

Level 4

Strand: Christian Faith

Aims

Children will:

- understand the call by grace to a covenant relationship with God
- explore the human response to God's call to a covenant relationship and how this involves blessing, grace, struggle and weakness (original sin) (CSRE 1d)
- understand that God's saving actions and his love are manifested in salvation history and fulfilled in Jesus (GS 10; GDC 98, 107, 115, 130; CCC 1094-95)
- explore Mary's role in God's plan of salvation (CCC 484-511)
- recognise that the Holy Spirit was given to the Church at Pentecost and remains present in the Church always (CCC 731-32; 737-47)
- develop an understanding of problems/questions relevant to pre-adolescents to which Christian faith responds (GS 4; GDC 10)
- develop their understanding of the Church as a community of faith
- grow in awareness and understanding of their Christian spirituality
- develop an understanding of the importance of ecumenical activity and inter-religious dialogue and of how religious people work together to create a better world
- understand how to express their own faith in the presence of others and to respect the expression of faith and/or belief on the part of others
- develop respect for family and community values in other religious traditions (NA 2)
- develop knowledge and appropriate vocabulary for the beliefs, holy people, writings and celebrations of local Christian communities and the Jewish and Muslim communities in Ireland.

Skills

The child should be enabled to:

Understanding:

- analyse the interaction between his/her culture and Christian faith
- identify and imagine connections between Christian beliefs and practices of the Church community.

Communicating:

- justify judgements and decisions about religious concepts and beliefs.

Developing Spiritual Literacy:

- explore challenges that have emerged in relation to his/her own religion/spirituality
- research and evaluate the spirituality of significant people for resources for his/her own spiritual life.

Developing Inter-religious Literacy:

- research one Christian and one other religious faith community (Jewish/Muslim)
- investigate ways of respecting and learning about and from people who adhere to other religions or stances for living in Ireland
- engage in ecumenical and interfaith activities.

Strand Units

Children at this level will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the following knowledge and concepts:

Mystery of God

- The mystery of the Trinity is the central mystery of the Christian faith and of Christian life (CCC 234).
- By the mystery of the blessed Trinity we mean that God is Father, God is Son and God is Holy Spirit, and that these are three persons in one divine nature (CCC 253; 261-26).
- The Father is the first person of the Trinity – creator of heaven and earth (CCC 198-242).
- Jesus is the second person of the Holy Trinity, equal with the Father and the Spirit (CCC 422, 461).
- Though he was sinless (and could never sin), Jesus took upon himself our sins and died to save us. Because he is God, Jesus could give his life for each one of us personally and individually, and his sacrifice redeemed the whole world (CCC 604-608).
- The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Holy Trinity, co-equal with the Father and the Son (CCC 243-8).
- The Holy Spirit works in each of us and in the Church through Scriptures, the sacraments and charisms, the teaching authority of the Church, Christian works of charity, the spiritual and corporal works of mercy, prayer, etc (CCC 687-747).
- When we say the Creed, we are expressing our faith and honouring God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- Symbols of the Trinity.
- God is love.
- God's love is constant, unconditional and everlasting (Is 54:8; Jer 31:3; CCC 220).
- God loved and valued us even before we were born. We are precious in God's eyes (Jer 1:5).
- God is present to our inmost being: 'In him we live and move and have our being' (Acts 17:28; CCC 300).
- God calls us into a covenant relationship, seeking a free and personal response (CCC 396).
- Our language about God is limited because God remains a mystery beyond words (CCC 40-3 and 48, 230).
- God the Father prepared the people of Israel for the coming of Jesus.
- God the Father so loved us that he sent his Son, Jesus, to be human like us in all things but sin (incarnation).
- Faith is a gift of God through which one trusts in God's care (GDC, 55; CCC 150,153, 179, 227).
- 'No one can believe alone' (CCC 166).
- The Church supports and nourishes faith. (CCC 181: Believing as an 'ecclesial act').
- Experiences of evil and suffering, injustice and death can challenge religious faith (CCC 164).
- Believers can hide the true nature of God from people (GS 19).

Mystery of Jesus Christ

- Jesus is fully human and fully divine (CCC 464-9, 483; Col 1:15).
- Jesus is God-with-us (Immanuel) (Jn 3:16-17; DV 4; CCC 484, 744).
- Jesus shows us what God his Father is like (DV 4, 17; CCC 151, 473, 458, 516, 571; Jn 14:9-10; Mk 1:11; Jn 6:38).
- Jesus addressed God as 'Abba' – which is like 'Daddy' (CCC 2766; Gal 4:6).

- Jesus is the way to the Father and to eternal happiness through all his works of love and salvation but especially through the sacraments (CCC 1; 422-29; 456-60; 1023-30; 1033; 1036; 1066-67; 1084-89; 1718-29, 1811).
- The name Jesus means in Hebrew: 'God saves' (CCC 430, 452).
- Jesus acts through the Holy Spirit in his Church to save his people (CCC 724-47; 763-68; 858-60; 869; 1076; 1087; 1111-12).
- Jesus was like us in every way except that he did not sin (GS 22).
- Jesus grew in age and knowledge as other humans do (Lk 2:52; CCC 472).
- Jesus was called 'Rabbi' and this means teacher (Mk 9:5; Jn 6:25).
- Jesus related to others, especially the poor and outcasts, with justice and compassion.
- Jesus had special esteem for women (FC 22).
- Jesus fulfils God's promises made in the Old Testament (DV 7, 15-16; CCC 1093-94).
- Christ means 'Anointed One' (Messiah) (CCC 436, 438, 453).
- The descent of the Holy Spirit on Jesus at his Baptism by John was the sign that he was the Messiah, the Son of God (Mk 1:9-11; DV 2; CCC 528, 535, 711ff, 1286).
- Jesus was anointed by the Holy Spirit to bring relief to the weak and suffering (Is 42:1-4).
- Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit into the desert where he was tempted and he returned full of the power of the Holy Spirit (Lk 4:1-15).
- Jesus' mission was to preach and bring about the Kingdom of God (Mk 1:14-15; DV 17; LG 3; CCC 541).
- Jesus sent the Twelve out to preach the Kingdom of God and to heal (CCC 551).
- Jesus promised to ask his heavenly Father to send the Holy Spirit to his followers to be their advocate (CCC 729; Jn 15:26; Lk 24:49; Jn 16:12-15).
- Jesus suffered an agony in the Garden of Gethsemane where he accepted God's will (Mt 26:36-46).
- Jesus descended into hell (CCC 631-637).
- Jesus' Resurrection: Physical and transforming (CCC 631-58).
- When Jesus Christ was glorified after his Resurrection he sent his Spirit to those who believe in him (CCC 690).
- The risen Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to us when we were baptised.
- Jesus poured out on his disciples the Spirit promised by the Father (LG 5).
- Jesus Christ will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and to create a new heaven and a new earth (Mt 25:31-46; Rev 21:1; CCC 729, 1040).

Mystery of the Holy Spirit

- The Holy Spirit is the gift of God's love which comes to dwell in the believer (CCC 733).
- The Holy Spirit is at work in all the world (GS 22, 38).
- The Holy Spirit is active and present in our world where there are people who work for justice, peace, human rights and the care of creation.
- The help of the Holy Spirit is needed in order to believe (CCC 179).
- Mary became the mother of Jesus, through the power of the Holy Spirit (Lk 1:35; LG 52; CCC 484).
- In Hebrew, the word for 'Spirit' is *ruach*, a feminine noun with a variety of meanings, including 'breath' and 'wind'.
- Titles of the Holy Spirit: e.g. Spirit of God, Spirit of Christ, Spirit of Truth, Paraclete, Advocate, Teacher, Guide, Gift of God Most High (CCC 692).

