



Christian Faith	Word of God
<p>Mystery of God</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God knows and loves me personally (CCC 300). • Christians live their faith in God through prayer and action (faith as living/witnessing). • Faith challenges Christians to work for the Kingdom/Reign of God (CCC 542). <p>Mystery of the Church/Kingdom</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All members of the Christian family are called to worship God and to serve their communities in imitation of Jesus. • Strand: Word of God • Strand Unit: Sacred Scripture • Jesus' Public Life (CCC 535–50, 1716–29). • Luke 10:27, the Greatest Commandment. 	<p>Sacred Scripture</p>
Liturgy and Prayer	Christian Morality
<p>Prayer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God calls us to prayer and we respond (GS 18; CCC 2567). • God always hears our prayers. • The church is God's house, where his family comes together (CCC 1180; LG 6; 1 Tm 3:15). • God's family gathers in the parish church to pray and celebrate (CCC 1069–71, 2179). • The church is a holy place where people go to pray and talk to God (CCC 1181). 	<p>Human Dignity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God gives us gifts and talents to use them for his glory, for our own growth, for the well-being of others and the care of creation.





Monday – Living Life to the Full with God

24 January 2022



‘God is always present with us. When we put our faith in Jesus, God gives us his spirit, who dwells with us and in us.’ (Jn 14:16–17)

Consider:

Having a good or positive attitude leads us to find happiness in everyday things. When we build a close relationship with God, through prayer and talking to God, we understand better what God wants from us and we can reflect on all that we are grateful for in our lives. Through looking outward, we become aware of the gifts God has given us and what is truly important in life. Through this awareness and gratitude, we are enabled to live life to the full with God.

Explore:

Gratitude Reflection

We are going to spend some time reflecting on God’s love for us and how grateful we are for this love that enables us to live our lives to the full.

1. Settle yourself on to your chair and relax your body. Take a few deep, calming breaths in and out slowly to relax. Let yourself become aware of where you are. Think about all the things you can touch, see, hear and smell. We thank God for the gifts he has given us to live our lives to the full.
2. Next, gently close your eyes. Bring to mind the people in your life to whom you are close – your friends and your family. We thank God for them. We are grateful to God for them.
3. Now, turn your attention onto yourself: you are a unique individual, blessed with imagination, the ability to communicate, to learn from the past and plan for the future. For this, we are grateful to God.
4. Finally, take a moment to consider all that is good in your life. Your life is a precious gift from God. Through knowing God’s love for you, you can live your life to the full. We are grateful to God for his love for us.



Activity:

Gratitude Jar

It only requires a few ingredients: a jar (a box can also work), a copy of the label below, coloured strips of paper, a pen or pencil for writing the gratitude notes, a ribbon, stickers, glitter, and whatever else is needed to decorate the jar.

Step 1: Find a jar or box.

Step 2: Decorate the jar using the printable label which students can decorate and glue to the jar or box. Students could tie a ribbon around the jar’s neck, put stickers on its sides, use clear glue and glitter to make it sparkle, paint it or keep it simple. It is up to each student to make it their own.





Step 3: (This is the most important step, which will be repeated every day this week). Invite the students to think of at least three things throughout the day that they are grateful to God for. Initially the teacher may need to invite suggestions. Be sure to include simple, everyday things. Invite the class to write down what they are grateful for on the coloured strips of paper and place the strips in their jar.



The jars can be kept in the sacred space for this week and at the end of the week the students can bring them home. Children can be reminded that if they are ever feeling especially down and need something to remind them of how lucky they are, they can take some notes from the jar to read about all that is good in their lives.

Printable label:

We are grateful to God
for his love for us.





Tuesday – Living Life to the Full Together



25 January 2022

‘Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.’ (Jn 13:34)

Consider:

Jesus taught us about the unlimited nature of love. Our neighbour is not just someone within our community. Our neighbour is anyone in need of love and mercy. Instead of asking who deserves our love as a neighbour, we are reminded about the importance of treating everyone as we ourselves would like to be treated. When we celebrate our differences as humans, we care about each other and we are truly living our lives to the full with God.

