

CATHOLIC
EDUCATION
MELBOURNE

Seeking to Live the Good News

STUDENT WORKBOOK

YEAR
5

Seeking to Live the Good News Student Workbook Year 5

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

Scripture

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God's Mission for Me

Baptism



2

Who is at this baptism?

.....

What is happening?

.....

What does the photograph tell me about baptism?

.....

.....

Jesus' Mission / My Mission

Jesus' Mission	We share in Jesus' Mission	I share in Jesus' Mission

3

SOMETHING TO REMEMBER

When I was baptised God gave me a special mission.

Let us pray:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

All: **Amen.**

We are Gifted

Let us pray:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

My gifts

Gifts and Ministries

Write underneath each ticked ministry the gift that someone would bring to that ministry.

Church cleaner

Baptism group

Catechist Musician

Maintenance group

Visitor to the homebound

Reader

Pastoral Associate

Special minister

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Parish school teacher

Gardener

Letter writer

Children's Liturgy Leader

Money counter

St Vincent de Paul Group (St Vinnies)

Prayer group

Vinnies Shop worker

My Gifts

What gifts do I have that could contribute to my parish community?

SOMETHING TO REMEMBER

Let us pray

Catechist: In the name of the Father ...

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

Let us pray.

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

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

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

Lent

Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday occurs 40 days before Easter (not including Sundays) and is the start of the Lenten season of preparation. Lent is a time of preparation for the most important feast of the Church's calendar – Easter – the celebration of Jesus' death and Resurrection. Ash Wednesday signifies the start of our journey towards Easter. As with all significant journeys, the first day is important. When people set out on a journey they try to prepare for what might lie ahead. The same is true for Lent, the start of our journey to Easter. Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, is celebrated with a special ritual.

The ashes that are used on Ash Wednesday are usually the burned palms from the previous year's Palm Sunday celebration. The cross of ashes marked on our foreheads continues the original Jewish understanding of ashes as a symbol of sorrow and purification. When we receive the mark of the cross made with the ashes, it is a sign that we are willing to go on our own journey of preparation, to cleanse our heart through prayer, fasting and alms-giving. The Sign of the Cross reminds us that our journey is to the celebration of the gift of Jesus' death and Resurrection. The ashes remind us that we are called to change how we live and to turn our face towards the way of Christ.

On Ash Wednesday we consider how we might make our journey. We think about what actions of prayer, fasting and alms-giving we might undertake. When we **pray**, we are turning our heart and mind to God, seeking God's love and praising God's goodness. To **fast** does not just mean not to eat; it can also mean missing out on something for ourselves by doing something good for others. For example, you might go with Mum or Dad to visit a relative in a nursing home when you could be out with your friends. We **give alms** when we share what we have with those less fortunate than ourselves. Project Compassion is a Lenten awareness program organised by Caritas and is one way that we can give money during Lent to help others. There might be a project happening in the parish that you can contribute towards. You might be able to support a refugee program or the St Vincent de Paul Society might have a special collection. Whatever is available, you might consider giving some of your pocket money towards one of these projects that help others.

The important thing about Ash Wednesday is that we remember that it is the beginning of our journey. It is a time when we will start to pray more often, do something for others rather than ourselves, and give alms to support the needy.

What will you choose?

Some Questions

1. Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent, means this to me:

2. Why do we need Ash Wednesday?

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3. For Lent I will ...

Prayer

When we pray we think about God, we turn our minds and our hearts to God. Whenever we decide to pray, it is like deciding to go and visit a friend. The more we speak to the friend, the more our friendship grows. Through prayer we get to know God better. During Lent we are asked to pray so that we might realise how we can know God better and make good choices.

In your group, brainstorm some answers for these questions:

What are some ways you can pray?

Where might you pray?

How does this prayer help me prepare for Easter?

Fasting

When we are asked to fast during Lent, we are not expected to just not eat. Rather, we are being asked to think very carefully about how we are living our lives each day. Do we eat food without thinking about who made it, or where it came from or without acknowledging that God provides for us, daily? Lent provides us with the opportunity to stop and think. If we stop eating lots of lollies and take-away food, or extra-large portions at meal times, or extra snacks during the day, we can remember where all these great things come from. We can remember that someone has taken time to prepare these things that God has provided for us. So fasting during Lent is a very special opportunity to reduce what we eat or to stop eating something in order to think about God, who provides, and our parents, family, friends or community, who contribute to the food that sustains our life.

