

(Joseph is busy in his workshop making a cradle for a baby. A boy comes running in.)

Boy

Hey, Mr Joseph, did you hear the news? The Emperor has ordered a census of all the people in the land. Everyone has to go back to the town of their ancestors. When they get there, they must sign their name in a great big book.

Joseph

(Strikes his thumb with the hammer) Oooooouch! What! Did you say a census? (Shakes his thumb and his head) That means a trip to Bethlehem for Mary and me. Doesn't the Emperor just pick the wrong time?

Boy

Yeah! Our family is of the house of David. So we have to go to Bethlehem as well.

Joseph

Poor Mary! A few more days and the baby will be born! Bethlehem is nearly sixty miles away. Will she be able for the journey? Will we get there and back before anything happens?

Boy

Well, I'm away home to help pack for the journey. I hope everything works out all right for you and Mary, Mr Joseph.

Joseph (preoccupied)

Yeah! Thanks! (Still shaking his thumb, starts putting away his work things)

(Mutters) Well, can't you just count on the Romans!

(Exit Joseph from workshop.)

Scene 2

Narrator

So Mary and Joseph, and lots of other families from Nazareth, packed up what they could carry and made their way down the dusty road to Bethlehem. The journey was difficult. Just imagine walking all the way from Coleraine to Belfast and then remember that Mary was nine months pregnant. Mary had to stop often to rest. At night, Mary and Joseph joined other families around a campfire. When they got to Bethlehem, days later, they were exhausted.



WHY DON'T YOU?

Use this play to get yourselves into the true spirit of Christmas. Make sure you have the words for the songs in it. (You might get them off the Internet, if necessary.) If it helps you to enter into the spirit of the play, the characters might dress up in some simple way. Otherwise, you might do it as a 'radio play'. In that case, it might be helpful if some people did sound effects.

Place: Bethlehem

(Lots of activity and people – Bethlehem is very busy. Mary and Joseph are both tired and worried.)

Joseph

Mary, hold my hand tight. I have never seen Bethlehem so busy. Don't worry, we will soon find a place to stay.

Mary

Let's try here, Joseph. It says they have spare rooms.

Joseph

Excuse me, Sir. Your notice says you still have some rooms.

Innkeeper

What? This notice. (Holds notice up and turns it around – it now says 'Full up'.)
Oh, well I'm sorry, but I've just let the last one.

Joseph

Oh no. We really need a place to stay. My wife is expecting a baby and we have been walking all day.

Innkeeper

Sorry Sir, but you're too late. There's nothing I can do.

Joseph and Mary

Thanks anyway. (They smile weakly and start to move on.)

Innkeeper (feeling sorry for them)

Hang on there. I'll tell you what. I have a stable. It's just up the hill a bit. It's only a stable now, but it's dry and it's private. You can rest there overnight, for nothing, if you want.

Joseph

Thank you so much. We'll be glad to take it.
My wife is very near her time and she needs to rest.

Innkeeper

No problem. I'll send my daughter up with some food and firewood.

Mary

Thank you. God bless you for your kindness!

(Mary and Joseph leave.)

Narrator

What a relief for Mary and Joseph. They had found somewhere to stay. It wasn't quite the cosy little Bed and Breakfast they might have liked, but it was warm and dry and away from the hustle and bustle of the streets of Bethlehem. The time came for Mary to have her baby. She gave birth to her first son and she wrapped him in strips of cloth and laid him in a manger. God's son born in a stable! Imagine!

All (sing)

Away in a Manger (or other appropriate hymn)



Scene 3

Narrator

You know the saying: 'Good news travels fast.' Well, this was good news: the Messiah that the people expected was born. But, how would the news travel? Remember, there were no phones, no televisions, no fax machines, no Internet, no e-mail or text-messaging. No modern gadgets! But, they had something better than any gadget. They had angels, and the angels were just delighted to tell about the birth of Jesus. And whom did they tell? Well, according to the story, the angels appeared to humble shepherds on a hillside. These shepherds were minding their business, doing a bit of sheep-counting, when angels appeared all around them. It must have frightened them half to death. Let's join them and find out.

Place: Hills outside Bethlehem

Moab

Hey! Stoke up that fire there. That night would skin the fleece of sheep.

Joel

It's a cold one all right. Here, try this soup. It'll warm your toes.

John

That's a strange-looking sky. I've never seen it so bright.

Moab

Hey! What's going on over there?

Joel

Something must be at the sheep. Darn wolves again.

John

Come on, we might be in time to save the lambs.

(Angel appears in dazzling apparel.)

Moab

What in the world?

Angel

Do not be afraid. I am here with good news for you.

Joel (aside to Moab)

What do you think it is, Moab?

Moab

I don't know, Joel, but I'm wondering what you put in that soup?

John

Shhhhhhhh, you two! Whatever it is, it's talking to us.

Joel

What are you?

Angel

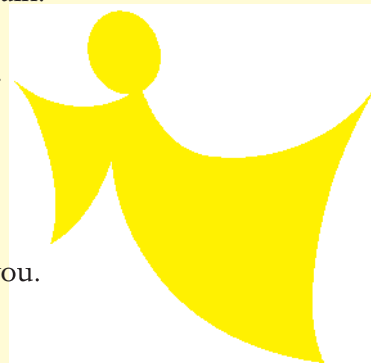
I am an angel of the Lord and I come with news of great joy for all people. This very day in David's town, your saviour is born. He is Christ the Lord!

Moab (to the other shepherds)

Angel! It's says it's an angel. We're looking at an angel.

Joel

Well, no one back at the sheep-pens is ever going to believe this.



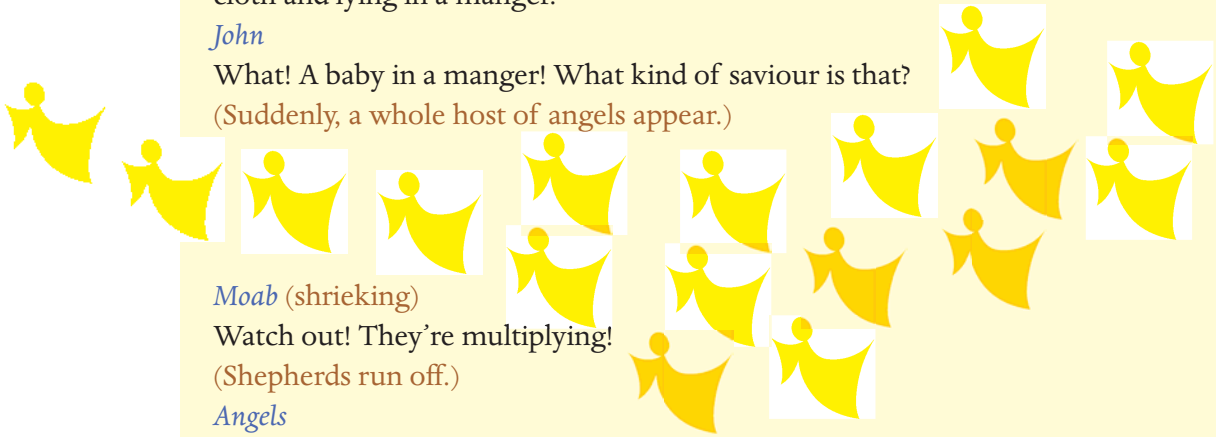
Angel

And this will prove it to you. You must go and find a baby wrapped in strips of cloth and lying in a manger.

John

What! A baby in a manger! What kind of saviour is that?

(Suddenly, a whole host of angels appear.)



Moab (shrieking)

Watch out! They're multiplying!

(Shepherds run off.)

Angels

Glory to God in the highest heaven and peace on earth to those with whom he is pleased.

Narrator

The poor shepherds! It was no dream! They had to go and find that baby. (Pause)

Meanwhile, some wise men arrived from the east. They studied the stars and had seen a star rising in the sky. They knew from this that the new king had been born. They made their way to Jerusalem to the court of King Herod expecting to find him there. But they couldn't have been more wrong. And, to make things worse, Herod was having a bad hair day.

Scene 4

Place: Court of Herod

(A number of servants are dressing a very grumpy Herod. One is attempting to brush Herod's tousled head.)

Herod

Oooch! Be careful you fool!

Servant 1

Sorry, your royal mightiness! But your hair is a trifle difficult this evening.

Herod

Hurry up you fools. I'm going to be late for my own royal party.

Servant 2

Your royal highness, we're going as fast as we can.

Courtier

Most magnificent Herod, excuse this interruption, but you have royal visitors from the east.

Herod

What! Visitors at a time like this! Fool! Tell them I'm otherwise engaged.

Courtier

But most regal prince, they bring gifts of gold and treasures of the orient. Surely you can spare them a few minutes.

Herod (rubbing his hands together)

Gold, eh! Well maybe I'll give them a few moments. Show them in.

(Herod shakes off the servants and moves over to sit on his throne. The three wise men enter, bearing gifts. They kneel in front of Herod.)

Balthasaar

Great and wise King Herod, we are three travellers from the east. My name is Balthasaar and this is Melchior and this is Caspar. (Each bows in turn.)

Herod

Look, I don't want to appear rude, but I have a royal party on in an hour and I am still not dressed and I'm having a bad hair day. So, if you don't mind, could you just leave the gifts and my courtier will see you out?

Melchior

But the gifts are not for you, royal Herod. They are for the newborn king. We have come to worship him.

Herod

Newborn king, eh? Newborn king, eh? (angry, but then hides it)

Caspar

We have been following his star all night and we thought we would find him here.

Herod

Oh yes, of course. (Trying to be nice) Well, sorry he's not here. But, if you find out where he is, make sure you come back and tell me. (Pauses, then adds slyly) Why, I've been looking for him too.

Balthasaar

Certainly, your majesty, if we find him we will let you know.

(Exit three wise men)

Herod

You there! (Points at the courtier) Send a message to the captain of the guards. I want those men followed and I want a report of where they go. I want to know who this new king is. (Deliberately) I'm going to put an end to this nonsense!

Courtier

Yes, most gracious ruler. Your word is my command. (Exit)

Narrator

And so, the three wise men left Herod's palace. They looked up and once again they saw the star in the sky. They followed it all the way to Bethlehem. When they arrived at the stable, they met with the shepherds. Together they went in and found the baby Jesus, who was wrapped in strips of cloth and lying in the manger. Joseph and Mary were watching over him. The visitors fell on their knees and worshipped the new king, born for all. The wise men presented their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. They all marvelled at the tiny little baby. It was not what the Jews had been expecting – they believed that God would send them a mighty leader. But instead, when God sent Jesus into the world it was not with the power of a great leader, but with the weakness and helplessness of a tiny baby. And yet, this little baby would change the world for ever.

(All gather again for the final song. You might light the fifth white candle of the Advent wreath.)

All (sing)

Silent Night

Term 2, Lesson 1
How Our
Background
Influences
Us

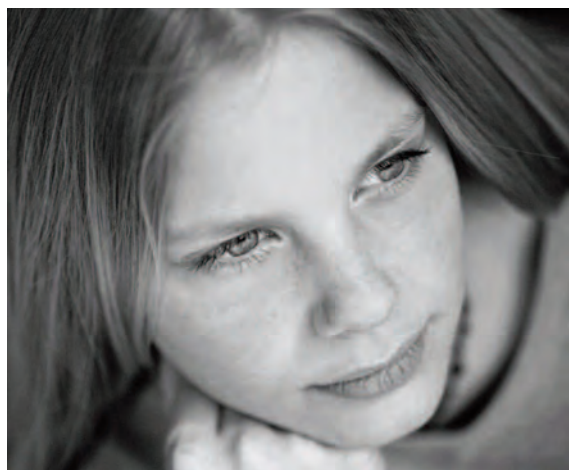
Hello again! Welcome to Term 2. How was Christmas for you? What did you eat? Turkey and ham again? Would you enjoy what the islanders of Lewis had?

Islanders prefer gannet to turkey



On the island of Lewis, in the Scottish Outer Hebrides, they don't have turkey for Christmas dinner. Instead, they have young gannet. This sea bird oozes black oil and is sold caked in salt crystals. Before cooking, you use a wire brush to scrub off the salt. Then you soak it overnight. Finally you boil it for ninety minutes. It is often cooked outside because of the stink. They say that it tastes like a cross between a duck and a mackerel. The hot oily skin is the best bit; the flesh is often black.

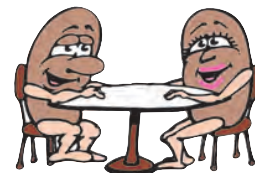
Where we live and when we live has a big part to play in who we are. Ask yourself some questions: What is your favourite food? What do you like to do in your spare time? What is your favourite song or piece of music? What is your favourite time of year? What do you hope for in your future? Got your answers? Fine. Now, find out what Elena, a young Russian girl, has to say about these things.



Hello from Moscow

My name is Elena. I am twelve years old. I live with my family in Moscow in western Russia. My Dad is an officer in the Russian army. My mother is a housewife. I am in Seventh Grade. I really love school. My favourite subjects are Russian, English and Biology. I have been studying English for the last six years and I think I speak it quite well. I have a hamster called Muesya. I love animals and would like to have lots of pets, but can't because we live in an apartment block. When I grow up I want to be a vet. I hope to have a house in the country where I can keep any animal I like. My favourite leisure activity is figure skating, but I also like swimming and dancing. My favourite piece of clothing is my ice-skating outfit. My favourite time of

year is winter because there's lots of snow and ice. In winter I can skate on the lake near where I live. It freezes over during the winter months. In summer my friends and I swim in it. It is always very cold. My favourite food is pirozhki, which is a kind of pastry filled with meat, cabbage, mushrooms and potato. I also love blyny, which is a thin pancake with jam, honey or sour cream on it. My favourite piece of music is our national anthem. I have included a picture of myself. What is it like to live in your country?
Bye for now, Elena.



LET'S TALK

1. Answer these questions for Elena:

What is your favourite food?
What do you like to do in your spare time?
What is your favourite song or piece of music?
What is your favourite time of year?
What do you hope for in your future?

2. Compare your answers with Elena's. Do you notice any differences? Why do you think your answers are different?

3. Would you agree that where we live makes a difference to who we are?

4. Do you think that your folks at home would have different answers to the above questions?

5. Would you agree that the time in which we live makes a difference to who we are?



LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

Today we pray in thanks for the good things that make us the people we are. We recognise that we are all different and special. We are a unique blend of all kinds of influences and experiences. We thank God for our families and friends and for all those who influence our lives in a positive way. As we pray together now, we ask God to protect us from negative influences and keep us safe from harm.

*Hear my cry, O God,
listen to my prayer;
from the end of the earth I call to you
when my heart is low.*

*Lead me to the place
that is safe;
for you are my guard
against all that bothers me.*

*Let me live in your home forever,
And find safety in your presence.
For you, O God, have heard my voice;
you have given all that you promised
to those who respect your name.*

(Based on Psalm 61)

Sign of the Cross



Term 2, Lesson 2

Tensions in the Land of Jesus' Birth



As the twenty-first century begins, there are over twenty million refugees in the world, mostly as a result of war. Can you name any places where there is war and tension at the moment?

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

We pause for a moment to remember the troubled places we hear of in the News.

(Pause)

Students mention a number of these places... Alternatively, the teacher might name some.

For peace in our own land and among our own people, we pray together (or sing) the Prayer of St Francis:

Lord, make me a channel of your peace;
Where there is hatred, let me sow your love;
Where there is injury, your pardon Lord;
Where there is despair, let me sow your hope;
Where there is doubt, let there be true faith in you;
Where there is darkness, let there be your light;
And where there is sadness, only joy.
O Master, grant that I may never seek so much to be consoled, as to console;
To be understood, as to understand;
To be loved, as to love with all my heart.
For it is in giving that we receive;
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

Sign of the Cross

The land where Jesus lived was a tense place. Soldiers and traders travelled its roads constantly. It was often taken over by foreign rulers, who had a lot of power in the area. Today it is divided between the Palestinian and Israeli peoples. In the time of Jesus it was known as Palestine. It was a small country, about the size of Northern Ireland or Yorkshire. It was situated at the eastern side of the Mediterranean, where the three continents of Africa, Europe and Asia meet. Palestine was on the main trade route between East and West.

Timeline of main events around the time of Jesus

63BC:	Palestine was conquered by the Romans.
40BC:	The Romans appointed Herod as king. Because Herod was not a Jew, the Jewish people never accepted him. He was king at the time of the birth of Jesus. He died when Jesus was still a boy.
8-4BC:	Birth of Jesus.
AD 1:	Death of Herod.
AD 26:	Pontius Pilate made governor of the province of Judaea. After Herod's death, his three sons ruled the country. They were bad rulers. So the Romans had to introduce direct rule in two of the country's three provinces: Judaea and Samaria.
AD 24-25:	Around this time, Jesus began his mission.

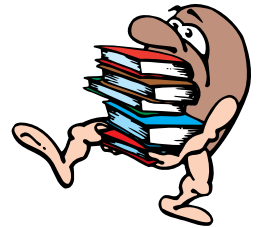
Roman Rule brings tension to Palestine in the time of Jesus

The Romans were not welcome in Palestine. They made the Jewish people pay taxes to them. The Zealots – a secret group of freedom fighters – wanted to get rid of the Romans. For the Zealots, God was Palestine’s only true king.



LET’S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Pretend that you are a Roman governor in Palestine around AD26. In your journal, write a report about the Zealots for the Roman authorities. Tell about the difficulties this group is causing. Describe recent Zealot activity. Tell them that you need more help in dealing with the Zealots.

Jerusalem Herald

SPRING, AD 26

Romans Invade Holy City

Sources in Rome tell us that Jerusalem is set to become the home of more Roman soldiers. Ever since 63 BC, when they first conquered Palestine, the Romans have been under rebel attack. The Zealots have

been responsible for recent attacks in Judaea. The local Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, has increased the numbers of Roman soldiers on the streets of Jerusalem. This is the third increase in as many months. It is clear that the Romans are taking these threats seriously.

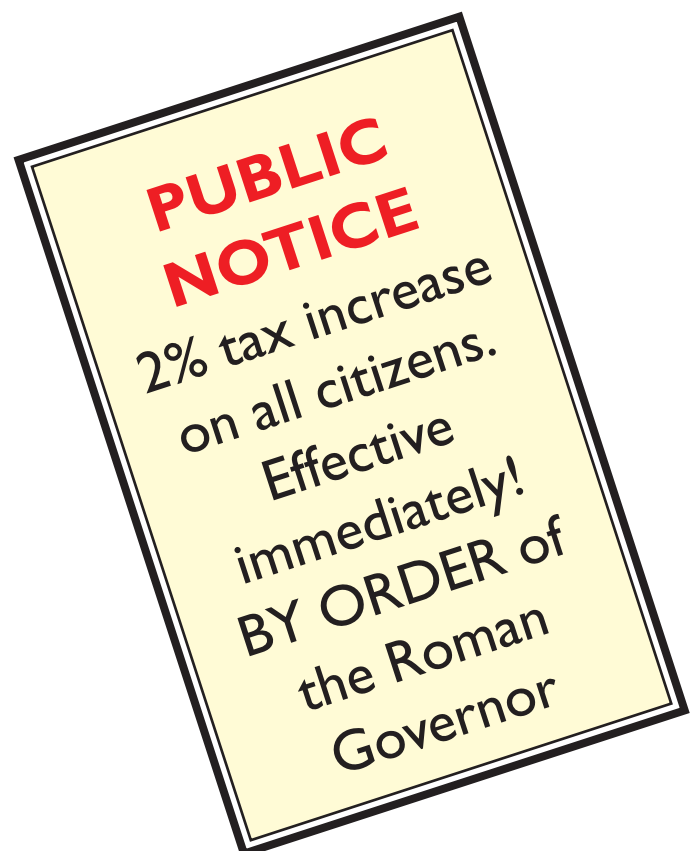
JERUSALEM REPORTER

AD 26

Romans Out!

HUNDREDS of Jews took to the streets of Jerusalem yesterday to protest against the latest tax increase. Speakers at the rally spoke of the greed of Rome and condemned this latest increase as robbery. The Zealots in Jerusalem issued a statement, which was read out to those present. Part of this statement is printed below.

‘Some of you are waiting on the Messiah to come and save you from the Romans. But for now, we must defend ourselves. God is with us! So, arm yourselves! Choose your weapon and stand with us. We will fight these pagan Romans! We will get rid of them and their taxes! They have no place here! Have no fear! The day of our freedom is at hand! Romans Out!’



Term 2, Lesson 3 The Land of Palestine in the Time of Jesus

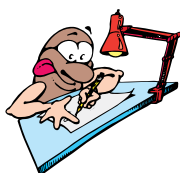
We know that time and place influence who we are. In the last lesson we learned about the times in which Jesus lived. We know they were tense times because the Romans occupied Palestine. Now, in this lesson, we learn about the place itself and its geography. Before you begin, take a moment to ask yourself: How well do you know your own country? Could you identify its main regions? Could you name its chief cities? And what about its main rivers, lakes and mountains? What is its best-known feature?

The main places in Palestine

In the time of Jesus, Palestine consisted of three main regions: Galilee, Samaria and Judaea. Palestine had two lakes: the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea. The river Jordan connected these two lakes. Palestine had one major city – Jerusalem – in the region of Judaea. There were also several small villages and towns. For example, in Galilee there were Nazareth and Capernaum; in Judaea, there were Bethlehem and Jericho. The people who lived in Samaria were called Samaritans. They were not Jewish. Jews would not go into this area as Jews did not trade or mix with Samaritans or with people of other races.

LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.



Palestine: Land of contrasts

The north of Palestine was very different from the south. Galilee, in the north, with its lake called the Sea of Galilee, was a place of rich fertile plains and steep hills. Jesus grew up here and probably watched fishermen mending their nets and shepherds minding their sheep and vineyard workers tending their vines, whose grapes were picked to make wine. Further south, the greenery gives way to desert. Jericho is built in an oasis near the river Jordan and from there on one moves steeply uphill to Jerusalem.

WHY DON'T YOU?

Do the following play about Palestine. Instead of playing people, you get to be the physical features of Palestine.

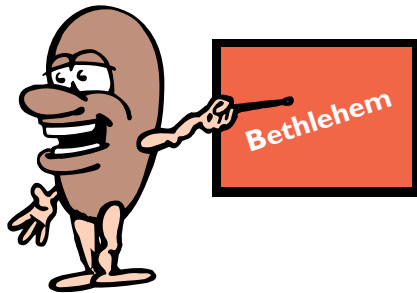


Play: The Holy Land

For this activity, you, the students, become the map of Palestine. Do this in a large spacious area. Your teacher might use some string or chalk to mark out an outline of the country and the seas and river on the floor. You then take up your correct position on the 'map'. If more than one person represents a place or feature, share the lines between you. You should have the name of the village/town/city/river/sea that you represent on a placard around your neck. The Narrator is the only person who moves around the 'map'.

Narrator

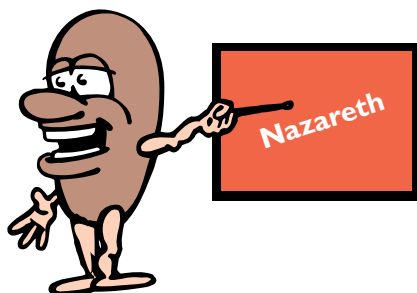
Hello. I am your tour guide for our tour around the land where Jesus lived. Jesus lived in a small country called Palestine, about the size of Northern Ireland or Yorkshire. It is beside the Mediterranean Sea. Palestinian and Israeli peoples share Palestine today. We begin our tour in the south of the country in the small village of Bethlehem.



Hello and welcome to Bethlehem. Mary and Joseph travelled here to be counted for the census and while they were here Jesus was born. Mary wrapped the baby Jesus in cloths and laid him in a manger. After they had been counted, Mary and Joseph went back to their home in Nazareth in Galilee.

Narrator

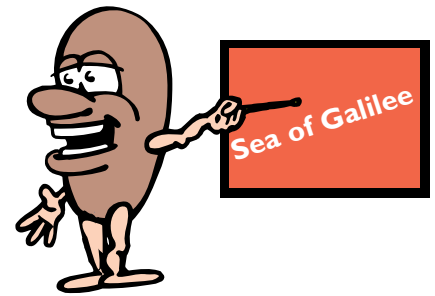
Let's stop at Nazareth and see what we can find out about it.



Hello. You are welcome to Nazareth, the home place of Mary and Joseph and the place where Jesus grew up. Nazareth was a village in the region of Galilee. Mary, Joseph and Jesus lived in a small house with one room. The village had at least one synagogue, where the Jews went to worship God on the Sabbath. Jesus went to school there and was taught by the local rabbi. Nazareth had a busy marketplace and Jesus often went there with Mary to buy food and other supplies. He also helped her to carry water from the village well. Bye now and enjoy the rest of your tour.

Narrator

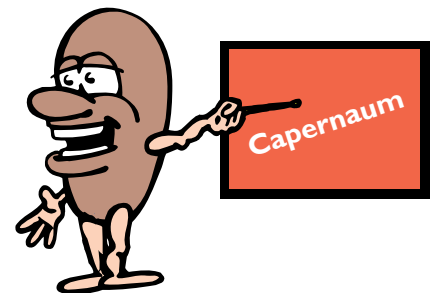
Thank you for telling us about Nazareth. Let us go further north now and visit the first of two seas in Palestine: the Sea of Galilee.



Hello there. We work here on the Sea of Galilee. It's a beautiful place. Jesus came here as a boy to play and to fish. However, it can also be a dangerous place. The water can be calm one minute and a raging storm the next. Boats can get flooded if people are not careful.

Narrator

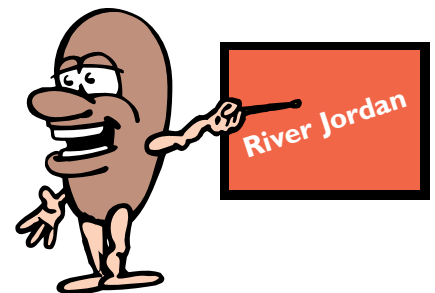
Well, the water looks calm and beautiful today. Let us go on now to Capernaum, a little village just a few miles from here, and see what it's about.



Hello and welcome to Capernaum. We have lived here all our lives. It's just north of the Sea of Galilee. Many of us work on the boats, catching fish; but you'll find farmers and carpenters here too. We're very proud because Jesus visited our town often and performed one of his first miracles here. There used to be a man here that people said was affected by some evil spirit. Jesus cured him. We're still talking about it. Anyway, enjoy the rest of your tour.

Narrator

Thank you, people of Capernaum. Every place has its story. Let's move south now, to the river Jordan, and see what the story is there.

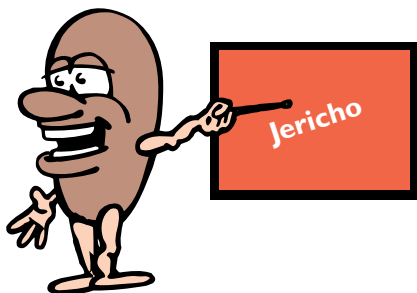


Welcome to the river Jordan. The Jordan river is just over 220 miles long. It starts above the Sea of Galilee in

the north and heads due south to the Dead Sea. John the Baptist baptised Jesus here before Jesus began the work God sent him to do. Like all the other people back then, he went completely under the water to be baptised. People still come today to dip in the waters where Jesus was baptised. Fancy getting in?

Narrator

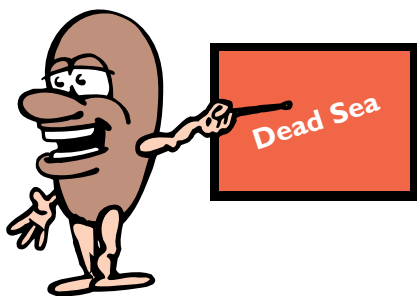
Thanks... but err... no thanks... it's too cold. Anyway, we've got to get on with this tour. We'll head on south to the town of Jericho.



Welcome to Jericho. Jesus did one of his last miracles here. He gave Bartimaeus back his sight. Imagine, bothering with a blind beggar. We thought he might spend his time on someone more important. But then, that was Jesus: always on the side of people we forget about! Look up that hill! That road leads to Jerusalem, and that was the way he headed. The next thing we heard, he had been crucified. Terrible stuff!

Narrator

I hope we don't end up the same way, because that's where we are going after our next stop: the shores of the Dead Sea.



Hello and welcome to the Dead Sea.

Narrator

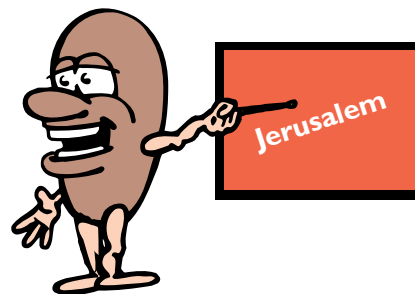
We were just wondering: why is this place known as the Dead Sea?

Dead Sea

Ah, there's an easy answer to that. The water here is chock full of salt: salt, salt, salt, salt and more salt. There's so much salt in it that nothing can live in it. When people called it the Dead Sea, the name stuck.

Narrator

Well, thanks for clearing up that little mystery for us. Now, as promised, we must go on to the last stop on today's tour. It is, of course, the most important place in Palestine: the Holy City of Jerusalem.



Hello there. You are most welcome to Jerusalem, capital of our country. It's always busy here with visitors from other countries, traders and Roman soldiers. Festival time is really busy here, especially Passover. At those times, the place is full of pilgrims: Jews who come to pray and worship at the Temple, our most sacred shrine. The city does well out of pilgrims. Jesus knew this place well and was often here at Passover. Of course that all ended with the Passover at which the Roman soldiers put him to death.

Narrator

Thank you for telling us about the Holy City. Well, there you are: the Holy Land. I hope you enjoyed your tour of Palestine. Now, let's show our appreciation for each of the places we visited today: Bethlehem, Nazareth, Capernaum, the river Jordan, Jericho, the Dead Sea, the Sea of Galilee, and Jerusalem.

(As each place name is called, its placard is held up. All others applaud for each place.)

A time to pray

Here is a prayer that you can pray quietly on your own or with everyone else.

*God our Creator,
People everywhere on earth
and beyond the sea trust you.
You make the mountains by your strength.
You have great power.
You are praised from where the sun rises to where it sets.
You take care of the land and water it.
You make it fertile.
The rivers of God are full of water.
Grain grows because you make it grow.
You soften the ground with rain
and then you bless it.
You give the year a good harvest.
Everything shouts and sings for joy.*

Term 2, Lesson 4

Getting to Know the Religious Background of Jesus

Our lives have many signs of religion in them. Can you think of any? What is the name of your school? Does your school close for particular religious holidays? What signs of religion are there about your home town or village? Do you know of any old monastic Christian ruins in your area?

Jesus grew up in the Jewish faith. It was an important part of everything he did and everything he taught. The prayer he taught us – the Our Father – is based in the Jewish prayer tradition. Learning more about Jewish religious customs will help us to learn more about Jesus.

A time to pray

Note: The class might divide into two groups for this prayertime.

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

We take a moment to reflect on the words that Jesus taught us.

Group 1

Our Father, who art in heaven. God, you love us as good parents love their children. You are with us now. One day we shall be with you fully alive in heaven.

Group 2

Hallowed be thy name. May your name be held holy. May we always respect you for all you give us.

Group 1

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. May our lives today reflect your kindness, your mercy and your justice.

Group 2

Give us this day our daily bread. Give us what we need for today.

Group 1

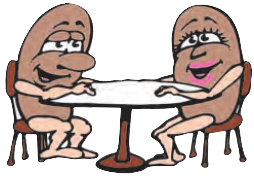
Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Help us to be sorry for the bad things we have done. Help us to forgive others from our hearts.

Group 2

Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Protect us in times of danger from all that is harmful.

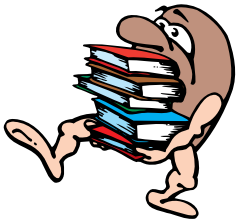
Sign of the Cross





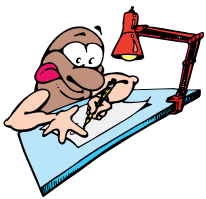
LET'S TALK

1. Make a list of the things that Mary did before the Sabbath.
2. How did their Sabbath meal begin?
3. Why do you think Mary and Joseph looked at each other at the end of the story?



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Our Sabbath is on Sunday, because that is the day when Jesus rose to new life. Write a short note on why you think it's good that Sunday is not the same as other days in the week. Write a short prayer of praise for the ways you can enjoy God's gift of life on a Sunday.



LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.

Mary's Sabbath Story

Joseph got a new apprentice, Moshe, recently. Let me tell you all about the day he arrived. It was a very ordinary Friday morning. Jesus had gone off to school. I cleaned the house and did the washing so that everyone would have clean clothes for the Sabbath: that's our holy day. School finishes early on a Friday and it's just as well. Jesus and I went to the well and carried home the water we needed for the two days. No work is allowed on the Sabbath. In one of the stories of Creation we are told that God rested on the seventh day, after creating the world; so we rest on the seventh day too. The housework just has to be finished before the Sabbath begins. I remember that day because we were nearly late going to the market. There was only enough time, before it closed, to buy flour and wine for the evening meal and oil for the lamp. I was just putting out the two loaves of freshly baked bread when I heard

Joseph at the door. 'Shabat Shalom' (the peace of the Sabbath) Joseph said as he entered. Then he introduced Moshe to Jesus and to me.

Jesus was very excited about meeting Moshe and because the Sabbath was almost here. We gathered around the table and at sunset I lit the lamp. That's the start of Sabbath. We joined hands. Joseph said the blessing. As we ate, Jesus told Moshe about Rabbi Solomon and our Sabbath day service. Rabbi Solomon has this particular way of taking a deep breath before he reads or chants. Jesus could imitate him so well. You'd just know it was Rabbi Solomon from the way he raised his shoulders. Reading aloud from God's Word is a serious job! Translating and explaining the sacred text is another!

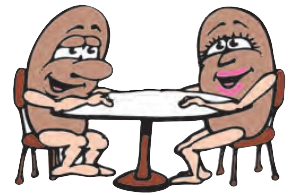
Moshe told us about his local rabbi, who likes to quote the Psalms. He thinks they tell about what the Messiah will be like. 'The Messiah will free us from the Romans,' Moshe said. 'We will be a free people. I wonder if I shall live to meet him.' Joseph and I just looked at each other...



Sabbath Day Service in Nazareth

On the Saturday morning each Jewish family went to the synagogue. The synagogue was used as a meeting place, as a school, as a hall and as a law court. Inside was a small porch with two doors. One door led up to the balcony, where the women and children could sit and listen. The other door led to the ground floor of the building, where the men gathered. In the middle of the ground floor, there was a large raised platform called a *bimah*, with a reading desk. In the wall behind this at the end facing Jerusalem was the 'Holy Ark' – a curtained area where the scrolls of the law, the sacred Jewish writings, were kept. Above the entrance to the Holy Ark was a replica of the Two Tablets on which the Ten Commandments were written. Above the Ark was a light which was kept burning day and night. This represented the Menorah – seven-branched candlestick – of the Temple, one branch of which was kept constantly burning.

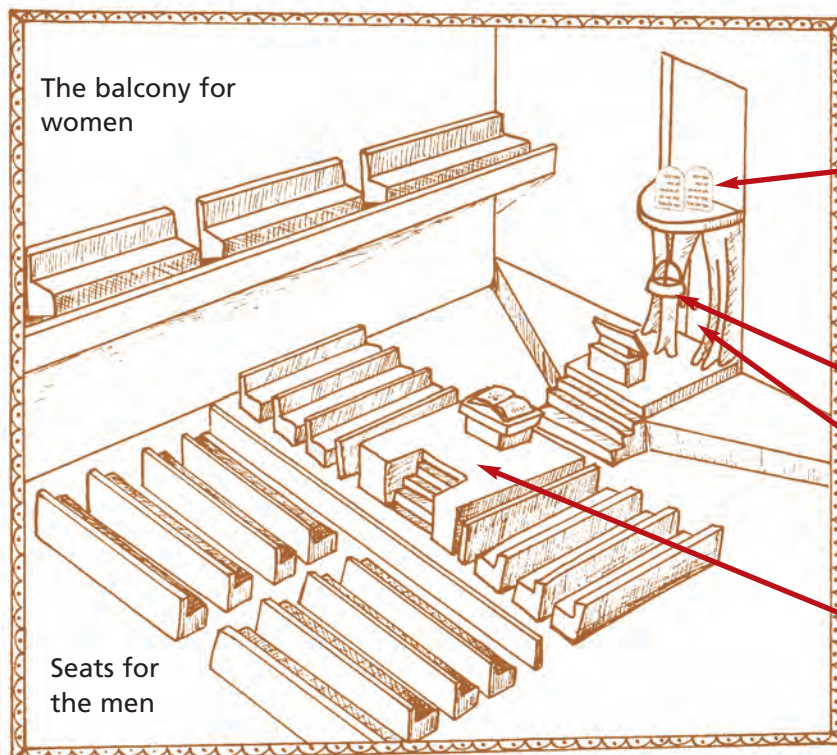
The service was quite lengthy. It was led either by the local Rabbi, or a Shaliach Tzibbur (lit: messenger for the congregation, a knowledgeable lay member of the congregation who keeps the laws of the Torah). (The format of the service and the prayers was as set by the Men of the Great Assembly who took control of all things religious during the exile in Babylon some 500–600 years previous and organised the services to replace the Temple worship when there was no Temple. This format and these prayers are followed to this day.) Blessings and Psalms were recited, followed by other prayers said by the whole congregation. All services in the synagogue had and still have a set format for any particular occasion. At the designated section of the service a section from the Torah, the Pentateuch, was read in Hebrew. Each year the complete Pentateuch (the Five Books of Moses) is read section by section, consecutively, from Genesis through to Deuteronomy. Then an associated section from the Prophets followed, also read in Hebrew by a member of the congregation. The Torah scroll was returned to the Ark in procession, accompanied by recitations from Psalms. Following a speech by the local preacher or Rabbi, probably explaining the weekly readings, further prayers, constituting the special additional service for the Sabbath, were then recited by all present.