- The gifts of the Holy Spirit are wisdom, understanding, right judgement, courage, knowledge, reverence and wonder and awe in God's presence (Is 11:2-3; CCC 1831, 1845).
- The gifts and charisms of the Holy Spirit help people respond to God's will (LG 7; DV 5; CCC 768, 1266).
- The fruits of the Holy Spirit are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, generosity, gentleness, faithfulness, modesty, self-control, chastity (CCC 736, 1832; Gal 5:2-23).

Creation

- God's Holy Spirit breathes life into the world (Ps 33:6; 104:30; Gn 1:2; 2:7; CCC 291, 703).
- Creation is a sign of God's love, glory, goodness, splendour and power (CCC 32, 293; Job 12:7-9; Ps 19).
- Man and woman have a unique and eternal relationship with God the creator because they are made in the image and likeness of God (Gn 1:27; CCC 343, 355).
- God put us in the world to know, to love, and to serve him, and so to come to heaven (GS 19; CCC 1, 27, 44 and 45, 55, 358, 1721: Person as religious being by nature and vocation).
- The spiritual and immortal soul is created immediately by God (CCC 382).
- God created human beings to live in relationship/communion with God, with other people and with the earth (GS 12; GDC 139).
- Adam and Eve were created good and without sin. They were happy because they were friends with God in paradise. Adam and Eve were tempted by Satan to choose a self-centred life and to sin (Gn 2-3; CCC 355-84, 397, 415).
- They disobeyed God and lost their original holiness (CCC 399). This event is called 'The Fall' and the first sin is called 'Original Sin' (CCC 355-86, 389, 417). Original Sin is transmitted from Adam and Eve to every human being (CCC 403).
- Everyone is born with original sin, with a tendency toward sin and a need for salvation (CCC 403, 419; GS 13).
- God promised to send a saviour to save the human race from sin (CCC 55-8, 385-90, 399, 409-10, 412, 416-19).
- Baptism erases original sin through the power of Christ's saving death. Baptism turns us back to God but we are still inclined to sin and need the help of God's grace (CCC 405-410).
- Some of the angels rebelled against God, and were driven out of heaven into hell; this is called the Fall of the Angels and their leader is Satan (the devil). The fallen angels tempt human beings to reject God and to sin, but their power is limited (CCC 391-95, 414).
- St Michael the Archangel led the army of angels who cast Satan and the rebellious angels into hell. Saint Michael the Archangel is the supreme enemy of Satan and the fallen angels and is Guardian of the Church.

Mystery of the Church/Kingdom

- Jesus Christ founded the Church to proclaim the coming of the Reign of God and to continue his work of bringing the Good News of God's saving love to all people. (GS 45; LG 5, 9, 10, 17; cf. GS 32; CCC 763; function of the Church).
- The Church is the new way for the Risen Christ to be with his followers, as he promised, until the end of time (CCC 1076: Church as Mystery and Sacrament).
- The Church is the Body of Christ. The head of this Body is Christ and all the members share his Spirit (LG 7; CCC 787-95: Church as Mystery and Sacrament).
- The Church is called to show all people the love, compassion and forgiveness of Jesus (GS 21; CCC 780, 831: Church as sacrament of salvation; RM 20: Church at the service of the Kingdom; GS 3).

- The Communion of Saints: the belief that all of God's people, on heaven, earth and in purgatory are connected in communion (LG 49-50; CCC 946-59).
- The Holy Spirit guides and protects the Pope and bishops as they teach the truths of Christ.
- The Holy Spirit empowers the Church to continue Jesus' mission (CCC 747, 852).
- The Holy Spirit (the Spirit of Jesus) is present to inspire and guide the Church until the end of time.
- The Holy Spirit graces the Church with charismatic gifts (LG 4, 7; CCC 768).
- Each member of the Church has some gift of the Spirit to carry on Christ's work of making God's Kingdom present here and now (LG 12, 32: vocation).
- Vocation means a call. It is God's invitation, his call to each person to love and serve him and his Church in a particular state or way of life.
- Each person's vocation flows from the grace of Baptism.
- Every person is called by Jesus to a specific vocation (CCC 3, 542-3).
- The four specific vocations of the Christian life are: single life, married life, religious life or the ordained ministry. Each vocation is a call to follow Christ closely.
- Single persons follow Christ in their daily lives by putting their lives at the service of others in work and prayer.
- Married persons follow Christ by giving themselves to each other completely in love and service. In marriage, a man and woman promise to love each other faithfully for the rest of their lives. 'This union is born of their love, as a sign and presence of God's own love, and of the acknowledgement and acceptance of the goodness of sexual differentiation, whereby spouses can become one flesh (cf. Gn 2:24) and are enabled to give birth to a new life, a manifestation of the Creator's goodness, wisdom and loving plan' (LF 52).
- Persons who choose the consecrated life make a public profession of the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity and obedience in order to perfect their love of God and neighbour (LG 43, 45; CCC 873, 915, 944). They serve the Church's mission through prayer, penance, apostolic work and community living (LG 44; CD 33; CCC 925).
- Persons who choose the ordained ministry, through sacramental ordination, represent Christ the Good Shepherd for God's people and Christ as the Head of the Church. They not only offer their own lives to the Father, as all Christians do, but they also minister to the faithful as Christ 'in person' (CCC 1548).
- The Successors of the Apostles are the Pope and the other bishops of the Church. From Christ they receive the power to act in his person (DV 7-8, CD 2; LG 18; CCC 861-62, 935).
- Jesus gave leadership of the Church to the successors of the twelve apostles: the Pope and the bishops (LG 8; CCC 77, 551-53, 765).
- The bishops continue the ministry of the apostles in caring for the churches (CCC 857, 1594).
- About leaders in the Church Jesus said, 'He who is greatest among you must be the least of all and the servant of all' (PO 9; LG 27; CCC 876, 893; Mt 20:26-34; Mk 10:45; Lk 22:24-7).
- As successor of Saint Peter, the Pope is the chief shepherd of the Church (CCC 880-882). Like the apostles, the Pope and bishops teach us the truths of Christ (CCC 883, 888, 892).
- Study of local diocese (CD 11). Diocesan Faith development services. Diocesan advisers.
- The Catholic Church in Ireland today (e.g. Catholic institutions and groups in Ireland – schools, hospitals, Trócaire, The Society of Missionary Children, etc).
- Practices of the Church community that relate to beliefs and teachings proclaimed (e.g healing – sacraments of healing, hospitals, palliative and aged care, schools etc.).
- The Church declares certain people as saints because of their great holiness, because it is certain they are in heaven, and because they are models of holiness for us (CCC 2683).