Fasting during Lent doesn't always mean that we have to give up food. We can also do something that makes us more thoughtful about others. We might help more around the house or do something without complaining.

With your group, brainstorm specific ways that you can fast during Lent. You might like to answer the following questions:

What might you give up?

What more might you do?

How do these things help you prepare for Easter?

Alms-giving

The word 'alms' is an old English word that means giving money or food or clothing or other goods to charity or to a person in need.

If we lived in a country town or a small community, we would know who needed extra help. We would know if our neighbour had lost a family member and was finding caring for the rest of the family difficult. We would take the family a casserole or offer to do the washing or ironing. In the larger communities in which most of us live, it is difficult to know who needs help. This does not mean that we ignore this particular aspect of Lent.

We can give to those in need, even if we do not know them personally. Caritas Australia is a Catholic fundraising organisation that conducts *Project Compassion* during Lent. One way of alms-giving is to contribute something from your own pocket money. If you choose to 'give-up' something for Lent such as lollies, you might consider putting the money you would have spent on the items into *Project Compassion*.

To make this 'giving' even more significant, you might consider doing something that will also show that you care for how your community lives. Talk to your parents about what you might do that is safe and within their guidelines. Consider helping out a neighbour who needs something specific to be done such as weeding the garden. Ask your parents if you can join them when they are visiting elderly relatives or doing some community service or volunteer work. Consider how you can do simple 'giving' actions within your own home or school. Do things quietly without looking for thanks or praise.

In your group, brainstorm the ways you can give alms during Lent. You might like to use the questions below.

What sorts of things can you do at home?

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What can you do at school?

What sorts of things can you do (with your parent's permission) in your local community?

Let us pray

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

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

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

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

The gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord, Jesus Christ.

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

(Pause for a short while.)

What do you think we are being told in this text?

Catechist: We will now receive the ashes to remind us that we have begun our journey of preparation.

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

Student: Amen.

Catechist: Let us pray:

Come to the Lord with all your heart.

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

Catechist: Leave the past in ashes.

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

Catechist: Turn to God with tears and fasting.

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

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

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

The Beatitudes

Let us pray

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

We will now listen carefully as we read the Matthew's account of the Sermon of the Mount.

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

Students read the Beatitudes from the cards provided.

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

Pause

Catechist: Let us pray:

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

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

All: **Amen.**

Thinking Hats Activity

Thinking Hats	Questions and Activities
White Hat – The facts, the information	<p>What does the word ‘beatitude’ mean?</p> <p>In the space provided on the next page, write/draw words that would answer this question:</p> <p>Identify people in today's world who would fit each of your three Beatitudes.</p> <p>Be specific for each of your Beatitudes.</p>
Red Hat – Emotional reactions, main feelings	<p>How do you feel about finding the guide to be really happy?</p> <p>In the space provided, write a short letter to a friend outlining your feelings about finding the guide.</p> <p>What does each Beatitude make you feel?</p> <p>Draw a symbol that reflects these feelings in the box provided.</p>
Green Hat – Creative improvement and ideas	<p>What does each of the three Beatitudes ask of you?</p> <p>How does each Beatitude suggest you should live?</p> <p>Prepare a list of ‘10 steps to living the Beatitudes’ that answers these two questions.</p>
Yellow Hat – Positive aspects, strengths and advantages	<p>What are the benefits of living according to the Beatitudes?</p> <p>What are the strengths of understanding the Beatitudes? (Focus on your three beatitudes only.)</p> <p>On page 17, create a poster that identifies the benefits and strengths.</p>
Black Hat – concerns, disadvantages, negative aspects	<p>What are some of the difficulties that you face when you choose to live the Beatitudes? (Focus on your three Beatitudes only.)</p> <p>Create a board game of ‘Snakes and Ladders’ on the grid provided. Put the difficulties you face at the top of each snake and the benefits at the bottom of each ladder.</p>
Blue Hat – reflecting on the process	<p>Write a statement that summarises how you can live as the Beatitudes suggest.</p> <p>Using greaseproof paper, present the statement as a scroll. Begin with ‘To live the Beatitudes I ...’</p>