LET'S TALK

1. Why do you think the family went to the synagogue on the Sabbath?
2. List the main things that happened during a synagogue service.
3. What was the purpose of the 'Holy Ark'?

SYNAGOGUE means 'assembly' or 'meeting'



The two tablets containing the Ten Commandments. On one of the Tablets are written the first words of the first five commandments – those between man and God – and on the second one the first words of the second five commandments – those between man and his fellow man. They are frequently placed above the Holy Ark.

The Eternal Light, which is kept burning night and day in front of the Holy Ark

The Holy Ark – containing the scrolls of the Law (Torah)

The bimah: a raised platform from which the scrolls are read

Term 2, Lesson 5

The Temple in Jerusalem

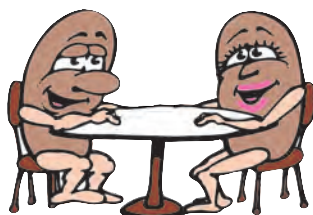
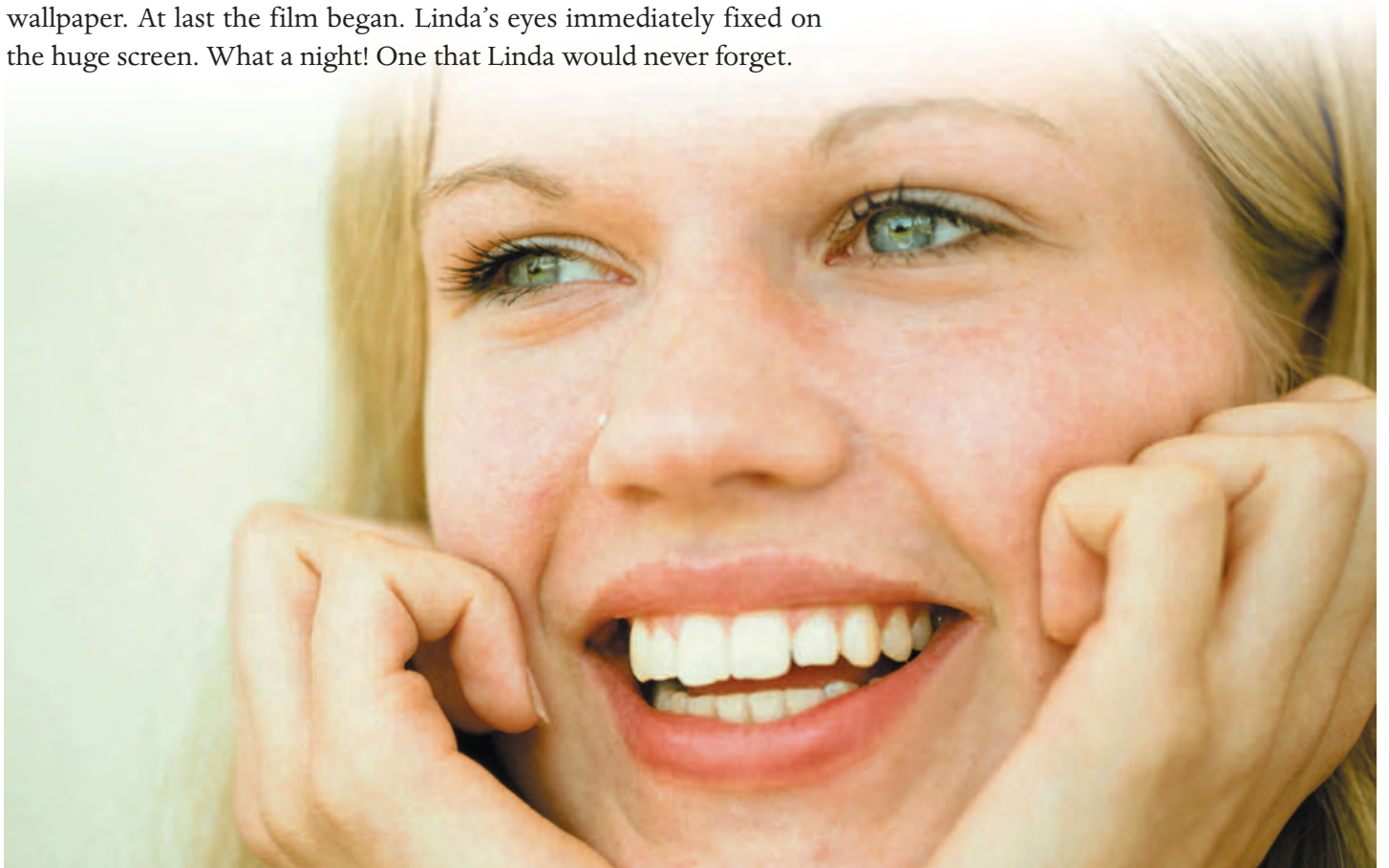
The Wailing Wall in Jerusalem. The stones in the wall are all that is left of the Temple that was destroyed by the Romans in AD 70. Jews from all over the world come here to pray.



In the previous lesson we saw how religion was a normal part of life in Nazareth when Jesus was growing up. It was also part of life beyond Nazareth. When Jesus was a baby he was – like all other firstborn sons – brought to Jerusalem and presented to God in the Temple. For the Jewish people, the Temple was an awesome place. It was their most important place of worship. Have you ever been to a place that filled you with awe and wonder? Watch for Linda's reaction in the story that follows.

A First Trip to the Cinema

Twelve-year-old Linda was so excited that she didn't feel the chill in the air as they waited in the long queue outside the cinema. She was used to the cold, as there was no central heating at home. She had often seen the twinkling lights of the cinema sign before but never got to go in. There was no money for that kind of thing in her house. Nor was there the humour for doing such a thing, ever since her mother died years previously. But this time Linda could delight in the wonder of it all – the flashing lights around the board that spelt out the name of the film they had come to see: *E.T. – the Extra Terrestrial*. It was Linda's first film, thanks to Annie, her neighbour. Annie bought tickets for the gallery; she wanted to treat Linda and her sisters. They got popcorn – another first for Linda. The attendant showed them the way to their places. Linda bounced up and down on her seat; she thought it funny how the chair seat sprung up when she stood. Annie had to tell her to calm down and sit still. But Linda felt on top of the world. She had a great view of everything: the magnificent crystal chandelier, the luxurious red carpet, the beautiful wallpaper. At last the film began. Linda's eyes immediately fixed on the huge screen. What a night! One that Linda would never forget.



LET'S TALK

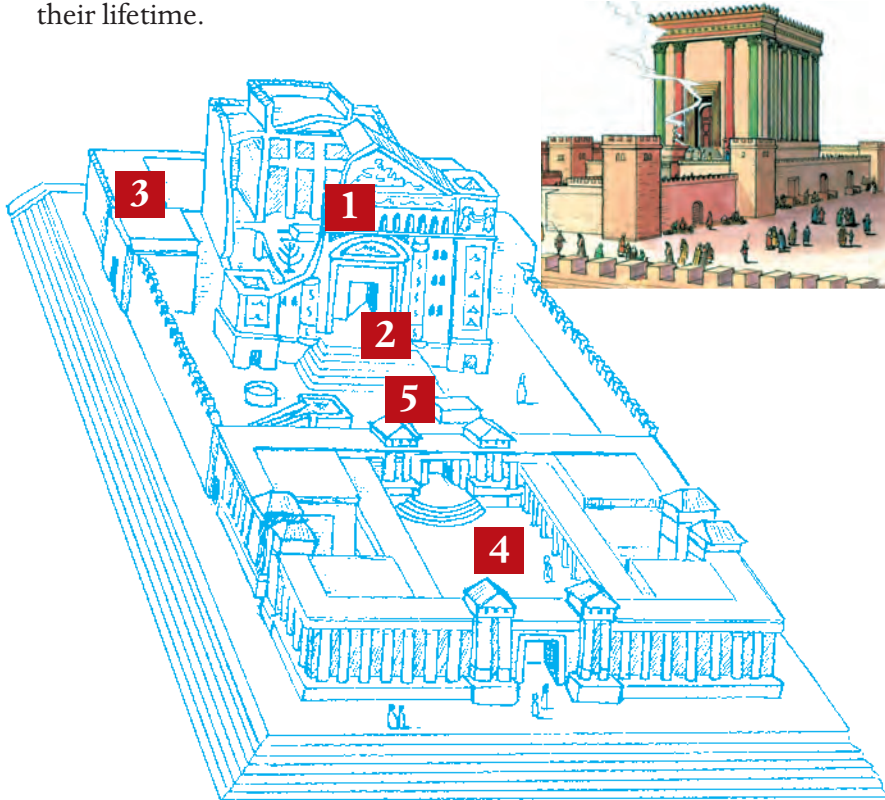
1. It was Linda's first visit to the cinema. What was it like for her?

2. How can you tell this was a special event in Linda's life?

3. Have you ever been to a place that made you feel wonder and awe?

The Temple in Jerusalem

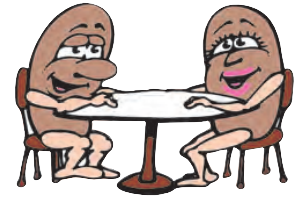
In the time of Jesus, a trip to the Temple was something out of the ordinary. People had to walk, perhaps for several days, and stay away from home for several nights. Jerusalem would have been thronged with visitors, as well as traders, storytellers and street entertainers. For most, the Temple was the largest building they would see in their lifetime.



The burning of incense, prayer, and animal sacrifice were all part of Temple worship in Jerusalem. On feast days, such as Passover, thousands of animal sacrifices were made, asking God's forgiveness.

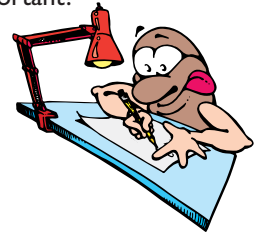
Jerusalem was even called 'The Holy City' because of the Temple. For the Jewish people, the Temple was the holiest place on earth. It had been built to house the Ark of the Covenant. The Ark was a special wooden box that was made to hold the stone tablets on which the Ten Commandments were written. The Jewish people honoured the Ark because they believed that it was a place where God was present. At first the Ark had been kept in a special tent. Then, in the middle of the tenth century BC, King Solomon built a Temple for it. This Temple was destroyed in 587 BC by an invading army from Babylon. The leaders of the Jewish people were taken into captivity in Babylon, but when they were released in 538 BC and returned to Jerusalem, they eventually rebuilt their Temple and dedicated it in 515 BC.

In 20 BC, King Herod ordered a new and more splendid Temple to be built. He wanted to impress the Jewish people, who did not like him. It took ten years to complete the main building. This was the Temple that Jesus would have visited. The decoration work continued right through Jesus' time until it was finished in AD 64. The Romans destroyed this Temple in AD 70.



LET'S TALK

1. What made a visit to the Temple so special for Jewish people?
2. The Jewish people went to the Temple for worship. Whom did they worship? Why did they worship?
3. What form did their worship take?
4. What was the most important place in the Temple and why was it important?



LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.

Areas in the Temple

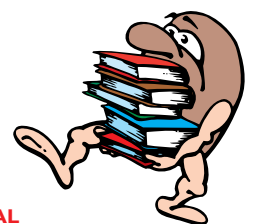
1 THE HOLY PLACE: This was the most important place in the Temple. It contained the Altar of Incense, where incense was regularly burned. It also contained the Holy of Holies, which was separated off from it by a large curtain. The High Priest could only enter it on certain days.

2 THE COURT OF PRIESTS: Jewish priests sacrificed animals and birds here.

3 THE COURT OF THE GENTILES: A public market selling birds and animals for Temple sacrifice. Gentiles were allowed here but no further.

4 THE COURT OF WOMEN: An area for Jewish women. They were not allowed beyond this point.

5 THE COURT OF ISRAEL: Only for Jewish males. Women and Gentiles were not allowed here.



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Imagine that you are a Jewish person going on a special trip to the Temple around the time of Jesus. Write an account of your experience. Try to include some of the facts that you have read in this lesson.

A time to pray

Note: You will need a small pebble for this prayertime.

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

Sometimes words are not enough and we use a gift to express ourselves. In our worship of God we can use things too. They help us get beyond words to a deeper level of communication with God. Today we are going to use a pebble in this way. We will allow it to help us in our worship of God.

Take the pebble in your hand. What is it like to look at? Explore it. Turn it over. Feel it. What is it like to touch? Is it rough or is it smooth? Is it light or is it dark? Does the pebble remind you of something in your life? Perhaps its smoothness reminds you of things that are pleasant. Perhaps its sharpness reminds you of things that are difficult. Perhaps its bright colour reminds you of the things that are happy. Perhaps its dark colour reminds you of the things that are sad. Perhaps its solid feel reminds you of things on which you can depend.

So, take a few moments with this pebble now and allow it to remind you of something in your life. *(Pause)* Take some time now and talk to God about this part of your life. Be aware of the pebble in your hand as you do so. *(Allow two minutes for silent reflection.)*

Teacher

Let us pray together and say:

All

Our Father...

Sign of the Cross

Someone has to referee a game between two teams. Someone has to be in charge of the school. Someone has to run the factory. Someone has to direct the company. Someone has to govern the country. Someone leads our prayer at Mass. Do you know any people who do these things? Who are the leaders in your own life at present? Why do you think these leaders are important in your community? What would life be like without leaders?

In this lesson you will learn more about the Jewish religious leaders at the time of Jesus. Through doing the play opposite, you will get to know more about the following groups and individuals:

- The Sadducees: They were priests in the Temple in Jerusalem. They were wealthy and powerful. They believed only in the written law of Moses (Torah).
- The Scribes: They were experts in the law (Torah). They wrote down the oral law (rules and traditions based on the Torah) and handed it on to others. They were linked closely with the Pharisees.
- The Sanhedrin: It was the highest court of Jewish law in the land. It had seventy members. It was led by the High Priest (*see below*).
- The Pharisees: They believed in the written law of Moses (Torah). They also followed the oral law as presented by the scribes. They were willing to challenge people who did not keep the law.
- The High Priest: He was the leader of the Council. At the time of Jesus his name was Caiaphas. He presided over Council meetings.



A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

We pray to God for leaders everywhere, as we say: God, guide them.

All

God, guide them.

Teacher

We pray for all leaders in religion: for the Pope, for our bishop (*name*), for our parish clergy, for all leaders of world religions... (Pause)
God, continue to guide them in their work for us, your people.

All

God, guide them.

Teacher

We pray for all civil leaders: for those who make decisions in Government here and throughout the world; for presidents, prime ministers, members of parliaments and assemblies.
God, guide them and give them patience and good will.

All

God, guide them.

Teacher

We pray for all leaders in our local community: for those who work for reconciliation, peace and good order; for business people who provide local jobs; for journalists and those who broadcast the News; for those who teach and guide others; for doctors and nurses and all who care for the sick; for voluntary workers who give their time for free. God, reward them for their efforts.

All

God, guide them.

Teacher

Let us pray as Jesus taught us:

All

Our Father...

Sign of the Cross

Trouble at the Sanhedrin

(Courtroom scene with representatives from the three main religious groups at the time of Jesus: the Pharisees, the scribes and the Sadducees.)

Noah: Order, order. All rise for the High Priest Caiaphas, leader of this Sanhedrin Council. *(Caiaphas walks in, looking very official and powerful.)*

Caiaphas: I, Caiaphas, leader of this Council, declare this meeting open. Are all seventy members present, Noah?

Noah: Yes Master.

Caiaphas: Well, what's for discussion today, Noah?

Noah: The proposed temple tax increase, Master!

Caiaphas: *(sighs)* Oh no, not again! Give me a good flogging any day. Right, we'd better get on with it! The longer here, the later there. Announce it, Noah.

Noah: This religious and civil court for the district of Jerusalem is now in session. Today's business: the proposed increase in temple tax.

Caiaphas: Those arguing in favour: who will speak on their behalf?

Solomon: I will, Master Caiaphas. I am Solomon, Son of Aaron, one of the Jerusalem Sadducee Party.

Caiaphas: Very good, Solomon. Now get on with it...

Solomon: Fellow members of the Sanhedrin, this latest increase in temple tax is necessary to keep our Temple in working order. You are all very aware of the rising cost of living in this city. Only a few coins are left in the fund. We must act urgently. I propose this increase in temple tax on all citizens – effective immediately. *(Solomon sits down amid lots of grumbling and shouts of 'ridiculous', 'robbery', 'outrageous', 'fool', 'traitor'.)*

Caiaphas: Order, order! I suppose the Pharisees would like to reply.

David: Yes, Master Caiaphas. I am David, son of Joel and member of the Jerusalem School of Pharisees.

Caiaphas: All right, David, but be brief!

David: I represent the ordinary people. Unlike the Sadducees who are wealthy

priests, Pharisees are ordinary men. The people of this land look up to the Pharisees and consider us their guides in all matters. *(Sniggers and grumbling from the Sadducees)* If people pay more towards the Temple, they will neglect their own local synagogues. This proposal simply cannot be allowed. Pharisees want people to know and keep God's laws as written in the Torah, God's Holy Word. As you know, the scribes have developed the oral law to help explain the written law. We cannot ask people to go against God's laws. *(David sits down amid shouts of 'Hear, Hear', 'cannot be justified', 'save our local synagogues'.)*

Caiaphas: Would the scribes like to add something?... Go ahead, Scribe Harris...

Scribe Harris: Yes, Master Caiaphas, scribes make accurate records of what God's law says. In the fifth book of the law given by God to Moses it says: Cursed be anyone who deprives the stranger, the orphan and the widow of justice. *(‘Amen’ shout all the Pharisees)* Cursed be anyone who misleads another for their own gain. *(More shouts of ‘Amen’)* Cursed be anyone who takes a bribe to hide the truth. *(Even more shouts of ‘Amen’)* And as God said to the Prophet Isaiah, ‘Ah you who make wicked laws, who write rules to oppress, who turn aside the needy from justice and rob the poor... what will you do on the day of punishment?’ This temple tax is a bad thing. The people won't have money left for doing good. *(Scribe Harris sits down amid shouts of ‘Amen, Amen’.)*

Caiaphas: Scribe Harris, what are you getting at? We are all quite well versed in God's law.

Scribe Harris: Yes, Master Caiaphas, but I must warn this Council that God will punish those who do wrong. As God said to the Prophet Ezekiel, ‘I will judge you according to your ways and punish all your wickedness. My eye will not spare, I will have no pity...’ *(Caiaphas cuts him off mid sentence.)*

Caiaphas: Yes, Yes, I think we are all well warned. So, where does this leave the Sadducees? Solomon?

Solomon: Scribe Harris has gone too far. Is he accusing members of this Council of being dishonest? He and the Pharisees know full well that we take our job here at the Temple seriously. Keeping God's law as found in the written Torah is our most serious concern. But, as Scribe Harris

knows well, Sadducees do not believe anything unless it is written in the Torah. We do not accept the oral law of the scribes. *(Roars of ‘No oral law’, ‘Written law only’ from the Sadducees.)*

David: Master Caiaphas, the Sadducees might reject the oral law... but that is not the point! A further tax increase is simply unjust. If the Sadducees were better at running temple business, we wouldn't need it.

Solomon: Oh you Pharisees! So heavenly bound, yet no earthly good! You have no idea what it takes to run this place. Rising costs and other expenses mean that this increase should become law at once.

David: Master Caiaphas, I strongly object. This whole issue needs further investigation. Temple accounts must be examined. Other options need to be discussed. These so-called ‘other expenses’ need to be explored. We need to know where this money is really going!

Pharisees together: Hear, hear! No more back-handers to the Romans. No more double dealing! *(Sadducees are enraged; lots of shouting and mumbling – ‘How dare he!’, ‘Such utter rubbish, arrest him!’)*

Scribe Harris: As the Lord said to the Prophets: ‘You must turn your back on evil. You must not mix with the outcast. Do not make deals with the enemy!’ *(Pharisees shout ‘Amen’.)*

David: Yes, mark my words Master Caiaphas, nothing good ever comes out of such compromise! *(Shouts of ‘Hear, hear’, ‘No more back-handers to the Romans!’, ‘No compromise!’, ‘Romans out’... A general shouting match begins.)*

Caiaphas: Order, I said order. This meeting is adjourned. *(Caiaphas hits table with mallet.)* Noah, call the temple guards. *(Noah runs out to get the guards.)*



LET'S GET WORKING

When you have read through the play, you can do the worksheet for this lesson.

WHY DON'T YOU?

Prepare a display about the religious leaders in the time of Jesus. Include information on the High Priest, the Scribes, the Sadducees, the Pharisees, and the Sanhedrin.

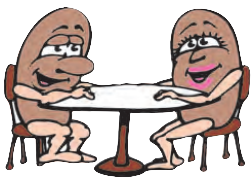
A Typical House in Nazareth in the Time of Jesus

At home in Pompeii

The Italian city of Pompeii is a ruin today. It was buried when Vesuvius erupted on 24 August AD 79. In recent years a fine house has been uncovered there. It is thought to have belonged to two brothers of the Vettius family. If you visit it, you can learn a lot about them. The garden is restored now, with its sculptures, birdbaths and fountains.

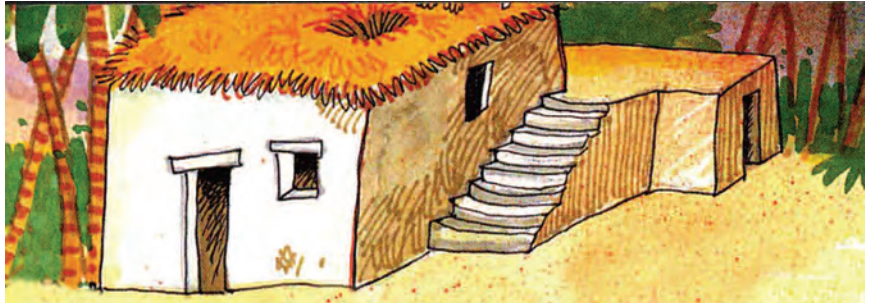


The hall has a water pool in the middle of it. You can still see the original pots and pans that the servants used for cooking. You can also see the original paintwork on the walls, which show pictures of trades and stories of those times. The Vettius brothers were wealthy traders. You can see pictures of their home at www.thecolefamily.com/italy/pompeii/slide62.htm and on the web pages that follow.



LET'S TALK

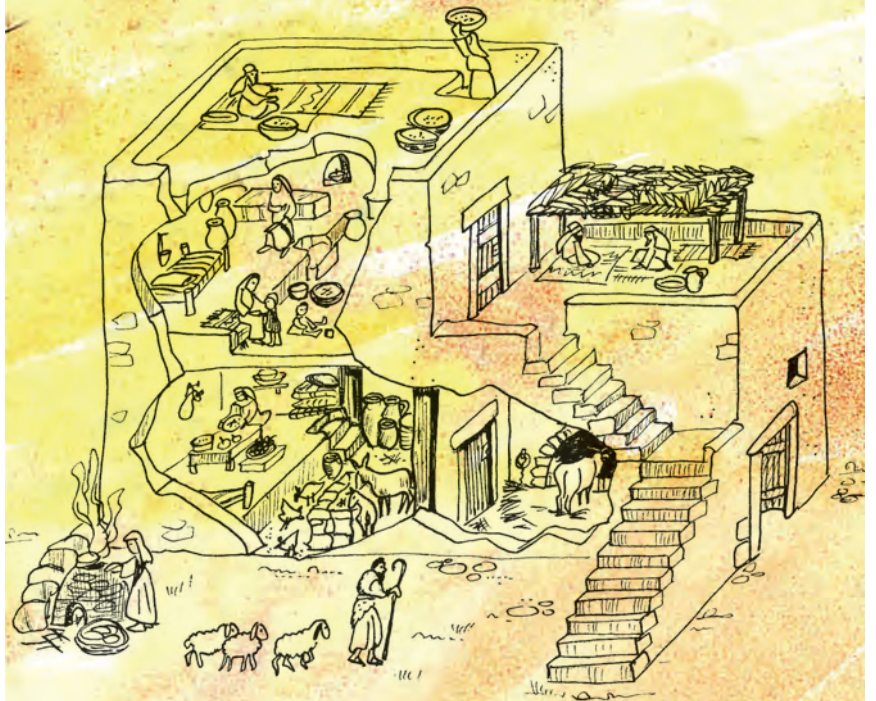
1. What might you learn about the Vettius brothers from a visit to Pompeii?
2. What kind of people do you think they were?
3. If a visitor from another place or time came to your house when no one was there, what might they learn about you just from looking around?



In this lesson we will learn more about houses in the time of Jesus.

At home in Nazareth in the time of Jesus

Nazareth was the place where Mary and Joseph made their home and where Jesus grew up. Their house would have been small – the typical house of an ordinary worker. The four walls would have been made of mud and stone, whitewashed inside and out. The house would have had one or two small windows and a door.



Inside, there was just one area, split into two levels. The lower level was mainly used as a stable. Most villagers owned a goat or two and some hens. Some owned a donkey and even a few sheep. The animals went outside during the day and were brought back inside at night.

The upper level was where the family lived. Among the few pieces of furniture was a wooden chest which contained the family's special things. Alcoves and ledges around the walls held household utensils.

Wineskins hung from hooks. Large jars contained water, oil and grain. An oil lamp burned night and day because the Jews did not like darkness.

At the side of the house, rough steps led up to the roof. The roof was flat and could be used for eating, sitting or even sleeping on a warm night.

For meals the family sat cross-legged around a mat on the floor. Their food was mostly bread, goat's milk, cheese, fruit and herbs. They would rarely have eaten meat. Sometimes the main meal might consist of a stew of sparrows. At night the family unrolled mats and laid them on the floor to serve as beds.

On the right-hand doorpost of the house was a small wooden or leather case containing a roll of parchment on which was written some biblical texts including the 'Shema', the first word of one of the texts meaning 'Hear' or 'Listen'. Each of these texts contain the commandments to fix these cases to the doorposts. They are called a 'Mezzuzah', which means doorpost, and can be found on the doorposts of Jewish houses to this day. For Jews, the Shema was and still is a most important piece of scripture. All Jewish children would have known, and still do know, it.

Everyone: 'Hear O Israel, the Lord your God is one and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your strength.'



Modern mezuzah



A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

Today we will use our imagination to help us to pray. But before we begin, we take a moment to be aware of our breathing. We settle ourselves and become quiet and still. (Pause)

We imagine the home of Jesus at Nazareth... the whitewashed walls ... the small window ... the glow from the lit oil lamp. (Pause)

It is daytime. In the dim light we see... the mats rolled up on a ledge... the lower area where the animals spend the night... the wooden chest on the upper level. (Pause)

Outside, we hear the sounds... of people talking... of birds chattering... of the marketplace nearby. (Pause)

In our minds, the scene now changes. We imagine our own home... We see it as it is now at this hour of the day: perhaps quiet, perhaps busy, perhaps empty, perhaps someone is there. (Pause)

Quietly, ask God to be with you as you look. Ask God to be with you as you remember the place where you now live. Talk with God about the people with whom you live... (Pause)
Thank God for what is good... (Pause)
Ask God for help with what is difficult... (Pause)

Spend a moment imagining each room in the house... Ask God to bless each room... and all that takes place there... (Pause)

Our prayertime draws to a close now. Take another moment. When you are ready, open your eyes and stretch.

Sign of the Cross

Term 2, Lesson 8

Jesus at School

In this lesson we will learn more about what school was like when Jesus was young.

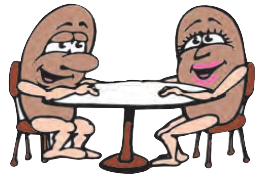
Here is a poem written by a man who went to a country primary school in Northern Ireland in the 1930s.

School Day Memories



Left at the top of the Church brae
and over the seven hills to Tullyholvin School.
Barefoot, bruised and bleeding,
we cursed the sharp stones of Carrybeg quarry.
Clutching two clods of black turf, one in each pocket,
I felt the warmth of the school-house fire
and longed to be indoors.
The tongue-lashing we always got
from the schoolmistress, for being late.
The sting of the sally rod on our hardened palms only lasted a moment.
The freshly cut rod, mercifully nicked¹ by my own fair hand.
Soda bread sandwich,
oozing with home-made butter and gooseberry jam:
the only lunch we knew.
Afternoon
and the priest came round to inspect us.
'Who was in the Garden of Eden?'² he inquired.
'Two of Frank McHugh's heifers. I saw them this morning Father,
on my way to school,' said wee Johnny earnestly.
(Pat McManus)

¹ The author secretly cracked or 'nicked' the slim branches used those days for physical punishment. This made them break when used, sparing pupils the full impact.
² The Garden of Eden was the nickname of a local field near the author's home.



LET'S TALK

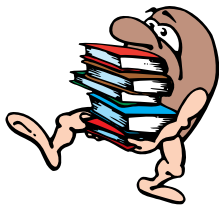
1. How does this poet's experience of school compare with your own?
2. If you were to write a story or poem about school, what kind of things might you mention?

Jesus at School

Jewish boys like Jesus went to school from the age of seven until they were thirteen. The school was in a room in the synagogue. At school they studied scripture. This was not easy because it was written in Hebrew, the ancient language of the Jewish people, and not in Aramaic – the language Jesus spoke every day. Jesus' teacher was called a rabbi. The rabbi taught the students how to read and write. From the age of ten, Jewish boys studied the Jewish law. They learned to recite in Hebrew many important passages from scripture, including the Commandments and several psalms. Here is an example of something Jesus would have learned:

With all my heart I praise the Lord,
and with all that I am I praise his holy name!
With all my heart I praise the Lord!
I will never forget how kind he has been. (Psalm 103: 1-2)

Girls did not go to school. Instead they stayed at home and learned from their mother and from the other women. They learned to cook and sew and carry out household duties. They did not learn to read or write.



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Here are some examples of Hebrew words that Jesus would have learned. Copy them into your journal and remember to include the English translation.

יהוה

Hebrew for 'God'

ברוך אתה

Hebrew for 'Blessed are you'

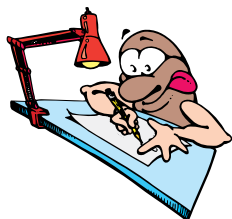
שלום

Hebrew for 'Peace'



WHY DON'T YOU?

Make a paper scroll and write your own prayer for the class on it. Make a display of these scrolls in the classroom. You might use some of them in future prayertimes.



LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.



Bar Mitzvah: Son of the Law

Before reaching his thirteenth birthday, Jesus would have gone to the local Rabbi for intensive instruction in Jewish religious practice and law. When he reached his thirteenth birthday he became 'Bar Mitzvah', lit: Son of the Commandment. He was now an adult religiously speaking, obliged to observe all the laws and responsible for all his own actions. He was also eligible to form part of the Minyan – quorum of ten adult men that is required for a full service to take place. To mark achieving this religious landmark, on the first Sabbath after attaining his thirteenth birthday he was one of the men who was called to stand alongside as the reading from the Pentateuch took place and to bless God who chose the Jewish people and gave them the Torah. This honour was and still is only afforded to adult males. He was now a full adult member of the community and was expected to

- know and keep the law;
- pray several times a day;
- fast on appointed days;
- attend the synagogue services;
- go up to Jerusalem for some of the great festivals.

A time to pray

Teacher

Today we pray for our class.

For anyone in this class who has had bad news lately, we pause and pray.

For anyone in this class who is going through a difficult time, we pause and pray.

For everyone in this class, we pray together and say:

All

Lord, help us to be a true community in our school.

May there be learning and fun!

May we have faith and friendship!

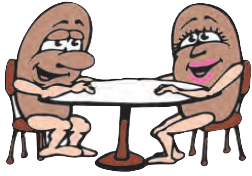
May your Spirit be in us so that no one feels left out!

May your Spirit guide us in the way that we treat others!

Lord, bless our learning and bless our study!

Make our school a place where we can all feel that we belong. Amen.

Term 2, Lesson 9 The Teaching of John the Baptist

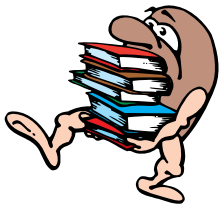


LET'S TALK...

Pick one of these stories.

1. What do you think the waiting is like for this person?

2. How do you think they might feel as they are waiting?



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Write a short note about a time when you or someone you know had to wait for something. Mention some of the feelings that went with that time of waiting.

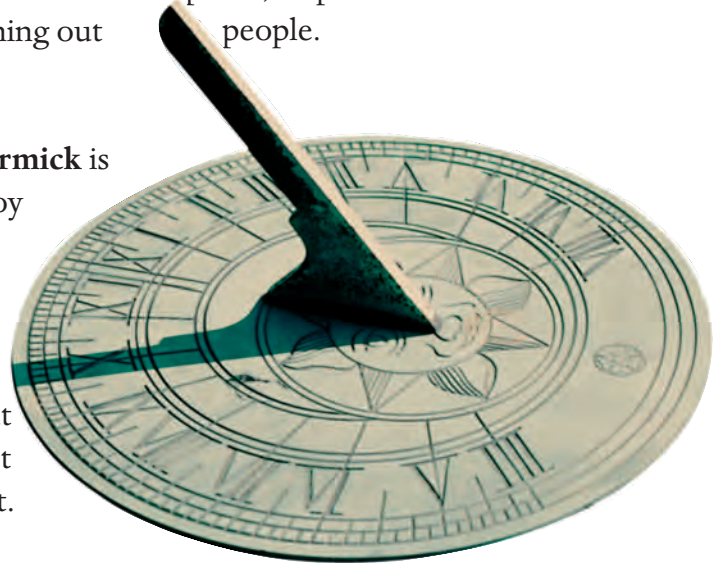
We all do our share of waiting: waiting for a bus; waiting in a queue to buy something; waiting on a friend to turn up for lunch. Here are some stories about people who are waiting.

Olivia Biron is only three months old. Her tiny heart has a hole in it. She is on a waiting list for a heart transplant. Her lungs have also begun to fail. Her family is waiting. They fear that a donor will not be found in time.

Myra Zannock is ten years old. She is a Romanian refugee waiting at the German border to find out if she and her family will be allowed into the country to begin a new life. This is their third week of waiting and the camp is running out of food supplies.

Fourteen-year-old **Tania McCormick** is excited because her favourite boy band is giving a concert in her hometown. She is also anxious because the queue for tickets in which she is waiting is very long. Will the tickets be sold out by the time she gets to the ticket booth? She is waiting to find out.

Aung San Suu Kyi, a woman from Burma (Myanmar), was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991. The political party she leads won 82 per cent of the vote in elections. The army leaders did not accept this. Instead they put her under house arrest. She has not been able to see her children. She was not able to visit her husband, Michael, when he was dying. In spite of many problems, she still waits for the day when there will be peace, respect and fairness for all her people.



A time to pray

Reader

A reading from the book of Ecclesiastes (3:1-8).

Everything on earth has its own time and its own season.

There is a time for birth and death,
planting and reaping,
for killing and healing, destroying and building,
for crying and laughing, weeping and dancing,
for throwing stones and gathering stones, embracing and parting.
There is a time for finding and losing,
keeping and giving,
for tearing and sewing, listening and speaking.

There is also a time for love and hate,
for war and peace.