- What inspired the saints is of more lasting importance than the details of their lives (CCC 2030).
- Saints: explore St Brigid, St Patrick, St Vincent De Paul and a selection from the following or similar list: St Catherine of Siena, St Teresa of Avila, St Joan of Arc, St Benedict (patron of Europe), St Peter, St Paul, St Maximilian Kolbe, St Padre Pio, St Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (Edith Stein). Other people who have shown Christian values at work e.g Rosa Parks, Jean Vanier, Dorothy Day, Nano Nagle, local holy people/saints.
- Contemporary witnesses to Christ.
- Introduce other Christian Traditions, with a significant local presence: e.g. Church of Ireland, Methodists and Presbyterians, Orthodox Christians, Evangelical Christians, Quakers, Eastern Rite Churches.
- All Christians contribute to the building of Jesus' Kingdom.
- All Christians are called to dialogue and co-operation with other religious communities (DP 82).
- All Christians are called to witness to their faith in Christ in word and deed (DP 59, 82; EN5).
- The Church works towards Christian unity (CCC 855; Jn 17:21).
- Baptism is the common bond that unites all Christians (UR 22).
- Work and prayer for Christian unity is a duty for all Christians (CCC 820).
- The ecumenical movement is a response to the call of the Risen Jesus to all Christians to work together to become the one Body of Christ (UR 3).
- Christians of all traditions pray the Lord's prayer (CCC 2761).
- Christians co-operate together for social justice (UR 12).

Mary

- God graced Mary in a special way for her mission (Lk 1:28; LG 56; CCC 490, 722).
- Mary accepted her role in God's plan of salvation when she willingly became the Mother of God.
- Mary was a woman of faith, obedience and wisdom (CCC 148-49, 273, 494, 511, 721, 967, 2617-19).
- Mary grew in her faith (LG 58).
- Mary devoted herself to the person and work of her Son (LG 56).
- Mary was totally preserved from the stain of original sin and she remained pure from all personal sin throughout her life (CCC 508: Immaculate Conception).
- Mary, when her earthly life was finished, was taken up body and soul into the glory of heaven. (Assumption: LG 59; CCC 974).
- Discipleship in the Catholic Tradition is inspired by Mary, the first disciple.

Eternal Life

- Here on earth the Kingdom is mysteriously present; when the Lord comes at the end of time it will enter into its perfection (GS, 39; GDC 102; CCC 1042-60, 2816).
- All that is good in our present world will survive in the Kingdom of Heaven. Every act of kindness, generosity and service contributes to the building of the Kingdom.
- The happiness of heaven consists of living with God and with all the blessed forever in a relationship of knowledge and love (CCC 1024, cf. 1026-27).
- By death the soul is separated from the body, but in the Resurrection God will raise our bodies, transformed by reunion with our soul (CCC 997, 1016, cf. 1005).

- The body will die but will rise again (in a renewed form) at the end of time (Resurrection of the body; cf. LG 48; CCC 998-90, 1020).
- Christians believe in a particular judgement immediately after death and the last judgement of Christ at the end of time (GDC, 102; CCC 678-79, 1021, 1038; 1051).
- Christ will come at the end of time to judge the living and the dead (CCC 682).
- People will be judged in the light of the Kingdom of God – a Kingdom, of love, justice, and peace. (cf. LG 48; GDC 102, CCC 1022).
- The Lord Jesus warns his followers that they will separate themselves from him if they fail to care for the poor and the little ones who are his brothers and sisters (Mt 25:31-46; CCC 1033; 2443).
- Hell is permanent separation from God and the blessed (CCC 1033, 1057).
- People can only go to hell if they deliberately choose to be separated from God through any un-repented mortal sin (CCC 1037).
- We have the freedom to direct our lives towards good, to love God and others, to seek the truth.
- We also have the freedom to turn away from good, to make ourselves deaf to the call of God and of others.
- By God's grace and mercy, Christians have the secure hope that all those who loved God and others have found true life with God in heaven (GS 18).
- The Church prays for the salvation of everyone (CCC 1058).
- Purgatory: 'Those who die in God's grace and friendship ... although they are assured of their eternal salvation, undergo a purification after death, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of God' (CCC 1030-31; CCC 1054).
- Catholics pray for the souls in purgatory on All Souls' Day and all through the year.
- The Church commends the dead to God's mercy and offers her prayers, especially the Eucharist, for them. The Church also commends almsgiving, indulgences and works of penance undertaken on behalf of the dead (Council of Trent, Session 25, Decree on Purgatory: DS 1820; CCC 1032; CCC 1055).

Other Religious Traditions

- The whole of humankind forms one family because God created all people in God's own image (NA1, DP 28).
- God's providence and his plan of salvation extend to the whole human race (NA 1, 16; DP 28-9).
- Jesus Christ is the saviour of all humankind (Rm 8:32; NA 2).
- Respect and love ought to be extended to those who think or act differently than we do in religious matters (GS 28).
- Catholics work together with people of other faiths to promote human rights, social justice, good morals, peace and freedom (NA 3; DP 44).
- The Church reproves discrimination against people on the basis of race, colour or religion (NA 5).
- Dialogue is an honest witnessing to our belief and a sincere listening to the belief of the other person.

Judaism

- Jews believe in one God; God leading Abraham to start the nation: the Shema. Torah. Importance of Moses; Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Feasts of Passover, Tabernacles and Pentecost.
- The covenant with Abraham and Moses reveals Israel as God's chosen people (CCC 60, 201).

- Christians and Jews are kin in faith and worship (CCC 63, 839-40).
- The celebration of Pesach; kosher food; family gathering; welcoming the stranger; special food. Rosh Hashanah. Yom Kippur (forgiveness, atonement).
- Christianity as the fulfillment of Judaism.

Islam

- Meaning of Islam; Muslim prayer; ninety-nine beautiful names of God – qualities and attributes; The values important to Muslims (good manners, kindness, honesty and respect for others).
- The Prophet Muhammad; stories of Muhammad; what he taught about God; the Imam. Irish Muslim communities. Fasting and festivals: Ramadan and Eid-al-Fitr.
- Muslims worship the one God. They venerate Jesus as a prophet, even though they do not acknowledge him as God, and they honour his virgin mother Mary and even sometimes devoutly call upon her. They worship God especially in prayer, almsgiving and fasting (NA 3).
- Pilgrimage to Mecca. Zakah (caring for the community); faith-based activities of the Irish Muslim communities. Diet (Halal and Haram). The five pillars of Islam. Muslims await the day of judgement and so they have regard for the moral life (NA 3). Id-al-Adha. Ways in which care for others is important in the Muslim faith.

Strand: Word of God

Aims

Children will:

- understand how Sacred Scripture is taught and handed on in the living Tradition of the Church
- discover Biblical events in the three great 'moments' of salvation history: creation, salvation, fulfilment (Old Testament, the life of Jesus Christ and the history of the Church) (DV 15-16; GS 45; LG2; CCC 54-64, 112-14, 128-30, 140, 1094)
- explore the concepts of creation, call and response, Messiah, promise and prophecy in Sacred Scripture (CSRE 1d)
- understand that Jesus fulfils the Old Testament Covenant by his life and New Covenant
- explore the relationship between scientific theories and understandings of the natural world and the creation narratives of the Book of Genesis.

Skills

The child should be enabled to:

Understanding:

- examine God's works of salvation through Sacred Scripture texts learned
- examine Biblical themes, images and principles to construct meaning about God, life, the created world and his/her personal identity.

Communicating:

- cite passages of Sacred Scripture by book, chapter and verse.