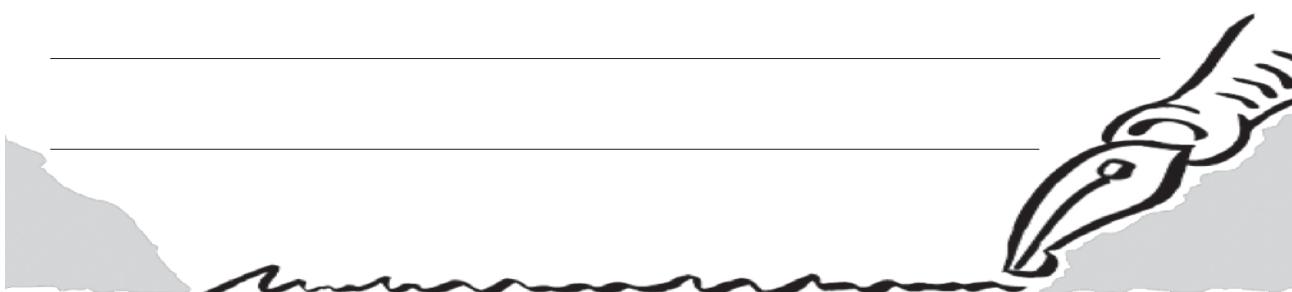
White Hat

The word 'beatitude' means ...

People today who fit my three Beatitudes ...

Red Hat

My letter to a friend ...



Red Hat (continued)