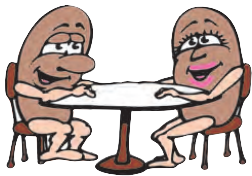
Teacher

Think of someone you know who is waiting at the moment: perhaps someone waiting to go to hospital or waiting for results or waiting for a new baby or waiting to meet a friend. Ask God to bless them as they wait.

(Pause)

All

God, be with us in our waiting!
God, be with us in our hoping!
God, protect us in our worrying!
Before and behind, above and below,
At every side, God with us always and ever. Amen.



Waiting for the Messiah

Jesus grew up among a people who were waiting. In the stories of the Bible they saw what God did to help Moses lead his people to freedom. They began to expect that God would send another special person to set them free once more in their day. They had a special title for this person: the Messiah. Early in the Gospel according to Matthew we hear about what the Messiah will be like:

Bethlehem in the land of Judaea, you are very important among the towns of Judaea. From your town will come a leader, who will be like a shepherd for my people Israel. (Matthew 2:6; see also Micah 5:2)



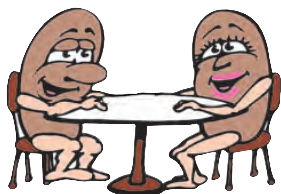
LET'S TALK

1. Why might the people have remembered the story of Moses?
2. What did they expect the Messiah to do for them?



John the Baptist announces Jesus, the Messiah

The New Testament says that Jesus is the Messiah and it presents John the Baptist as the one who announced him: So John the Baptist appeared in the desert and told everyone, 'Turn back to God and be baptised! Then your sins will be forgiven.' From all Judaea and Jerusalem crowds of people went to John. They told how sorry they were for their sins, and he baptised them in the River Jordan. John wore clothes made of camel's hair. He had a leather strap around his waist and ate grasshoppers and wild honey. John also told the people, 'Someone more powerful is going to come. And I am not good enough even to stoop down and untie his sandals. I baptise you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.' (Mark 1:4-8)



LET'S TALK

1. What did John the Baptist ask the people to do?
2. Whom did John announce?

John was a remarkable person in the way that he lived and spoke. He called on the people to turn away from the wrong things they were doing and to change their ways. He baptised in the Jordan those who came to listen to his preaching. When John poured water on their heads, it was a sign that they would change their lives and turn away from sin.



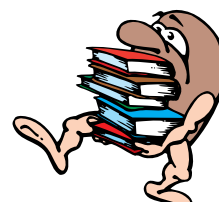
LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.

IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Write the following prayer and draw a picture of John the Baptist to go with it:

*In our work, John, help us to be fair.
Of those less fortunate, John, help us to take care.
With those who have less, John, help us to share.
For the One who is coming, John, help us to prepare.*



Term 2, Lesson 10
The Baptism
of Jesus

You have special times and events in your life. So did Jesus. One of these important times was his Baptism by John the Baptist in the river Jordan.



The special things we do

There are times in life when words are not enough. You need to do something as well. People do things to express the importance of life's special moments and special relationships. For example:

- When it's your birthday, you celebrate with friends and family.
- When you go for a job interview, you dress to look your best.
- When you get engaged, you buy a diamond ring.

Can you think of any other examples? What traditions do we connect with Easter/St Patrick's Day/Christmas, etc.?

The Baptism of Jesus was an important event that showed the special relationship at the heart of his life. The Gospel story of the Baptism of Jesus tells how Jesus was called God's Son. The Gospels show us too how the Holy Spirit was with Jesus at his Baptism.

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

The Baptism of Jesus was a turning point in the life of Jesus. From then on he lived God's call in a different way. We hear of the Baptism of Jesus in God's Word. As the Bible is brought from its place now, we pray together:

All

Bless us, O God,
So that what we now hear
May open our minds and our hearts to your Word.
May it nourish us as it nourished Jesus. Amen.

Reader

A reading from the Gospel according to Mark (1:9-13).

About that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee, and John baptised him in the River Jordan. As soon as Jesus came out of the water, he saw the sky open and the Holy Spirit coming down to him like a dove.

A voice from heaven said, 'You are my own dear Son, and I am pleased with you.'

Straight away God's Spirit made Jesus go into the desert. He stayed there for forty days while Satan tested him. Jesus was with the wild animals, but angels took care of him.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

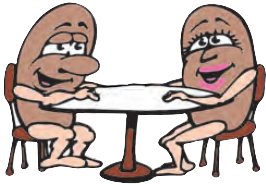
Teacher

As the Bible is returned to its place now, we pray:

All

Bless us, O God,
So that we may reflect on your Word
And keep it in our hearts and our minds
As Jesus did. Amen.

Sign of the Cross



LET'S TALK

Read again the story of the Baptism of Jesus in the Gospel according to Mark. How does it describe the relationship between Jesus and God?



WHY DON'T YOU?

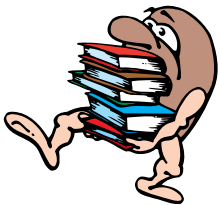
Check the Internet for images of the Baptism of Jesus. For example:

www.eclecticconnection.com/eclectic_html/laurajames.htm

www.heqiarts.com/gallery/new-works/072002/works2003.htm

Search for Piero della Francesca's work on the following website:

www.nationalgallery.org.uk



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Complete one or more of the following sentences in your journal:

- 'Today, God calls me to...'
- 'I could answer God's call by...'
- 'I am more aware of God's call when...'

Reflect quietly for a moment before you write.

Why did Jesus get baptised?

Jesus did not have to be baptised. It was not because he was a sinner that Jesus was baptised. He had come to a point in his life when he knew the call of God the Father more clearly. He felt called to journey a new way and to do the work that God the Father wanted him to do. His Baptism expressed his readiness to begin his new work. After his Baptism by John in the Jordan, Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness. He stayed in the desert for forty days, and while he was there he was tested. Afterwards, strengthened by that time with his Father, Jesus was better able to focus on the purpose for which God had called him.



Mother Teresa

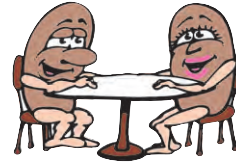
Your life changes when you answer God's call. Mother Teresa found this out when she came across a woman who had been left to die on the streets of Calcutta:

The woman was half-eaten up by rats and ants. I took her to the hospital, but they could do nothing for her. They only took her because I refused to go home unless something was done for her. After they cared for her, I went straight to the town hall and asked for a place where I could take people such as this woman, because that day I found more people dying in the street. An employee of the health services brought me to the temple of Kali... the building was empty and he asked me if I wanted it. Within twenty-four hours we brought our sick and suffering and started the Home for the Dying Destitutes.



Mother Teresa started an order of nuns called the Missionaries of Charity in Calcutta, India to help look after people who were poor and dying. Today, the sisters live and work in over five hundred places around the world. Mother Teresa was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979.

See www.catholic.net/RCC/People/MotherTeresa/mother.html for more information on Mother Teresa.



LET'S TALK

1. What event affected Mother Teresa very deeply?
2. How did it change her?
3. How did that change eventually show itself in her life?

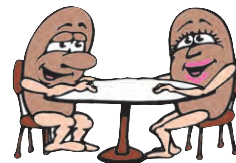
Chad Varah

As a minister, Chad Varah was used to funerals. However, when he buried a fourteen-year-old girl who had taken her own life, it affected him very deeply. At that time, people could phone 999 for emergencies; but there was no number for people to phone when life's worries were too much for them.

The Samaritans

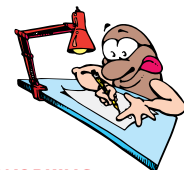
He got the idea that there should be such a number. Years later, on 2 November 1953, he set up the Samaritans organisation. Today, there are 203 branches worldwide. The Samaritans are a household name. They continue to befriend those who call on them for help. They have made a huge difference to countless lives.

See www.samaritans.org.uk/know/about_history.html for more about the Samaritans.



LET'S TALK

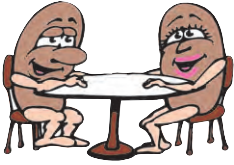
1. What event affected Chad Varah very deeply?
2. How do you think it might have changed him?
3. How did that change eventually show itself in his life?



LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.

Term 2, Lesson 11 Lent



LET'S TALK...

about how we use what we own

As a class, make a short list (four or five items) of the main things that most students own (e.g. clothes, music player, sports kit, etc.). Divide into groups. Choose one of those items and ask:

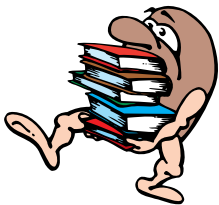
How might you use it in a way that includes God?
includes others? includes only yourself?

LET'S TALK...

about how we use our time

As a class, make a short list of the main things that most students do during a normal weekday (e.g. time in school, watching TV, playing games, time eating, etc.). Divide into groups. Choose one of those activities and ask:

How might you include others more during that time?
How might you include only yourself during that time?
How might you include God more during that time?



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

My Lenten pledge

Draw a certificate scroll and copy the following sentence into it: 'I (name) promise to do the following three things during Lent...'



WHY DON'T YOU?

Get this year's Trócaire envelope and box and read what is on it.

Consider deciding to do something as a class to mark the season of Lent. For instance, you might decide to collect tinned food during Lent to donate to a particular charity.

This lesson is for use during the week in which Ash Wednesday occurs. It focuses on Lent: what it is about and how you might take part in it.

Lent: Using what we own and using our things differently
In the Gospel according to Matthew (6:1-18), Jesus invites us to do three things: 'Give alms... Pray to God... Fast without a gloomy face...' Lent is the time when you make a new effort to do as Jesus asked.

Giving alms means

- Doing something about the needs of others
- Not just looking out for ourselves
- Giving time, attention, talents, and perhaps what we own

Praying means being aware of God's love and focusing on God

- at a particular time of day or evening
- in a place where we can be still and quiet
- with a favourite piece of the Gospel, or a Psalm, etc.
- through a prayer like the 'Our Father' or the 'Prayer of St Patrick'
- using a suitable posture (e.g. sitting straight, kneeling, etc.)

Fasting makes us more aware of God and more aware of the good things around us. It means

- eating less food (e.g. chocolate, biscuits, crisps, etc.)
- giving up things we enjoy (e.g. music, computer games, cinema, etc.).

Key Facts: *The Church Season of Lent*

- Begins Ash Wednesday; ends Holy Thursday.
- It is a time of preparation for Easter.
- Jesus spent forty days praying and fasting in the wilderness.
- A time to be more aware of God and to listen to God.
- A time to focus on what is really going on in life for you and for others.
- The word 'Lent' comes from the old Anglo-Saxon word for 'spring'.

Key Facts: *Ash Wednesday*

- First day of Lent.
- Our foreheads are marked with ashes in the sign of a cross.
- Ashes are made by burning last year's palms from Palm Sunday.
- Day of Fast (eating less) and Abstinence (no meat).
- Ashes show that we admit our wrongdoing and that we say sorry to God and others; we make a new start.

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

We gather to mark the start of the season of Lent. We come together today as a Christian community. Lent is that time of forty days when, like Jesus in the wilderness, we focus on doing what God wants. We begin now with the words of Psalm 16 to remind ourselves that God is always with us.

Reader

I praise you, Lord, for being my guide.
Even in the darkest night, your teachings fill my mind.
I will always look to you,
as you stand beside me and protect me from fear.
With all my heart, I will celebrate, and I can safely rest.
(Psalm 16:7-9)

Teacher

Quietly now, we recall the different areas of our lives and we ask ourselves how we have responded to God's call.

At home, have I been a helpful, cheerful and generous member of my family? Or have I been selfish, rude, unkind and an unpleasant person to live with? **(Pause)**
We praise God and we say: You guide us along the right path.

All

You guide us along the right path.

Teacher

At school, have I used my talents and gifts to the full? Have I been helpful, kind, friendly and considerate to the other students? Or have I been lazy and troublesome in class and unkind and unhelpful to the other students? **(Pause)**

We praise God and we say: You guide us along the right path.

All

You guide us along the right path.

Teacher

With friends, have I been trustworthy? Have I been generous and kind? Have I always tried to include others? Have I been ready to put myself out for another person, when necessary? Or have I hurt my friends by telling lies, by being untrustworthy, by cheating, by being selfish? **(Pause)**

We praise God and we say: You guide us along the right path.

All

You guide us along the right path.

Teacher

As we stand together now, we call to mind our chosen Lenten promises. We renew our commitment to keep them.
(Pause)

We praise God and we say: You guide us along the right path.

All

You guide us along the right path.

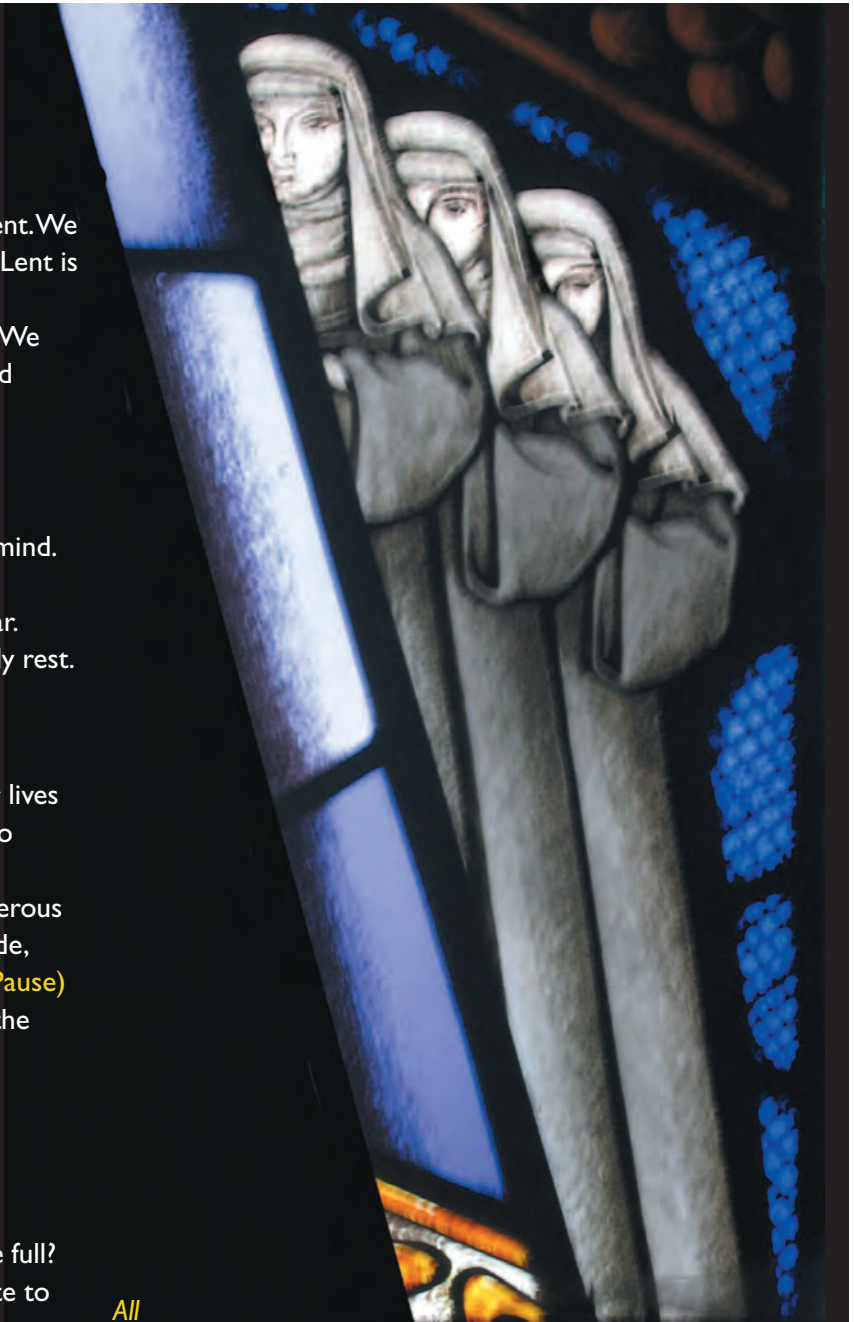
Teacher

Let us pray in the words that Jesus taught us:

All

Our Father... (Ár nAthair...)

Sign of the Cross



The Life and Ministry of Jesus

The Helpful Father...

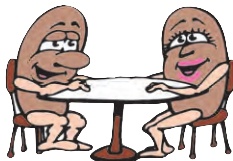
The builders came to do an extension at the back of the house. So, John Junior thought he would play with his bricks and do an extension of his own. He was only five years old. He manhandled the wheelbarrow into position and, one by one, he filled it with bricks. Eventually it was time to move the bricks. John Junior tried to lift the wheelbarrow. Now, while a little boy can lift bricks one by one, he can't shift a wheelbarrow full of bricks.

Just then, John Junior's father came along. It took him only a minute to figure out what was going on. 'Son,' he asked, 'are you using all your strength?' 'I am! I am!' the boy said. 'Oh no, you're not!' said his father. The little boy tried again on his own; he was getting red in the face. 'Son,' said the father, 'I don't think you are using all your strength; you still haven't asked me to help!' John Junior smiled at his father. And with that, both of them took a firm grip of the handlebars and together they moved the wheelbarrow along...



LET'S TALK

1. Are you ever like the son in the story? Do you ever try to do things on your own?
2. Do you think that God might be like the father in the story in any way? Explain your answer.
3. In what way did the father make the son see things differently?
4. Can you think of something that Jesus has made people see differently?
5. Has God ever helped you to see something differently? Give an example.



After his Baptism, Jesus went into the wilderness and spent some time preparing for his work. Then he began his work by telling people that the Kingdom of God was close at hand. He asked people to change and repent. In this lesson you will find out what this means.

Jesus begins his mission

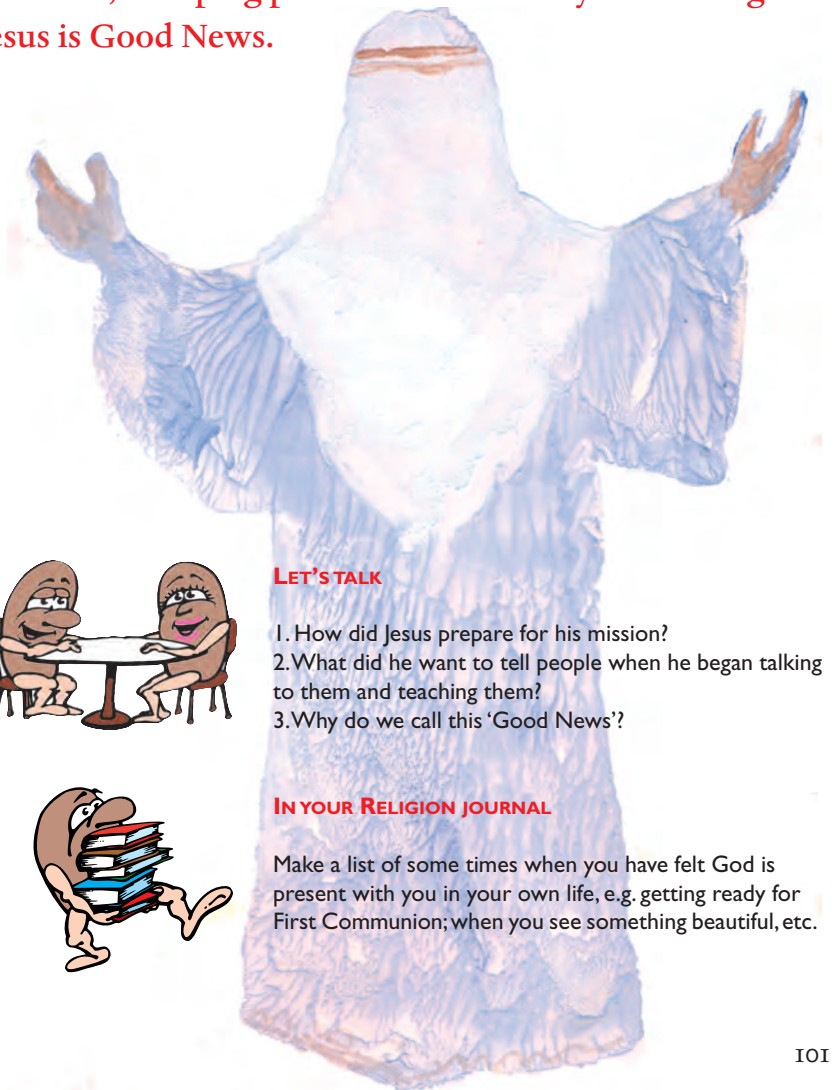
The Gospel according to Mark tells us that Jesus came to Galilee preaching 'Good News'. It sums up his teaching like this:

The right time has come.

The Kingdom of God is at hand.

Turn away from your sins and believe in the Good News. (Mark 1:15)

Jesus told people that God was with them; he invited them to accept God's help to change themselves and to change the world. The 'Good News' that Jesus told was that 'God is with us'. God is with us – God is not far away or standing on the sidelines. God's presence is a loving presence, a helping presence. That is why the message of Jesus is Good News.

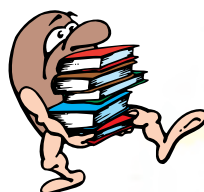


LET'S TALK

1. How did Jesus prepare for his mission?
2. What did he want to tell people when he began talking to them and teaching them?
3. Why do we call this 'Good News'?

IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Make a list of some times when you have felt God is present with you in your own life, e.g. getting ready for First Communion; when you see something beautiful, etc.



Where is the Kingdom of God?

When you hear the word 'kingdom', you might think of a piece of land. Jesus explained that God's kingdom is not so much a piece of land as something that is happening in our lives and in the lives of others. When Jesus says that God's kingdom is at hand, he means that God is with us in our lives now. He invites us to imagine the world differently and to change the world by making choices based on God's love. When Jesus asks us to repent, he means us to turn away from sin and to accept God's love. In God's kingdom, good is stronger than evil, and justice, truth, peace and love are clearly seen.

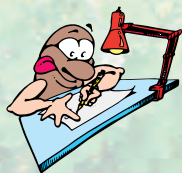
We can see God's kingdom in the lives of people who change the world in good ways. Mother Teresa is a good example. We can see God's kingdom happening in the world today in those who work for organisations like the St Vincent de Paul society. The work that scientists, artists, writers and musicians do to benefit people can also show us God's kingdom happening. God's kingdom is also seen in the good things that happen at home.

However, for the best example of what God's kingdom is like, we have only to look at Jesus. He showed us what God's kingdom is like in what he did and in what he said.



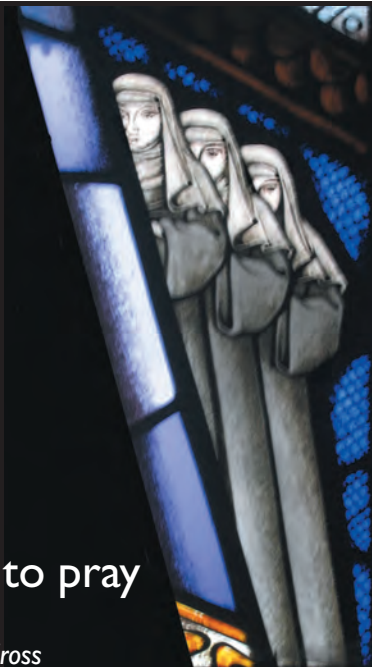
WHY DON'T YOU?

Get some newspapers. Find headlines that you think show people responding to God's help to change themselves or to change the world for the better. You might put these on the display board under the title 'The Kingdom of God is close at hand.' Write out Mark 1:15 in large letters and put it at the centre of the display.



LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.



A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

Today our prayer will remind us that God is always with us.
Together we will pray: O God, you are with me in the quiet of my heart.

All

O God, you are with me in the quiet of my heart.

Teacher invites the students to repeat this phrase a number of times.

Teacher

Now, we will pray our prayer silently in rhythm with our breathing.
We close our eyes and notice our breathing. **(Pause)**
On the in-breath we will pray the words: O God you are with me.
As we breathe out, we will pray the words: in the quiet of my heart.

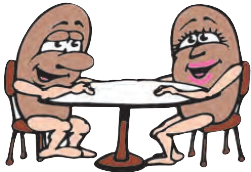
*Teacher repeats the phrases once or twice in rhythm with the breathing of the class.
When the time for praying is about to end:*

Teacher

Our time for praying is almost over.
When you are ready, open your eyes again and stretch.

Sign of the Cross

Jesus called Disciples



LET'S TALK

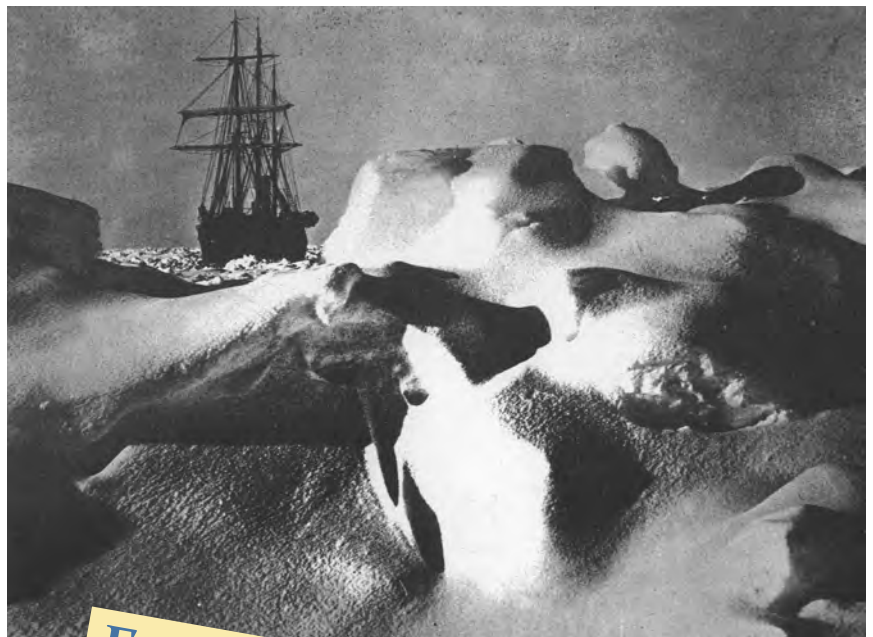
1. What did Ernest Shackleton call men to do?
2. Why do you think so many people answered his call?
3. Give examples from your own experience of someone calling other people (e.g. from the school notice board or the parish bulletin). Did you (or anyone you know) answer any of those calls? Why? Why not?

*Shackleton's ship,
Endurance, locked in the
Antarctic ice*

People call on you in all sorts of ways. At home, they call on you to help. At school, you are called to take part and to learn. Your friends call on you to listen and to join in the fun. There are various ways in which people are called...

A Call to Adventure

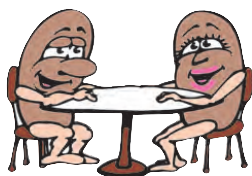
Sir Ernest Shackleton was famous for exploring the South Pole. He was born at the end of the nineteenth century in County Kildare and was forty-eight when he died in the Antarctic, where he is buried. Once, before an expedition, he put an advertisement in *The Times*. It read: 'Men wanted for hazardous journey. Small wages, bitter cold. Long months of complete darkness. Constant danger, safe return doubtful. Honour and recognition in case of success.' Five thousand people replied to this advertisement. Ernest Shackleton selected twenty-seven to join him on his great journey.



Big Issues...

YOUNG PEOPLE HOMELESS ON CITY STREETS

Recent survey shows an 18% increase in the number of young people sleeping rough. A Simon Community representative stated that more hostel beds are needed.



LET'S TALK

1. Did you react to any of these stories? If so, how did it make you feel?
2. Choose one of the headlines. If someone did react to it, what might they do? Why might they do it?
3. Can you think of a recent news headline that could call people to action?

Famine Crisis warning in Africa

A catastrophe worse than the Ethiopian Famine of 1984 threatens South Africa. If action is not taken immediately, an estimated 12.9 million people will die.

Gap in ozone layer is now three times the size of Australia

Scientists fear that a quiet epidemic of skin cancer will result because of increased exposure to the sun's ultra-violet rays.

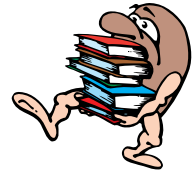
Jesus calls his first disciples (followers)

Jesus called people. He started to do so just as soon as he started telling the Good News of God's love. The story of how Jesus called his first four disciples is told in the Gospel according to Mark. It says:

As Jesus was walking along the shore of Lake Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew. They were fishermen and were casting their nets into the lake. Jesus said to them, 'Come with me! I will teach you how to bring in people instead of fish.' At once the two brothers dropped their nets and went with him.

Jesus walked on and soon saw James and John, the sons of Zebedee. They were in a boat, mending their nets. At once Jesus asked them to come with him. They left their father in the boat with the hired workers and went with him. (Mark 1:16-20)

The first four disciples whom Jesus called were all fishermen. They also happened to be two sets of brothers. They probably knew Jesus already and had heard him preach. Jesus had many followers, but he chose twelve people from his larger group of disciples and invited them to be his special friends.



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Imagine that you are Peter. In your own words, tell the story of the day Jesus called you. If you wish, you might begin: 'Hello. My name is Peter. I was at my work one morning when...' You might like to end by completing the following sentence: 'I was happy to follow Jesus because...'

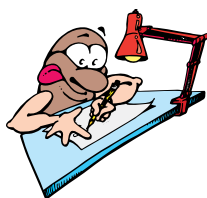


Jesus calls Matthew

Another person in the special group called by Jesus was Matthew (or Levi). Here is the story from the Gospel according to Mark:

Jesus went to the shore of Lake Galilee. As he walked along, he saw Levi [Matthew], the son of Alphaeus. Levi was sitting at the place for paying taxes, and Jesus said to him, 'Come with me!' So he got up and went with Jesus. (Mark 2:13-14)

Matthew was a tax-collector who worked for the Romans. His own people disliked him because they thought he was a traitor. Despite this, Jesus chose him to be one of his disciples.



LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.



A time to pray

Note: Here is a prayer that you can say together. You might like to do the actions suggested in the brackets after each line. If so, practise them before saying the prayer.

Sign of the Cross

All

God, you call me in ways I have yet to know.

(Standing, hands by sides)

Train me to listen.

(Hand to ear)

Help me to understand.

(Hands outstretched, palms upwards in front)

Give me the openness

(Hands moved apart)

to notice your call.

(Look slowly around from left to right)

Guide my new steps

(Head up; hands by sides)

as I go into the future

(One foot forward)

for you are with me.

(Hands over heart)

Sign of the Cross

Note: The prayertime in the next lesson requires teacher or students to bring in a tea-towel, school badge, sports shirt, parish bulletin, Trócaire box or charity box.

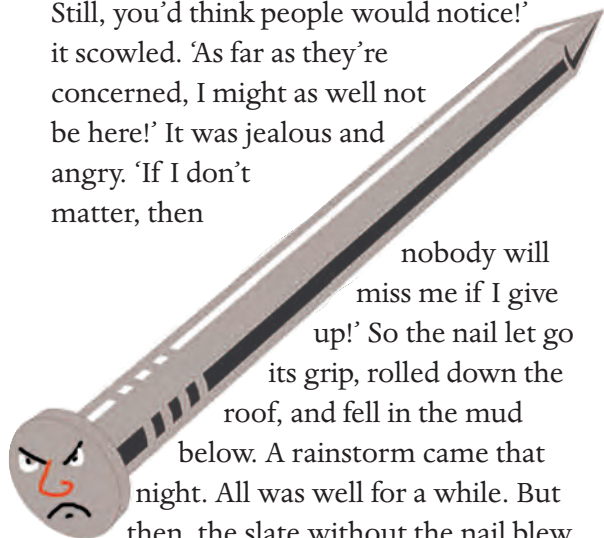


Term 2, Lesson 14 Jesus Called Twelve Apostles

As soon as Jesus started to tell the Good News of God's love, he called people to follow him. That call came to you at your Baptism and Confirmation. Jesus continues to call you today. In this lesson you have a chance to consider what that means for you and for others.

The Nail's Story

When the new church was built, people came from all around to admire it. How beautiful it was! High above in the roof, a little nail could overhear the praise of the people below. They praised everything about the new building, except for the nail. 'I know that I have a job to do because I am a nail. Still, you'd think people would notice!' it scowled. 'As far as they're concerned, I might as well not be here!' It was jealous and angry. 'If I don't matter, then

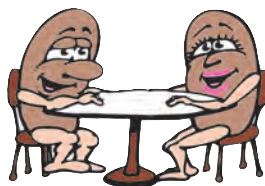


it scowled. 'As far as they're concerned, I might as well not be here!' It was jealous and angry. 'If I don't matter, then nobody will miss me if I give up!' So the nail let go its grip, rolled down the roof, and fell in the mud below. A rainstorm came that night. All was well for a while. But then, the slate without the nail blew away, and the roof began to leak. The water streaked the paintwork on the walls. Parts of the plaster swelled up and fell off. The carpet was messed up... and all because the little nail decided to give up.

And what happened to the nail? While holding the slate, it was doing its job and answering its call. Now that it had stopped answering its call, it was buried in the mud. Soon, it would be eaten up by rust.

LET'S TALK

1. The little nail had a particular role or 'calling' in the story. How would you describe its role?
2. Who are the people who have a special role in your life? What is their special role?
3. What is your role at school? at home? with your friends? in the world?
4. How does Jesus call you to live out your role?



A time to pray

Note: Have the following items ready for this prayertime: tea-towel, school badge, sports shirt, parish bulletin, Trócaire box or charity box. Each item is carried forward at the start of the prayertime. They represent some of your roles and responsibilities at home, in school, on teams, in the parish and in the world.

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

Today we remember the special roles that we have. God calls us all.

Reader

This tea-towel represents the things that we are called to at home: helping, listening, caring, working, supporting.

This school badge represents the things that we are called to at school: working together, co-operating, sharing, doing our best.

This sports shirt represents the things that we are called to in our break time and in our games: trying, teamwork, practice, dedication, loyalty.

This parish bulletin represents the way we are called to be part of our parish: turning up, getting involved, playing our part, giving others a sense of belonging.

This charity box represents the ways that we are called to get involved in the world: being aware of the needs of others, noticing the injustice that exists in places, doing things for charity.

All

Holy Spirit, I want to do what is right.
Help me.
Holy Spirit, I want to live like Jesus.
Guide me.
Holy Spirit, I want to pray like Jesus.
Teach me. Amen.

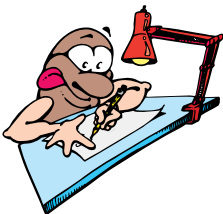
Sign of the Cross

In the last lesson you heard of how Jesus called Peter, Andrew, James, John and Matthew. They were part of a special group: the apostles. The Gospel according to Mark tells how the twelve apostles were chosen:

Jesus decided to ask some of his disciples to go up on a mountain with him, and they went. Then he chose twelve of them to be his apostles, so that they could be with him. He also wanted to send them out to preach and to force out demons. Simon was one of the twelve, and Jesus named him Peter. There were also James and John, the two sons of Zebedee... Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus were also apostles. The others were Simon and Judas Iscariot. (Mark 3:13-19)

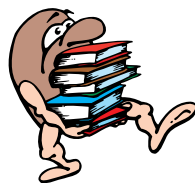
Being an apostle

The twelve apostles were a mixed group with different backgrounds, ideas and abilities. They were different ages. Some were brothers and fishermen, like the first four that Jesus called. Some may have been shepherds. One was a tax-collector. One was a member of a Jewish group of freedom fighters. Some were married; others were not. They all had one thing in common: the new role Jesus gave them. They were to be with him, to be his friends. They were to share in his work, telling people the Good News. They went everywhere with Jesus: sharing meals together, singing together, laughing together and praying together.



LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

WANTED: TWELVE PEOPLE FOR A VERY SPECIAL MISSION. MUST BE DEPENDABLE, EAGER FOR ADVENTURE, WILLING TO TRAVEL ANYWHERE. ABILITY TO WORK AS PART OF A TEAM ESSENTIAL.

Reply to this advertisement with a short letter. You might do so by completing the following sentences:

- I would like to be chosen as an apostle because...
- I would be good as an apostle because...

Term 2, Lesson 15

An Introduction to Parables

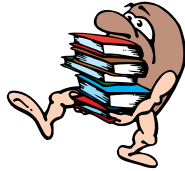
IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Write a short note about an event that changed you. You might complete the following sentences:

I was changed when...

I used to be the kind of person who...

Now, after what happened, I am the kind of person who...