Strand Units

Children at this level should be able to demonstrate an understanding of the following knowledge and concepts:

Bible

- Christians love and reverence for the Bible because it is the Word of God.
- The Bible is the inspired Word of God (DV 9, 24; CCC 104). This means: a) God really speaks to us in Scripture; b) the message of Sacred Scripture is meaningful for all people in all times; c) the Bible does not err on any matter concerning our salvation (DV 11; CCC 107).
- The human Biblical writers were inspired by the Holy Spirit (DV 11; CCC 76, 105-6, 134).
- When we listen to God's Word, the Holy Spirit speaks to us and helps us to follow Jesus closely in our daily lives.
- God communicates with us in Sacred Scripture, in the works of creation, in the person of Jesus and in the ongoing presence of the Spirit (DV 3, 4, 6, 12; CCC 51-3, 60, 79, 104, 257; revelation).
- God speaks to us in a distinctive way in the Word of God expressed in Sacred Scripture and in the Sacred Tradition of the Catholic Church (CCC 80-3, 97; DV 10).
- It is the Church as a community with a living Tradition that provides a context for doctrinal and moral interpretation of Sacred Scripture (DV 10).
- The bishops succeeded the apostles in guaranteeing the faithful transmission of the Christian Tradition.
- The task of giving an authentic interpretation of the Word of God has been entrusted to the teaching office of the Church alone.
- With the help of the Holy Spirit, the Magisterium has the duty of giving an authentic interpretation of the Word of God (DV 10; GDC par 96).
- Sacred Scripture recounts the history of salvation, past, present and future. The three 'great moments' in the history of salvation are the past (the Old Testament events), the present (the moment of 'redemption'; which began with the coming of Christ and continues right up to today), and the future (the 'parousia', when Christ will come again and 'God will be all in all'). (DV2, 14, 15; LG 9, 113, 48, AG3).
- Jesus fulfils all of God's promises to the Chosen People. Hence Christians understand the Hebrew Scriptures and the Gospels in light of each other (CCC 128).
- The Hebrew Scriptures tell of a time of waiting for the Saviour, fulfilled in the coming of Jesus.
- The Jewish people looked forward to God's promised Messiah (CCC 207, 211, 214, 712; Is 61:1-2).
- Jesus fulfilled this expectation in his ministry (Lk 4:16-22).
- The covenant is the unique relationship between God, the chosen people and all creatures, based on God's gracious choice (CCC 62).
- At the original Passover meal, God promised to save his people from slavery in Egypt (Ex 12:1-14) and to feed them in the desert on the way to the Promised Land (Ex 16:4-18). This is known as the Old Covenant. The Covenant was celebrated and renewed every year at the Passover when a lamb was sacrificed.
- When the people neglected the covenant, God remained faithful by sending the prophets to call them back to the covenant (CCC 64).
- The prophets preached justice, morality, and faithfulness to God (e.g. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Amos, Hosea and Ezekiel, John the Baptist).
- The message of the prophets is about God's unending love and mercy despite Israel's unfaithfulness (CCC 218).

- Holy women such as Sarah, Miriam, Hannah, and Judith kept alive the hope of Israel's salvation (CCC 64).
- Jesus' death and Resurrection establishes a New Covenant, this one between God and those who become one with Christ (LG 9; CCC 73, 613). In the New Covenant, Jesus promised us peace, reconciliation with God and eternal life.
- Jesus brought a New Covenant by celebrating the Passover with his disciples at the Last Supper (Mt 26:17-30) and by giving them his own body and blood instead of a lamb (this is why Jesus is called the 'Lamb of God') by dying for them on the Cross. We share in the New Covenant at Mass, which was instituted at the Last Supper when Jesus said: 'This is my blood, the blood of the new and everlasting covenant. It will be shed for you and for many, so that sins may be forgiven. Do this in memory of me.'
- The new Law is summarised in the commandment of love (CCC 782).

Sacred Scripture

God's Loving Plan of Salvation

- Gn 1-3. First creation story.
- Gn 2:5-25. Second creation story.
- Gn 3:1-24. Story of the first sin.
- Gn 9:8-16. Covenant with all creatures.
- Ex 14:5-15:3. The crossing of Red Sea.
- Ruth 1-4. Story of Ruth.
- 1 Sm 1:9-19; 24-2:9. Story of Hannah and canticle of Hannah.
- Job 12:7-9; Ps 19. Creation as a sign of God's glory and power.
- Ps 78. Psalm of sacred history.
- Ps 95:1-5. Praising God.
- Ps 100:1-5. Giving thanks.
- Ps 102. Prayer in misfortune.
- Ps 104. In praise of God the Creator.
- Ps 106:1-3. Prayer of Joy.
- Ps 130. Out of the depths.
- Ps 139. O Lord you have searched me and known me.
- Prov 4:5-8. Wisdom.
- Prov 21:13. Listening to the cry of the poor.
- Prov 17:17. 'A friend loveth at all times.'
- Is 7:14. Immanuel.
- Is 9:1-7. The people who walked in darkness.
- Is 42:1-4. Jesus anointed by the Holy Spirit to help the weak and suffering.
- Is 43:1-4. 'I have called you by your name.'
- Is 49:15. God's care for us.
- Jer 1:4-9. Call of Jeremiah.
- Jer 7:1-15. Jeremiah preaches in the temple.
- Jer 22:3, 13, 15-16. True religion does justice.
- Jer 31:33-34. Prophecy of the new covenant.
- Mic 6:6-8. What does the Lord require.
- Jude 15:12-17. God saves through Judith.
- Eccl (Qo) 6:15. Loyal friendship.

Jesus Birth and Youth (CCC 422-24; 430-60; 522-34)

- Mt 2:1-11. Epiphany: Jesus' identity revealed.
- Lk 1:26-38. Annunciation.
- Lk 1:5-24; 57-80. Story of Zechariah.
- Lk 2:1-20. Christmas.

Jesus' Public Life (CCC 422-24; 430-55; 535-40; 543-56)

- Mt 5:1-14; 38-48. Sermon on the Mount (Beatitudes).
- Mt 6:1-19. Ethics of the new lawgiver.
- Mt 9:1-8. Healing of the man born paralysed.
- Mt 12:9-14. Curing on the Sabbath.
- Mt 18:21-35. Parable of the unforgiving servant.
- Mt 20:1-16. Parable of the workers in the vineyard.
- Mt 23:3. Practising what you preach.
- Mt 25:1-13. Parable of wise and foolish maidens/life after death.
- Mt 25:14-30. Parable of the talents.
- Mt 25:31-46. Sheep and goats.
- Mk 3:13, Mt 10:1-42. Jesus sends out twelve disciples preaching.
- Mk 6:34-44; Lk 9:12-17. Feeding the five thousand.
- Lk 4:1-13. Temptation of Jesus.
- Lk 4:14-22. Jesus claims to be the Messiah.
- Lk 4:16-22. The spirit of the Lord.
- Lk 7:36-50; Mt 26:6-13; Mk 14:3-9. Mary anoints Jesus.
- Lk 7:19-23. The signs of the Messiah.
- Lk 15:11-32. The Prodigal Son.
- Lk 16:19-31. Parable of rich man and Lazarus.
- Lk 22:42. Jesus' prayer on the Mount of Olives
- Lk 24:49; Jn 16:12-15. Jesus' promise of the Holy Spirit.
- Jn 1:6-8, 15. John the Baptist.
- Jn 1:29-34; Mt 3: 1-17. Baptism of Jesus.
- Jn 8:1-11. Jesus forgives the woman caught in adultery.
- Jn 14:1-4. 'In my father's house ...'
- Jn 14:15-17. Spirit as advocate.
- Jn 14:25-26. The Advocate will teach you everything.