A symbol

Green Hat

10 steps to living the Beatitudes

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

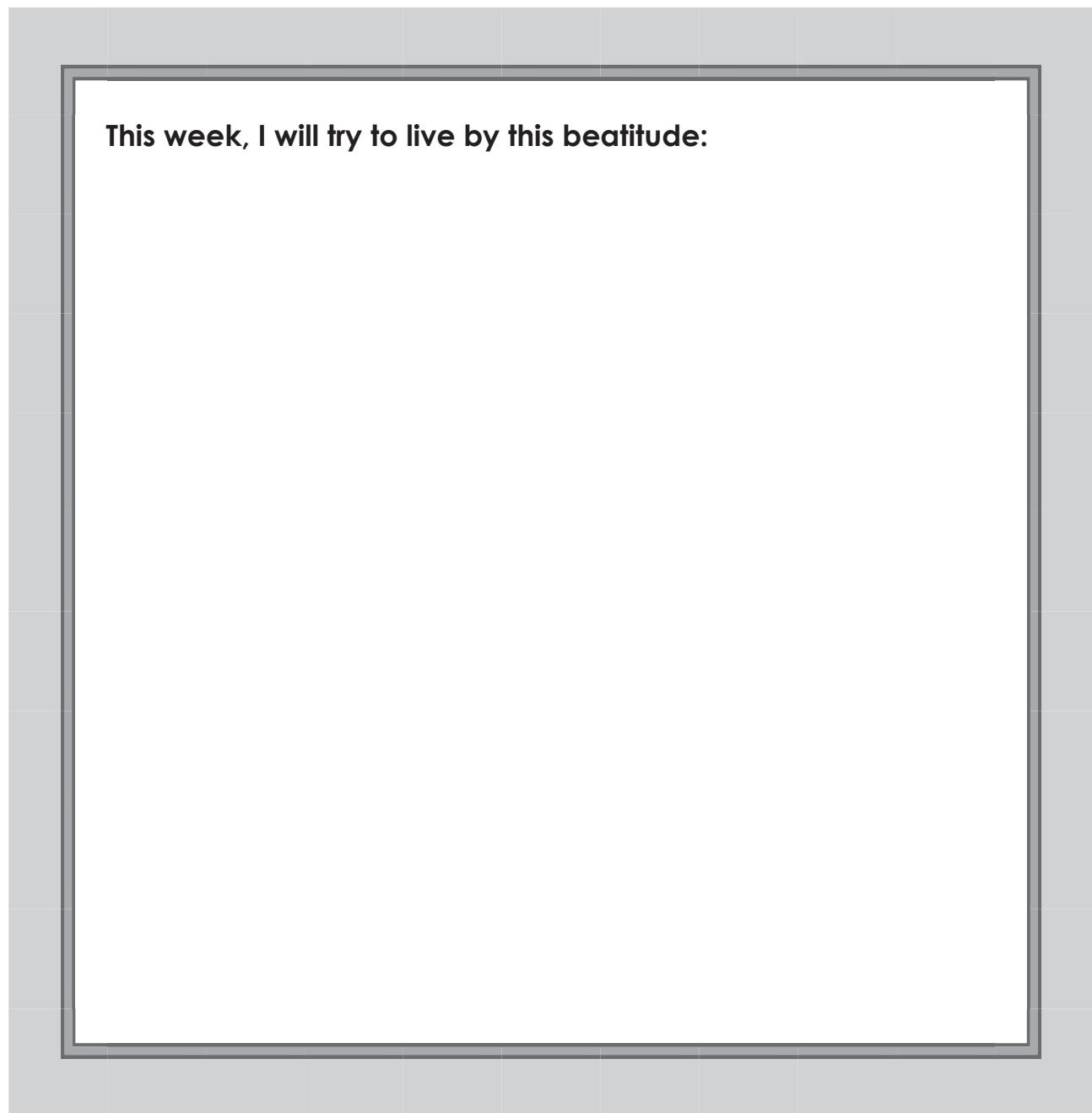
10

Yellow Hat

The Benefits and Strengths of the Beatitudes (a poster)

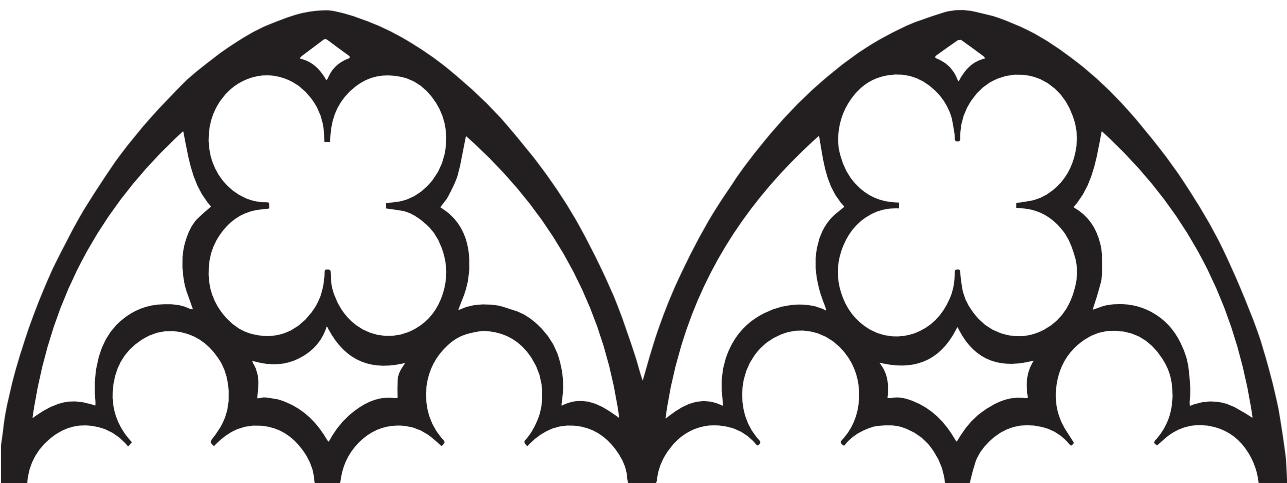
SOMETHING TO REMEMBER

This week, I will try to live by this beatitude:



The Christian Community Prays

The Christian Community Prays Together



The Christian community gathers to pray when:

Be Just and Respectful

Let us pray

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The parable of the labourers in the vineyard

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

Matthew 20: 1–16

Answer the Question:

How might you describe justice as Jesus wants us to understand it?