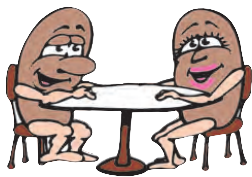


So, you think you're never going to change. Wrong. Everyone changes. They change because of events in their lives – life-changing events. That includes things like an unexpected gift, being forgiven, not being forgiven, the loss of a good friend, the death of a loved one, a serious illness, or doing voluntary work. Has an event in your life changed you? Stories have the power to change people too.



A story that changed history... eventually

In 1781 a slave ship set sail from the West African coast, going to Jamaica. It was packed with 440 slaves, chained together. On the journey a disease broke out and sixty of the slaves died. Their bodies were thrown into the sea. Many of the remaining slaves were ill, and the voyage was fast becoming unprofitable. So, the captain decided to throw the remaining slaves overboard while they were still alive. He would then claim from the insurance company, alleging that the ship had run out of fresh water. However, one man who was thrown overboard managed to catch hold of a rope once he was in the water. He struggled back on to the ship, where he hid. When the ship reached England the slave told his account of the murders. The insurance company would not pay out for the loss of the slaves and the matter went to court. The judge decreed that the slaves were the property of the owners, saying, 'It is only like throwing horses overboard.'



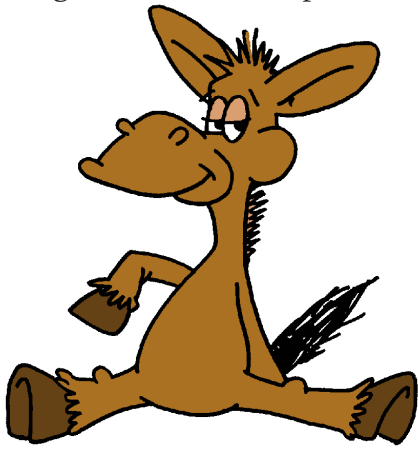
LET'S TALK

1. How do you react to the story about the slaves?
2. If you had lived back in 1781 and had heard this story, what difference might it have made to the way you lived your life?
3. Hearing this story today, what difference might it make to you, if any?

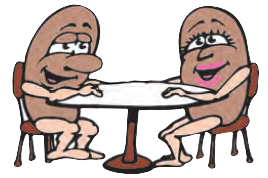
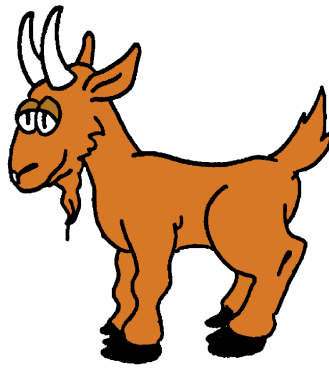
The Goat and the Donkey

(one of Aesop's Fables)

A man once kept a goat and a donkey. The goat envied the donkey because, in the daily division of the food, the donkey got more than he did. 'What can I do,' the goat wondered, 'so that the donkey might get less?' He thought up a plan. One day the goat said to the donkey, 'You have a hard life! They don't treat you well! At one time, you have to move the grindstone at the mill. At another time, they put you carrying heavy burdens.' The goat advised him to pretend to



have a fit and fall into a ditch. In that way the owners would have to give him a rest. But secretly, the goat was thinking, 'If the donkey does less work, the donkey gets less food... and I'll get more.' The donkey listened to his words and took his advice. He fell into a ditch. However, the donkey was cut and bruised very badly in the fall. It needed a cure. His master sent for a local healer and asked for some advice. The healer said there was one certain cure. All he had to do was to make an ointment from the lungs of a goat. They killed the goat straightaway so as to heal the donkey.



LET'S TALK

1. Did the story turn out as you expected or not? Explain your answer.
2. What do you think the story is really about?
3. Do you think that everyone who hears the story will have the same answers as you? Why? Why not?
4. Do you think this story might make a difference to how a person approaches life?

A Life-Changing Story from the Old Testament

Jesus invited people to live in God's way. One of the ways he did this was through special stories, which we call 'parables'. Such stories were used before Jesus' time. Here is an example of a story from nearly a thousand years before Jesus was born. It is a parable about a pet lamb, which the prophet Nathan told King David.

Nathan's Story

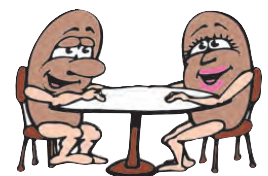
One day, King David of Israel saw a beautiful woman. He found out that her name was Bathsheba. She was the wife of Uriah, one of David's soldiers. David wanted her for himself. So, he told the leader of his army to put Uriah in the front line of their next battle so that he would be killed. Just as David planned, Uriah died. God was not pleased with David's actions. So God sent the prophet Nathan to David. Nathan said:

'Judge this case for me! In a certain town there were two men, one rich, the other poor. The rich man had lots of sheep. But the poor man had nothing except a ewe lamb that he kept as a pet. Now the rich man had a visitor. But instead of taking one of his own animals, he took the poor man's ewe lamb and made a meal of it for his visitor.'



David grew very angry and said to Nathan: 'The person who did this deserves death!' Then Nathan said to David: 'You are the man!' David said to Nathan: 'I have sinned before the Lord.' Nathan said to David: 'Now the Lord has put away your sin.'

(Based on 2 Samuel 12:1-7, 13)



LET'S TALK

1. Why do you think Nathan went to see King David?
2. Why do you think Nathan did not begin by accusing David?
3. Do you think Nathan chose a good story to tell? Why? Why not?
4. What does this tell us about what stories can do?

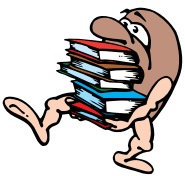
Parables: A special kind of story

On the surface, parables appear to be like many other stories. They tell of everyday situations: farmers and crops, fishing folk and their catch, someone baking bread. In parable stories, however, unexpected things can happen. The outcome of the parable can be surprising.

Parables are stories that point. They might point to something about us or in the way we behave. We might see ourselves in the way that

the characters react or in the way that we react to them. Parables invite us to see life differently. Through his parables, Jesus invites us to respond in a better way to God, to others and to the world around us.

Some examples of the parables that Jesus told are: the Parable of the Sower, the Parable of the Seed Growing Secretly, the Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin and the Lost Son.



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Write a short note about your reaction to the Prayertime.

A time to pray

Note: The teacher might use an image for this Prayertime other than the one above.

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

Get into a comfortable position. Sit up straight with your feet flat on the ground and your hands on your lap.

Take some time to look at the image. Notice the details. **(Pause)**

As you look at it, what are your thoughts... your

feelings... your reactions? What do you imagine as you look at it? **(Pause)**

Perhaps the image has no effect on you. Spend a moment reflecting on why that might be. Have you other things on your mind today? **(Pause)** Focus your mind on God now and share your experience with God. Be with God in what you feel... in what you think... in how you react. **(Pause)**

Now allow yourself to become aware of God's response to you. **(Pause)**

Slowly, and when you are ready, let the image go and finish your prayer. **(Pause)**

Sign of the Cross

Term 2, Lesson 16

The Parable of the Sower (I)

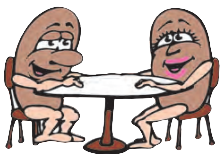
– God is with us

Note: For the Prayertime in this lesson you will need a tray of moist soil/peat moss and some seeds, e.g. watercress.

So, what do you know about parables so far? A parable is a special kind of story. If you pay attention to it, it can help you see more to life and understand more about God's way for us. Parables point to God, who is always with us. They are part of the way in which Jesus showed that the Kingdom of God is near. Through his parables, Jesus also offers you other ways of looking at life. His parables can even direct you into living your life differently. The parables of Jesus are the Word of God. Now that you know all this, it's time to look at one of these parables. However, before you do, do you know much about farming?

A few facts about farming...

- Farming began in present-day Turkey and the Middle East about 10,000 years ago.
- Jericho, in Palestine, was one of the earliest farming communities.
- Jericho was home to some 2,500 people. Each farmer worked about eight to ten acres of land. (A football field is roughly one acre.)
- The people of Jericho grew wheat, barley, peas and lentils.
- These farmers used a type of wooden plough made from forked sticks and timbers and pulled by oxen. Ploughs of this ancient design are still used in some developing countries today.



LET'S TALK

1. How is seed sown today?
2. How is the ground prepared today?
3. Talk about how this is different to the way seed was sown at the time of Jesus.

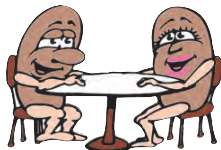
- Before farmers ploughed the ground, the seed was sown.
- Ploughs were used to loosen the soil and allow the seed to get into the soil.
- The seed for sowing came from the previous harvest. Some of the grain was kept for this purpose. If ten seeds grew for every seed they planted, those farmers thought that to be a brilliant harvest.
- Farming methods only began to change in the 1700s.
- In the 1800s new farm machinery started to be invented. John Deere invented the modern plough in 1847.
- Up until around 100 years ago, four-fifths of the world's population lived outside of towns and was in some way involved with farming.
- Up until 1970, over half of the world's population was employed in the farming industry.
- Most of the world's farmers are female.





WHY DON'T YOU?

Do a Bible Search for Mark 4:3-8. This is the Parable of the Sower as the evangelist Mark recorded it.



LET'S TALK

1. Did everything go smoothly for the sower?
2. What bad things happened?
3. Did the story end badly? Give a reason for your answer.
4. Can you think of someone who had a bad experience but got through it? Can you think of anything that might have helped that person?



The Parable of the Sower

Jesus taught people using parables. He told the Parable of the Sower.

'Listen! Once there was a man who went out to sow corn. As he scattered the seed in the field, some of it fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some of it fell on rocky ground, where there was little soil. The seeds soon sprouted, because the soil wasn't deep. Then, when the sun came up, it burnt the young plants; and because the roots had not grown deep enough, the plants soon dried up. Some of the seed fell among thorn bushes, which grew up and choked them, and they didn't produce any corn. But some seeds fell in good soil, and they sprouted, grew, and produced corn: some had thirty grains, others sixty and others a hundred.' (Based on Mark 4:3-8)

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

We listen to the Parable of the Sower.

A student carries the Bible from its place in the classroom and reads the Parable of the Sower from the Gospel according to Mark.

Reader

(Reads Mark 4: 3-8)

A student steps forward with a tray of moist soil or peat moss. Another student brings forward some seeds (e.g. watercress) and slowly sprinkles them on the tray.

Teacher

These seeds remind us of God's power.

As they grow, may they remind us of God's work and God's presence with us.

The tray of sprinkled seeds is put in a designated place in the classroom.

Choose some moment in your life when it was easy to see God's presence... (Pause)

Thank God for it... (Pause)

Now, focus on some moment when God's presence seemed far away from you... (Pause)

Listen to what God might tell you about that...

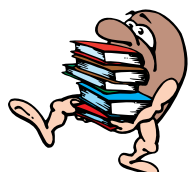
(Pause)

We pray together the words of St Patrick:

All

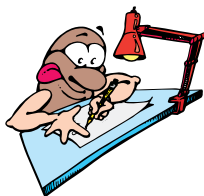
I surround myself today with the power of God:
 God's strength to comfort me,
 God's might to uphold me,
 God's good sense to guide me,
 God's eye to look before me,
 God's word to speak for me,
 God's hand to lead me,
 God's way to lie before me,
 God's angels to save me.

Sign of the Cross



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

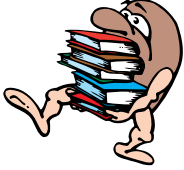
Imagine what God might be doing to make the world develop in a good way. Draw a picture about it.



LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.

The Parable of the Sower (2) – Responding to God



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

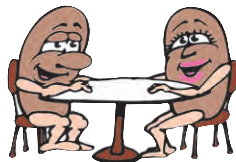
Go back to the last lesson and read the Parable of the Sower again. Then answer these questions:

1. Did all the seed grow well? Why not?
2. In how many different types of place were the seed thrown?
3. How did the seed do in each different place?
4. Copy the following into your journal and finish the sentence: There were two types of ground in the parable: ground that did respond well to the seeds and ground that did not respond well to the seeds. I would agree with this because...



WHY DON'T YOU?

Make a display for the noticeboard. Put a picture of the sower in the middle and around it put pictures of the different types of place where the seed landed.



There is usually more than one way in which a parable might get you to think about yourself, about others, about the world or about God. In the last lesson you saw the Parable of the Sower from one particular point of view. Despite many setbacks, there was a harvest at the end. Looked at in this way, Jesus seems to want the parable to ask: 'Do you realise that God is with you despite your failures and mistakes?'

Through the parable, Jesus seems to say: 'God is with you always.' In this present lesson you get to see another way in which the Parable of the Sower could make you think. To get you started, go back and read the parable again.



The Ten Wallets



A TV presenter had ten wallets. Into each one he put a credit card, a £10 note and a few small photographs. He went to a large 'CD and Tape' shop which had hidden cameras and he purposely dropped the wallets in various places in the shop. He asked the shop to record what happened with the hidden cameras. So, the TV programme was able to show pictures of the ten wallets being found.

In one case, a person saw the man dropping the wallet and ran after him to give it back. Three of the wallets were found by people who returned them at the shop counter. Two other people found a wallet, took the £10 note and quietly put the wallet back where they found it. Finally, the TV programme showed what happened to the other four wallets. They were picked up by four different people, who quickly put them in their own pockets and left the shop without giving them back.



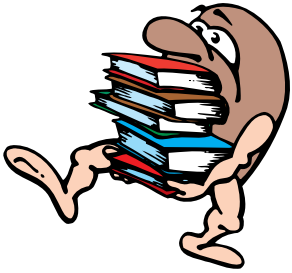
LET'S TALK

1. There were two types of people who found the wallets: what types were they?
2. Can you see any comparison between the types of people who found the wallets and the types of soil where the seed landed in the Parable of the Sower?
3. Can you give an example of someone who did not respond well to a situation? What stopped them from responding well? Write a story about this person.
4. Pick one of the types of ground mentioned in the parable. Could you say that the person in your story is like it? Give a reason for your answer.



WHY DON'T YOU?

Check the seeds that you planted in the tray during the last lesson. Are they responding yet?



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Write the titles 'Good Ground' and 'Bad Ground' across the top of two facing pages. Get some old newspapers and magazines. Find one or more stories about people who are like the good ground because they responded well to others and to God. Put these on the page that's titled 'Good Ground'. Find one or more stories about people who are like the bad ground because they did not respond well to others and to God. Put these on the other page.

Note: Instead of doing this in your journal, the whole class could do it as a wall display.

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

The Parable of the Sower reminds us that we do not always respond to God, to the world and to others.

We remember what can make us shallow and thoughtless:
when we do not listen... when we do not look... when we do not hear...

We remember the things that can steal away our energy for others:
when we worry too much... when we try to be popular... when we want to do things our way... when we think more of some people than of others...

We remember the things that can distract us and steal away our time:
the TV programmes... the computer games... the long phone calls...

For the times when we have not responded, we say sorry to God:

All

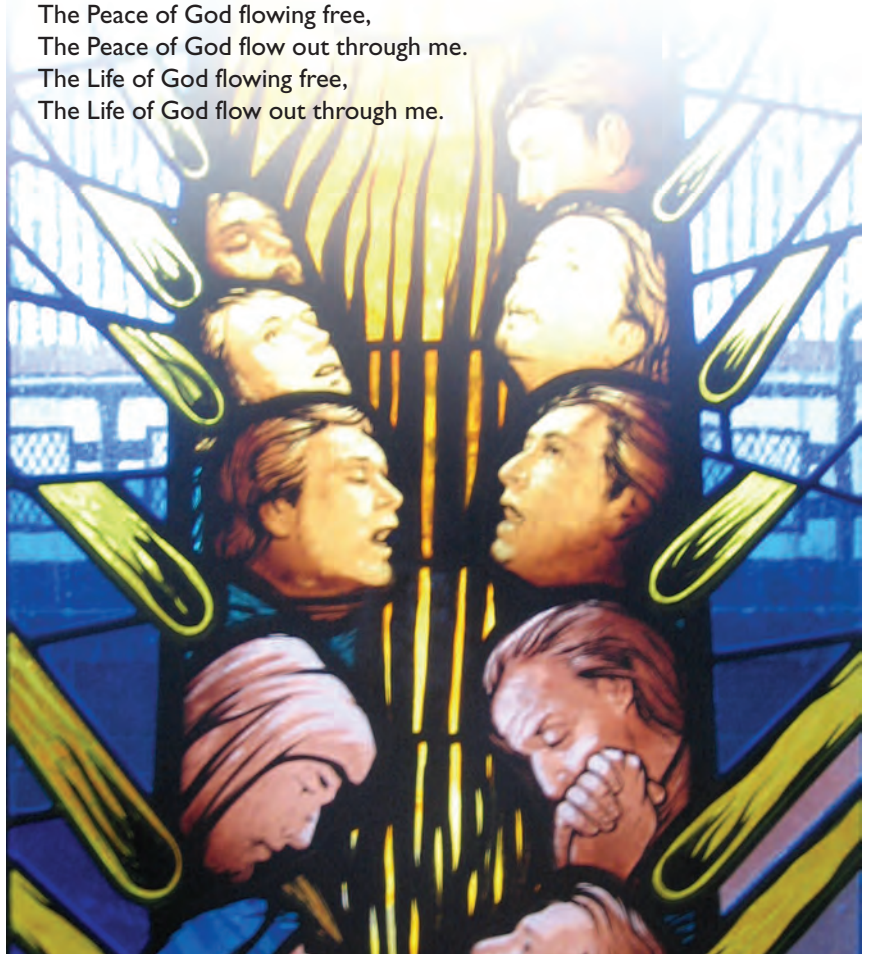
O my God, I thank you for loving me.
I am sorry for all my sins,
for not loving others and not loving you.
Help me to live like Jesus and not to sin again. Amen.

Teacher

We pray that we may be God's blessing for others...

All

The Love of God flowing free,
The Love of God flow out through me.
The Peace of God flowing free,
The Peace of God flow out through me.
The Life of God flowing free,
The Life of God flow out through me.



The Parable of the Seed Growing Secretly

Parables get you to take a different view of your life.

In this lesson we explore the Parable of the Seed Growing Secretly.

Through it, Jesus gets you to become more aware of the hidden part of life. God gives you the gift of your own life, with your own identity and your own hopes and plans. Those hopes and plans may lie hidden for a long time. Yet eventually, God's gifts can work themselves out in ways that may surprise you and others.

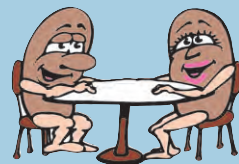
Helen Tew caused just such a surprise. When Helen's father talked about crossing the Atlantic in a boat, it was like a seed being planted in Helen's mind. For a long while, it seemed as if nothing was happening. But like a seed growing secretly underground, the idea of crossing the Atlantic continued to take root in Helen's heart and mind.

Crossing the Atlantic

On 6 July 2001, Helen Tew stepped ashore from a journey in her yacht. Nothing unusual about that, except that this woman had just crossed the Atlantic both ways AND she was eighty-nine years old. She is probably the oldest person to have made the journey in this way.

Now Helen is finally at ease with the memory of her father, Douglas Graham. Back in 1934 he promised her that they would sail the Atlantic together. But then he went without her because she was getting ready for exams. She was furious.

Later on in her life, she had hoped to make the journey with her husband. But he died in 1976. Then Helen sold some property and did up the old family boat. When her son suggested that they sail south to the Azores, she got really excited and insisted that they cross the Atlantic.



LET'S TALK

1. What made this trip across the Atlantic such an unusual achievement?
2. From whom did Helen get the idea about sailing across the Atlantic?
3. Why did it take so long for Helen to achieve her dream?
4. Why do you think Helen did not forget about her dream?
5. Is there anything that you dream about doing?



A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

Today we will pray quietly. Take a moment now to become quiet and still. Become aware of your breathing, as you breathe in and breathe out. (Pause)

Reader

A reading from the Gospel according to Mark (4:26-29).

The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how. The earth produces of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. But when the grain is ripe, at once he goes in with his sickle, because the harvest has come.

Teacher

Now, imagine a seed. Picture its size and weight. Think of its shell. (Pause)

Imagine it in the soil. It starts to grow. The earth surrounds it and helps it to grow. (Pause)

The shell splits as the little plant grows and begins to make its way up towards the light and heat. (Pause)

Imagine your life being like the seed. God has given you the power to grow. That power is hidden in you.

Thank God for the energy of life at work in you.

(Pause)

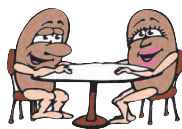
What is your hope – your dream – for yourself?

(Pause)

Ask God to help you to grow well in life. (Pause)

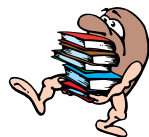
Think of a hope or dream that you want God's help with ... (Pause)

Sign of the Cross



LET'S TALK

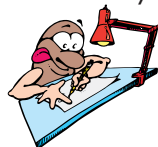
In the Prayertime you heard the Parable of the Seed Growing Secretly. What do you think we learn from it about the Kingdom of God (God's presence with us)?



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Draw a picture of a few seeds underground. Label each one with some good thing that you do at present, e.g. I'm learning to play the guitar; I practise my football skills; I listen to others when they need to talk.

Draw another picture that shows what these 'seeds' might become, e.g. I entertain my friends with music; I coach a local team; I am able to show care for my friends.



LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.

Term 2, Lesson 19

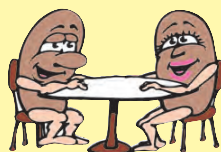
The Lost Sheep/The Lost Coin

Have you ever felt lost, afraid or anxious? Probably. The chances are that you will feel these things again at another time in your life. Where is God in your life at times like that? Does God leave you on your own? Does God stop caring about you? Some of the parables of Jesus can give us another way of looking at times like these. Before you get to that, though, here's a reminder of those times.

Whistling Love...



A man got lost while driving out in the country one day. He stopped at a small farmhouse to ask for directions. An elderly man was working in the yard, and as he worked he whistled non-stop. There was no tune to it. He just kept going: whistling, whistling, whistling. The stranger couldn't help but notice it. 'You're fond of whistling,' he said. 'Oh,' said the man, 'it's second nature to me now.' Then, he dropped his voice and, pointing over to his wife, he explained that they had been married for thirty-eight years, when suddenly she was struck blind. Coming so late in life, it was a dreadful shock, which left her feeling very anxious. 'I reckoned that if I just kept whistling while I was outside the house, she'd have the security of knowing that I'm still with her,' he said.



LET'S TALK

1. Why do you think the woman felt anxious?
2. What kind of man do you think her husband is? Why?

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

Let's take a moment to pray for people who are worrying just now.

For people who are refugees because of war. (Pause)

For those who are homeless because they have run away. (Pause)

For families where someone has died. (Pause)

For anyone in our class who is very worried today. (Pause)

God is always with us, even at the difficult times of life, and so we pray:

Choose one of the following prayers to Guardian Angel:

All

Angel sent by God to guide me,
Be my light and walk beside me,
Be my guardian and protect me,
On the paths of life direct me.
Amen.

or

O angel of God, my guardian dear,
To whom God's love commits me here;
Ever this day, be at my side
To light, to guard, to rule, to guide.
Amen.

Sign of the Cross



Two Special Parables about Reconciliation

The parables of Jesus are images of God's kingdom. Each time you hear them, you have a new chance to consider what it means to say that God is with us. Here are two examples from the Gospel according to Luke:

Parable of the Lost Sheep



If any of you has a hundred sheep, and one of them gets lost, what will you do? Won't you leave the ninety-nine in the field and go and look for the lost sheep until you find it? And when you find it, you will be so glad that you will put it on your shoulder and carry it home. Then you will call in your friends and neighbours and say, 'Let's celebrate! I've found my lost sheep.' Jesus said, 'In the same way there is more happiness in heaven because of one sinner who turns to God than over ninety-nine good people who don't need to.' (Luke 15:4-7)

Parable of the Lost Coin



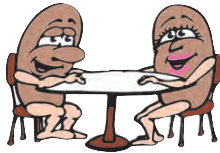
What will a woman do if she has ten silver coins and loses one of them? Won't she light a lamp, sweep the floor, and look carefully until she finds it? Then she will call in her friends and neighbours and say, 'Let's celebrate! I've found the coin I lost.' Jesus said, 'In the same way God's angels are happy when even one person turns to him.' (Luke 15:8-10)



Term 2, Lesson 20

The Prodigal Son

LET'S TALK

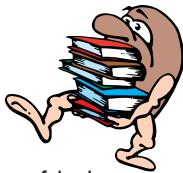


1. What moment or word in the Parable of the Lost Sheep strikes you?
2. Why does that word or detail strike you now?
3. What word or moment in the Parable of the Lost Coin strikes you?
4. How does that detail or word make you feel now?
5. To whom might Jesus want to tell these stories today? Why?
6. Are you glad that Jesus told these stories? Why?

Reconciliation and Sin

When we choose to turn away from God, from the world and from others, and when we do not follow God's way, we call this sin. God loves us even when we sin. Even though we turn away from God, God does not turn away from us. In fact, God comes looking for us and does not stop searching until we are back where we belong again. God does not give up on us, even though, sometimes, we give up on God and on ourselves. God constantly invites us back. All we have to do is to ask for forgiveness and be willing to change our ways. We celebrate this in the sacrament of Reconciliation.

IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

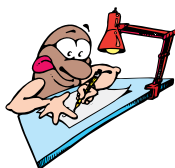


Write about a time in your life when you felt alone or lost. Describe what was going on. How did you get through it? Does it still affect you? Did you feel close to God at this time or did you feel God was very far away?



WHY DON'T YOU?

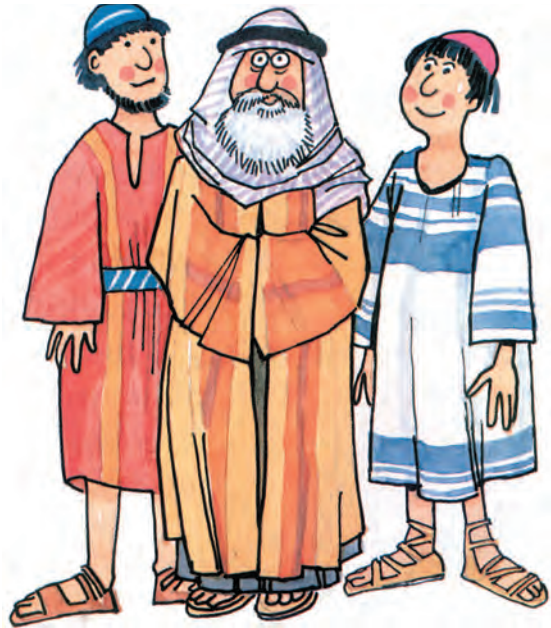
Do a classroom display based on one of the parables in this lesson. Put the title of the parable at the top. Use magazines and newspapers to find words, stories and images that go with the parable.



LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.

It's over two years since you first explored one of the most famous parables of Jesus: the Prodigal Son. You're different now than you were two years ago. So the way you understand this parable of Jesus will be different too. What more will it help you to see about God and about your life now? Let's see...



The Father and His Two Sons

A farmer had two sons. One day the younger son said to his father, 'Dad, it's time you handed over the farm to the two of us.' The father did as his son asked. He divided up the farm between the two sons. The younger son sold his share of the farm, quickly packed his things and went abroad.

There, he wasted his money having 'a good time'. At last, his pockets were empty. Then the harvest failed all over the land. He found himself with no money and no food. He took a job with a farmer, who sent him off to feed the pigs in the fields. He was so hungry, he felt like eating the pigs' food. No one lifted a hand to help him.

Then he realised what a fool he had been. 'How many of the workers on my father's farm have more food than they want,' he thought, 'and here I am starving to death! I will go home to my father. I have wronged God and I have wronged my father. I'll tell my father that I don't deserve to be his son any more; he can take me on as a hired worker.' So he got up and went home.

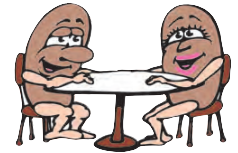
When he was still quite a long way from his father's farm, his father saw him coming. The father felt sorry for the son, and he ran out to meet him. He threw his arms around his neck and kissed him. 'Dad,' the boy began to say, 'I have wronged God and I have wronged you. I don't deserve to be called your son...'

'Quick!' his father called to the servants, 'Go and get the best clothes out. Get a ring and sandals and dress my son properly. And kill that calf we have fattened. We'll have a feast and a grand time tonight. My boy was dead and lost; but here he is alive and back home again!' And they began to celebrate.

Now the older son had been out on the farm. He was coming home and had almost reached the farmhouse when he heard the sound of music and dancing. He called one of the farmhands out and asked him what was going on. 'Your brother is back,' said the man, 'and your father has killed the fattened calf for a feast because he is safe home again.'

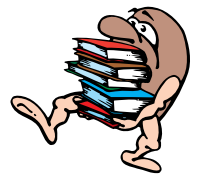
The older son was furious. He wouldn't even go inside the house. His father came out and pleaded with him. But the older son answered him back: 'Look,' he said, 'I have slaved for you all these years. I did everything you asked. But did I get anything for it? Not even a kid goat to have a good time with my friends. Now, this son of yours throws your money away on the high life, and then comes home again, and you go and kill a calf for him.'

'My dear boy,' said his father, 'we're always together. The whole farm is yours – you know that. But we had to celebrate tonight. Your brother was dead and lost, but now he is alive and back home again!' *(Based on Luke 15:11-32)*



LET'S TALK

1. What moment or word in the story stands out for you?
2. What makes that word or moment stand out for you now?
3. Does that moment suggest anything to you about what people can be like?
4. Does it suggest anything to you about what God is like?
5. What do you think was going on in the younger son's mind when he demanded his share of his father's inheritance and then went off and wasted it all?
6. What do you think was going on in his mind when he chose to come back?
7. If someone always gets their own way, does that make him or her happy?
8. Do you think such a person might ever change? Why? Why not?
9. Give some examples of someone today going their own way rather than going God's way.



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Choose one of the characters in the Parable of the Prodigal Son – the youngest son, the father, or the older son. Write about a time in your life when you were like that character.

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

We take a moment to be quiet and still.
We pray for parents and children everywhere.
For those who are having a hard time at the moment. **(Pause)** For those who have problems with money and with health.
(Pause) For those who have no one with whom to share their worries. **(Pause)** For parents and children who have made mistakes with each other. **(Pause)**

All

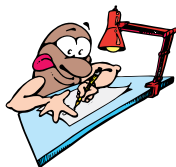
Father in heaven, you love me.
You're with me night and day.
I want to love you always
In all I do and say.
I'll try to please you, Father.
Bless me through the day. Amen.

Sign of the Cross



WHY DON'T YOU?

Do a Bible Search in Luke 15 for the stories in this lesson and in the previous one. Write down the references for the three stories.



LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.

The same story... only different

Here's another way for you to explore what is going on in the world of the father and his two sons. Why don't you act it out as if it were for radio!

Drama: A Split in the Family

Narrator

There once was a man who had two sons. The younger said to his father:

Son 1

Father, give me my share of Ma's life insurance money. I want it today.

Father

Your mother is still sick in hospital. Can't you even wait until she's dead?

Narrator

Eventually the father divided the money between his two sons. After a few days the younger son packed his bags and left. He went to a large city far away and wasted the money on wild living. He spent everything he had. At last, he got a job as a toilet cleaner at a local café. He would gladly have filled himself with the slops scraped from the customers' plates but no one gave him even that much. He had lost everything. He hadn't enough to eat. He became weak and ill. He slept rough at night in alleyways and doorways, with only newspaper and cardboard to keep him warm. Then, he came to his senses and said:

Son 1

Here I am, about to starve! I'll get up and go to my father and say, 'Father, I have sinned against you. I am no longer fit to be called your son; please allow me to work for you to earn my keep.'

Narrator

So he got up and began the journey back to his father. When his father saw him, his heart was filled with pity, and he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

Son 1

Father, I have sinned against God and against you, I am no longer fit to be called your son.

Narrator

But the father called the neighbours.

Father

Quick! Get the quilt off my bed and put it around him and run a bath and turn on the cooker. We are going to have the biggest party ever, because this child of mine was dead and now he's alive; he was lost but now he has been found.

Narrator

And so the party began. Now the older son was away that day at his work. When he returned he heard the music and dancing coming from the house. He could hear his father laughing, a sound he had almost forgotten. He called a neighbour's child and asked:

Son 2

What's going on?

Neighbour's Child

Your Jimmy has come home and your Da has a fry on that would feed half the estate, because he has got him back safe.

Narrator

The older brother was so angry that he wouldn't go into the house. So his father came out and pleaded with him. But the older son shouted back at his father:

Son 2

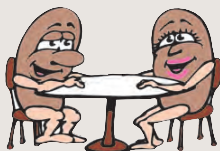
Look, all these years I have slaved for you and never once gave you a bit of bother, and what have you done for me? But this tramp of a son comes back after wasting all on God knows what... and here you are having a party for him.

Narrator

The father answered:

Father

My dear son, you're right. You have always been a good child and I don't know what I would have done without you. I know I just wouldn't have made it. But you're wrong too. Wait till I tell you: we had to have this party and be happy because your brother was dead, but now he is alive; our Jimmy was lost and now he has been found.



LET'S TALK

1. What's different in this version of the story? What's the same?
2. What moment struck you in this version of the story?
3. Did you pick a different moment from the first version? Why? Why not?
4. Whom do you think Jesus was trying to reach when he told the Parable of the Prodigal Son?
5. Do you think he succeeded? Why? Why not?
6. Are you glad that Jesus told this parable? Why? Why not?

A time to pray

Note: For this prayertime, you will need a small piece of paper to write on.

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

When the lost son came home, his brother was angry. Sometimes, we too can have bad attitudes at home. Take a piece of paper and write on it a single word to describe a bad attitude that you showed at home. Quietly, look at what you have written and remember it now as we say together:

All

O my God, I thank you for loving me.
I am sorry for all my sins,
For not loving others and not loving you.
Help me to live like Jesus and not to sin again. Amen.

Teacher

Now, we ask God to help us let go of any bad attitudes in our lives. We take the piece of paper, tear it up and put it in the box as it is passed around.

Sign of the Cross



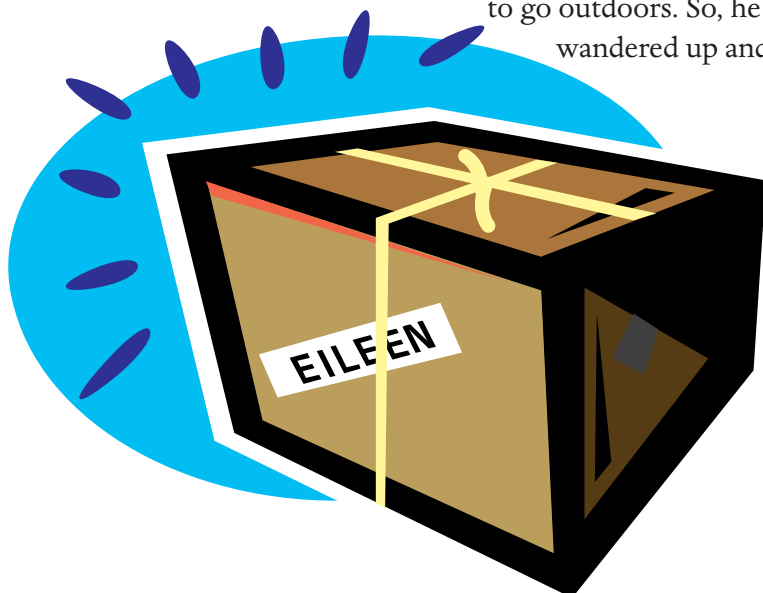
My Sense of What is Right

You've explored the story of the Prodigal Son, who had to face up to his wrong behaviour and work out how to be reconciled again. Now it's time for you to look at yourself and to deal with some important questions: Can you name bad behaviour when you see it? Can you admit when your behaviour is wrong? How do you know when your behaviour is wrong? Here's a story about a boy who knew his actions were wrong... but that wasn't enough to stop him.

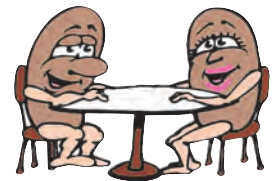
The Birthday Party

Gerry had been invited to Eileen's birthday party. Indeed, everyone from his class had been invited. And they were all going... except Gerry. He knew he couldn't go. After all, he was the one who had put the dead cat in a shoebox and left it on Eileen's front step, with her name on it. He had known it was wrong and that it would give Eileen a terrible fright, but he also thought it would be very funny. He could still hear her screams as he reached the bus stop, having left the box at her door. As he sat down on the bus he had started to feel a bit guilty.