Jesus' Passion and Death (CCC 575-637; 1402-19)

- Mt 26:20-30. Last Supper.
- Mt 26:36-46. Agony and acceptance of God's will.
- Mt 26:47-56. Arrest of Jesus.
- Mt 26:57-68; Mt 27:11-26. Trial before Sanhedrin and Pilate.
- Mt 27:27-61. Crucifixion, death and burial of Jesus.
- Mt 28:16-20; Mk 16:14-18. Commissioning of the disciples.
- Mk 14:53-65 and Mk 15:1-15. Jesus' trial.
- Mk 15:16-47. Crucifixion, death and burial.
- Lk 19:29-38. Entry into Jerusalem.
- Lk 22:7-20. Last Supper.
- Lk 22:47-53; Mk 14:10-11. Mk 14:32-50. Betrayal by Judas and arrest of Jesus.

- Lk 22:54-62; Mt 26:69-75/Peter's denial of Jesus.
- Lk 23:26-31. Road to Calvary.
- Lk 23:34-43. Let him save himself if he is the Messiah.
- Jn 12:12-19. Entry into Jerusalem.
- Jn 13:1-20. Washing of feet.
- Jn 19:25-7; Mt 27: 55-6. Women at cross and 'woman here is your son'.

Jesus' Resurrection and Ascension (CCC 638-67)

- Lk 24:13-35. The Road to Emmaus.
- Lk 24:36-49. Jesus appears to eleven disciples.
- Lk 24:50-3; Acts 1:1-11. The Ascension and second coming of Christ.
- Jn 20:1-18. Mary and Peter at tomb.
- Jn 20:11-18. Mary meets Jesus.
- Jn 21:15-17. Peter shepherd of the whole flock.

Pentecost (CCC 731-41)

- Acts 1:12-14. Prayerful waiting for the Holy Spirit.
- Acts 2:1-13. Pentecost.
- Acts 3:1-10. Peter cures the cripple at the temple.
- Acts 4:1-22. Peter and John.
- Acts 4:32-5. Early Church.
- Acts 8:14-17. Confirmation in early Church.
- Acts 9:1-22. Conversion of Saul.
- 1 Cor 2:9. 'Eye has not seen ...'
- 1 Cor 12:4-11. Varieties of gifts.
- 2 Cor 11:24-27. Paul's testimony to his faith.
- 1 Th 4:13. God will bring with him those who have died.
- Heb 13:2. 'Remember to welcome strangers in your homes ...'
- 1 Jn 4:10. 'This is what love is; it is not that we have loved God, but that God loved us.'

For memorisation

- Ps 104. Praising nature.
- Ps 139:1-18. 'O Lord, you have searched me.'
- Mt 1:28-30. 'Come to me ...'
- Jn 8:12. 'I am the light of the world.'
- Mic 6:8. Act justly.
- Mt 5:44. 'Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.'
- Jn 13:35. 'By this will everyone know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.'
- Mt 5:3-11. The Beatitudes.

Strand: Liturgy and Prayer

Aims

Children will:

- develop their understanding of personal and communal prayer
- investigate the connections between the Church's liturgy and the life and ministry of Jesus
- explore the encounter with Jesus in liturgy, sacraments and prayer (CCC 1067-1690; 1114-16)
- make connections between liturgical practices of the Church community and the beliefs and teachings proclaimed
- develop their understanding of the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Reconciliation, Marriage and Holy Orders
- develop their understanding of the Lord's Prayer (CCC 2759-865)
- understand how the liturgical year is an expression of salvation history.

Skills

The child should be enabled to:

Understanding:

- explore connections between Scripture and the Church's liturgy (ritual, prayer, sacred music and art)
- examine sacred art, poetry and music and explore how it inspires people to prayer and to a deeper understanding of the mystery of God
- explore prayer resources which enhance ecological awareness and responsible agency.

Communicating and Participating:

- create original sacred art, dance, music, prayer and poetry as a form of prayer.

Strand Units

Children at this level will be able to demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of the following knowledge and concepts:

Prayer

- Prayer is the raising of one's mind and heart to God or the requesting of good things from God (CCC 2559, 2562-63).
- Prayer is a personal relationship with God (CCC 2558, 2565).
- God tirelessly calls each person to this encounter with Himself (CCC 2591).
- In prayer God calls us first; our own first step is always a response (CCC 2567; GS 18).
- Prayer strengthens our friendship with Jesus.
- The Holy Spirit helps us to pray (CCC 741, 2630, 2652; Rom 8:26-27).
- Jesus' teaching on prayer emphasises perseverance, gratitude and the desire to do God's will (Lk 11:1-13; Lk 18:1-8; CCC 2611, 2731).
- Contemplative prayer is a prayer of silent love, being in God's presence.
- Our attitudes and actions are influenced by praying (CCC 2725).
- In the Our Father the first three petitions are addressed to God; the other four present our wants: they ask that we be fed and nourished, healed of sin and made victorious in the struggle of good over evil (Mt 6:9-13; Lk 11:2-4; CCC 2857).
- The Lord's prayer is a summary of the whole gospel (CCC 2774).
- Psalms: types of psalms (e.g. praise, petition, faith, songs of trust, lamentation, penitential). Imagery in psalms.

Formal Prayer

- *An Phaidir*
- *Sé do Bheatha, a Mhuire*
- Hail Holy Queen
- Benediction
- Nicene Creed
- Acts of Faith, Hope and Love (CCC 2098)
- Prayers to the Holy Spirit
- The Rosary: Glorious mysteries and mysteries of light (CCC 971)
- Memorare
- Memorial acclamation 1
- Sung parts and Hymns for the Mass
- Prayers for Confirmation ceremony
- All Mass responses

Additional Prayers

- Psalms 104, 139
- Journal keeping as prayer
- Praying over moral decisions
- Prayer for human rights
- Prayer to be free from prejudice
- Prayer of centring
- Stations of the Cross (fourteen)
- Hannah's prayer in the Book of Samuel

- Benedictus
- The Magnificat
- The Serenity Prayer
- Eternal rest

Liturgy

- Liturgy is the work of the Holy Trinity (CCC 1077-1112).
- The Church teaches that Christian prayer is primarily Trinitarian, directed to the Father, through Christ, in the power of the Spirit.