Complete the sentence

I am just and respect others when I ...

Let us pray:

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

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

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

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

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

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

SOMETHING TO REMEMBER

We must be just
and respect the
rights of others.

Liturgical Signs and Symbols

Let us pray

23

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

Amen.

Sign

In everyday life signs tell us what to do or identify something. We know where the car park is or we are directed to the MCG sportsground when we see the signs that tell us where these are located. We can identify the local hospital because it has a sign at the front entrance.

A sign, therefore points to something that we are familiar with, but it isn't obvious or clear. When we talk about sign in the sacraments we are saying that, although what is happening is something that we know, such as the priest pouring water over the head of the baby being baptised, the action points us to something that is not so clear: that through this water the child is becoming part of the Christian family, that Jesus and the Holy Spirit are with this child.



Symbol

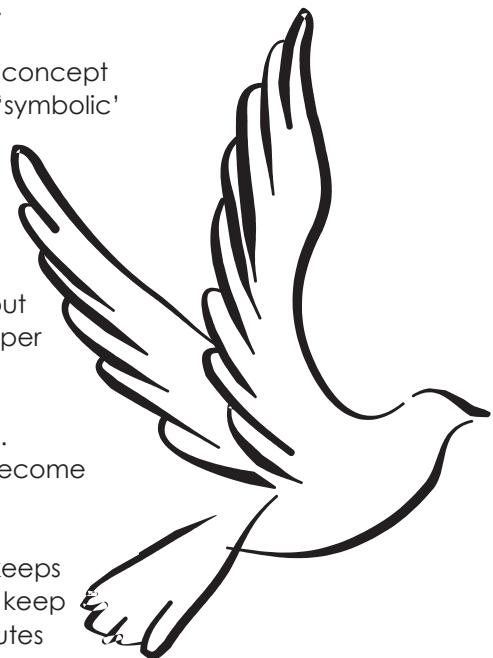
A symbol is something concrete that represents a concept or understanding. It can be an object, a drawing or a design.

The object, when used as a symbol, helps us understand a concept better. The meaning of the concept is deepened and the 'symbolic' object has another meaning beyond what it is.

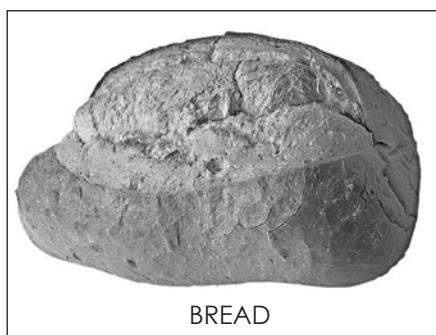
For example, the symbol of a dove is understood to mean peace and all that peace stands for. Peace is an abstract concept that doesn't look like anything in particular, but when we think about the qualities of a dove and think about the concept in light of these attributes then we gain a deeper sense of what peace means.

The water used during baptism is a symbol as well as a sign. As a sign it points us towards the truth that in baptism we become a member of God's family and one with Jesus.

Water is also a symbol of life, death and cleansing. Water keeps us alive, but can kill us when it floods. Water is also used to keep us clean and free from illness. In baptism, all of these attributes of water help us to understand better what baptism is about. We can appreciate more that we have life in Jesus and are 'cleaned' of all that might have stopped us being a member of God's family.