Now there was no way he could be persuaded to go to that birthday party. He kept saying that he was feeling sick. Well, too sick to go to the party but well enough to go outdoors. So, he wandered up and



down, listening to the fun and games going on in Maguire's backyard. He could imagine the table covered with sandwiches, sausages, buns, birthday cake and fizzy drinks. Still, he couldn't go. He wouldn't be welcome. Anyway, he wouldn't feel right: sitting at the table and Mrs Maguire accusing him with every glance. She could add two and two. She must at least suspect him. **Then Maguires' front door opened...**

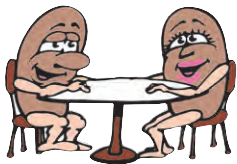


LET'S TALK

1. What wrong was done to Eileen?
2. Why do you think Gerry put the box on her doorstep?
3. Check the Guidelines for Making Good Choices on page 56. In your opinion, which ones did Gerry not follow?
4. Why did Gerry pretend that he felt sick?
5. What could Gerry have done to put the situation right?
6. Give another example of someone doing something that starts as a joke but then ends as something much more serious.
7. Suggest an ending for the story.

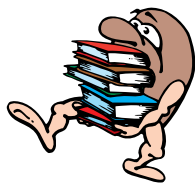
One way of ending the story ...

Then Maguires' front door opened. Gerry ran around the corner, but not before he heard a loud voice saying, 'Gerry Morgan, what has been keeping you all this time?' It was Mrs Maguire. He had to turn around and say something. Keeping his eyes on his trainers, he said: 'I'm not feeling so well, Mrs Maguire.' 'Come on out of that,' she began, 'you're no more sick than I am. Never mind that awful trick you played on Eileen this morning. It was a terrible thing to do, but Eileen is over it now, so come in and join the party.' Gerry blushed to his roots as he went through Maguires' front door. How would he face Eileen? But Eileen was all smiles as she frightened her friends with stories of a dead cat.



LET'S TALK

1. What do you think of how the story ended?
2. How does this ending compare with your own?
3. Compare this ending with the ending of the Parable of the Prodigal Son. Make a list of some comparisons.



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Make a list of five examples of a person doing something wrong. Beside each example offer a suggestion of a way in which the situation can be put right.

Influences on your sense of right and wrong

In Term 1 you were reminded that other people and things influence your sense of right and wrong: your family, your friends, your school, your community and the mass media. Your belief in God also influences your sense of right and wrong. Jesus told parables to get people to think about their behaviour and attitudes. (The parables of the Sower and of the Seed Growing Secretly are good examples of this.) Still, God has given us the power to make choices and it's up to us to choose. God wants us to do the right thing and God gives us the gift of the Holy Spirit to help us. Even when we deliberately go against God's way and choose the wrong thing, God still wants us back. God never stops wanting us, as the parables of the Lost Sheep, Lost Coin and the Prodigal Son show us.



LET'S TALK

1. List some moments of right behaviour and moments of wrong behaviour in the Parable of the Prodigal Son.
2. Whom do you think Jesus was trying to reach in telling this parable?
3. When might you be glad that Jesus told this parable?
4. When in your life might this parable influence a choice you might make?

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

As we pray together today we remember that our sense of what is right comes from several places, including from God. God sees what is good in all of us. God wants to help us to see what is good in others.

We will now quieten ourselves and prepare to pray.

We become aware of our breathing. **(Pause)**

As we breathe in, we will pray: 'God, you see what is good in me.'

As we breathe out, we will pray: 'Help me to see what is good in others.'

(Breathing in) God, you see what is good in me.

(Breathing out) Help me to see what is good in others.

(This prayer is repeated a number of times to help in remembering it.)

Now we pray the prayer quietly within ourselves for a short while.

(Longer pause)

As we draw our prayertime to a close, we bless ourselves.

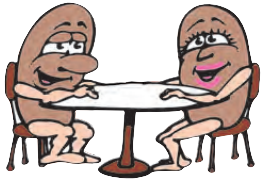
Sign of the Cross

Term 2, Lesson 22

Celebrating Reconciliation – Past and Present

It's a very hard thing to admit that you have behaved badly and then to find that you are not forgiven. It may happen to you sometimes in life. However, it will never happen to you with God. So people have confidently passed on the stories and the message of Jesus about the forgiveness of God over the centuries. Today we celebrate our reconciliation with God in the sacrament of Reconciliation. Has it always been celebrated in the same way? Let's see...

LET'S TALK



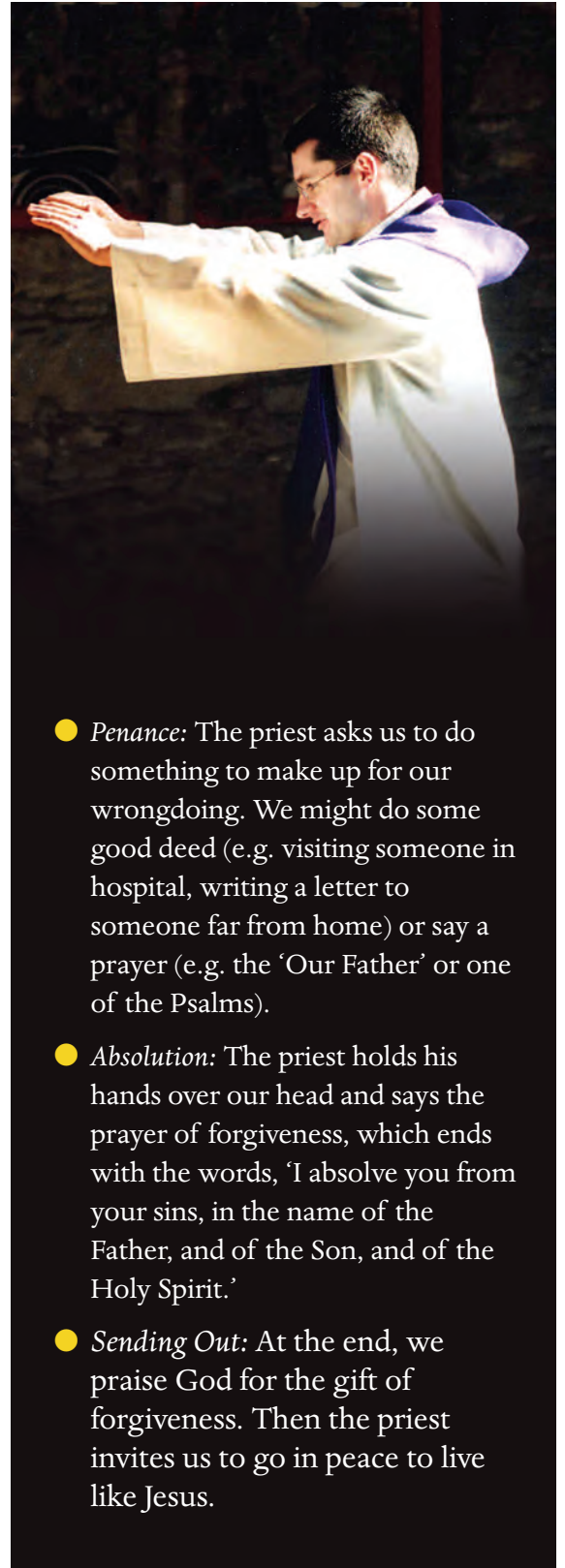
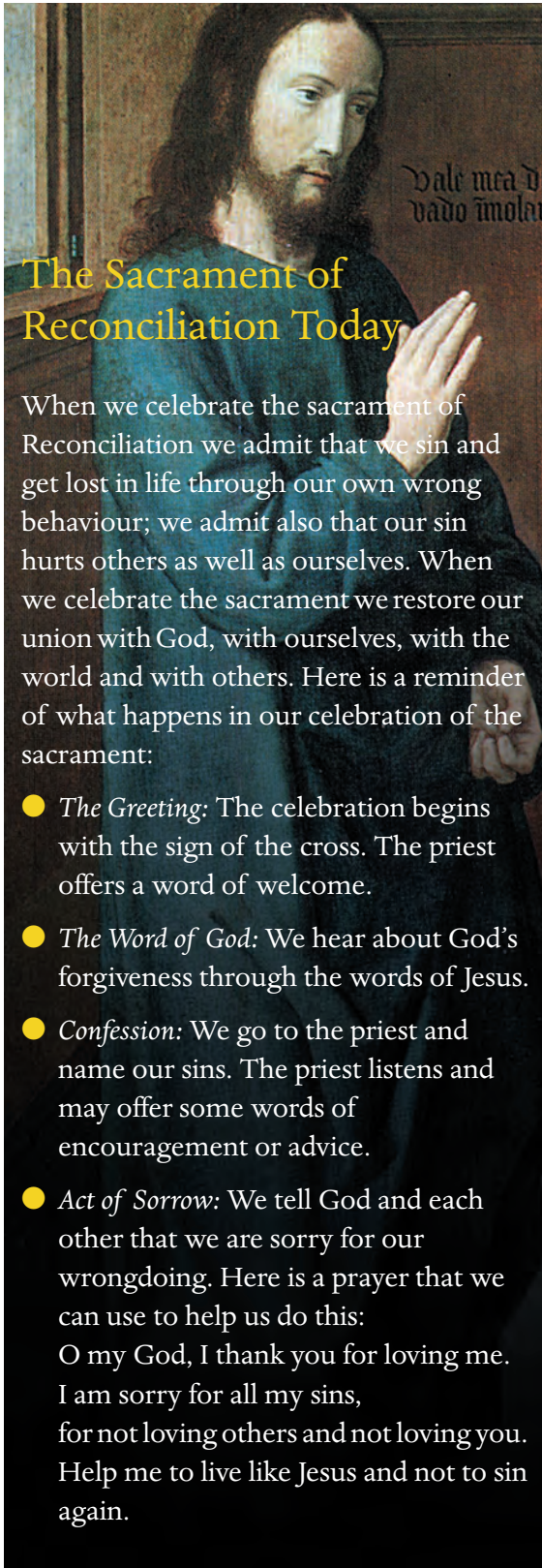
Read 'Reconciliation through the Ages' (on the page opposite), before discussing the following.

1. Name one time in the Gospel according to Mark when Jesus forgave a person's sins.
2. Why do you think the Irish monks might have offered a new way of celebrating God's forgiveness?
3. Which of today's three ways of celebrating the sacrament is most familiar to you?
4. At what times of the year are people more likely to celebrate the sacrament of Reconciliation?
5. What other names do we use for the sacrament of Reconciliation?

The Sacrament of Reconciliation Today

When we celebrate the sacrament of Reconciliation we admit that we sin and get lost in life through our own wrong behaviour; we admit also that our sin hurts others as well as ourselves. When we celebrate the sacrament we restore our union with God, with ourselves, with the world and with others. Here is a reminder of what happens in our celebration of the sacrament:

- *The Greeting:* The celebration begins with the sign of the cross. The priest offers a word of welcome.
- *The Word of God:* We hear about God's forgiveness through the words of Jesus.
- *Confession:* We go to the priest and name our sins. The priest listens and may offer some words of encouragement or advice.
- *Act of Sorrow:* We tell God and each other that we are sorry for our wrongdoing. Here is a prayer that we can use to help us do this:
O my God, I thank you for loving me.
I am sorry for all my sins,
for not loving others and not loving you.
Help me to live like Jesus and not to sin again.
- *Penance:* The priest asks us to do something to make up for our wrongdoing. We might do some good deed (e.g. visiting someone in hospital, writing a letter to someone far from home) or say a prayer (e.g. the 'Our Father' or one of the Psalms).
- *Absolution:* The priest holds his hands over our head and says the prayer of forgiveness, which ends with the words, 'I absolve you from your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.'
- *Sending Out:* At the end, we praise God for the gift of forgiveness. Then the priest invites us to go in peace to live like Jesus.



Reconciliation through the Ages

It all started with the **ministry of Jesus** around AD 30. Jesus often forgave people their sins. You'll find a good example in Mark 2:1-12 – the story of Jesus and the man who was paralysed.

In **the early Church** after AD 100, God's forgiveness was celebrated:

(a) once in a lifetime, sometimes just before death;

(b) at the end of Lent on Holy Thursday in public.

The emphasis was on doing penance publicly to make up for sins.

Around AD 590, **Irish monks** introduced the private celebration of God's forgiveness. People celebrated the sacrament more frequently. Monks offered help and advice, so the emphasis now was more on confession.

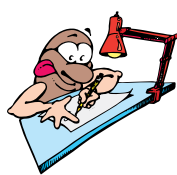
In the **twentieth century** (1970), our celebration of God's forgiveness became known as the sacrament of Reconciliation. It could be celebrated in three different ways:

(a) individual celebration;

(b) community celebration with individual confession and absolution;

(c) community celebration with general confession and absolution.

The emphasis now was more on reconciliation with God and others.



LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.

A time to pray

Note: You will need a page to write on for this prayertime.



Sign of the Cross

Teacher

God knows what is good in us and God waits for us always.

God loves us with the love that the father in the parable had for his lost son. We think of the times when we have not loved others as God does. We think of the times when we have not respected the earth as God does.

All

O my God, help me to remember the times when I didn't live as Jesus asked me to. Help me to be sorry and to try again. Amen.

Reader

Have I been selfish and thought only of suiting myself?

(Pause)

Have I forgotten about others and done only what I wanted?

(Pause)

Have I honoured my parents or guardians? (Pause)

Have I treated the earth with respect? (Pause)

Have I been careful with where I put litter? (Pause)

Have I caused rows and arguments? (Pause)

Have I prayed to God and thanked God for what I have? (Pause)

Have I been jealous of others and thought more of what they had? (Pause)

Have I been mean? (Pause)

Have I refused to forgive others? (Pause)

Have I made it hard for people to say that they are sorry? (Pause)

Teacher

Take a moment to write out an 'Act of Sorrow' using your own words. (Pause) Together now, we say that we are sorry for our sins.

All

O my God, I thank you for loving me.

I am sorry for all my sins,

For not loving others and for not loving you.

Help me to live like Jesus and not to sin again. Amen.

Sign of the Cross

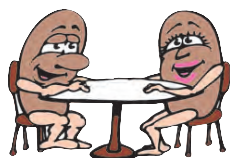
Jesus Shared Meals

Do you have memories of a special meal? Do you look forward to sharing a special meal with others? Can you picture the occasion? the place? the company? the food? the entertainment? What makes a meal like that so special? In Jewish life, meals are really important times. So Jesus grew up to value mealtimes too. For Jesus, mealtimes could be another way of experiencing God's kingdom. The happiness and unity of a shared meal gave a taste of what life is like when we live in God's kingdom. Before you look at one of the meals Jesus shared, read this story about what Robert de Moor remembers of a time from his childhood when his family ate something together.



Growing up in Canada

Back in Ontario when the apples ripened, my mother would sit all seven of us down, Dad included. We worked with our pans and paring knives until the mountain of fruit was reduced to neat rows of filled canning jars. She never bothered keeping track of how many we did, even though the younger ones undoubtedly proved more of a nuisance than a help: cut fingers, squabbles over who got which pan, apple-core fights. But when the job was done, the reward for everyone was the same: the largest chocolate-dipped ice-cream cone money could buy. A stickler might argue it wasn't quite fair since the older ones actually peeled apples. But I can't remember anyone complaining about it. A family understands it operates under a different set of norms (rules) than a courtroom. In fact, when the store ran out of ice-cream and my younger brother had to make do with a popsicle (ice pop), we felt sorry for him despite his lack of productivity: he had eaten all the apples he'd peeled that day – both of them.



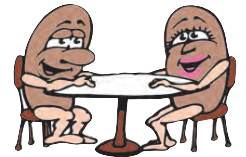
LET'S TALK

1. In the story, what was the occasion?
2. Who was there?
3. What do you think makes the memory special for the writer?

Jesus Shares a Meal (Mark 2:13-17)

Once again, Jesus went to the shore of Lake Galilee. A large crowd gathered around him, and he taught them. As he walked along, he saw Levi, the son of Alphaeus. Levi was sitting at the place for paying taxes, and Jesus said to him, 'Come with me!' So he got up and went with Jesus. Later, Jesus and his disciples were having dinner at Levi's house. Many tax collectors and other sinners had become followers of Jesus, and they were also guests at the dinner. Some of the teachers of the Law of Moses were Pharisees, and they saw that Jesus was

eating with sinners and tax collectors. So they asked his disciples, 'Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?' Jesus heard them and answered, 'Healthy people don't need a doctor, but sick people do. I didn't come to invite good people to be my followers. I came to invite sinners.'



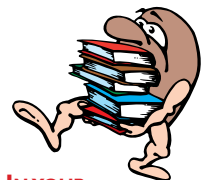
LET'S TALK

1. What was the occasion in the story?
2. Who was there?
3. What happened?
4. What did Jesus do? What did Jesus say?
5. What effect did sharing a meal with Jesus have on the people in the story?
6. If you had been there, what would you remember most?



WHY DON'T YOU?

Get into groups and do a Bible search for Luke 7:36-50 (Jesus Anointed by a Sinful Woman) and Luke 14:1-7 (Jesus at a Pharisee's House). Answer the same questions as in 'Let's talk' above.



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Imagine that you invite Jesus to a meal. Describe the meal in as much detail as you can. Answering the following questions may help you: Where would the meal be held? Who else would be there? What would you eat? What would you talk about? How would you feel about having Jesus there with you? How might you be different as a result of sharing this time with Jesus?



A time to pray

Note: Put the tinned foods that you have collected during Lent where they can be seen during the prayertime.

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

We have special meals in our lives: times of togetherness, friendship and sharing. Jesus ate with his friends at special times too. The Gospel according to Mark recalls such a time.

Reader

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark (2: 13-17).
(Reads the passage as given above)
This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Teacher

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation.
Through your goodness, we have food to

share. As we share it, we remember the friendship that you give us. Help us to love others as you love them.

All

For the food that we eat: we praise you.
For the friendship that we have: we thank you.

For the food we have wasted: we are sorry.

Bless our special efforts on behalf of those who are poor and hungry. Amen.

Sign of the Cross



The Passover Meal

Although Jesus shared many meals, there was one special meal each year that stood out. It was called the Passover meal. Why did Jesus and his fellow Jews celebrate this meal each year? What did it mean to them? This lesson will help you to find out.

The Passover Story

The book of Exodus tells how the Pharaoh kept the Israelites (the Jews) as slaves in Egypt. The Pharaoh was the ruler of the Egyptians. He forced the Israelites to work on Egyptian building projects. This was difficult, heavy work. The Israelites longed for freedom.

God called Moses and sent him to bring the Israelites out of Egypt to freedom in a new land. Together with his brother, Aaron, Moses went to Pharaoh and asked for the people to be freed. At first Pharaoh stubbornly refused. But eventually he let the people leave Egypt. On the night before they left, Moses told the Israelites to get ready. They ate a special meal.

Towards the end of spring each year, Jews everywhere remember this escape during their festival of Passover. For eight days, they celebrate the journey that brought them freedom and that made them a nation. On the first of the eight nights of the Passover festival, the Jews celebrate with a special meal. During it, they hear

again the story of how God freed the people from slavery. You will find that story in Exodus 12-14. They eat only unleavened

bread – bread that is flat because it is made without yeast. This recalls how there was no time to make ordinary bread on the night of the Passover because they left Egypt in such a hurry.

The father and the youngest member of the family have a special role at the meal. In response to the questions from the youngest

member of the family, the father explains the meaning and background of everything that happens during the meal.



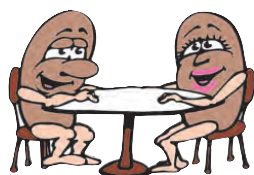
Food used at the Passover Meal

When Jews celebrate the Passover meal, they eat special foods. Each type of food is a reminder of some aspect of the slavery in Egypt or of the escape.

Unleavened bread (called *matzoth* in Hebrew):

This is bread cooked without yeast or any other raising agent. There was no time to make ordinary bread on the night of the Passover because the Israelites left Egypt in such a hurry.

A roasted lamb shank (Z'roa): This commemorates one of the two offerings that were made in the Temple on the Eve of Passover. The family also remembers that the Israelites were instructed to sacrifice a lamb before they left Egypt and to daub their doorposts with its blood to mark them so that the Angel of Death would 'pass over' all Jewish houses and only kill the Egyptian firstborn. The family were instructed to totally consume the lamb and to burn any that was left.



LET'S TALK

1. What was the name of the leader of the Egyptians who kept the Israelites as slaves?
2. What did God send Moses to do?
3. Why do Jews celebrate the Passover every year?
4. How long does the Passover festival last?
5. What is unleavened bread and why do the Jews eat it during the Passover festival?
6. What is the father's role at the Passover meal?
7. What role does the youngest member of the family have at the meal?

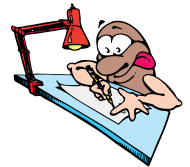


A burnt egg (Beiza): This symbolises the second of the two Passover offerings which were made in the Temple on the eve of Passover.

Charoset: A combination of ground nuts, apple and sometimes dates bound together with wine to form a paste resembling mortar. This is a reminder of the mortar that the Hebrews had to make for themselves in Egypt.

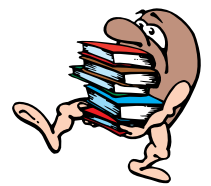
Karpas: Celery, watercress, parsley, potato – in fact any vegetable other than those used as bitter herbs. This is dipped in the salt water also present on the table as a reminder of the tears shed by the Israelites.

Bitter Herbs (Maror): Usually horseradish, a very bitter root vegetable or some types of lettuce which leave a bitter aftertaste. This is a reminder of the bitter times that the Israelites had as slaves in Egypt.



LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Recall a meal you were at which celebrated a special event.

Write a few sentences describing why that meal was different from an ordinary meal.

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

Slavery is a fact of life in the world, even today. We will listen now to the story of a young person from Pakistan who has to make bricks to pay off a family debt. There are many others like him. Forced labour is the most widespread form of slavery in the world today.

Reader

My name is Ashique. I am eleven years old. I have worked in the brick factory (kilns) for the past six years with my father and three brothers. My father borrowed 20,000 rupees (about £400) to pay for my sister's marriage. Now we have to work hard to pay off the loan. I work every day except Sunday. My father, brothers and myself are paid 30 rupees (50p) for every 1000 bricks. We can make around 2,500-3000 bricks in a day. Half of this goes to repay our loan. We work from around 2 am – when it is still dark – until 6 pm or 7pm in the evening. We have a half hour break between 7 am and 8 am. I get

no time to play. My father sent me to school, but after three months the factory owner took me out of school and put me back to work. I liked going to school. I liked being free.

Teacher

The Hebrew slaves in Egypt were not the only people to be used as forced labour. Today, millions of people in the world are used as forced labour. Some children are even forced to be soldiers. We remember that God sees us all as equal, as we now pray:

All

Our Father...

Teacher

God of justice, we thank you for the freedom we enjoy. You freed the slaves in Egypt. Help those who work on behalf of people who are denied their freedom. Amen.

Sign of the Cross

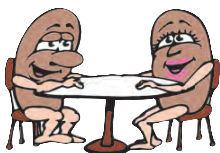
The Last Supper

Here is what St Paul wrote about the Last Supper in his first letter to the Christians in the city of Corinth:

...the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.' (1 Corinthians 11:23-25)



Just before he died, Jesus shared his last meal with his friends. It is now known as the Last Supper. He broke bread, gave it to them and said, 'This is my body that is for you.' Then he passed round the cup of wine and said, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this... in remembrance of me.' Jesus was thinking of his own death to come. He died to bring forgiveness for the sins of all.



LET'S TALK

1. What did Jesus say about his body and blood at the Last Supper?
2. What would you say he was thinking of as he spoke those words?

Over the last two lessons you have learned more about meals that Jesus shared and more about the Passover meal. This lesson will help you now as you explore one of the most famous meals ever: the Last Supper. It will help you to see links between the Passover meal and the Last Supper. In that way, you will understand better what Jesus did and said at that meal.

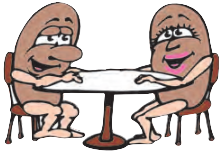
Connecting the Passover and the Last Supper

The Gospel according to Mark tells us that the Last Supper was a Passover meal. Through the Last Supper Jesus gave a new meaning to the Passover meal. Jesus linked his death and resurrection to the escape of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt.



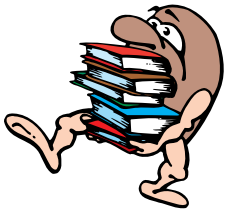
Moses told the Israelites that prior to their escape from Egypt they were required by God to sacrifice a lamb, an animal sacred to the Egyptians. The blood of the lamb was painted on their door frames so that the angel of death would 'pass over' them that night and only punish the Egyptian households. The blood of the lamb protected them from the great plague that struck Egypt. If a household was small they were told to share a lamb with another small household. They were instructed to eat the flesh that night roasted, and if any was left they were to burn it the following morning. This was the origin of the Paschal-Passover offering which was later offered on the Eve of Passover in the Temple. It was also the first time that the Israelites marked their doorposts, a practice which is carried out to this day with Mezzuzot.

Just as Moses led the Israelites from slavery to freedom, Jesus leads us to new freedom and to new life. Jesus is sometimes called the Lamb of God because, by his death, Jesus opened the way to new life for us. Like the lamb, Jesus was sacrificed so that we could be brought to freedom and to new life.



LET'S TALK

1. By what name is the farewell meal of Jesus with his friends known today?
2. What did Jesus do at this meal?
3. To what great event in Jewish history did Jesus link his death?
4. Why is Jesus sometimes called the Lamb of God?



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Record your answers to the questions above. Write your answers as full sentences.



LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

Let's settle ourselves and become quiet. Imagine the scene: the Passover meal table is set for Jesus and his friends. On the table is the special food: the unleavened bread, the lamb shank, the herbs, the egg, the charoset, and all the other things. Imagine it for yourself. **(Pause)**

Jesus and his friends arrive. This has been a difficult week. Jesus has annoyed the Jewish leaders. Jesus' friends are uneasy. **(Pause)**

Then Jesus leads them through the Passover meal. They remember the slavery long ago. They praise God for making them one people. **(Pause)**

But then Jesus surprises his friends. He does something different. He takes the bread and the wine. He says that they are his body and blood, which will be given up for all. **(Pause)**

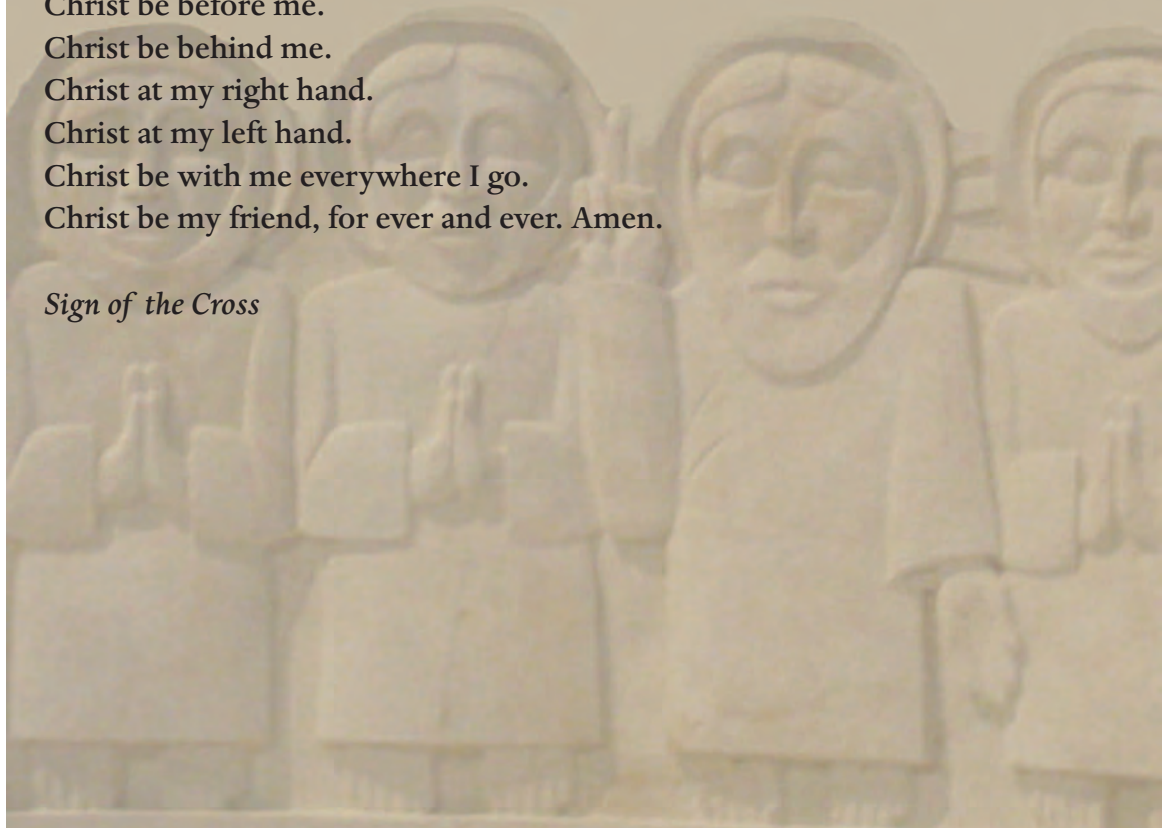
We ask Jesus to be with us, as we say:

All

Prayer to Jesus

Christ be with me.
 Christ be beside me.
 Christ be before me.
 Christ be behind me.
 Christ at my right hand.
 Christ at my left hand.
 Christ be with me everywhere I go.
 Christ be my friend, for ever and ever. Amen.

Sign of the Cross



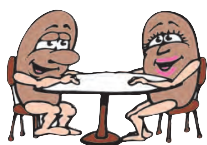
In the Garden of Gethsemane – The Passion of Jesus begins

In the week before Easter – Holy Week – Christians everywhere recall the passion (suffering) and death of Jesus. These next four lessons will help you to connect with these events and reflect on them. After the Last Supper, Jesus went to the Garden of Gethsemane. While there, he struggled with his anxiety in the face of what was about to happen to him. The story about a girl named Sinéad will give you an opportunity to reflect on coping with anxiety. The lesson also recalls the arrest of Jesus.



WHY DON'T YOU?

If there is a cross/crucifix in the classroom, highlight it in some way. You might do this by taking it from its usual position and giving it a place of honour during Holy Week. Alternatively, you could leave it where it is and place some purple cloth or paper near or behind it.



LET'S TALK

1. Why do you think it was important for Jesus to speak to his Father?
2. Why did that help him?
3. When Jesus returns for the third time, he seems to be different. What do you think brought about this change in Jesus?

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

Jesus suffered with worry and fear in Gethsemane. So we pray now for anyone who is worried and under pressure, especially anyone here. We begin by becoming quiet and still. We pay attention to our breathing in *(Pause)* and our breathing out *(Pause)*. As you breathe in, think of the words: 'God of love! God who helps us!' *(Pause)*

As you breathe out, pray silently: 'Be close to all who are worried and upset.'

The teacher repeats these two phrases a number of times in rhythm with the breathing. The prayer continues in quietness for a suitable time.

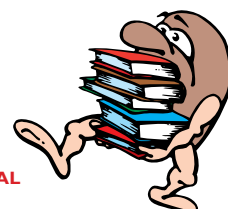
Sign of the Cross



The Garden of Gethsemane

(Mark 14:32-42)

Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he told them, 'Sit here while I pray.' Jesus took along Peter, James and John. He was sad and troubled and told them, 'I am so sad that I feel as if I am dying. Stay here and keep awake with me.' Jesus walked on a little way. Then he knelt down on the ground and prayed, 'Father, if it is possible, don't let this happen to me! Father, you can do anything. Don't make me suffer by making me drink from this cup. But do what you want, and not what I want.' When Jesus came back and found the disciples sleeping, he said to Simon Peter, 'Are you asleep? Can't you stay awake for just one hour? Stay awake and pray that you won't be tested. You want to do what is right, but you are weak.' Jesus went back and prayed the same prayer. But when he returned to the disciples, he found them sleeping again. They simply could not keep their eyes open, and they did not know what to say. When Jesus returned to the disciples the third time, he said, 'Are you still sleeping and resting? Enough of that! The time has come for the Son of Man to be handed over to sinners. Get up! Let's go. The one who will betray me is already here.'



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

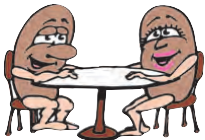
Write a prayer that Jesus might have said to his Father about being betrayed and left alone. You might like to focus on his reaction to what Judas did.



Sinéad's Struggle

Sinéad was exhausted. She had raced from school to make it for the four o'clock starting time at the supermarket. It was late opening and all the new Christmas stock had to be put on display. Her back ached from lifting the boxes. But she didn't dare to say so; she really needed this job. Well, if the truth were told, her family really needed this job. The local shirt factory had relocated to Morocco because they said that labour was cheaper there. Sinéad's mother was one of the 800 workers who lost their job... just in time for Christmas. When Sinéad got home, her mother was going out the door to her part-time job in the local pub. 'The baby's got a temperature. Keep an eye on him. It might just be the teething...' her mother said. Sinéad's head hurt. She was hungry. Here she was on her own again. Beside the phone, she saw the red 'Final Reminder' electricity bill... more worry. Christmas was coming. Just then, the baby started crying. Sinéad dropped her schoolbag on the step. Her mind was a long way from tomorrow's history exam.

LET'S TALK



1. Describe how Sinéad feels when she comes home. Is there anyone that she could talk to?
2. How do you feel about Sinéad in her situation? Have you ever felt anything similar?
3. Can you see any link between Sinéad in her situation and Jesus in the garden?
4. Jesus prayed to his Father in the garden. How might praying help Sinéad cope now?

DID YOU KNOW?

One in ten students work more hours (outside school) than they spend in school.

The Arrest of Jesus

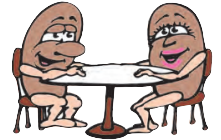
(Mark 14:43-50)

Jesus was still speaking, when Judas the betrayer came up.

He was one of the twelve disciples, and a mob of men armed with swords and clubs were with him. They had been sent by the chief priests, the nation's leaders, and the teachers of the Law of Moses. Judas had told them beforehand, 'Arrest the man I greet with a kiss. Tie him up tight and lead him away.' Judas walked right up to Jesus and said, 'Teacher!' Then Judas kissed him, and the men grabbed Jesus and arrested him. Someone standing there pulled out a sword. He struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his ear. Jesus said to the mob, 'Why do you come with swords and clubs to arrest me like a criminal? Day after day I was with you and taught in the temple, and you didn't arrest me. But what the Scriptures say must come true.' All Jesus' disciples ran off and left him.



LET'S TALK



1. How did Judas betray Jesus?
2. Do people today ever say one thing and mean another? Can you give an example.

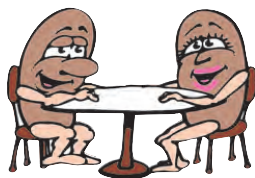


WHY DON'T YOU?

Search the Internet for:

- images of famous paintings connected with the events that took place in Gethsemane;
- information on Gethsemane today.

Jesus Before the Jewish Religious Authorities



LET'S TALK

1. Can you remember what the Sanhedrin was? (Hint: Check page 89)
2. Who was the leader of the Sanhedrin?
3. Why do you think Jesus did not make any attempt to defend himself?
4. How might Jesus have been feeling as he was questioned by the Sanhedrin?
5. Was the 'trial' fair? Explain.
6. Based on the life Jesus lived, did he deserve this kind of treatment? Explain.

Jesus was a Jew. His first friends and followers were Jews. Not all Jews were against him. However, the Jewish religious authorities definitely were. This second lesson for Holy Week offers you an opportunity to reflect on the unfair treatment of Jesus before the Sanhedrin and the high priest, as told to us in the Gospel according to Mark. They accused Jesus of blasphemy, i.e. showing disrespect for God in what he said. The punishment for blasphemy in Jewish religious law was death. However, the Jews were not permitted by the Romans to carry out the death sentence. The death sentence could only be decided on by a Roman court. The other story in the lesson shows that many other people have also experienced cruel and unfair treatment.



Jesus Before the Sanhedrin

(Mark 14:53, 55-65)

Jesus was led off to the high priest. Then the chief priests, the nation's leaders, and the teachers of the Law of Moses all met together. The chief priests and the whole council tried to find someone to accuse Jesus of a crime, so they could put him to death. But they could not find anyone to accuse him. Many people did tell lies against Jesus, but they did not agree on what they said. Finally, some men stood up and lied about him. They said, 'We heard him say he would tear down this temple that we built. He also claimed that in three days he would build another one without any help.' But even then they did not

agree on what they said. The high priest stood up in the council and asked Jesus, 'Why don't you say something in your own defence? Don't you hear the charges they are making against you?' But Jesus kept quiet and did not say a word. The high priest asked him another question, 'Are you the Messiah, the Son of the glorious God?' 'Yes, I am!' Jesus answered. 'Soon you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right side of God All-Powerful, and coming with the clouds of heaven.' At once the high priest ripped his robe apart and shouted, 'Why do we need more witnesses? You heard him claim to be God! What is your decision?' They all agreed that he should be put to death. Some of the people started spitting on Jesus. They blindfolded him, hit him with their fists, and said, 'Tell us who hit you!' Then the guards took charge of Jesus and beat him.