Liturgical Year

- The Church 'in the course of the year unfolds the whole mystery of Christ from his birth through his Ascension, to Pentecost and the expectation of the blessed hope of the coming of the Lord' (CCC 1153, 1194; Ps 31:14-15).
- Advent and Christmas celebrate God's promise of a Saviour and its fulfilment in Christ, the Messiah (CCC 524).
- Advent is a special time of waiting in hope for the coming of the Messiah, Jesus Christ.
- Advent is a time of waiting for the coming of the Saviour. It is also a preparation for the end of time, when Christ will come again to judge the living and the dead (CCC 672, 678).
- The Jesse Tree.
- Christmas is a time to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, the Messiah.
- At Christmas God fulfils his promise to send Jesus into our world, to be with us, to bring happiness and peace.
- Jesus is Immanuel (God with us) (Is 7:14).
- Lent is a time of repentance and reconciliation which reminds Christians of Jesus' call to 'repent and believe in the gospel' (SC 109; CCC 540).
- By the solemn forty days of Lent, the Church unites herself each year to the mystery of Jesus in the desert.
- The Church celebrates Lent as a season of renewing our commitment to the mission of Jesus/the Reign of God.
- Lent is a time to recall or prepare for Baptism (SC 109).
- Lent is a time for Christians to review how they live.
- Lent is a time when we participate in gestures of reconciliation including concern for the poor.
- The crucifix is a symbol of Jesus' love for all people.
- Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday are known as the Easter Triduum, which means three days.
- The Triduum begins with the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday evening and concludes with the Evening Prayer of Easter Sunday.
- Easter is a time to celebrate Jesus' death and Resurrection, his glorification and the sending of the Holy Spirit (CCC 1163).
- Easter celebrates Jesus' Resurrection: the victory of life over death, good over evil.
- The Paschal candle reminds us that Jesus Christ has risen from the dead and has triumphed over sin and death.
- At the Easter vigil the Church awaits the Resurrection and then celebrates it in the Sacraments.
- Easter liturgy of light. Concepts of light and darkness, Easter candle, relate Easter to Baptism – receiving and living the light of Jesus. Jesus is the light of the world. Four parts of the Easter Vigil: the service of light, the liturgy of the word, the liturgy of Baptism, and liturgy of the Eucharist.

- At Pentecost the Church celebrates the fulfilment of the promise given by Jesus that he would send the Holy Spirit to the apostles to enable them to continue his work on earth, while they waited for his return on the final day of judgement.
- Pentecost: the celebration of the beginning of the Church and the power of the Holy Spirit to make every day holy.
- On the Feast of All Saints we celebrate all saints, known and unknown and ask for their prayers and intercessions (to be tied in with the concept of the communion of saints: see Christian Faith strand).
- On the Feast of All Souls the Church commemorates and prays for the holy souls in purgatory, undergoing purification of their sins before entering heaven.
- The Feast of Corpus Christi, the Feast of Our Lord Jesus Christ the King, Trinity Sunday.
- Liturgical Feasts of Mary: The Assumption.

Sacraments

- It is in the sacraments that Jesus meets us at important moments in life and turns these moments into opportunities of grace (CCC 1210).
- The sacraments confer grace but they also require an active faith on our part, a desire to respond in faith and to deepen our faith through the sacrament. (CCC 1128)
- We receive sacraments to become more holy, to build up the Church, and to give worship to God (SC 59; CCC 1123).
- It is important to prepare carefully to celebrate the sacraments (CCC 1098).
- The sacraments are the continuation of the Paschal Mystery of Christ in the age of the Church (CCC 1116).
- The sacraments of initiation are Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist (CCC 1212)
- Through the sacraments of initiation Christians are received into full membership of the Church and lay the foundations for their Christian life (LG 7; CCC 1121-22).
- Baptism and Confirmation confer a sacramental 'seal' or spiritual mark and so can never be repeated (CCC 1121, 1280, 1317).
- When the person is anointed with Chrism s/he becomes a Christian.
- Baptism frees people from original sin and all personal sin, makes them children of God and members of the Church and gives them a share in the Church's mission. It is necessary for salvation. (CCC 1213, 1262, 1279).
- Baptism calls us to participate in establishing God's Kingdom (GS 38).
- The rite of Baptism consists in immersing the candidate in water or pouring water on his/her head, while saying 'I baptise you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit' (CCC 1278).
- The promises of Baptism and how they are to be lived and renewed.
- The symbols of Baptism: water as life-giving and cleansing, oil as strengthening and healing, light as driving out darkness, the white garment as 'putting on Christ', the community as the setting in which Christ is present.
- In Confirmation we receive the Holy Spirit, who strengthens us to live a holy life, proclaim the gospel and serve others as Jesus did.
- Confirmation increases and strengthens the reception of the Holy Spirit received at Baptism: it is the sacrament which gives the Holy Spirit in order to unite us more firmly to Christ, strengthen our bond with the Church, help us take part in her mission, and to bear witness to Christ in words and deeds (LG 11; CCC 1285, 1288, 1316).

- The Rite of Confirmation is anointing the forehead with sacred Chrism, together with the laying on of the minister's hand and the words: 'Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit' (CCC 1295, 1320).
- Confirmation uses the signs of laying on of hands, anointing, sign of peace (CCC 1293-96, 1299, 1301).
- Symbols of the Holy Spirit: water, anointing, fire, cloud and light, the seal, the hand, the finger, the dove, wind, breath (Ruah) (CCC 694-701).
- In Confirmation Christians are sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit which marks their belonging to Christ (CCC 1296).
- Confirmation is a time to remember and renew baptismal promises.
- The Risen Jesus gives us his Spirit in the sacrament of Confirmation.
- Gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit (CCC 1831, see Christian Faith strand).
- The bishop is the ordinary minister of Confirmation, but he can delegate this function to a priest (CCC 1312).
- The bishop, in the course of the Chrism Mass of Holy Thursday, consecrates the sacred Chrism for his whole diocese (CCC 1297).
- We use many terms to describe the sacrament of Christ's loving forgiveness. Three are: Confession, Penance, Reconciliation (CCC 1423).
- The process of conversion and repentance was described by Jesus in the parable of the prodigal son (CCC 1439; RP 5, 10, 26).
- Reconciliation is principally a gift of the heavenly Father (RP 5, 10).
- Sin is choosing to disobey God (CCC 386-87, 1850; RP 14, 17).
- Sin is forgetfulness and indifference toward God (RP 14, 18).
- We sin whenever we act against the loving law of God (sins of commission) and whenever we deliberately neglect to do something good (sins of omission).
- When we sin we damage our relationship with God and with the whole community, the Body of Christ.
- When Christians receive the sacrament of Penance/Reconciliation they obtain pardon from God for the offence committed against him and are at the same time reconciled with the Church, which they have wounded by their sin (LG 11).
- By prayers or penances people can receive God's pardon for penance owed for the bad effects of the sins they have committed.
- In the Sacrament of Reconciliation, Christians receive God's grace to amend their lives and follow God's commandments more faithfully in the future.
- Regular confession of our sins strengthens our relationship with Jesus Christ, helps us form our conscience, to fight against temptation, and to live more like Jesus (CCC 1458).
- We prepare for Reconciliation by examining our conscience (CCC 1484; RP 31).
- The Holy Spirit helps us to grow and change (conversion).
- There are many forms of penance in the Christian life that bring about reconciliation with God and others. These include prayer, fasting and almsgiving (CCC 1434; RP 26).
- Marriage and Holy Orders are Sacraments in the service of communion (CCC 1113).
- Marriage is a covenant between a man and woman, exclusive and for life (GS 48; CCC 1614).
- Through the sacrament of Marriage, the Holy Spirit strengthens the love and commitment of husband and wife (GS 48; CCC 1624).
- The Sacrament of Marriage gives special graces and blessings to married couples, so that they can love each other, love their children, serve others and build up the Christian community (GS 48; LG 11; CCC 1534, 1641-54).