In our classrooms today we are surrounded by differences in ethnicity, religion, culture, gender, abilities and many other differences. As Catholics, we are called to include everyone in our lives – to respect them and love them as neighbours.

Explore:

Explain to the class that God calls us to live life to the full with others. The greatest commandment that Jesus gave us was to love one another. He didn't say to love the ones who look like us, who act like us, or who speak as we do. He simply said to love one another.

Loving everyone is not always easy. Jesus taught us to love our neighbour as ourselves. Let us think about what Jesus meant when he said this.

Take some time to explore the following question with the class:

- What is a neighbour?
- Who are my neighbours?
- How does God want us to treat our neighbours?

Bible search: Let's look in our bibles and read about what God says about how we should treat our neighbours.

The teacher can read any or all of the following pieces to the class. The class could spend some time exploring the passage and what it teaches us about living our lives to the full together.

- Mark 12:28–34
- Matthew 7:12
- Matthew 19:19
- Matthew 22:36–40
- Romans 13:8–10
- Galatians 5:14

There are a lot of verses about loving our neighbour. With so many verses in the bible about this, we know loving our neighbours is important to God. How does he say we should love them?

God wants us to love our neighbours as we love ourselves. What do you think God means by that?

Brainstorm ways in which we can show our love for our neighbour.





Activity:
The People Chain

Provide the children with strips of various colours of construction paper that are all the same length and size. On each strip encourage each pupil to record one of the ways we can show love for our neighbour. Explain to the children that each loop represents how we should treat all those that we meet.

Once each child has finished writing and decorating their strip, they can be joined together to create a chain to decorate the classroom.





Wednesday – Grandparents’ Day: Celebrating Being Together Again



26 January 2022

‘And now these three remain: faith, hope and love.
But the greatest of these is love.’ (1 Cor 13:13)

Consider:

During Catholic Schools Week each year, schools celebrate the important role played by grandparents in passing on the faith. The love of a grandparent is to be celebrated and cherished, especially in recent times that saw so many children separated from their grandparents because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Last year we were apart, but this year we can celebrate being together again.

As this pandemic continues to affect our lives, it is possible that grandparents may not be able to visit our schools as normal. It is more important than ever, though, to continue to show our grandparents our gratitude and celebrate all that they do for us.

Explore:

Our grandparents love us unconditionally just as God loves us unconditionally. They show this love in many ways. One of the most important ways is by showing us how they know God and how important God is in their lives.

Encourage the children in your class to write a letter to their grandparents to remind them of how much they are loved. (This could also be done for a grandparent who has passed away.)

If the school is unable to host the annual Grandparents’ Day celebration in school, then third to sixth classes may wish to work on individual mini projects about their grandparents.





The following questions could be used to interview grandparents and the answers recorded in written form. Each child could compile their answers and decorate their work to create a display for the classroom or common areas in the school.



1. Did you come from a big family? How many brothers and sisters did you have?
2. Where did you go to school? What was your favourite subject?
3. What games did you play at school? Who did you play with? Did you like to read books?
4. What was your favourite book?
5. What was your favourite time of year?
6. What kinds of occasions did you celebrate? Where did you celebrate them?
7. Did you have a best friend?
8. What kinds of things did you do together?
9. Did you have a pet?
10. What was your favourite food?
11. What do you remember about your First Communion or your Confirmation day?
12. What were your favourite prayers growing up?
13. What do you remember about the time when I was born?
14. The children could recall one special memory of a time spent with a grandparent.
15. The children could write a short prayer of thanks to God for giving them such special grandparents.





Thursday – Living Life in Wonder and Awe



27 January 2022

‘Nature cannot be regarded as something separate from ourselves or as a mere setting in which we live. We are part of nature, included in it and thus in constant interaction with it.’ (Laudato Si’ 139)

Consider:

In our rapidly changing world, dominated by screens and new technology, it is a delight to watch children become mesmerised in the wonders of nature. Wonder in a child is an inner desire while awe can be described as a powerful feeling that leaves a mark. Wonder and awe move us, inspire us and motivate us. They make us feel connected to something larger than ourselves. They encourage well-being and bring us closer to God our creator.

It is important that children are given the opportunity to spend time considering the importance of caring for the earth, our common home, a wonderful and awe-inspiring gift from God.