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

During Holy Week, we focus on the cross. As we pray now, we will slowly make the sign of the cross. At each point we will pause to pray. To begin, we place our right hand on our foreheads. We focus on God our Father. May God be with us when we are worried. May God help us to understand the love of Jesus on the cross... (Pause)

Together now, we place our right hand on our chest. We focus on Jesus, God the Son. The life and death of Jesus were so full of love. May God's love fill our hearts and our actions... (Pause)

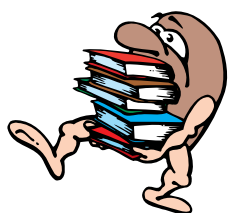
Together now, we place our right hand on our left shoulder. We focus on God the Holy Spirit. God sent the Holy Spirit to us at Pentecost. Together, we move our right hand on to our right shoulder. We remember how God's Holy Spirit of love and courage is all around us today... (Pause)

Together we join our hands and pray:

All

God with us in times of trouble!
Jesus sharing our fears!
Holy Spirit giving us courage!
Praise to you, Holy Trinity,
In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Sign of the Cross



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

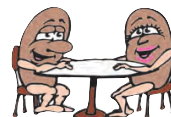
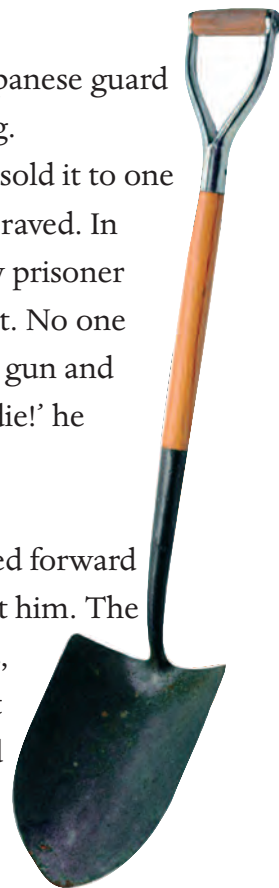
Draw a picture of Jesus before the Sanhedrin. Include some speech bubbles containing some of the accusations made against him.

The Story of the Missing Spade

During the Second World War, the Japanese used prisoners of war to build a railway. It was cruel work. The men grew thin. Food was scarce. The local people used to steal their blankets to sell at the market.

At the end of one very long day's work, a Japanese guard cried out that one of the shovels was missing. Immediately, he decided that a prisoner had sold it to one of the locals for food. The guard ranted and raved. In broken English, he demanded that the guilty prisoner should step forward and take his punishment. No one moved. The guard was raging. He raised his gun and aimed it at the nearest prisoner. 'All die! All die!' he shrieked.

At that moment, one of the prisoners stepped forward and said, 'I did it.' The guard kicked and beat him. The prisoner made no sound. Even more furious, the guard raised his rifle butt and pounded it on to the head of the prisoner, who dropped to the ground. Even though the man was dead, the guard continued to beat him and only stopped when he was exhausted. The prisoners carried their dead comrade's body back to the camp. When the tools were counted again at the guardhouse, no shovel was missing.



LET'S TALK

1. What is your reaction to the way the guard treated the prisoner who stepped forward?
2. Why do you think the prisoner stepped forward?
3. What do you think of what the prisoner did?
4. Compare the story of Jesus before the Sanhedrin and the story of the Missing Spade. Are they similar in any way?
5. After reading the story of Jesus being condemned and the story of the missing spade, what have you learned about unfairness?
6. Have you ever been treated unfairly? How did you feel? How did you cope?



WHY DON'T YOU?

Make a display under the title 'Unfair'. Have an image of Jesus at the centre, with the label 'Accused Unfairly'. Include images and stories of other examples of unfairness today.

The Trial before Pilate

Jesus was arrested in Gethsemane and brought before the Sanhedrin. They found Jesus guilty of blasphemy. Under Jewish religious law, the sentence for blasphemy was death. However, the Sanhedrin could not carry out this sentence because the Romans only accepted their own laws. So, if the Jewish religious leaders wanted Jesus dead, they had to accuse Jesus of something that was a crime in Roman law. Many times in history, laws have been invented or twisted as a convenient way of accusing someone; you will see an example of this in the second story in this lesson. Meanwhile, we know that the Jewish religious authorities succeeded in having Jesus executed. How did they do that? Read on to find out.

Trial Before Pilate

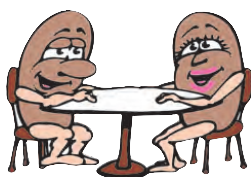
(Mark 15:1-15)

Early the next morning the chief priests, the nation's leaders, and the teachers of the Law of Moses met together with the whole Jewish council. They tied up Jesus and led him off to Pilate. He asked Jesus, 'Are you the king of the Jews?' 'Those are your words,' Jesus answered. The chief priests brought many charges against Jesus. Then Pilate questioned him again, 'Don't you have anything to say? Don't you hear what crimes they say you have done?' But Jesus did not answer, and Pilate was amazed. During Passover, Pilate always freed one prisoner chosen by the people. And at that time there was a prisoner named Barabbas. He and some others had been arrested for murder during a riot. The crowd now came and asked Pilate to set a prisoner free, just as he usually did. Pilate asked them, 'Do you want me to free the king of the Jews?' Pilate knew that the chief priests had brought Jesus to him because they were jealous. But the chief priests told the crowd to ask Pilate to free Barabbas. Then Pilate asked the crowd, 'What do you want me to do with the man you say is the king of the Jews?' They yelled, 'Nail him to a cross!' Pilate asked, 'But what crime has he done?' 'Nail him to a cross!' they yelled even louder. Pilate wanted to please the crowd. So he set Barabbas free. Then he ordered his soldiers to beat Jesus with a whip and nail him to a cross.



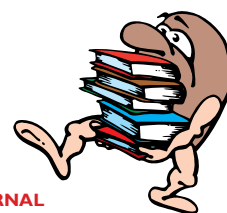
LET'S TALK

1. Why did the religious leaders bring Jesus to Pilate?
2. Of what crime did the Sanhedrin find Jesus guilty?
3. Did Pilate ask Jesus about this crime? Suggest a reason for your answer.
4. Pilate asked Jesus, 'Are you the King of the Jews?' Of what was Pilate accusing Jesus?
5. What do you think the Jewish religious leaders said to Pilate to make him ask this question?
6. Why would the Romans be sensitive about this matter?
7. Suppose you had a chance to speak to Pilate before Jesus was brought in, what would you say to him?



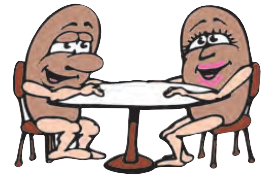
IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Write out Pilate's first question to Jesus. Then write a note about Pilate. You might find it helpful to complete the following sentences: Pilate thought the Jewish religious leaders were...; Jesus made Pilate feel...; Pilate was the type of person who...



The Story of Leonard Hutchinson

On 1 September 1982 David Comer looked out the window of his apartment and saw two men using tools to break into and steal a neighbour's car. When he tried to stop them, he was shot and injured. The men got away. The police arrested Leonard Hutchinson for doing it. David Comer identified him. Tools like those used in the crime were found in Hutchinson's car. Scientific tests proved that they were not used in the crime. Even though the prosecution had this report, they continued to accuse Hutchinson. 'Expert' witnesses lied in court. They said that the tools found in Hutchinson's car were indeed those used in the crime. Hutchinson himself said that he did not do it. However, he had a criminal past and, in 1985, he was found guilty of attempted murder. At the time of the crime in 1982, undercover police found evidence that another man had committed the crime. It took them till 1986 to present evidence that a different man was guilty. There was a chance that Hutchinson would be released from prison. But the prosecution opposed this. They stood by the original trial result because all proper procedures had been followed. False evidence did not appear to concern them. It was ten years before a retrial was ordered and Hutchinson was released. A court has yet to say that he was innocent of this crime.



LET'S TALK

1. What two pieces of evidence led the police to arrest and charge Leonard Hutchinson?
2. What two pieces of evidence made it clear that Leonard Hutchinson did not commit the crime?
3. Did Leonard Hutchinson have a fair trial? Why? Why not?
4. How is the story of Leonard Hutchinson like the story of Jesus before Pilate?



A time to pray



Sign of the Cross

Teacher

The three special days in the life of Jesus are near. We remember Pilate, who sentenced Jesus to death.

Reader 1

I am Pilate. I am strong. I get my way. No one bothers me. I make people afraid. So, what do I care about Jesus? These Jews are all trouble. I'll get rid of Jesus. That will shut them up.

Teacher

We remember people who act unfairly in the world today: those who cause wars, those who put money before jobs, those who force small children to work in factories. (Pause)

Reader 2

I am Jesus. I believe in what is right. God loves people, so I care about them. Our leaders are false. They care about themselves. I told them so. Now I am in trouble. I trust that my Father will help me.

Teacher

We remember people like Jesus who act for justice today: those who get food and clean water for poor people; those who help people who have been put out of their homes because of war; those who stop bullying. (Pause)

All

Our Father

Sign of the Cross

Jesus Dies on the Cross



Jesus died in one of the cruelest ways ever invented. Many people have died terrible deaths at the hands of others. The story of Max Kolbe is a good example. Use this lesson as a chance to reflect on the death of Jesus.

The Crucifixion and Death of Jesus (Mark 15:24-26, 33-39)

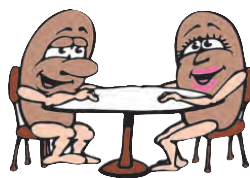
They nailed Jesus to a cross and gambled to see who would get his clothes. It was about nine o'clock in the morning when they nailed him to the cross. On it was a sign that told why he was nailed there. It read, 'This is the King of the Jews.' About midday the sky turned dark and stayed that way until around three o'clock. Then about that time Jesus shouted, 'Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?' which means, 'My God, my God, why have you deserted me?' Some of the people standing there heard Jesus and said, 'He is calling for Elijah.' One of them ran and grabbed a sponge. After he had soaked it in wine, he



The Death of Max Kolbe

When a prisoner escaped from Auschwitz concentration camp in 1941, the commander decided to punish everyone. Ten prisoners would be executed. The commander walked along the lines of prisoners, choosing the men to be killed. When he picked the tenth, that man began to cry and plead: his wife and young family would have nothing without him. Just then, one of the other prisoners stepped forward. He offered to take the place of the other man. This was prisoner number 16670: Maximilian Kolbe, a Franciscan priest. The commander agreed. These ten men were to suffer terribly by being starved to death. This was to put off any others who thought of escaping. During the days that followed, Maximilian helped the men to die. They sang together at first and then, as they all grew weaker, they whispered prayers. After fourteen days, all but one was dead: Maximilian Kolbe. The commander decided that Kolbe should die immediately. Maximilian held out his arm and a guard injected him with a fatal poison. The man Maximilian had replaced survived the war and went home to his wife and family. Each year after that, he visited the place to lay a wreath where Maximilian Kolbe died in his place. Pope John Paul II named Maximilian Kolbe a saint in 1982.

put it on a stick and held it up to Jesus. He said, 'Let's wait and see if Elijah will come and take him down!' Jesus shouted and then died. At once the curtain in the temple tore in two from top to bottom. A Roman army officer was standing in front of Jesus. When the officer saw how Jesus died, he said, 'This man really was the Son of God'.



LET'S TALK

1. What do you think made Max Kolbe offer to take the place of the other man?
2. What words might we use to describe the actions of Jesus and of Max Kolbe in the face of death?
3. Why do you think the other man came back to the prison each year?
4. Why do we revisit the events of the death of Jesus each year?

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

The three special days in the life of Jesus are near. Today, we focus on Calvary. We are quiet and still. *(Pause)*

In our mind, we picture Calvary. We are standing on the south wall of Jerusalem, looking out on to Calvary below. It is a cruel sight. *(Pause)*

Jesus is nailed to the cross. See the leaders jeering at him. See the people jeering at him. *(Pause)*

Jesus is in great pain. But he is quiet and still. He does not respond to those who jeer at him. *(Pause)*

Now Jesus dies. His body goes slack. The Roman soldier is surprised. *(Pause)*

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

All

Dying you destroyed our death.
Rising you restored our life.
Lord Jesus, come in glory!

Sign of the Cross

Term 3, Lesson 1 The Empty Tomb

Can you imagine how Jesus' friends and followers must have felt on Good Friday? Jesus was dead, his message rejected, his love refused, his followers split. Imagine their disappointment and confusion! And then everything changed on the Sunday that followed. This lesson is a chance for you to get in touch with what was going on in the minds of Jesus' friends over those days. It's also a chance to recall some of your own deepest disappointments. Here's a story to start...

The Trip

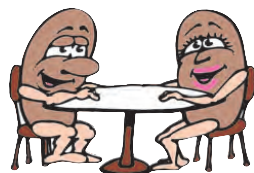
We had been saving for months. This was to be our very first family holiday. There are six of us you see, so going abroad together was just not possible. Then Mum had seen the advertisement in the Travel Agent's window for Disneyland Resort Paris. She had convinced Dad that if we all saved as much as we could we might just be able to manage it. Dad took on an extra shift at the factory.

Mum got a cleaning job in the local hotel in the mornings. I did an extra paper round after school. My younger brother walked old Mr Hyland's dog for fifty pence a time and we all saved every penny we were given for birthdays, First Communion or any other occasion. We were all so looking forward to going to Disneyland.

The younger ones were really excited and had already decided what rides they might be tall enough to be allowed on. Mum and Dad were bursting to tell people that we, the Rices, were going on a family holiday. I was hopeful that this year when my classmates talked about family holidays they had been on, that I would not feel so left out and alone.

Finally, the week of the trip arrived. We had been packing and repacking for weeks. Everything was ready. Nothing had been overlooked or forgotten. That's why it all came as such a shock. 'Tour Company Goes Bust' said the News reader. 'Thousands of families left stranded.' 'Directors of the company were unavailable for comment.' What? How? Why? This can't be true. But my mum's and dad's faces said it all. All the months of scrimping and saving, the effort everyone put in, the excitement of the younger ones – all our hopes so cruelly dashed. 'It looks like we've lost all our savings,' Dad said. 'What are we going to do now?' Mum asked.

**Tour
Company
Goes
Bust...**



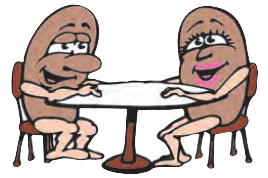
LET'S TALK

List the feelings of the family members when they hear the news that the tour company has gone bust and all their savings are lost.

Two days to remember...

At his last meal with his friends in the Upper Room, Jesus blessed and broke the bread and said, 'This is my body.' He blessed and shared the wine, saying, 'This is my blood.' After eating, they all went out to the Garden of Gethsemane. All except Judas. He had left the meal early. In the garden, Jesus seemed upset and fearful. He asked his apostles to keep watch and pray. He prayed for a long time. The apostles fell asleep. Jesus woke them. He was annoyed that they could not stay awake. Then Judas arrived with the temple guards. Judas kissed Jesus so that the guards would know which man they were to arrest. The friends of Jesus ran off. Jesus was left alone.

In the early hours of the morning Jesus was interrogated by the Sanhedrin. They handed him over to the Roman authorities, accusing him of wanting to be king. Pilate, the Roman governor, could find no case against Jesus, but he gave in when the crowd, with the encouragement of the Jewish authorities, cried out for his crucifixion. Jesus was condemned. He was nailed to a cross and suffered an agonising death. The centurion who saw how he had died said, 'Truly this man was the Son of God.' Jesus' body was taken down from the cross by Joseph of Arimathea and buried in a tomb nearby. Mary Magdalene, Mary the Mother of James, and Salome witnessed where Jesus was buried.



LET'S TALK

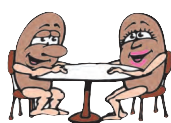
1. It's 8 pm on Good Friday evening. Jesus is dead and has been buried. How do you think Jesus' friends felt?
2. Choose a word to describe how the friends of Jesus felt.
3. Why did you choose this word?
4. What might make you or your friends feel like that today?



The Friends of Jesus find the Tomb Empty (Mark 16:1-8)

After the Sabbath, Mary Magdalene, Salome, and Mary the mother of James bought some spices to put on Jesus' body. Very early on Sunday morning, just as the sun was coming up, they went to the tomb. On their way, they were asking one another, 'Who will roll the stone away from the entrance for us?' But when they looked, they saw that the stone had already been rolled away. And it was a huge stone! The women went into the tomb, and on the right side they saw a young man in a white robe sitting there. They were alarmed. The man said, 'Don't be alarmed! You are looking for Jesus from Nazareth, who was nailed to a cross. God has raised him to life, and he isn't here. You can see the place where they put his body. Now go and tell his disciples, and especially Peter, that he will go ahead of you to Galilee. You will see him there, just as he told you.' When the women ran from the tomb, they were confused and shaking all over. They were too afraid to tell anyone what had happened.

LET'S TALK



1. Why did the women go to the tomb?
2. What might they have felt on the way there?
3. What did they discover when they arrived at the tomb?
4. What was their reaction?



LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.

A time to pray

Note: For this prayertime, make an empty tomb-box or space. Suggestion: cover a box with dark-coloured paper or paint, or with a black bin-liner. Each of you will need a sheet of paper and a pencil for the drawing activity.

Sign of the Cross

Place the box where it can be seen in the room.

Teacher

This box reminds us of the tomb in which Jesus was buried. Jesus' death was a huge disappointment to his friends. Today we join with them as we recall the disappointments that have come to us in our lives. Each of you may now draw something that represents your own experience of disappointment. As you do this, share silently with God the feelings that you are experiencing. *(Pause for the activity)*

When the activity is completed:

Carefully fold your drawing and place it in the box.

All

Loving God, help us to cope with the disappointments in our lives.

Sign of the Cross

The Risen Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene

The friends of Jesus did not expect his tomb to be empty. Yet it was. For the second time in the space of a couple of days, their lives were changed again. This lesson offers you a chance to imagine what it must be like when disappointment turns to joy. It happened for Mary Magdalene, a friend of Jesus. It happened in this story too...

Laddie

Jack got a new pup for his eleventh birthday. 'Where did you get that name?' his mother asked when Jack named the pup 'Laddie'. Over the following days and weeks, Jack and Laddie walked together and played together. In fact, Jack and Laddie were inseparable. And if Jack had known what was going to happen, he would never have allowed his folks to take him on holidays without his pet. 'We'll only be away for ten days,' his father said. 'We can't take the dog on the plane.' Sadly, Jack agreed to let his cousin, John, look after Laddie.

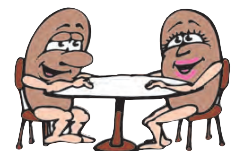
After the holiday, cousin John's house was the first stop. When Jack didn't come out straightaway, his mother knew something was wrong. She went into the house and found Jack in tears. Laddie was lost. Three days ago, the dog had run away. Jack's mother suspected that all was not right in the way John treated the dog. So even if Laddie had heard John calling, he would probably not have wanted to go back.

When the family got back to their home, everyone – even Jack's sister, Kellie, who doesn't like dogs that much – joined in the search for Laddie. Mum and Kellie went out in the car, checking the streets and

the laneways. Dad and Jack began checking in the waste ground behind the factory. After a while, they had been everywhere. There was nothing to do but return home. When they got back to the house, Mum and Kellie began making some 'Lost Dog' posters for the supermarket and the post office.

Jack was depressed. He left the house and headed for the park. He flopped down under a tree and thought of the games that he would no longer be able to play with Laddie. Just then, he heard something quiet and high-pitched. Was it a whimpering sound? He scanned the undergrowth and then saw the familiar colours of black and brown. Was it...? Could it be...? It was Laddie all right... scared and hiding.

Jack got down on his knees and talked to Laddie in a quiet voice. He picked him up very carefully and put his jacket around him and carried him home. Jack's folks were delighted to see Laddie too. Jack told his story to everyone who came to the house. 'Funny how hard it is to be quiet when you have good news,' his mother said, delighted to see him so happy again.



LET'S TALK

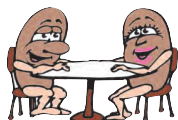
1. Have you ever had a similar experience to the boy in the story? Describe that experience.
2. How were you let down or disappointed? How did that feel?
3. What or who turned your disappointment around? What was that like?

Mary Magdalene's Story



What a wonderful day. Jesus is alive! I have seen him. No one believes me, of course. No, it's just 'Mad Mary' seeing and hearing things again. But I know what I saw. I know the Master has risen and is alive. The other Mary and Salome saw and heard the angel in the tomb too. They refuse to talk about what they saw, but they were there and heard the angel say that Jesus had risen. No one can deny that the body of Jesus is no longer there. Didn't he tell us all that after three days he would rise from the dead? And then, as I struggled to make my way home from the tomb, it happened...

At first I thought it was just the shock of the morning's events at the tomb. I thought I had fainted and was in some kind of dream. I blinked several times as the light was so blinding. There he was standing in front of me. I sank to my knees. The jar of spices fell from my grasp. I could feel the rough ground beneath me. This was no dream. He smiled at me and said, 'Mary, don't be afraid, it is I.' I was frozen to the spot. I stopped being afraid. His loving look calmed me. It was really him. It was Jesus. 'Go tell my disciples and Peter that I am going ahead of them to Galilee. There they will see me,' he said. 'Yes Lord,' I managed to whisper. And then he was gone. After a few minutes I gathered myself together. I decided that I must find the disciples and tell them what had happened. Why did he appear to me? No one would ever believe me. But even if they laughed at me or thought I was crazy, Jesus had chosen me to deliver this news to them. I would do as he asked. He has risen. I saw him. Oh, it's such a wonderful day!

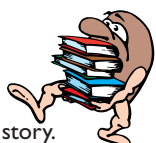


LET'S TALK

1. What is Mary Magdalene talking about in her story?
2. Imagine you were among the group of apostles trying to cope with what happened on Good Friday. How would you have reacted to this story?
3. Before the prayertime, recall a time when you were happy and joyful. If you wish, share it with others in the group.

IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Draw a picture to illustrate Mary Magdalene's story.



WHY DON'T YOU?

1. Do a Bible search of Mark 16:1-8 (the women going to the tomb) and Mark 16:9-11 (Jesus appearing to Mary Magdalene).
2. Read also Mark 16:12-13. Does the Risen Jesus appear to anyone else?



LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.



A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

When Mary Magdalene met the Risen Jesus, she found joy. We will now spend some time recalling a joyful moment in our own lives and we will give thanks to God.

Become quiet and still. Sit comfortably. Close your eyes. Be aware of your breathing. **(Pause)**

Go back in your mind to that joyful moment when you were happy. Imagine the details of the scene: anyone else who was there... **(Pause)**; the time of day... **(Pause)**; the weather... **(Pause)**. Remember anything that was said... **(Pause)**. Recall what you were feeling inside yourself... **(Longer Pause)**.

Now take a moment to thank God. The good things in life are God's gifts to us. **(Pause)**

Together we praise God as we say:

All

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

Sign of the Cross

Term 3, Lesson 3

The Risen Jesus Appears to the Eleven

This lesson will tell you about how the friends of the Risen Jesus felt great fear when they saw the change in him. Change isn't always easy. In fact, it can make you afraid, as this story suggests...

A Change of Scene

As the summer holidays wore on, I began to get anxious. August ended like the cliffhanger at the close of a soap-opera. I was like someone going to a hospital expecting to hear bad news. I was on my own. My friends were all going to the other school. I knew no one. Not like the second- or third-year students, who were already sharing summer stories. The walk from the bus station to the school entrance was endless. A tall woman met us. She directed us into the hall for assembly. She ticked off our names and pointed to the rows for first years. I was in class 8B.

After assembly, we were led away by another woman to a room just up the stairs. With a bright smile, she told us she was Miss Hughes, our form teacher, and that this room was our form room. Over the next two hours Miss Hughes gave out lists of rules and regulations, timetables, bus passes and lunch tickets. She also told us a little about herself. Then she said that we'd do an 'ice-breaker'. I wondered if this was some kind of cool dance routine. But no; she got us to play some games – pen-and-paper games, guessing games, etc. – to help us to 'break the ice' or get to know one another.

I felt a bit lonely and awkward at first. But soon I was getting to know the names of my class-mates and discovering that some of them were feeling just as nervous as I was. However, there was this one student who was very loud and whom I instantly disliked. Never mind, I thought, you can't be best friends with everyone. Miss Hughes then took us on a tour of the school. She gave us a map and we had to find certain rooms. Once we found the rooms we had to gather the sweets from the teacher's desk and bring them back to our form room. It was great fun! In the afternoon, the school photographer came in and took our photographs, individually and as a class. As I stood to have my photograph taken I began to feel I had arrived. Soon I would have the picture to prove it! This wasn't as bad as I had expected. In fact, I liked this school and was beginning to feel I belonged here. Then, with all the sweets we had gathered, Miss Hughes had a party for us. Before the final bell, she told us that, next day, we would begin preparations for the school Mass in three weeks' time. The theme for this year's Mass would be 'Bloom Where You Are Planted'. With the help of Miss Hughes and of my new classmates, I felt I would indeed bloom where God had planted me.

Jesus Appears to the Eleven

(based on Mark 16:14-15)

(The eleven apostles are in hiding in a house in Galilee. They are jumpy and anxious. They are just about to eat. A noise is heard outside.)



JOHN: What was that?

JAMES: Nothing, brother. It's just the wind.

JOHN: No. I heard something outside. It could be the Romans coming for us.

ANDREW: Calm down, John. This is Galilee. There aren't too many Romans in these parts.

PHILIP: Besides, no one knows we're here. Come and sit down and have something to eat.

THADDAEUS: You too, Peter. The food is ready.

PETER: In a minute. I'm just going to check that no one is there. The Romans have spies everywhere.

(Blinding flash of light – the disciples scatter/cover their eyes.)

PETER: Who is there? What are you?

JESUS: Peter, it is I.

PETER: Lord, is it really you?

JAMES: Peter! It is Jesus. He has come back!

JOHN: Are you real? I mean, are you some sort of ghost?

JESUS: No, John. I am not a ghost. It really is me. Don't be afraid. I have come back as I told you I would.

BARTHOLOMEW: But you were crucified. You were dead.

JESUS: Yes, Bartholomew. I was crucified and I did die. But I have risen. I am alive. I will never die again. Why have you all so little faith?

THOMAS: But Lord, it's so hard to take in. We thought when they killed you it was all over.

JESUS: My dear friends, you are so troubled. You have so little faith. Didn't I tell you that I would be put to death and that after three days I would rise again?

MATTHEW: Yes, Lord. You did tell us that. But we were so afraid. We had lost all hope. When we heard that the tomb in which you had been laid was empty, we feared your body had been stolen by the authorities.

SIMON: Yes. It was bad enough that they crucified you and dashed all our hopes – but then to discover that they had taken your body as well.

JESUS: Did Mary tell you that she had seen me alive?

JAMES: Yes, Lord, but we didn't believe her.

JESUS: And the two disciples on the road?

JOHN: We didn't believe them either.

JESUS: Why didn't you believe them?

ANDREW: We thought it was some kind of trick to trap us.

JESUS: But you obeyed my message. You came to Galilee.

PHILIP: To tell you the truth, we were glad to get out of Jerusalem. Too many people knew us. It was getting too dangerous for us to stay.

PETER: I suppose we did believe a little bit of what Mary told us, or rather, we hoped it might be true.

JESUS: And now what do you believe?

JAMES: I don't know. Is it really you, Master?

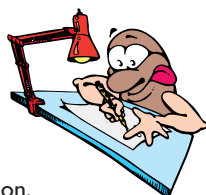
JESUS: Come closer, all of you. Look and see that it really is me.

(Apostles approach him hesitantly. One by one they fall to their knees.)

JESUS: Go out to the whole world and tell the Good News. I will be with you always.

PETER: You are alive. It really is true. You have risen. Alleluia!

ALL (loudly): Alleluia! Our Lord is risen. He is alive. Alleluia.



LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

We become quiet and still. We close our eyes. We begin to notice our breathing. **(Pause)**

Today, we will use two phrases to help us to pray. We will pray them quietly with our inner voice.

As we breathe in, we will pray: 'In the challenges of my life...'

As we breathe out, we will pray: 'You are with me, God.'

(The teacher may repeat these words a few times in rhythm with your breathing to help you to remember them. The prayer lasts a few minutes.)

Now we finish our prayer. We open our eyes again.

Sign of the Cross



The Story of Pentecost

The resurrection of Jesus transformed him. In this lesson you will hear about how it also transformed his apostles and friends. You will have a chance to consider what it means to be transformed, as happens in the story that follows...

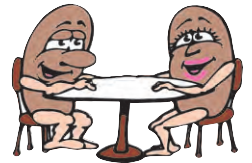
Transformed

We were the 'bad' class. Someone from our class was in trouble every day. We were also the 'divided' class. There was fighting between groups – the country students vs. the 'townies'. One student had even received hate mail and believed it was from someone inside the class. Teachers constantly complained about our behaviour. We had more detention points than any first-year class in the history of the school. Our form teacher kept telling us she had never had a class like us: careless, cheeky, inattentive, unorganised, uncooperative, lacking in motivation and manners. Real messers! Every form teacher's worst nightmare!

Then came the school literary competition. Our English teacher, Mr Murphy, took no nonsense. As a class, we were entered and had to produce a

fifteen-minute play. He had already decided on the script. The parts were distributed. No one was left out. He told us that if we worked hard and worked together, we could win. We were not convinced at first. But after a few weeks' rehearsal, we began to hear rumours about how good we were. True enough, we had acting ability. What would you expect in a group with so many characters and such strong personalities! Mr Murphy started to praise us... and we wore that well. But he also became quite strict. He didn't let us off with absence or forgetting lines. After a while, we were actually working together.

The day finally came for the competition. We were nervous and excited. The school's teachers, students and parents were gathered in the school hall. The curtain drew back and off we went. We were brilliant. We got the biggest cheer. We had done it. 8D was finally a class. We had been transformed.



LET'S TALK

1. What does the storyteller mean by the phrase 'We had been transformed'?
2. Have there been any events or experiences that have affected the atmosphere/relationships in our class?
3. Can you think of some way in which we as a class might be transformed?
4. Is there anything we could do as a class that might change us?
5. Can you remember anyone in the Bible or in the world who was transformed?



An interview with Peter the Apostle

The apostles of Jesus have come out of hiding. They are preaching openly in Jerusalem about Jesus and his message. Our reporter, Moshe, has spoken with Peter, the leader of the group. Here is his report.

Moshe: How long were you hiding out and what did you expect to happen?

Peter: We waited for days. We were waiting for what Jesus promised before he left. He promised to send the Holy Spirit to help us and to give us courage.



Moshe: What was it like for you as you waited on this Holy Spirit to arrive?

Peter: At first I wondered if it would ever happen. How could we hope for better than Jesus, our Master?

Moshe: So, would you say you had sort of given up then?

Peter: No. We kept telling each other that Jesus would not forget us. Because Jesus had appeared to us, we wanted to tell the Good News of his resurrection. We wanted to carry on the work Jesus began. But we lacked confidence. How were we to do this by ourselves?

Moshe: Peter, can you describe for us exactly what happened that changed you?

Peter: Well, we had locked ourselves in this room. We were afraid. We prayed together. Then we heard a noise like a wind blowing through the whole house. We were frightened. No one moved. Suddenly the room began to feel very bright and warm. I looked up and saw over our heads what looked like tongues of fire. They spread out over us. I felt a surge of life run through me, as if my life had begun again.

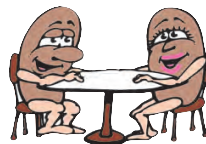
Moshe: What difference has the Holy Spirit made to you and the other friends of Jesus?

Peter: Before this we were lost, lonely and afraid. Now we are strong, full of hope and confidence. We are changed. Somehow, foreign visitors can understand us, even though we don't speak their language. Isn't that amazing?

Moshe: Yes, it really is. What reaction have you got so far?

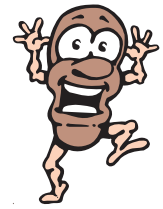
Peter: We were so excited that some people thought we were drunk. We are driven by God's Spirit in our hearts. It must be working! People are amazed when they hear our story of Jesus. Many become believers and get baptised. Some three thousand people joined our group – and that was just on the first day!

Moshe: That's really incredible, Peter. I wish you and your fellow apostles every success in your mission. That's all for now, from the Holy City.



LET'S TALK

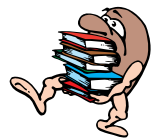
1. How does Peter describe the mood of the apostles before Pentecost?
2. How does Peter describe the events of Pentecost?
3. How were the apostles transformed by their experience?
4. How did the people respond to the preaching of Peter and the other apostles on Pentecost day?



WHY DON'T YOU?

Read Acts 2:1-4 (in the prayertime) and answer the following questions:

1. What two images are used in it to describe the Holy Spirit?
2. Can you recall any other images used for the Holy Spirit in the Gospel stories you have looked at so far? (Hint: Think back to last term and the story of Jesus' Baptism.)

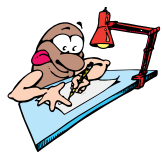


IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Write up your own interview with: one of the other apostles or someone who has joined the apostles after hearing them preach about Jesus or someone who has witnessed the scene and wonders if they have all gone mad.

Ask four questions, e.g.

- Who are you and what were you doing here?
- Describe what happened. What did you see? What did you hear?
- How has this experience changed you?
- What will you do now?



LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.

A time to pray

Note: Do this prayertime near the end of the lesson time. Put your books away in readiness to leave the room. Then, following the teacher's instructions, change seats with another student.

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

We have changed our positions in the class. For a moment, think about what that is like. How does it feel? **(Pause)**

Think back to the big changes in your life: leaving one school and going to another; the physical changes that are part of growing; or any other big change that has been part of your life. Pick one of those times of change and remember it now. **(Pause)**

Think of God's Holy Spirit with you in that big change. Ask God to bring you good things out of life's changes. **(Pause)**

The Holy Spirit brought change to the lives of the friends of Jesus.

We will listen now to the story of what happened on Pentecost Day.

Reader

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 2:1-4).

On the day of Pentecost all the Lord's followers were together in one place. Suddenly there was a noise from heaven like the sound of a mighty wind! It filled the house where they were meeting. Then they saw what looked like fiery tongues moving in all directions, and a tongue came and settled on each person there. The Holy Spirit took control of everyone, and they began speaking whatever languages the Spirit let them speak.

All

Holy Spirit, I want to do what is right.

Help me.

Holy Spirit, I want to live like Jesus.

Guide me.

Holy Spirit, I want to pray like Jesus.

Teach me. Amen.

Sign of the Cross



Term 3, Lesson 5 The Holy Spirit

This lesson will help you to recall some of the images that can make you more aware of the Holy Spirit in your life and in the lives of others.

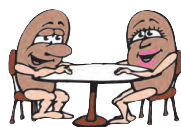
Caught!



It was a busy Friday night in Dublin. There was a steady flow of traffic up and down O'Connell Street. In the middle of it all, there was a sight that was new to the city: rickshaws! Ken was one of the young fellows who were pedalling along on these special bicycles, with a small passenger compartment at the rear. It was a sure way of keeping fit... as well as making ends meet!



Amanda and Susan had just stepped out of the fish-and-chip shop and were hailing a rickshaw, when Amanda's mobile phone rang. The rickshaw pulled up as she fumbled in her bag, anxious to answer it before it would ring off. She had just pulled it out when she felt a push from behind – as powerful as it was unexpected. A hand reached forward, grabbed her mobile, and then just as quickly disappeared. Her mobile phone had been stolen! But Ken, the rickshaw driver, had seen what had happened. In a flash, he was off his bike and running. Soon, he had caught up with the boy who had stolen the phone. He grabbed him and made him give it back.



LET'S TALK

1. What qualities did Ken, the rickshaw driver, show in this incident?
2. What would you say prompted him to do what he did?
3. Have you ever seen other people prompted to do good things?
4. Can you see any connection between people who are prompted to do good things and the working of the Holy Spirit? Explain your answer.