- In the sacrament of Holy Orders, men are called and ordained to serve others in the community of the Church as deacons, priests or bishops (CCC 1548-1551).
- Through the sacrament of Holy Orders, the priest is gifted by the Holy Spirit to exercise the ministry of leadership and service (cf. LG 11; PO 2).
- Holy Orders is conferred by a bishop through laying on of hands followed by prayer of consecration (CCC 1538, 1573).
- Like Baptism and Confirmation, Ordination imprints a sacramental seal and cannot be repeated (CCC 1597).
- The Sacrament of Orders has three degrees: deacon, priest and bishop (CCC 1536).
- Priests are consecrated to preach the gospel, to preside at the liturgy and to engage in pastoral governance and care (LG 28; PO 4-6; CCC 1592).
- Priests have a special concern for the poor, the sick and the needy (PO 6; CCC 1586).
- Priests and deacons put into practice in their own lives what they have taught (LG 28; PO 3, 6).

Mass

- At this level work on the Mass pivots on six points:
 1. Eucharistic Presence
 2. Memorial Sacrifice
 3. Praise and Thanksgiving
 4. Communion
 5. Pledge of Future Glory
 6. Structure of the Mass (CCC 1348-55).
- The Eucharist is the heart and summit of the Church's life (CCC 1407).
- Essential signs are: 1) Wheat bread and grape wine; 2) the words of consecration spoken by Jesus at the Last Supper, 'this is my Body ...' (CCC 1412).

1. Eucharistic Presence

- Through the action of the Holy Spirit, bread and wine are changed into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ (CCC 1412).
- Christ himself becomes present in a true, real and substantial manner: his Body and his Blood, his soul and his divinity. This change is called 'transubstantiation' (CCC 1373-77, 1413).
- The consecration takes place during the Eucharistic Prayer.
- We can respond to Jesus Christ's presence in the tabernacle by prayer and adoration (PO 5, 18; CCC 1378, 1381).
- We can respond to Jesus Christ's presence in others by loving and serving them (CCC 1397).
- Special devotions to the Blessed Sacrament: e.g. Benediction; holy hour.

2. Memorial Sacrifice

- Jesus Christ's life and death (his sacrifice) is his self-gift to the Father for the salvation of humankind.
- Christians are not only to imitate Jesus, but to be closely united to him. Jesus invited his disciples and friends to join him in his unique offering on behalf of the whole world (DP 86; c.f. Sc 48). In the sacrifice of the Mass, Jesus offers himself to God the Father and we offer ourselves with him to the Father (LG 11; CCC 1330, 1368, 1362-72; Lk 22: 19-20).
- Eucharist is the memorial of Christ's Passover – the work of salvation accomplished by the life, death and Resurrection of Christ (CCC 1409).

3. *Praise and Thanksgiving*

- Eucharist means first of all 'thanksgiving' (CCC 1360).
- The Eucharistic Prayer gives thanks to the Father for all that he gave us in Jesus Christ (CCC 1103, 1352, 1359).
- In the Eucharist we give thanks to God for the blessings of creation (CE p. 17).

4. *Communion: sign of unity*

- At Mass we receive spiritual strength and nourishment to love God and neighbour (CCC 1359-61; CCC 1392).
- The celebration of the Eucharist challenges us to share the goods of the earth with everyone, especially the poor, and to be concerned for the well-being of all creation.

5. *Pledge of future glory*

- Jesus Christ gives us the Eucharist as a pledge of glory with him in heaven because he said 'I am the living bread that came down from heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, s/he will live forever' (Jn 6:51; SC 8; CCC 1323, 1419).

6. *Structure of the Mass*

- The origins of the Eucharist in Jesus' practice of table fellowship culminating in his Last Supper.
- The structure of the Mass as it corresponds to the meal Jesus had with his disciples after chatting with them on the road to Emmaus (CCC 1347).
- The Holy Spirit helps us to listen to and understand God's word so that we can live it out (CCC 1100-01).
- The Homily is used to proclaim the Reign of God/the presence of Jesus Christ and to help us put the word of God into practice (SC 34, 52; CCC 1349).
- In the 'prayer of the faithful' intercession is made for the Church, for the civil authorities, by those oppressed by various needs, for all people, and for the salvation of the entire world (SC 53).
- In the Creeds (the Nicene Creed and the Apostles' Creed) we profess the central truths of Christian faith.
- During the Eucharist there are special times of forgiveness: Penitential Act, Our Father, Sign of Peace, Lamb of God.
- When we offer Holy Mass, we apply Christ's saving sacrifice to assist the living and the dead.

Strand: Christian Morality

Aims

Children will:

- understand moral life as an expression and consequence of our relationship with God
- explore how Christians' relationship with Jesus, their beliefs and values affect their words and actions, as exemplified in their lives (LG 50; Christian decision-making)
- understand moral life as 'new life in Christ' lived with the help of the Holy Spirit (VS 21)
- develop their understanding of factors that call for, influence and promote moral behaviour
- explore how to live the new covenant in Jesus (the Law of Love), the Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes with faith, hope, and love (CCC 1812)
- examine the relationship between Jesus' example, Christian moral values and contemporary culture
- begin to incorporate moral ideals of conduct into their identity (moral self-reflection)
- develop their concepts of personal sin, grace and conversion
- develop an awareness of social justice, ecological justice, universal solidarity and responsibility
- develop an understanding of human sexuality in a moral, spiritual and social framework with particular emphasis on the virtue of chastity (RSE).

Skills

Children should be enabled to:

Understanding:

- investigate and evaluate models for their own moral life, making connections between the decisions and personal attributes of moral models and their own sense of moral self (moral character: integrity and responsibility)
- examine the cost and challenge of living a Christian moral life
- discover practices that support Christian values, precepts and virtues
- discern and evaluate values, attitudes and expectations with which they are surrounded in contemporary culture
- identify links between the Christian story of creation, the knowledge of science and the moral question of how humans treat the natural world.

Communicating:

- develop strategies to promote a more just society and world (moral agency and imagination).

Strand Units

Children at this level will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the following knowledge and concepts:

Human Dignity

- All human life is God's gift (Rev 4:11; CCC 295).
- God has willed that all people should constitute one family and treat one another as brothers and sisters (GS 24, 32; LG 13).
- Every Christian is called to develop his/her own gifts and carry out his/her own responsibilities and so become holy (LG 39-41; AG 28).
- Every person, created in the image and likeness of God has dignity and rights (GS 12, 26; CCC 225, 356-57, 1907, 1701 ff., 1930, 2070).
- Our dignity is a gift of God's love and does not depend on race, sex, economic status, human achievement or our place in society.
- Christians respect the fundamental rights of each person (CCC 1944, 2479, 2507, 1782, 2106).
- Every human being has a right to life, food, clothing, and shelter, education, employment, to respect, to appropriate information, to act according to one's own conscience, to privacy and freedom of religion (GS 26; PT 11-27, 106).
- A person is more precious for who s/he is than for what s/he has (GS 35).

Human Freedom and Responsibility

- God calls us and we are free to respond (vocation).
- We can experience a struggle in ourselves between good and evil, light and darkness (GS 13; CCC 1707).
- Choices between right and wrong involve the whole person – emotions, feelings and reasoning.
- Emotions are gifts to be valued and used responsibly.
- Recognising motives and taking responsibility for them is important.
- God has given us the gift of a conscience to help us know right from wrong (GS 16, CCC 1713, 1776ff.).
- Conscience is a judgement which helps us to recognise good and to assume responsibility for our actions (CCC 1781).
- Informing our conscience, we are assisted by the Word of God, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, the witness or advice of others and the authoritative teaching of the Church (CCC 1785).
- Note: teaching concepts on sin and forgiveness are found in the liturgy/prayer strand.