Explore:

We are called to be agents of climate and social justice in our world. Spend some time exploring this statement with the class to ensure they understand what it means.



Discuss with the class how we can protect the world God has created for us. God calls us to care for and protect our beautiful world. How can we help our environment in God’s name?



Invite the class to think of the place where they live. Use the following questions to generate a discussion about where they live:

- What do you like most about where you live?
- Can you identify any natural features in your area? (Gardens, fields, local parks, trees along the road, etc.)
- Why are natural features important? (Encourage the class to consider this question in relation to themselves and also animals, plants, birds, insects, fish, etc.)
- How do you protect the natural surroundings of your home from damage or destruction?

If the school is involved in Green-Schools, this lesson can link in with past and current themes.

Prayer:

Invite the class to repeat the following prayer. Allow each child to include what they consider to be their favourite part of nature.

Loving God, we thank you and praise you for the beauty in all of creation but most of all for [each person says their favourite part of nature]. Thank you for the beauty of our common home. Amen.





Activity:

Clean Sweep Game

Divide the class into small groups with about six in each group. It is better to do this exercise in a hall or larger dry space with a hard surface. Mark a big circle for each group. Three from the group stand inside the circle and three stand outside. Give the three outside the circle sheets of newspaper. Give the three inside a paper or plastic bag each.

On 'Go', have the children outside the circle tear their newspapers into little pieces and throw the pieces into the circle. Instruct the those inside the circle that their job is to keep the circle clean, by picking up all the paper and putting it in the bags. Call time after one minute and see if the inside group was able to keep the circle clean. Before the class return to the classroom, have everyone gather the remaining paper shreds.

Explore the following questions with the class:

- How did you feel when you threw all that rubbish into the circle?
- How did you feel trying to keep the circle clean?
- Is this game like or unlike what's happening in the world? Explain/discuss.
- Do you think God feels the same way the children in the circle felt? Why or why not?
- How does God expect us to care for the earth?
- How do you help care for the earth, our common home?
- What else can you do to help care for the earth?

If the class do not mention the following things, make sure to introduce them: recycling, walking or riding a bike instead of asking for a ride in a car, and using water and other resources carefully.

Photocopy the worksheet for today. Encourage the children to fill in ways they can take care of the earth.



Worksheet:

Thank you, God, for creating the earth, our common home.
 This week I will take care of the earth by ...

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Dear God, please help me to take good care of our wonderful world. Amen.





Friday – Living Life and Facing the Future



28 January 2022

‘He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.” (Mk 16:15)

Consider:

God’s love is constant, unconditional and everlasting. As we build our relationship with God, trust and faith bring spiritual strength, love, knowledge, and peace. When we look to the future, we can have confidence that through God’s love we can extend love, forgiveness, understanding and compassion toward ourselves and others. Our relationship with God helps us to flourish and experience success. We are able to face the future knowing God is with us always.

Explore:

Say to the class: Now that we are coming to the end of Catholic Schools Week, we remember God’s love for us. During this week we spent time thinking about how we can live our lives to the full with God and each other. Now we consider how we can spread the Good News and face the future together in God’s love. We are asked to sow the seeds of love in our lives now and in the future. Each time we show God’s love, our relationship with God and with others grows just like a tiny seed that is planted grows.



Ask the class to think of ways they can show God’s love to one another. Invite the class to share some of their ideas. On the board write the phrase ‘Sowing the Seeds of Love’. Record some of the suggestions made by the class.



Activity:

Sowing the Seeds of Love

Provide each child with a yoghurt pot, some soil and some easy grow seeds, such as cress seeds. Allow the class time to plant their seeds and label their pots. Discuss with the class what the seeds will need to grow.

Distribute the worksheet for the lesson and allow the class time to write down some of the suggestions recorded earlier in the lesson about how they can show God’s love to one another. Allow the children time to decorate the sheet. Encourage the class to bring the sheet home to share their ideas with their families.





When I plant seeds they grow.
In the same way I can plant the seeds of love by ...

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Dear God, please help me to plant the seeds of love every day. Help me to face the future knowing that you are with me and that you want me to share your love with all those I meet.

Thank you, God, for your love. Amen.