Amanda couldn't believe her luck when Ken handed the phone back to her. 'Get in!' he said to the two girls. 'Time to get away from here!' And he took the two girls safely home.

Images that teach us about the Holy Spirit

WIND

Wind is powerful. We do not see where it comes from or where it goes. So, too, the Holy Spirit is powerful and mysterious.

FIRE

Fire can warm and comfort us. The Holy Spirit is called the Comforter or Paraclete. Fire can also destroy and change. The Holy Spirit brought change at Pentecost and can change us too.

WATER

Without water, there is no life. God's Holy Spirit gives us new life in Baptism.

DOVE

Christian artists have used the dove to suggest the presence of the Holy Spirit. The Gospels also use the image of a dove to tell how the Holy Spirit was present at the Baptism of Jesus. The dove is a sign of peace.

CLOUD AND LIGHT

Old Testament stories tell how cloud and light often covered places where people had special meetings with God. Cloud and light can remind us of how God's Holy Spirit covers our lives too.

SEAL

A seal is a mark or stamp to identify something and to say that it is genuine. In Baptism and Confirmation we celebrate our true identity as God's children.

HANDS

Jesus used his hands to heal, to teach and to comfort people. The hand is a sign of God's Holy Spirit in our lives: healing, teaching and comforting us.

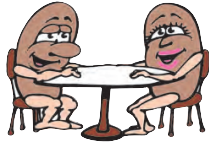
ANOINTING

In the Old Testament, people who were given special roles by God were sometimes anointed with oil as a sign of being strengthened. In Baptism and Confirmation, God's Holy Spirit guides us in our new roles as members of God's Church.

FINGER

People point with their fingers to give directions or to signal the start of an event. God's Holy Spirit directs and guides us.





LET'S TALK

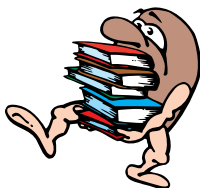
1. Which of these images feature in the Pentecost story?
2. Which one means most to you?



WHY DON'T YOU?

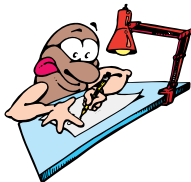
Do a Bible search for Galatians 5:22-23 and read the list of things that are the Fruits of the Holy Spirit. Then answer the following questions:

1. When people look at us as a class, which two things in the list are most visible? How might they be seen?
2. Which two of these Fruits of the Holy Spirit are least visible in our group? What can we do to change that?



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

1. Which one of these Fruits is most visible in your life? Write about an incident that illustrates this.
2. Which one of these Fruits is weakest in your life? Name one thing you could do to show that quality in your life.



LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

God gives us the Holy Spirit. We ask that the Holy Spirit may influence us more as we pray our response: Be with us, Holy Spirit.

All

Be with us, Holy Spirit!

Student 1

When we live with indifference, we learn to ignore. When we live with love, we learn to give. Be with us, Spirit of Love! *(Response)*

Student 2

When we live with sorrow, we learn to be sad. When we live with joy, we learn to appreciate our life. Be with us, Spirit of Joy! *(Response)*

Student 3

When we live with conflict, we learn to be stressed. When we live with peace, we learn to be calm. Be with us, Spirit of Peace! *(Response)*

Student 4

When we live with impatience, we learn to be demanding. When we live with patience, we learn to wait. Be with us, Spirit of Patience! *(Response)*

Student 5

When we live with cruelty, we learn to hurt others. When we live with kindness, we learn to accept. Be with us, Spirit of Kindness! *(Response)*

Student 6

When we live with badness, we learn to be mean and unkind. When we live with goodness, we learn to be decent. Be with us, Spirit of Goodness! *(Response)*

Student 7

When we live with unfaithfulness, we learn to let others down. When we live with faithfulness, we learn to love. Be with us, Spirit of Faithfulness! *(Response)*

Student 8

When we live with roughness, we learn to be aggressive. When we live with gentleness, we learn to take time. Be with us, Spirit of Gentleness! *(Response)*

Student 9

When we live with self-indulgence, we learn to be lazy. When we live with self-control, we learn to do good. Be with us, Spirit of Self-Control! *(Response)*

Sign of the Cross

Early Christian Celebrations of the Eucharist

At the Last Supper Jesus invited his friends to 'Do this in memory of me'. In this lesson you will find out more about how they gathered to do this. But before you begin, pick a particular gathering with family or with friends and ask yourself a few questions about it: Who gathers together? Who and what is remembered? What is listened to? What is talked about? What do people give thanks for? Is there a special tradition or custom that is followed? What food and drink are shared? Answering these questions will help you to understand better what gathering for Eucharist is about.

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

We gather together with others many times in our life.

Reader

We have a class at school. We join the crowd at games. We are part of the audience at concerts. We take part with others in parades. We play music and sing together at festivals.

Teacher

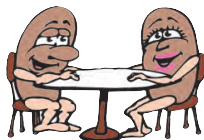
Remember for a moment a time when you were part of a crowd. Perhaps you cheered or sang. Perhaps you clapped or shouted. For a moment, feel the energy of being gathered together in a crowd. (Pause)

God gives us the joy of being together. God has made us a people to be united. Together, let us pray the prayer of God's family, as Jesus taught us.

All

Our Father...

Sign of the Cross



LET'S TALK

Answer the following questions about how the first Christians celebrated the Eucharist.

1. Who gathered together?
2. Whom and what did they remember?
3. What did they listen to?
4. What did they talk about?
5. What did they give thanks for?
6. Did they follow a special tradition or custom?
7. What food and drink were shared?
8. What positive effect did this have?



WHY DON'T YOU?

Do a Bible Search for Acts 2:44-47 and copy it into your Religion journal. Highlight the part that refers to the way they celebrated the Eucharist.

The Earliest Celebrations of the Eucharist

The Acts of the Apostles tells us that the first Christians gathered in each other's houses to celebrate the 'Breaking of the Bread', or Eucharist, as it became known. This was in the time before Christian church buildings existed.



When they gathered together, they talked and listened as they told stories from their own lives and remembered the stories of Jesus. They gave praise and thanks for all God had done in the past and in the present. They did again what Jesus had done at the Last Supper. The leader of the group, probably one of the apostles, retold the story of the Last Supper. He repeated the actions of Jesus by blessing and sharing bread and wine among the group. They were sharing the same food that Jesus shared at the Last Supper. They were doing the same actions and repeating the same words, just as he had asked them to do. They knew, as they did this, that Jesus was really present with them. He was present under the appearances of bread and wine. When they shared the bread and wine, he was with each one of them, giving them the strength and confidence they needed to live as his followers. Nourished by the Eucharist and filled with the Holy Spirit, they went out to live like Jesus.

The Early Christians and the Breaking of the Bread

(The scene is a room in a house. Some of the apostles and friends of Jesus are there. Peter and John have been arrested and have not been seen or heard from in two days. The apostles are anxious for their safety. There is a knock. Philip answers it.)

PHILIP: Look! It's Peter and John!

ANDREW: You're back safe! Thanks be to God!

JAMES: We feared the worst when we heard you had been arrested.

PETER: It is good to see you again too.

JOHN: The Sanhedrin let us go. God must indeed be with us.

MATTHEW: Are you all right? You have been through a tough time.

BARTHOLOMEW: So, Peter and John, tell us what happened.

PETER: We will tell you everything in a moment. First of all, I must know how your father is doing, Thaddaeus?

THADDAEUS: He's much stronger, Peter. We really appreciate the prayers of the community.

PETER: And Salome, has your mother recovered fully after her fall?

SALOME: It's truly a miracle, Peter. She had lost all feeling in her left leg and was confined to bed. Shortly after you and some of the community visited to pray with her, she began to improve. Now she says she never felt better.

PETER: Do not thank us, Salome. Thank Jesus who continues to do his healing work through us.

JOHN: And what about the widow Eunice; did she get the money that we gathered for her?

SIMON: Yes, John. Matthew and I called with her yesterday and she was most grateful for the community's help.

(The others start to arrive and greet each other with delight.)

ANDREW: See! I told you they would come back.

MATTHEW: Now that we are all gathered, listen up everyone! Peter and John are about to tell us what happened at the Sanhedrin.

PETER: Well, as you know, John and I were outside the Temple teaching the people about Jesus being risen.

Suddenly we were surrounded by temple guards led by a group of Sadducees. They took us and put us in jail for the night.

JOHN: Early next morning they brought us before the whole council. They asked us by what power we were doing these things. They wanted to know how Peter had healed the man who was crippled. They had the poor man there and he kept praising God and saying that Peter had healed him.

PETER: Then I told them that it was by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth that I had healed the man. I told them that this was the same Jesus whom they had crucified, but whom God had raised from the dead. It was by his name that this crippled beggar was healed.

JOHN: Peter spoke bravely and boldly. They were

astonished at his confidence and lack of fear. They then ordered us out while they discussed our fate.

PETER: Later they called us back in and commanded us never to speak or teach in the name of Jesus again.

JOHN: But we replied that we must obey God and that we could not help speaking about what we had seen and heard.

PETER: They threatened us further, but were afraid to punish us, as a crowd of people were gathered outside and were shouting out our names.

JOHN: So, after warning us again, they let us go.

MATTHEW: Thanks be to God! You came to no harm and we are together once again.

PETER: Yes, brothers and sisters — let us praise and thank God. Have you broken bread together today?

BARTHOLOMEW: No Peter, we haven't. It didn't seem right to give God thanks and praise when you and John were in prison.

JOHN: It is always right to give God thanks and praise. *(All gather into a circle and become quiet. They all listen as Peter recalls the story of the time Jesus healed the man with the crippled hand.)*

PETER: Jesus was a friend to the sick and the sinner; he reached out to those who were poor. We remember that day in the synagogue when Jesus healed the man with the crippled hand. Our religious leaders were against him, as they are now against us. Even so, Jesus



still told the man to stretch out his hand and, as he did, the hand was healed. We remember the love Jesus showed and we remember too how Jesus has asked us to live like him. At our meal on the night before he died, he asked us to do this in memory of him.

(Peter takes the bread in his hands.)

PETER: Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation! You sent us Jesus, your Son. In all that he did and said, he showed us your love. On the night when he was betrayed, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body that is for you. Do this in memory of me.'

(Peter takes the cup in his hands.)

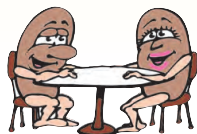
After supper, he took the cup and said, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood.' Then he said, 'Do this in memory of me.' As we do what he said, we know that you are with us, God, especially through the Lord Jesus, who is present among us. Your Holy Spirit helps us to remember the words of Jesus. May the Holy Spirit continue to help us to live like Jesus!

ALL: Amen.

(All eat a piece from the one bread and drink from the one cup. They sing a psalm of praise.)

PETER: May God's Holy Spirit be with us always and guide us in what we have been sent to do.

(The gathering continues in conversation and in praise of God as they eat their meal.)



LET'S TALK

1. Whom do Peter and John enquire about on their return?
2. What does this tell you about how the first Christians behaved towards each other?
3. What does Matthew call on them all to do?
4. What do the apostles and friends of Jesus give thanks for in the play?
5. How do the apostles and friends of Jesus give thanks and praise to God?
6. What evidence is there in the play that the friends and apostles believe Jesus is still present with them and that God's Holy Spirit continues to guide and help them?



LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.

Term 3, Lesson 7 At Mass We Listen

Note: If possible, the Bible should be displayed, open, in a place of honour in the classroom.

Did you ever get the feeling that someone wasn't listening to you? Did anyone ever get the feeling that you weren't listening to them? Listening properly isn't as easy as it seems. In this lesson you will focus on what it means to listen, especially at Mass. After all, the Word of God is proclaimed during the first part of the Eucharist – the Liturgy of the Word.



Are you listening?

LET'S TALK

1. Can you tell from the story whether or not Agatha was really listening? Explain your answer.
2. Has anything like this ever happened to you? Describe when and how this happened. Can you explain why you didn't hear what was being said?
3. What might prevent a person from hearing what someone else is saying?

On their fiftieth wedding anniversary, Henry and Agatha received many cards, presents and visitors. When the day was nearly over and all the children and grandchildren had gone, the couple sat down and had a cup of tea. Henry looked across the table at the woman whom he had wed fifty years earlier. 'Agatha,' he said, 'I'm proud of you!' Agatha replied, 'What's that you're saying? Speak up, man. You know I'm deaf!' So Henry repeated, 'Agatha, I'm proud of you!' 'Oh that's all right!' said Agatha, with a dismissive wave of her hand. 'I'm tired of you too!'

Listening at Mass – Then and Now

From the earliest times, when Christians gathered together they retold stories about Jesus, about themselves and about all God's people. Hearing these stories gave them courage and inspiration. As the years went by, people began to write down these stories so that

they could be shared and remembered. These writings were gathered together and became the part of the Bible that we call the New Testament.

Today, we listen to some of these stories and events in the readings at Mass. We call this part of the Mass the Liturgy of the Word. God's Word is proclaimed as we listen. God speaks to us through what we hear. There are some readings from the Old and New Testaments, including the Gospels. The priest gives a homily, usually based on the readings. During the Liturgy of the Word, we focus our minds and hearts. The Holy Spirit helps us to hear what God is saying to us and is present as the Word of God is proclaimed and spoken aloud.



A time to pray

Note: Before the prayertime, open the Bible at Mark 10:46-52. You might also practise making the sign of the cross, first on the forehead, then on the lips and finally over the heart.

Teacher

We honour the Word of God present among us. We get ready to listen to the Word of God. Whatever worries we have, we try to put them to one side. Whatever excitement we look forward to, we forget it for a while. *(Pause)* We focus on listening. *(Pause)* Together, we pray:

All (making the sign of the cross on the forehead, lips and heart)

Lord, cleanse our minds, our lips and our hearts, so that we may hear your Word.

Reader now goes to the place in the classroom where the Bible is open and lifts it reverently before reading from it.

Reader

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark (10: 46-52).

Jesus and his disciples went to Jericho. As they were leaving, they were followed by a large crowd. A blind beggar called Bartimaeus was sitting beside the road.

When he heard that it was Jesus from Nazareth, he shouted, 'Jesus, Son of David, have pity on me!' Many people told the man to stop, but he shouted even louder, 'Son of David, have pity on me!' Jesus stopped and said, 'Call him over!' They called out to the blind man and said, 'Don't be afraid! Come on! He is calling for you!' The man threw off his coat as he jumped up and ran to Jesus. Jesus asked, 'What do you want me to do for you?' The blind man answered, 'Master, I want to see!' Jesus told him, 'You may go. Your eyes are healed because of your faith.' Straight away the man could see, and he went down the road with Jesus.

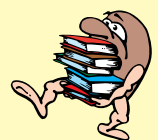
This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Teacher

In your mind, pick out a word or phrase from the story. *(Pause)* Let that be God's word or phrase to you for now. Perhaps you picked the beggar's words, asking for help. Perhaps you picked the words of Jesus, saying, 'Don't be afraid.' Take some time now. Perhaps you might use your word or phrase to help you to ask Jesus for something. Perhaps you might let Jesus use those words as the beginning of what he wants to say to you. *(Pause)*



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Let the prayertime continue as you write a prayer with the title, 'My Prayer for Today'.



LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.

At Mass we give Thanks and Praise to God

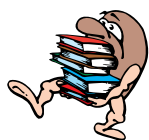
Are you a thankful person? Is there anything for which you give thanks and praise? This lesson will give you a chance to name some of those things and to look at a very important prayer of the Church: the Eucharistic Prayer. It is used during Mass to give thanks and praise to God.



WHY DON'T YOU?

Find and listen to a popular song with the theme of thanks. Suggest what you think makes the singer thankful.

Name some things for which you are thankful.



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Is there anything you are particularly thankful for in your life? Write about it and say why you are thankful for it.

At Mass we give Thanks and Praise to God

At Mass we gather to give thanks and praise to God. The word 'Eucharist' comes from the Greek word meaning 'Thanksgiving'. In Eucharistic Prayer II which follows, you will see how the Church praises and thanks God for the gift of creation, the gift of life, the gift of Jesus, God's Son, and the gift of God's great love for us.

PREFACE

The Preface is the first part of every Eucharistic prayer. It always begins with the same dialogue. Then it suggests why we should praise and thank God.

PRIEST

The Lord be with you.

PEOPLE

And also with you.

PRIEST

Lift up your hearts.

PEOPLE

We lift them up to the Lord.

PRIEST

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

PEOPLE

It is right to give him thanks and praise.

PRIEST

Father, it is our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks through your beloved Son, Jesus Christ.

He is the Word through whom you made the universe,
the Saviour you sent to redeem us.
By the power of the Holy Spirit
he took flesh and was born of the Virgin Mary.

For our sake he opened his arms on the cross;
he put an end to death
and revealed the resurrection.
In this he fulfilled your will
and won for you a holy people.

And so we join the angels and the saints
in proclaiming your glory
as we sing (say):

ACCLAMATION

Several times during the Eucharistic Prayer the people respond with acclamations, for example, the 'Holy, Holy' at the start; 'Christ has died...' after the Consecration, and in the 'Great Amen' at the end of the prayer.

ALL

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

PRIEST

Lord, you are holy indeed,
the fountain of all holiness.

FIRST EPICLESIS

We pray to God to send us the Holy Spirit.
The priest joins his hands and, holding them outstretched over the offerings, says:

Let your Spirit come upon these gifts to make them holy,
so that they may become for us
the body and blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

INSTITUTION NARRATIVE (CONSECRATION)

During each Eucharistic Prayer, the story of the Last Supper is told while the priest repeats the actions and says the words of Jesus.

PRIEST

Before he was given up to death,
a death he freely accepted,
he took bread and gave you thanks.
He broke the bread,
gave it to his disciples, and said:

Take this, all of you, and eat it:
this is my body which will be given up for you.

When supper was ended, he took the cup.
Again he gave you thanks and praise,
gave the cup to his disciples, and said:

Take this, all of you, and drink from it:
this is the cup of my blood,
the blood of the new and everlasting covenant.
It will be shed for you and for all
so that sins may be forgiven.

Do this in memory of me.

ACCLAMATION

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

ALL

Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.

ANAMNESIS AND OFFERING

In all he did and said, Jesus offered himself to God and to others. In particular, Jesus offered himself on the cross. At Mass we join with Jesus in giving ourselves to God and others.

PRIEST

In memory of his death and resurrection,

we offer you, Father, this life-giving bread,
this saving cup.
We thank you for counting us worthy
to stand in your presence and serve you.

SECOND EPICLESIS

Again, the priest asks God to send us the Holy Spirit:

May all of us who share in the body and blood of Christ be brought together in unity by the Holy Spirit.

INTERCESSIONS

We pray for the living and the dead.

PRIEST

Lord, remember your Church throughout the world;
make us grow in love,
together with N. our Pope, N. our bishop,
and all the clergy.
Remember our brothers and sisters who have gone to their rest in the hope of rising again;
bring them and all the departed into the light of your presence.
Have mercy on us all;
make us worthy to share eternal life with Mary, the virgin mother of God,
with the apostles, and with all the saints who have done your will throughout the ages.
May we praise you in union with them,
and give you glory through your Son, Jesus Christ.

DOXOLOGY AND GREAT AMEN

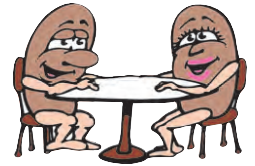
The 'Doxology' is the final prayer of thanks and praise and is followed by the 'Great Amen'.

PRIEST

Through him, with him, in him,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory and honour is yours,
almighty Father,
for ever and ever.

ALL

Amen.



LET'S TALK

1. In the Preface of Eucharistic Prayer II, for what or for whom are we giving thanks to God?
2. How does the first acclamation of the Eucharistic Prayer begin?
3. Name two other occasions during the Eucharistic Prayer when we respond with an acclamation.
4. What do we pray to God for in the Epiclesis?
5. What story is recalled during the Institution Narrative (Consecration)?
6. What do we remember during the Anamnesis and Offering?
7. For whom do we pray in the Intercessions?
8. What follows the Doxology of the Eucharistic Prayer, when the priest says, 'Through him, with him...?'



WHY DON'T YOU?

As a group, write your own prayer of thanks to God, including any or all of the following:

- the gift of creation;
- the gift of life;
- the gift of Jesus, God's Son;
- the gift of God's great love for us.

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

We turn our hearts and minds to God. For a moment we remember that God is with us and that God loves us. *(Pause)* Today we have recalled some good things in our lives: the good things in our own lives and the good things in our life together as a class. I invite you to take turns in picking something and saying thanks to God for it.

Each of you can now offer a prayer of thanks in your own words. You might use phrases like: 'I would like to thank God for...' or 'Thank you God for...' or 'God, I really appreciate...' or 'God, I think you are great because...'

Teacher

Together, we praise God in the words we use at Mass...

All

Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.

Sign of the Cross



LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.

Term 3, Lesson 9

The Presence of the Risen Jesus at Mass

What was it like for Jesus' friends to have him around? What was it like for those whom he helped? For them, he was present as one who listened, as one who healed, as one who celebrated, and as one who gathered people together. On Good Friday he was present as one who gave himself completely to his Father and who gave himself for us. In the resurrection, he was transformed. He will never die again. The Risen Jesus is present with us today, through those who live like him as they listen, help, heal, celebrate, gather and give. The Risen Jesus is also with us at Mass in several ways, especially under the appearances of bread and wine. So, the key word in this lesson is 'presence'. What does that word mean? Here's a story to help you to reflect on it...



Aunt Peggy

Even when the plane levelled out, Joanne couldn't relax. After all, she was ten years of age; she was on her first trip to London on her own; and she was going to stay with Aunt Peggy. Peggy was the one who came home at Christmas, bringing toys and games. She had no children of her own. Her husband had died in a terrible accident years ago and she had never married again.

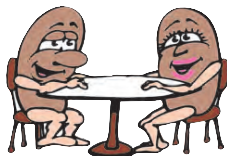
London was brilliant: Madame Tussaud's, Hamley's toy store, Oxford Street, Regent Street, Trafalgar Square, the Tower of London, a boat trip on the Thames, the rush and the speed of the

Underground, the different accents, the different faces, the different languages. But best by far was the moment when Aunt Peggy bought Joanne her first mobile phone. On the way back to the airport, Joanne began to cry. She didn't want it to end. Aunt Peggy hugged her. 'Now, Joanne,' she said, 'don't cry because it's over; laugh because it happened.'

From there on, it was phone calls and text messages. Joanne felt that Aunt Peggy was never far away. She always seemed ready to listen. She always seemed to have the right words. And she'd surprise Joanne with a text message... or there would be another phone card in the post.

Then one day the text messages and the phone calls stopped. Aunt Peggy had never been unwell. There had never been any hint of a problem with her heart. But that's what 'took her', as Joanne's mother said.

Doing the exams that summer was tough. Joanne couldn't study. She couldn't settle. She couldn't focus. Then one night, sitting at her table, she looked at Aunt Peggy's photograph and suddenly she felt a sense of calm. She remembered what Aunt Peggy had said at the airport that day: 'Don't cry because it's over; laugh because it happened.' For the first time, she didn't feel so lonely. In fact, ever since, she has the strange sense that Aunt Peggy isn't so far away after all.



LET'S TALK

1. In the beginning of the story, what part did Aunt Peggy play in Joanne's life?
2. When the text messages and phone calls stopped, how did this affect Joanne's sense of her aunt's presence in her life?
3. 'Joanne looked at Aunt Peggy's photograph and suddenly she felt a sense of calm.' What did she now realise?
4. If you're physically separated from someone, does this mean they are no longer present to you? Explain your answer.
5. The apostles and friends of Jesus strongly believed in Jesus' presence at the Breaking of the Bread. In what way do you feel the presence of the Risen Jesus in your life?

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

We become quiet and still. We become aware of our breathing. Today, we will use two phrases to help us to pray.

As we breathe in, we will pray the words: 'I am not alone'.

As we breathe out, we will pray the words: 'for you are with me always'.

I will repeat these phrases a few times in rhythm with our breathing to help you to remember them. Then we will pray them in silence. (Pause)

I invite you to open your eyes and we will pray together:

All

Christ be with me.

Christ be beside me.

Christ be before me.

Christ be behind me.

Christ at my right hand.

Christ at my left hand.

Christ be with me everywhere I go.

Christ be my friend, for ever and ever. Amen.

Sign of the Cross



The Risen Jesus is present at Mass in different ways

He is present in the gathered people

Jesus is risen and is with us always. When we gather together, we gather as his people. Jesus told his followers that he would be with them always. He said, 'Whenever two or three of you come together in my name, I am there with you' (Matthew 18:20).

He is present in the priest

The Risen Jesus is present in the priest. The priest acts in the place of Jesus and the Risen Jesus acts through him. He speaks the words of Jesus in the Gospel and he helps us to reflect on these words and to apply them to our lives. The priest repeats the words and actions of Jesus at the Last Supper.

He is present in the Word

The Risen Jesus is present in the scriptures. He is present when the readings are read aloud at Mass. Through the Gospel and the homily, the Risen Jesus continues to speak to us today.

He is present in the Eucharist

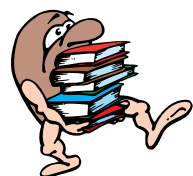
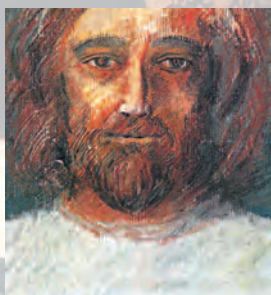
The most special presence of Jesus comes about during the Eucharistic Prayer. During the Consecration, the Risen Jesus becomes present under the appearances of bread and wine.

Holy Communion

We believe that in the Consecration of the Mass, the bread and wine change and become the body and blood of Christ. The Risen Jesus comes to us in Holy Communion to help us to love God and to love one another.

Jesus called himself the 'Bread of Life'. Bread nourishes us and helps us to grow. We call the Risen Jesus the 'Bread of Life' because he helps us to grow in love of God and of others. When we receive Holy Communion it is this same Jesus who comes to us.

When people receive Holy Communion, they do so with great respect because the Risen Jesus is truly present. They form a procession to receive Communion. They receive Holy Communion – on the hand or in the mouth – with great reverence. The priest or eucharistic minister holds up the host and says 'The Body of Christ', and the person receiving it says 'Amen'. The person returns to their place in a dignified way. This is a time of special prayer, when we can talk to the Risen Jesus and thank him for his presence with us.



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Write a prayer of thanks to the Risen Jesus for coming to you in Holy Communion.



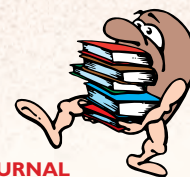
LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.

A time to pray

Footprints

One night I had a dream. I was walking along the beach with the Lord, and across the skies flashed scenes from my life. In each scene I noticed two sets of footprints in the sand. One was mine, and one was the Lord's. When the last scene of my life appeared before me, I looked back at the footprints in the sand, and, to my surprise, I noticed that many times along the path of my life there was only one set of footprints. And I noticed that it was at the lowest and saddest times in my life. I asked the Lord about it: 'Lord, you said that once I decided to follow you, you would walk with me all the way. But I notice that during the most troublesome times in my life there is only one set of footprints. I don't understand why you left my side when I needed you most.' The Lord said: 'My precious child, I never left you during your time of trial. Where you see only one set of footprints, I was carrying you.'



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

1. List some people whose presence is very important to you. Can you suggest a reason why this is so?
2. Write a note about a time when someone's presence meant a lot to you.
3. Write about your reaction to the reflection 'Footprints' (above). You might find it helpful to consider these questions:
 - Is the person who wrote this happy or not? Why? Why not?
 - Do you like this reflection? Why? Why not?
 - Can you recall a time when it seemed that God was not with you? When?

The Mass and the Sacrifice of Jesus

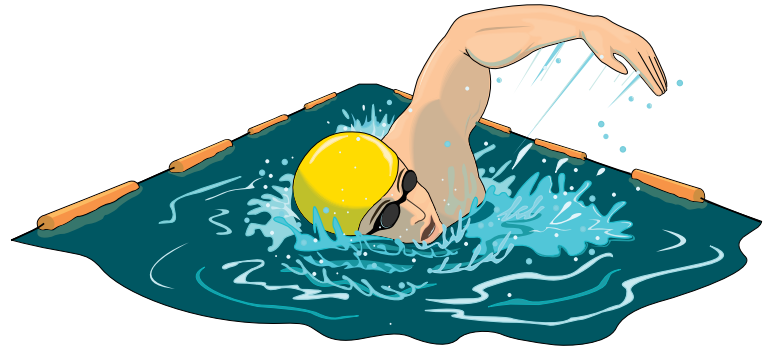
Have you ever put someone else's needs before your own? Jesus did. He did it for his Father. He did it for us. Most of all, he did it in his passion and death on the cross. In other words, he lived a life of love and sacrifice. This lesson gives you a chance to explore what sacrifice meant in the life of Jesus and what it can mean in your life today. It also reminds you of how you can connect with the sacrifice of Jesus at Mass. Here is a story about a boy who might put the needs of others before his own... and, then again, he might not.

John's Choice

It had been a great weekend for John. He won a silver and a bronze medal at the junior regional swimming finals. Four others on his team had won gold. But the big moment for John came in the relay, when his team won gold... and he had been part of it. John didn't always get that chance. It happened because the fourth swimmer, Martin, hurt himself playing football the day before. The coach had picked John to take his place.

John's hard work had paid off. For the last two years he was up every morning at six o'clock to go training at the local pool before school. Most evenings, he was back at the pool or being supervised in the local gym. By the time he got home he had just enough energy to do his homework before going to bed early.

The following week, the school Religion department put up posters about an up-coming school trip to Italy. Word spread quickly. There would be stops at Rome, Florence and Venice. But the big thrill was the visit to the Inter-Milan football grounds and an evening football match there. All John's friends signed up to go and paid their



deposit. John was going to sign up too. His coach said it would be all right, as Martin – the fourth swimmer on the relay team – would probably be back by then. For John, this would be the trip of his lifetime...

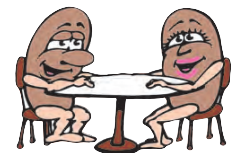
John's mother had just given him the deposit when the telephone rang. It was the coach. He had fresh news about Martin: he hadn't just sprained his ankle, he had torn a ligament. So his recovery was going to take much longer.

Would John stay and help his team or would he go on the school trip with his other friends? If he went, he would miss ten days of training. The national finals were fixed for the weekend directly after the school trip. If John went, he would never be ready.

John thought for a moment and then he said...

The Mass and the Sacrifice of Jesus

Jesus always gave himself for others. His life was a life of sacrifice. Jesus always did what pleased his Father, even though this was sometimes very hard. He made time to tell people about God's love for them, even when he was tired. He said that God loved everyone. He disagreed with the religious leaders, who thought that God did not love sinners or sick people. Telling the Good News of God's love became more and more dangerous for Jesus because the religious leaders opposed him. But Jesus was prepared to make this sacrifice.



LET'S TALK

1. What were John's options? What do you think John did?
2. What would you do if you were John? What do you think your best friend would do?
3. Why might John do what you say? Why might he do otherwise?
4. Supposing John stayed and helped his team, can you think of any words that would describe John's choice?

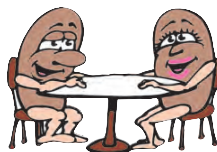
On Good Friday, Jesus was crucified. The meaning of his words at the Last Supper became very clear. At that meal with his friends, he had said, 'This is my body, which will be given for you.' He also said, 'This is my blood, which will be poured out for you.' Whenever the friends of Jesus came together at the Breaking of the Bread, they remembered what had happened on Good Friday. They believed that Jesus was present with them as they repeated his actions and spoke his words. They were not simply remembering the sacrifice of Jesus; they were actually making it present again. Because Jesus is with us at Mass, his sacrifice on the cross is present too. Remember how he showed his wounds to his friends after his resurrection. At Mass Jesus is present for us in the same self-sacrificing way as he was in his passion and death.



Jesus asks us to love others. This can be difficult when we are dealing with people whom we don't like. Sometimes it is very difficult to love, especially when it means doing without something we'd like to have or to do. Loving others will often mean making a sacrifice. At Mass we remember the sacrifice of Jesus. We join with the Risen Jesus as God's people who make sacrifices in order to live a life of love.

LET'S TALK

1. Give some examples of times when it was hard for Jesus to show his love for God and for others.
2. Give an example of a time during the Mass when we are connected with the sacrifice of Jesus.
3. Give an example of a time when you were like Jesus in making a sacrifice, i.e. putting the needs of others before your own.



A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

We focus on the cross as we remember the sacrifice of Jesus.
Jesus had to have courage to go against the religious leaders. We trace the sign of his cross on our foreheads as we remember his courage. *(Pause)*

In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus was afraid. We trace the sign of his cross on our hearts as we remember his fear. *(Pause)*

Jesus made his greatest sacrifice on Calvary. We trace the sign of his cross on our shoulders as we remember how he carried it. *(Pause)*

Reader

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Philippians (2:2-8).

Live in harmony by showing love for each other. Be united in what you think, as if you were only one person. Don't be jealous or proud, but be humble and consider others more important than yourselves. Care about them as much as you care about yourselves and think the same way that Christ Jesus thought: Christ was truly God. But... he gave up everything... He obeyed God and even died on a cross.

This is the word of the Lord.

All

Thanks be to God.

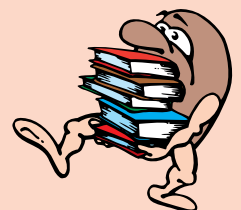
Teacher

Look at the cross now and ask Jesus to help you in any sacrifice you have to make. *(Pause)*

Sign of the Cross

IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Write a short reflection or story entitled: 'A sacrifice I made for someone'.

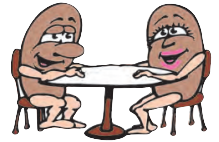


LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.



Living the Mass



LET'S TALK

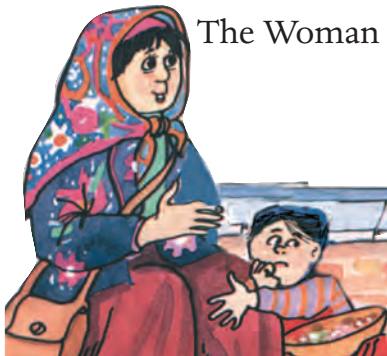
1. How did Mrs Heatley treat the woman and her son?
2. What did Jesus say in the Gospel story about how we should treat other people?
3. Read the last line of the role-play again. In your opinion, did Mrs Heatley 'go in peace to love and serve the Lord'? Explain your answer.
4. Give one example of something Mrs Heatley could have done to help the woman and her son.
5. How can you love and serve the Lord in
 - a) your class,
 - b) your local community
 - c) the world?Give one example of each.
6. The role-play is called 'The Woman who was Poor'. This might refer to the woman who was begging. Could it also refer to Mrs Heatley? Why?



WHY DON'T YOU?

Before the Prayertime, divide into small groups. You have to provide one or two practical examples of how you can 'love and serve the Lord'. Get a page (or piece of card) and complete the sentence: 'When we....., we love and serve the Lord.'

At the end of Mass the priest says: 'Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.' How do you do that? This lesson is an opportunity for you to answer that question in ways that are relevant for you now. Start with this role-play...



The Woman who was Poor

Characters: Mrs Heatley, Fr McCann, members of the congregation, refugee woman and her son. Also six narrators.

NARRATOR 1

Mrs Heatley thought she was a good Catholic. She was hard-working and honest. She did not join in gossip. She paid her bills and taxes. She prayed every day. She read the Bible. She went to Mass.

NARRATOR 2

One Sunday in November, Mrs Heatley was sitting near the front of the church, as she usually did. It was warmer there and she could hear better. She listened comfortably as the priest read the words of Jesus from the Gospel:

FR MCCANN

Jesus said: 'I was hungry and you gave me something to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink. I was a stranger and you invited me in. I needed clothes and you clothed me. I was sick and you looked after me. I was in prison and you came to visit me.' Then the good people asked, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, thirsty and give you a drink...?' Jesus answered, 'Whenever you did this for one of the least of my people, you did it for me.'

NARRATOR 3

Mrs Heatley stopped paying attention to the Mass. She began to concentrate on her own prayers. The Mass continued, and when it was over, the entire congregation stood for the final blessing. Fr McCann said:

FR MCCANN

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

CONGREGATION

Thanks be to God.

NARRATOR 4

The trouble began on the way out. Mrs Heatley politely greeted those whom she knew. (Mrs Heatley nods politely to other members of the congregation.) But then, she saw them: the young woman and her small boy. They were refugees. They were sitting on the ground, urgently begging, just inside the church gate. They were half-blocking the way as people left.