God's Graceful Presence and Assistance

- The Pope and the bishops have teaching authority in the Church and they guide us in our moral life.
- The values and teachings of Jesus can help us to make good choices.
- The Holy Spirit inspires and guides people to do the right thing (CCC 1697).
- The Holy Spirit helps people to love what is good and shun evil (CCC 1810).
- The liturgy and sacraments help Christians to live like Jesus (CCC 2030, 2047).
- Christians do good because it is right and out of love for Jesus (CCC 1828).
- Christians are motivated to strive to forgive because of the love and mercy of God for them.
- Jesus not only reaffirmed the commandments of the Old Covenant but also gave a new commandment: 'love one another. Such as my love has been for you, so must your love be for each other' (Jn 13:34; CCC 1968, 1823, 1970, 1972).

- Jesus' teaching in the Sermon on the Mount is about the actions and attitudes that will bring about the Reign of God (Mt 5-7; CCC 1717, 1726).
- The Beatitudes (Mt 5:1-11; CCC 1716-29).
- The Beatitudes teach us to love God above all things (CCC 1723, 1728).
- Jesus' teaching in the Beatitudes does not change the Commandments, but helps us understand that following Jesus' way begins in the 'heart' (CCC 1968).
- Jesus tells us how to build up his Kingdom by following the Ten Commandments, and the New Commandment of love and the Beatitudes (CCC 1716-1729; 1967-74).
- The Lord asks us to love as he does, to welcome the stranger, and to love children and the poor as Christ himself (Mt 5:44; Lk 10:27-37; Mk 9:37; Mt 25:40, 45; CCC 1825, 1931-33).
- Jesus' teaching on love includes the command to forgive injuries, to love our enemies and to pray for our persecutors (Mt 5:44; Mt 6:14; Lk 6:27-29; GS 28).
- Jesus warned against anger and hatred which destroy (Mt 5:22; CCC 2302).
- There are three theological virtues: faith, hope and charity (CCC 1813).
- By faith, we believe in God and believe all that he has revealed to us and that the Holy Church proposes for our belief (CCC 1842).
- By hope we desire, and with steadfast trust wait from God, eternal life and the graces to merit it (CCC 1843).
- By charity, we love God above all things and our neighbour as ourselves for love of God (CCC 1844).
- The Precepts of the Church:
 - You shall attend Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation.
 - You shall confess your sins at least once a year.
 - You shall humbly receive your Creator in Holy Communion at least during the Easter season.
 - You shall keep holy the holy days of obligation.
 - You shall observe the prescribed days of fasting and abstinence (CCC 2041).
 - The ten commandments are to be re-presented at this level.

Social Teaching of the Church

- Jesus teaches his followers to have respect, tolerance and compassion.
- Jesus promoted the dignity of women (MD 12-13).
- Men and women have an equal dignity (CCC 369; 1605, CCC 2334).
- Every kind of discrimination whether based on sex, race, colour, social condition, language or religion is against God's will (GS 29).
- Jesus challenged injustice and teaches how to live justly.
- Jesus wants us to recognise his own presence in the poor (CCC 2449).
- The Church has a special mission to the poor, the sick and the marginalised (CCC 2448).
- Worshipping God and working for justice go hand in hand (GS 43; Is 58:5-9; Am 5:21-4; Mic 6:8).
- All Christians are called to act for peace and justice in the world (GS 78-9; cf. CCC 2307, 2327).
- The Church responds, through its institutions and organisations, to injustice.
- The goods of creation are destined for the entire human race and should be shared equally (GS 69: universal destination of earthly goods; CCC 353, 2452; CSDC 171).
- Our responsibility for the well-being of other species must also be taken into account as part of the universal destination of the goods of the earth.

- All creatures have a value in their own right and are not there simply for human use (CCC 339).
- Creation is ongoing and we can co-operate with God's plans for creation (CCC 307, 323).
- The creation story reveals that human beings are called by God to counteract influences that damage or destroy the natural world (CCC 373, 2402; SRS 34: stewardship).
- Include some of the following: Justice issues in the local community (environmental, economic, cultural, political, infrastructure, social) e.g. care of the aged, homelessness, equality issues, poverty, consumerism and the environment.
- Study of people and organisations working for peace and justice in the world (e.g. Trócaire, Red Cross, Catholic Commission for Justice, Peace and Ecology, International Women's Day etc.).
- Stories of accessible role models who exhibit the sorts of decisions and actions children can incorporate into their moral self-definitions, including characters similar in age to the students themselves.
- Include models whose moral actions are counter-cultural (e.g. leaders of the suffragettes).
- Include models who struggle with the right thing to do (e.g. Huckleberry Finn).
- Stories of contemporary Christians who live their religious beliefs.
- The Relationship between Faith and Reason
- Scientific accounts of the origin of the universe are in harmony with non-scientific accounts in the Scriptures.
- Science and Sacred Scripture are complementary in helping us to understand the wonder of God's creation (CCC 37, 159, 283-9).

RSE in a Christian Context

- *Note:* work on the sixth and ninth commandments are taken together covering the gift of human sexuality, its inherent goodness, and its proper place in the context of marriage. Keeping these commandments involves practising the virtue of chastity.
- Love is the fundamental and innate vocation of every human being (FC 11; LFL 19, 21). This vocation to love is realised in two diverse ways: in marriage, or in a life of celibacy for the love of the Kingdom (FC 16; EGHL 56; HS 34).
- Our bodies are good because God created them and will raise them up on the last day (GS 14).
- The human body is sacred – the visible image of God.
- God created male and female in God's plan for creation.
- The male and female body are, each in their characteristic way, made in the image and likeness of God.
- Sexual difference (the difference between male and female) is part of the variety of God's gifts.
- Sexuality is good because it is a gift from God (HS 11; LFL 28; HS 4, 11).
- Sexuality gives the possibility for sharing pure love, altruistic love (EGHL 36).
- Sexuality fulfils God's plan of love (LFL 24).
- The use of sexuality reaches its full meaning when it expresses the personal giving of man and woman even unto death (HS 3, 31).
- Sex is a great gift of God who placed the ability to generate life in the human body, thereby sharing his creative power with us (HS 96).
- Chastity is a spiritual power that helps us love and respect ourselves and others. It helps us to see them as persons to reverence because they were created in the image of God (HS 16- 17; CCC 2337-91).
- Life is precious and God-given from the moment of conception to natural death.

- Chastity is a spiritual power which frees love from selfishness and aggression for the sake of true self-giving realised in each person's specific vocation (HS 4, 16-21; LFL 138).
- A Christian practises the virtue of chastity by cultivating decency and modesty in behaviour, dress and speech (HS 4, 56).
- Sexuality is physical, but also psychological and spiritual (EGHL 5; HS 3, 13).
- We are called to love and to self-giving in the unity of body and spirit (HS 10).
- Conjugal love makes married couples capable of the greatest possible gift, the gift by which they become cooperators with God for giving life to a new human person (HS 15).
- Sexual intercourse is an act of love within marriage (FC 11, EGHL 5, 95; HS 14).
- Christians respect life because life comes from God and every person has a right to life. Therefore, abortion is forbidden (CCC 2258, 2319; HS 137).