NARRATOR 5

Something flipped inside Mrs Heatley. She got very angry. She reached forward and snapped the begging plate from the woman's hand.

MRS HEATLEY

Get out of here I tell you. You have no business here.

NARRATOR 6

Mrs Heatley went home, happy at the thought that those same people would not be there next Sunday to disturb her.

A time to pray

Note: You might like to use the group work from 'Why don't you?' as a litany for this prayertime.

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

Together we say the prayer with which we begin each new day.

All

Father in heaven, you love me.
You're with me night and day.
I want to love you always
In all I do and say.
I'll try to please you, Father.
Bless me through the day. Amen.

Reader

A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew (22:35-39).

One of the Pharisees tried to test Jesus by asking, 'Teacher, what is the most important commandment in the Law?'

Jesus answered: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind. This is the first and most important commandment. The second most important commandment is like this one. And it is, Love others as much as you love yourself.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

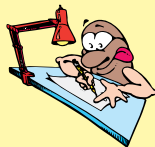
(If you did the 'Why don't you?' group work earlier, the representative(s) of each group could read their sentences. After each one, all respond: We love and serve the Lord.)

Sign of the Cross



WHY DON'T YOU?

Get into groups. Imagine a situation where a student behaved unfairly, without respect and without love, like Mrs Heatley. Role-play that situation for the rest of the class. Then do it differently a second time so that it shows people who 'love and serve the Lord'.



LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.

Before you do Lesson 12

Ask your parents/ grandparents or an elderly neighbour the following question: 'When you were my age, in what ways was the Mass different to how it is today?' With their help, make a list of things that were different.

Term 3, Lesson 12

The Mass through the Ages

A history of the Mass

AD 30
The Last Supper

AD 100-300
The Early Church

After Pentecost, the Holy Spirit helped the friends of Jesus to gather new followers. They continued to celebrate the Eucharist, as Jesus had done at the Last Supper. These first Christians met together to celebrate the Eucharist in each other's homes. This celebration was also known as the 'Breaking of the Bread'. It included a meal of friendship.

The Eucharist took place in Christian homes but it no longer included a meal. Those present listened to readings from the prophets or from some writings of the apostles. They prayed for the needs of the community. The leader gave thanks and praise to God over the bread and wine, which were then shared. Holy Communion was brought to those who were sick.



WHY DON'T YOU?

Did you get a chance to do the preparation suggested for this lesson? If so, share your answers at the start of the lesson.

Think back to when you were eight. What was your favourite food? What was your favourite song? What was your favourite book? Did you have a favourite television programme? Who were your friends? Now think of yourself today. Would your answers to those questions be the same? Probably not... and yet you're still who you were. It just shows that people and organisations change over time and yet remain the same. This is true of the Mass too. Every Mass has celebrated the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus. Yet, throughout history some aspects of the Mass have changed. This lesson is a chance for you to find out about those changes. Begin with the 'Why don't you?' activity (on the left below).

AD 300-800 The Basilica

Christianity became an official religion. As the numbers grew, Mass was celebrated in special buildings called basilicas. It was more solemn, with candles, incense, vestments, genuflections and processions being used. Latin was the people's everyday language and so it became the language of the Mass.

AD 800-1500 The Middle Ages

The role of the priest became bigger as the rules for Mass became more complicated. The role of the people grew smaller; they watched in silence. The presence of Jesus under the appearances of bread and wine became the major focus of the Mass, with the Consecration being seen as the most important part. Altar rails were introduced. Unleavened bread was used. People started to receive Holy Communion on the tongue. Many people stopped receiving Holy Communion because they did not feel worthy to do so. This led to a new rule in 1215 that everyone should receive Holy Communion at least once a year.

AD 1500-1900

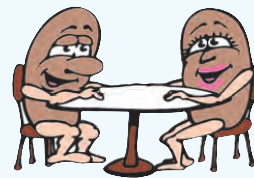
After the Council of Trent (1545-63), the Roman Missal was published. This book gave clear instructions about exactly how the Eucharist should take place. For centuries afterwards, Mass was celebrated all over the world in exactly the same way.

AD 1900-1962

In 1910 children were allowed to receive First Holy Communion at an early age. People began to receive Holy Communion more frequently.

1962-today

Since the Second Vatican Council (1962-65), everyone is encouraged to take a full and active part in the celebration of Mass. There are more opportunities for the people to play an active role in the celebration. The local language is used.



LET'S TALK

1. Did you learn anything new or surprising about the history of the Mass? Explain your answer.
2. How is celebrating the Eucharist the same today as it was years ago? What has remained the same in the Mass through the ages?
3. Do you know of any times in history when celebrating Mass was dangerous? Explain.



A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

Think back to one of your early memories... See if you can remember a time when you were small... Picture yourself at that moment... What is the expression on your face in that moment? What is the feeling in your heart? What did you learn to do then?

(Pause)

What is the feeling in your heart today?... What are you learning to do in life at the moment?... Are you different now from what you were when you were small? **(Pause)** Jesus tells us that God is watching over us at every step in life's journey.

Reader

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew (6:25-26).

I tell you not to worry about your life. Don't worry about having something to eat, drink or wear. Isn't life more than food or clothing? Look at the birds in the sky! They don't plant or harvest. They don't even store grain in barns. Yet your Father in heaven takes care of them. Aren't you worth more than birds?

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Teacher

Together we pray:

All

Arise with me in the morning.
Travel with me through each day.
Welcome me on my arrival.
God, be with me all the way. Amen.

Sign of the Cross

LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.



Term 3, Lesson 13

Jesus gave Leadership to the Church

Just as at Mass there is a leader – the priest – so in the whole life of the Church there is leadership too. What do you know about the leadership of the Church? How did it start? What is it for? Who is the leader of the Church today? Are there different levels of leadership in the Church? This lesson will help you to answer these questions. But first, here's a story about leadership to help you focus your ideas on what a leader is.

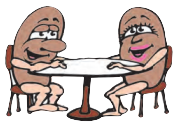
Sullivan's Strand

Geography class had already started when Anita hobbled into the room on crutches. Her schoolbag had been slipping off her shoulder and now it fell with a thud to the floor. Mrs Donnelly asked one of the students to pick it up. Pointing to Anita's bandaged foot she said, 'That looks nasty. Did you sprain it?' 'No, I gashed it on a glass at Sullivan's Strand.' The thought of glass slicing through skin made several students draw breath through their teeth. Then everyone began asking questions: 'Were you in hospital?' 'Have you many stitches?' 'How did it happen?' Mrs Donnelly quietened the class. 'Well,' said Anita, 'My cousins came to visit last Sunday and we went down to the beach to explore. I jumped down off the wall on to the sand. The glass was in the sand and it just cut through the side of my runners. The place is full of rubbish down



there.' That's when Shane spoke up. Everyone knew that his puppy had died when it choked on a plastic bottle top down at the beach during the summer. 'This isn't right! This shouldn't happen!' he began. 'The beach should be a great place. Instead, it's a mess! I'm going to do something about it...' The others were amazed at Shane. Normally quiet, he spoke strongly. Mrs Donnelly was content to devote part of Geography class to doing something about the environment.

And that's how it all began. Others in the class were impressed by what Shane said and by the way he said it. They joined him. He organised them. Together, that summer, they ran a regular 'Rubbish Rumble', which was their name for going to the beach and gathering the litter. When the beach was listed among the best improved in the country, people knew who deserved the credit. So, no one was surprised when Shane was made a prefect the following year.



LET'S TALK

1. What happened to Anita and how do you think it might have affected her day-to-day life?
2. How did people in Mrs Donnelly's class react to what happened?
3. How was Shane's reaction the same as everyone else's? How was it different?
4. Would you agree that Shane showed leadership in what he said and did? Where in the story do you find support for your answer?
5. Can you point to a recent example of someone showing leadership in your school? Describe it and say why you think it was an example of leadership.
6. List some ways in which you could be a good leader at home.



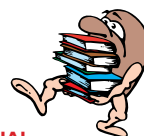
WHY DON'T YOU?

Go to www.bergen.org/AAST/Projects/Forum/What.html on the Internet and see what other young people have to say about what being a leader means. Alternatively, put the phrase 'What is leadership?' into an Internet search-engine and check the results.



WHY DON'T YOU?

Read the list of ways in which Jesus showed he was a leader. As a class, recall an example from the story of his life to go with each one. The scripture references will help you.



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Pick out your favourite example of Jesus being a leader. Write a few sentences saying why you like it. Draw a picture to go with what you write.

Jesus, Our Leader

Here is a list of ways in which Jesus showed he was a leader.

- He was a good person. (Mark 1: 40-45)
- He was a gifted person. (Mark 4: 35-41)
- He was wise. (Mark 2: 15-17)
- He knew how to act and what to say in difficult situations. (Mark 12: 13-17)
- He called people to follow him and they did so willingly. (Mark 1: 16-20)
- He taught people about God in a way they found easy to understand. (Mark 4: 1-10)
- He listened to people and showed that he understood them. (Mark 5: 21-43)
- He challenged his followers to live better lives. (Mark 10: 17-27)
- He stood up to those who did not like him. (Mark 7: 1-16)
- He believed in what he said. (Mark 15:37)



Jesus gave leadership to the Church

Every group needs a leader. Otherwise, the group may forget what it is for. It may even fall apart. Jesus gave leadership of the Church to the apostles and to their successors – the Pope and the bishops. Jesus promised to be with the Church always. One of the important ways in which he continues to be with the Church is through the leadership offered by bishops and their successors. They give this leadership with the help of the Holy Spirit, who helps them to be true to what Jesus taught and to hand it on faithfully.

Leadership was handed on in the Church

In the Gospel according to Matthew, we read of how Jesus said to Peter: ‘So I will call you Peter, which means “a rock”. On this rock I will build my church’ (Matthew 16:18). Peter became the first leader of the followers of Jesus in Jerusalem. Later on, Peter travelled to Rome, where he became the first bishop or leader of the Christians there. Peter and the other apostles passed on the authority that Jesus gave them. They laid hands on other men and called down the Holy Spirit on them. These men were also known as bishops. In turn, these



bishops passed on their leadership role to other men by the same laying on of hands and the calling down of the Holy Spirit. So as time went on, one group of bishops succeeded another. That is why we say that the bishops we have today are the successors of the apostles. They have received the same Spirit and the same duties of leadership as the apostles.

The Pope – Successor of Peter the Apostle

The chief bishop and leader of the Catholic Church throughout the world is called the Pope. Pope means ‘father’. Peter was the first person to carry out this role. There have been over two hundred and sixty popes from Peter to the present day. The Catholic Church is led by the Pope, together with all the bishops. The Pope is the bishop of Rome. In Rome there is a small state called the Vatican. This is where the Pope is based. You can find out more by visiting the Vatican website:

www.vatican.va



WHY DON'T YOU?

Write up a short biography of the present Pope. You will find helpful information at the Vatican website: www.vatican.va

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

Today we will pray in rhythm with our breathing. We begin by becoming quiet and still. **(Pause)** Close your eyes and focus on Jesus, who is with us. **(Pause)** Pay attention to your breathing. **(Pause)** As you breathe in, pray the words: **Jesus, you call me.** As you breathe out, pray: **help me to follow you.**

The teacher repeats the phrases of the prayer several times to help you to remember it as you pray. The praying continues for a suitable length of time, after which the teacher may say:

As our prayertime draws to a close, we allow a moment for Jesus to speak to us in our hearts. **(Pause)**

Sign of the Cross

Term 3, Lesson 14 Bishops – Successors of the Apostles

In the previous lesson you saw how Jesus gave leadership of the Church to Peter and the other apostles. They handed on their leadership to others who were called bishops. Peter settled at Rome. The Pope, who is the bishop of Rome, is Peter's successor today. Just as Peter and the other apostles shared the leadership of the first followers of Jesus, so the Pope and the other bishops share leadership of the Church today. In this lesson you will find out more about what the role of a bishop is today. But first check that you remember the names of the twelve apostles...



Jesus chooses the Twelve

The Gospels tell of how Jesus spent a night in prayer before he chose some of his followers to be his apostles. Then he called them one by one:

- Simon, whom Jesus called Peter
- Andrew, brother of Simon Peter, who was called first
- James, the son of Zebedee
- John, the son of Zebedee, brother of James. They are called 'sons of thunder' because of their enthusiasm
- Philip
- Nathaniel, also called Bartholomew
- Thomas, also called 'the twin'
- Matthew, also known as Levi, a former tax-collector
- James, son of Alphaeus, called 'the less, or younger, or smaller' to distinguish him from James, the son of Zebedee
- Simon, known as the Zealot
- Thaddaeus, son of James, who was also known as Jude
- Judas Iscariot, who later betrayed Jesus

Bishops – successors of the apostles

Jesus gave leadership of the Church to the apostles and to their successors (the Pope and the bishops). Today there are followers of Jesus in many different parts of the world. They are divided up into groups according to where they live. In other words, the Church is divided into areas. Each of these areas is called a diocese. In every diocese there is a bishop. A bishop is a priest who has been specially ordained to lead a diocese and to look after overall Christian life in it. Sometimes, if the diocese is very large, there will be one or more assistant bishops, known as auxiliary bishops. A coadjutor bishop is an auxiliary bishop who takes over leadership of the diocese after the present bishop.

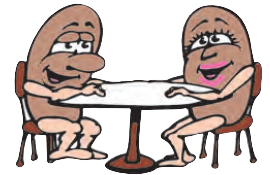


The bishop's local church is called a cathedral. This comes from the Latin word for 'seat' and it reminds us of the bishop's role as teacher in following the way of Jesus.

The role of the local bishop

Here is a list of some of the ways in which a bishop lives out his role:

- He believes in Jesus and calls others to follow Jesus.
- He leads the people of his diocese.
- He looks after his diocese through careful planning.
- He visits each parish or local area in the diocese.
- He makes himself aware of the needs of the people in the diocese and works to ensure that these needs are met.
- He ensures that the Gospel is preached and that the sacraments are celebrated.
- He confirms the young people in the parish in the sacrament of Confirmation.
- He ordains men to the priesthood in the sacrament of Holy Orders.
- He maintains the unity of the Church through his contact and work with other bishops and particularly with the Pope, the bishop of Rome.



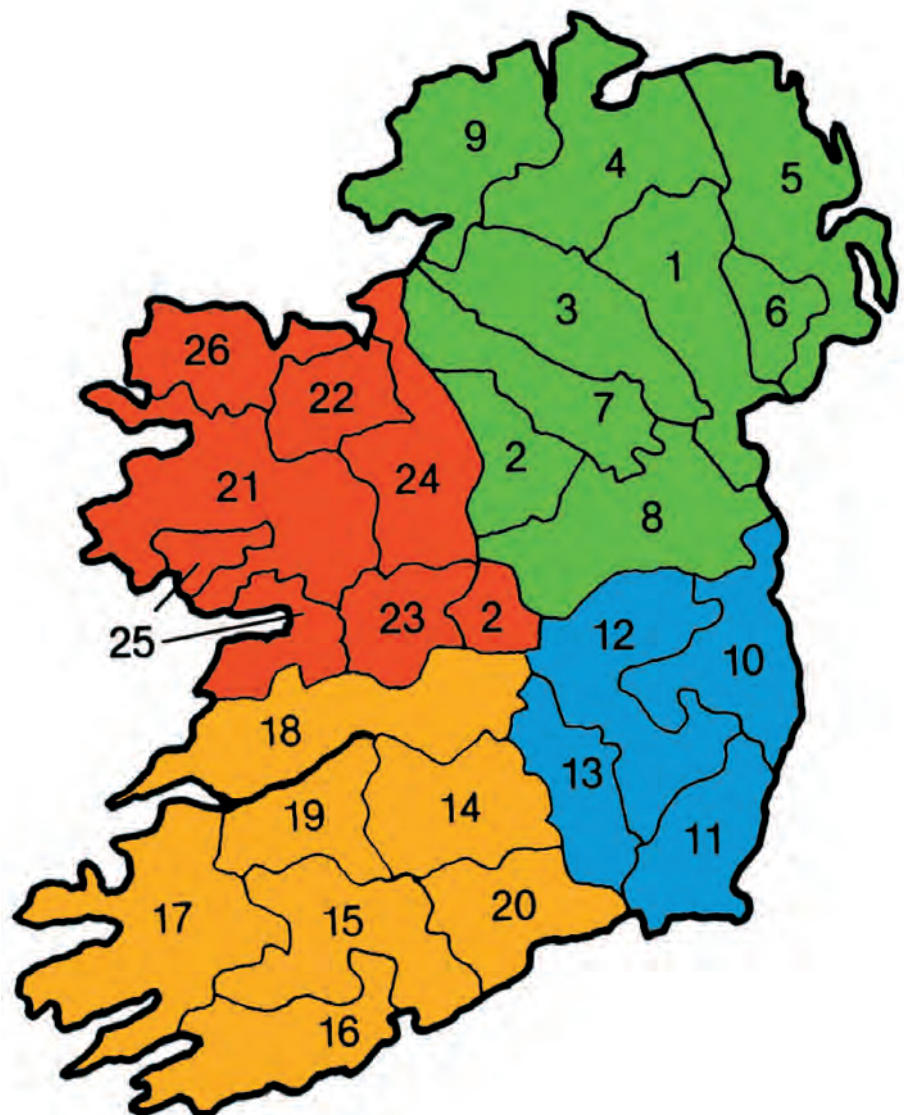
LET'S TALK

Look back at the list of ways in which Jesus acted as a leader (in Term 3, Lesson 13). Can you see any comparison between what Jesus did and the role of a bishop today?



LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.



The Organisation of the Church at National Level

The Catholic Church in every country is divided into dioceses. Here are some examples: Ireland has twenty-six dioceses; England and Wales have twenty-two dioceses; Scotland has eight dioceses. There is no overall official leader of the Catholic Church in any country because each diocese has its own bishop, who is its leader.

In every country, dioceses are divided into groups; each of these groups is called a province. For example, in Ireland there are four provinces: Armagh, Dublin, Cashel and Tuam. The province of Armagh includes the following diocesan areas:

- Armagh
- Ardagh & Clonmacnois
- Clogher
- Derry
- Down & Connor
- Dromore
- Kilmore
- Meath
- Raphoe

Key to Provinces of Ireland

Green
Province of Armagh

Orange
Province of Cashel

Blue
Province of Dublin

Red
Province of Tuam

Key to Dioceses of Ireland

- 1 Armagh
- 2 Ardagh & Clonmacnois
- 3 Clogher
- 4 Derry
- 5 Down & Connor
- 6 Dromore
- 7 Kilmore
- 8 Meath
- 9 Raphoe
- 10 Dublin
- 11 Ferns
- 12 Kildare & Leighlin
- 13 Ossory
- 14 Cashel
- 15 Cloyne
- 16 Cork & Ross
- 17 Kerry
- 18 Killaloe
- 19 Limerick
- 20 Waterford & Lismore
- 21 Tuam
- 22 Achonry
- 23 Clonfert
- 24 Elphin
- 25 Galway
- 26 Killala



WHY DON'T YOU?

Do a short project on your own diocese. You might like to include information on its location, its history, its bishops (past and present), its cathedral, its patron saint(s), and any other interesting information. You may find it helpful to search the Internet for more information at www.catholiccommunications.ie (In England and Wales, go to www.catholic-ew.org.uk; in Scotland go to www.scm.org.uk)



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Write about a time when the bishop came to visit your school or local area.

The leader of the main diocese in a province is called an **archbishop**. In Ireland, the Archbishop of Armagh is also known as the **Primate of All Ireland** and the Archbishop of Dublin is known as the **Primate of Ireland**. Primate means 'chief bishop'. In each country, one or more bishops may be named as a **cardinal** by the Pope. Cardinals help the Pope to lead the Catholic Church. When a pope dies, cardinals gather from all over the world in the Sistine Chapel in Rome, where they elect the next pope.

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

Remember back to the day you were presented to the bishop at your Confirmation... *(Pause)* Picture in your mind the moment you were presented to him... *(Pause)* In that moment, Jesus blessed you through your bishop. Jesus is with you now as you pray. He blesses you now... *(Pause)* Listen quietly within yourself to hear what Jesus has to say to you today... *(Pause)* Listen quietly within yourself to hear what Jesus calls you to do today... *(Pause)*

Ask Jesus to bless and strengthen the bishop of your diocese today... *(Pause)*

Sign of the Cross

Getting to Know your Parish

The Fiftieth Wedding Anniversary

Paul's folks were annoyed. 'What possessed you to stay on playing football after school? You knew we have to get away early this evening!' his mother said. 'Get into that shower.' Paul couldn't understand the fuss. It was only a fiftieth wedding anniversary.



Twenty minutes later they were driving down the M1 into the heart of the country. After an hour they stopped at a church. 'Why are we stopping here? Why aren't we going to Granny and Granda's?' said Paul, looking at all the parked cars. 'Because the celebration is here,' his father replied. 'Is there going to be Mass?' Paul asked. 'Yes,' said his father. 'This is where Granny and Granda married; it's where they prayed every Sunday; it's where we were all baptised.' Paul couldn't believe that so many people had turned up.

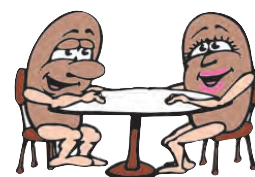
Now that you know more about your diocese, it's time to look at the next level of organisation. Every diocese is made up of parishes. You live in such a parish. In this lesson you will have a chance to become more aware of it. In the following story Paul learns about what a parish is and what it can be. He learns even more from looking at a Parish Bulletin...

After the Gospel, the priest talked about how people make a parish better by the way they live and by what they give to others. He congratulated Granny and Granda on their faithfulness to each other and to the parish, particularly through football. That was how Granny and Granda met. She had been the club treasurer. He had been a great player. Later, he had started the junior team in the parish and had trained them over the years.

This was a great gift to the parish community. It had brought life to the young people of the parish. It was part of what it meant to love and serve the Lord, the priest said.

This was news to Paul. Somehow, he found it hard to see his grandparents as anything other than two old people who found it difficult to walk. But in the parish hall afterwards, before the concert, Paul had time to look at the photograph display that somebody had put together. It

dawned on him that these were more than two old people. There was a speech and a presentation by the chairwoman of the local club. 'I can only hope,' she said at the end, 'that your grandchildren have inherited your faithfulness, commitment and dedication to the local parish community, so that others may enjoy what we did.' Paul saw his Granda look over at him and wink. Afterwards, some of the locals came up and shook Paul's hand. 'You'll be great if you're half of what your grandparents are!' they said.



LET'S TALK

1. Why did people who weren't family members also turn up for the Mass?
2. Why were the people making such a fuss of Granny and Granda?
3. The priest mentioned a particular way in which Granda had loved and served God. Why did he mention this?
4. Why did the locals feel that they could come up to shake Paul's hand when they didn't even know him?
5. What do you think Paul learned from his visit?



LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.

The Parish Bulletin

After Mass, Paul saw a leaflet at the back of the church. He took it home because it mentioned Granny and Granda. Take a look at it for yourself...

Holy Family Parish Bulletin

Twelfth Sunday of the Year



Sunday, 20 June

Fr John O'Connor, Parochial House, Church Street • Tel 028 2345 6789

Anniversary Masses

Monday 21st: Anne Hutton, Month's memory

Wednesday 23rd: Deceased members of the Kelly family

Newly Baptised

We welcome Margaret Farrell into our parish community. Congratulations to all her family.

Recently Deceased

We sympathise with the family and friends of the late Hugh Gilmore, RIP.

Readers

Saturday 26th: M Smyth (Vigil)

Sunday 27th: D Cassidy (10am)

P Brady (12 noon)

Eucharistic Ministers

Saturday 26th: F Morgan (Vigil)

Sunday 27th: C Rice (10am); V Bacik (12 noon)

Church Cleaning and Altar Society

Group C meets Saturday at 10am



Sacrament of Marriage

Best wishes to Sarah Hynes, Newcastle, and Gerald Hughes, Main Street, on their recent marriage. We recommend all couples intending to marry to do the local Pre-Marriage Course.

Golden Wedding Anniversary

Congratulations to Paul and Sarah Lynch on their 50th wedding anniversary. Thanks to all who organised the concert in the hall afterwards.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saturdays 10.00-11.00 am

Visiting the Sick and Housebound

Fr O'Connor will visit next Tuesday morning.

Inter-Church Prayer Service

Methodist Hall, Sunday 27th, 3pm

Parish Bingo

Monday and Wednesday at 8pm. Jackpot £500.

Parish Draw Numbers

1 5 8 17 26... Good luck!

Junior Summer School

Trip to the cinema: Saturday 3rd July



Choirs

Junior Choir: Thursdays in Parish Centre 7-9pm

Senior Choir: Tuesdays in Parish Centre 7-9pm

Fashion Show

To raise funds for 'Freedom for Children' campaign. Glen Hotel Monday 5th July at 8pm.

Sports Club

Congratulations to the Novelty Act team who are through to the Semi-Finals.

'Golden Years' Tuesday Club

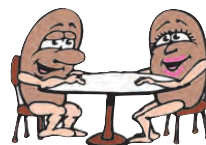
Tuesdays from 11am to 3pm. Lunch served.

Car Wash/Coffee Morning

Fundraising for the Hospice in the Parish Centre and Car Park. Saturday 10th July.

Good luck to the Under-16 Football Team

Castletown v Newcastle on Saturday next. Bus leaves the Square at 9.30am.



LET'S TALK

1. What are the main opportunities that Holy Family parish offers for all its people to gather together to hear God's call to love and serve?
2. What evidence is there that the people of Holy Family parish love and serve the Lord?
3. How do people in Holy Family parish reach out to others in the local community and in the world?



WHY DON'T YOU?

Design a Parish Bulletin for your own parish. In preparing your parish bulletin, show how people in your parish hear and answer the call to love and serve the Lord.

Do a project about your parish. You might include its location, its history, its priests (past and present), its local church(es), its patron saint(s), and any other interesting information. You might also include the names of some people you know in your parish, particularly those who help in any way.

A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

All

God, make me more aware of the people in the place where I live. Help me to remember those who are sick and those who are struggling with problems. God, make me more kind to the people in the place where I live. Make me more ready to lend a hand, to listen, to notice, and to take part.

God, make me more content to be in the place where I live. May I grow to be more thankful for those who have been there to help me throughout all these years. Amen.

Sign of the Cross

Parish – People who love and Serve the Lord

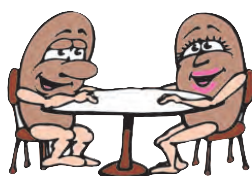
St Paul tells us what God wants
(1 Corinthians 12: 14-22, 25-27):

Our bodies don't have just one part. They have many parts. Suppose a foot says, 'I'm not a hand, and so I'm not part of the body.' Wouldn't the foot still belong to the body? Or suppose an ear says, 'I'm not an eye, and so I'm not part of the body.' Wouldn't the ear still belong to the body? If our bodies were only an eye, we couldn't hear a thing. And if they were only an ear, we couldn't smell a thing. But God has put all parts of our body together in the way that he decided is best.

A body isn't really a body, unless there is more than one part. It takes many parts to make a single body. That's why the eyes cannot say they don't need the hands. That's also why the head cannot say it doesn't need the feet. In fact, we cannot get along without the parts of the body that seem to be the weakest.

He did this to make all parts of the body work together smoothly, with each part caring about the others. If one part of our body hurts, we hurt all over. If one part of our body is honoured, the whole body will be happy.

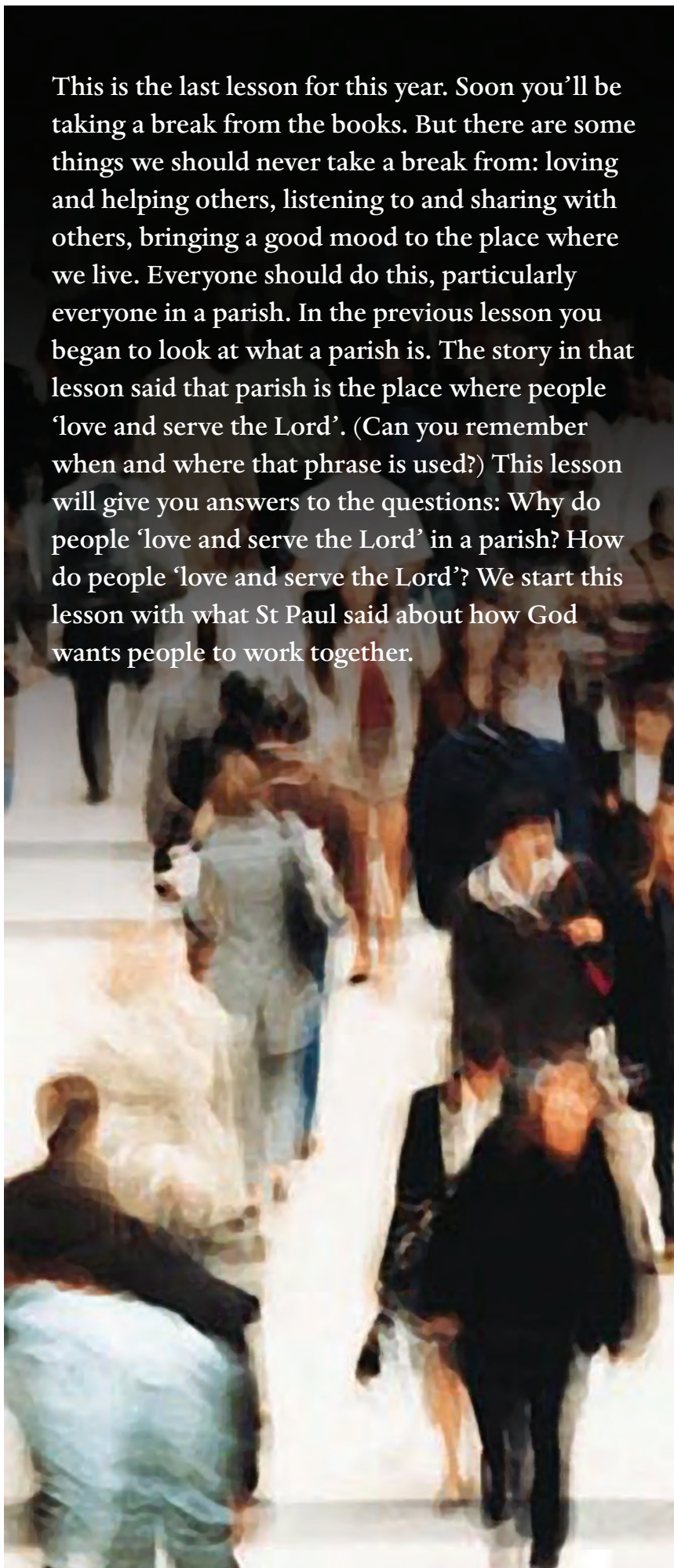
Together you are the body of Christ.
Each one of you is part of his body.



LET'S TALK

1. What point is St Paul making here?
2. Why does he use the image of the human body to make this point?
3. Name one way in which you and your class live as St Paul suggests.

This is the last lesson for this year. Soon you'll be taking a break from the books. But there are some things we should never take a break from: loving and helping others, listening to and sharing with others, bringing a good mood to the place where we live. Everyone should do this, particularly everyone in a parish. In the previous lesson you began to look at what a parish is. The story in that lesson said that parish is the place where people 'love and serve the Lord'. (Can you remember when and where that phrase is used?) This lesson will give you answers to the questions: Why do people 'love and serve the Lord' in a parish? How do people 'love and serve the Lord'? We start this lesson with what St Paul said about how God wants people to work together.



Life in the parish...

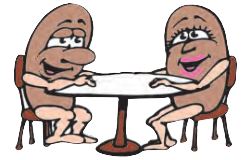
'Right,' said Susan, 'where to?' She felt like a taxi-driver, but in fact she was a mother. Jason had to be brought to football. 'Have you got your kit?' she asked. 'Yes,' said Jason. 'Hey Mum, Gregory phoned me to say not to forget to bring him too.' Before she left the kitchen, she took the dinner plate with the bowl over it. 'Hold that carefully on your knees,' she said as she passed it to Jason in the car. 'That's Mr Harkin's dinner.' 'Mum,' asked Jason, 'how did Mr Harkin lose the use of his hands?' ... And so it was that before Susan got back home, she had collected Gregory, left the boys at football, and brought Mr Harkin his dinner (which she heated up again in his microwave). A busy afternoon...

Margaret lived down the street from Susan. Unlike Susan, Margaret's family were all grown up. Unlike Susan, she now lived alone. Margaret went to Mass every day. On the way home she called in with Annie, who was almost ninety years old. Annie could manage about the house, but walking to the shops was too difficult for her now. So Margaret helped her in little ways: bringing her the parish bulletin, talking over the news with a cup of tea, getting groceries or magazines for her, or posting a birthday card to one of the grandchildren. 'Chat is only a small word, but life would be very dull without it,' said Margaret.

Father Donnelly had been parish priest for ten years. He knew the place like the back of his hand... and why wouldn't he? He had baptised the children, married the couples, buried those who had died... and he said Mass every weekday and Sunday in the parish. So, when he saw Margaret come into the sacristy after Mass, he guessed it was about Annie...

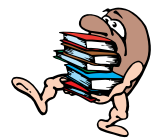
Eoin took a part-time job at the supermarket, once the summer holidays began. One evening, they were short of a referee for the Under-11 Five-A-Side football. Eoin was tired after work. 'Well, will you or won't you?' asked Seán...

Sarah's friend, Michelle, called at the door. 'Will you come and keep me company at the Youth Centre? I promised that I would supervise the junior disco this afternoon.' Sarah looked at Michelle and...



LET'S TALK

1. The story says that Susan and Margaret are different. Can you see any way in which they are the same? Describe it.
2. Would you say that Susan and Margaret were good members of their parish? Give reasons for your answer.
3. If Eoin and Sarah are good members of their parish, what will they do?
4. What role does the local priest play in your parish? What would you say his work includes?



IN YOUR RELIGION JOURNAL

Ask yourself 'What kind of member of my parish am I?' Write a few sentences about it. End by suggesting one practical way in which you might be a better member of your parish.



WHY DON'T YOU?

Ask your local priest to tell you about some of the things he did during the past week.

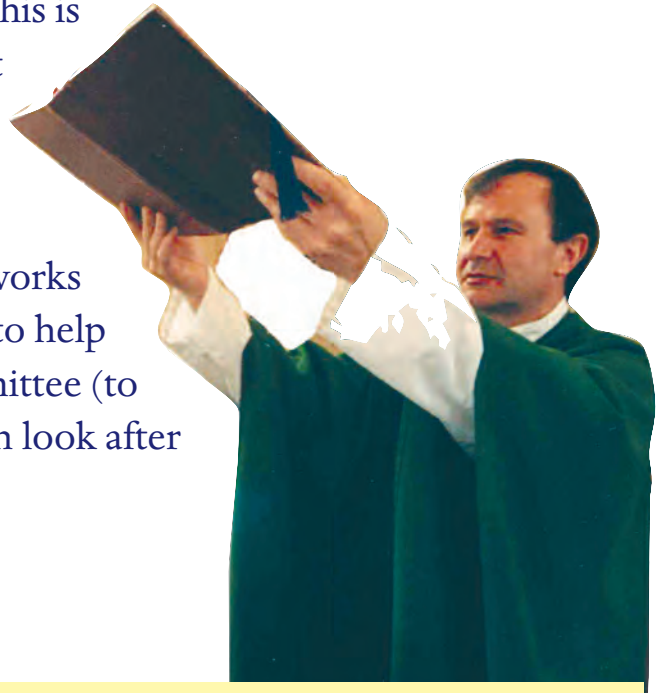


LET'S GET WORKING

Check your workbook for more to do with this lesson.

Parish

The parish is the Church at local level. The priest welcomes the people of the parish as they come together each week for Mass on Saturday evening or Sunday morning. This is where people live out the words the priest says at the end of Mass: 'Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.' In any country, there are many parishes. For instance, there are 1,300 parishes in Ireland. The local parish is led by the priest. He works in partnership with a parish finance committee (to help with money matters) and a parish pastoral committee (to help with decisions about how best the parish can look after people).



A time to pray

Sign of the Cross

Teacher

Right now, people are loving and serving God in your parish(es). They do so in the way they help others. We remember them and pray for them now...

For mothers and fathers in your parish(es), we quietly pray... *(Pause)*

For workers and helpers in your parish(es), we quietly pray... *(Pause)*

For the priest(s) in your parish(es), we quietly pray... *(Pause)*

For ourselves, that we will be good parish members over the holidays... *(Pause)*

We pray the prayer that makes us one family as Jesus taught us:

All

Our Father...

Sign of the Cross