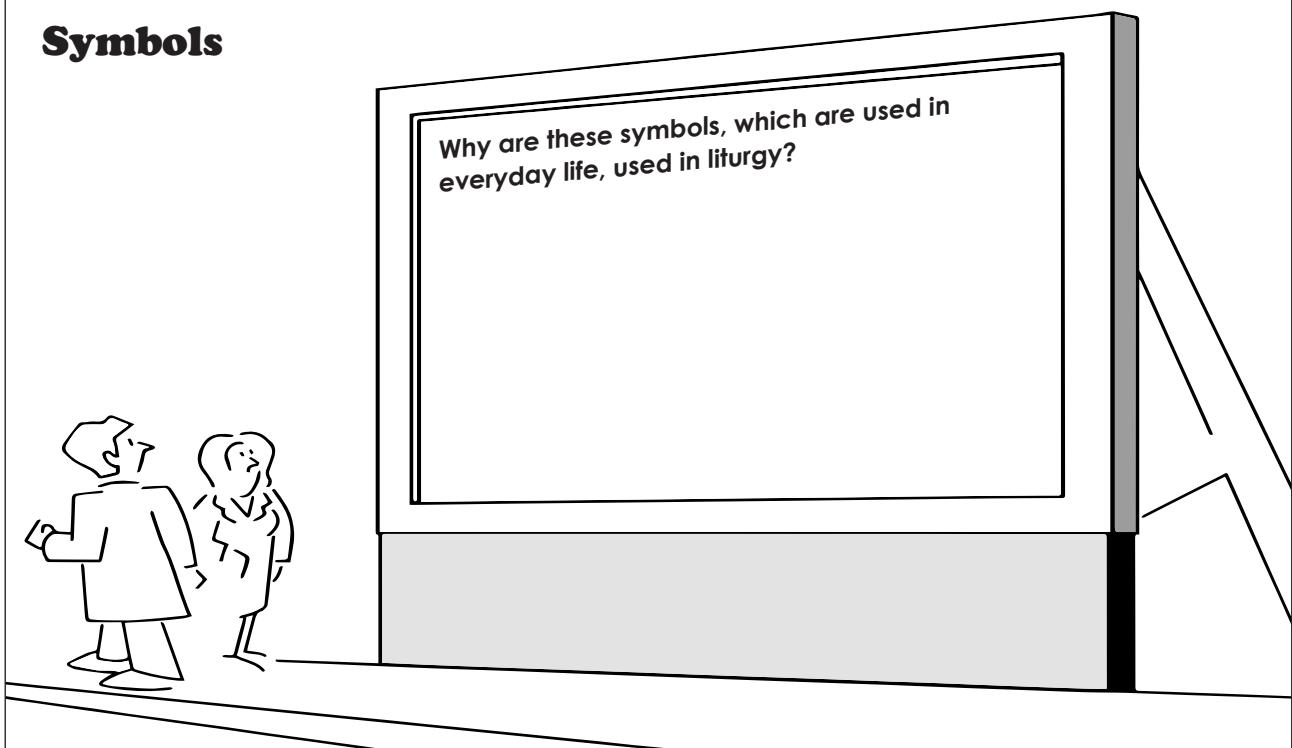
Liturgical Signs and Symbols



Symbols

Why are these symbols, which are used in everyday life, used in liturgy?

25



SOMETHING TO REMEMBER

We use liturgical signs
and symbols.

Easter

Research Cards

Baptismal Water

One of the special ceremonies of the Easter Vigil is the blessing of baptismal water. Easter is a time to remember that we have been baptised in Christ to share in his new life and to belong to the Christian family. The priest stands at the baptism font and prays the Litany of the Saints. Then he blesses the baptismal water and lowers the Easter candle into the water. This reminds us of our baptism when we were bathed in baptismal water as a sign of dying to our old sinful lives and rising to new life.

After the blessing of the water, everyone renews their baptismal promises. Most of us were baptised as very young children, so our parents and godparents spoke for us. They made the baptismal promises for us. At the Easter Vigil we have the opportunity to say them for ourselves. We will also have this opportunity when we receive the sacrament of Confirmation.

After the baptismal promises there is sometimes a baptism, usually of an adult who is becoming a member of the Catholic Church.

Baptism is the first step of initiation in the Church, the People of God. Eucharist and Confirmation are the other stages of initiation.



Easter Fire and Candle

At the Easter Vigil (the night before Easter), the ceremony begins outside the church with a fire, which the priest blesses. The fire reminds us of Jesus because he is the light of the world and because he brings new life to the world. It reminds us that Jesus rose to new life (Resurrection). It reminds us to pray that we might be on fire with love of Jesus. It reminds us to start again.

The Easter candle is a large candle usually made from beeswax. At the Easter Vigil, the priest cuts a cross into the wax of the candle to remind us that Jesus died on the cross.

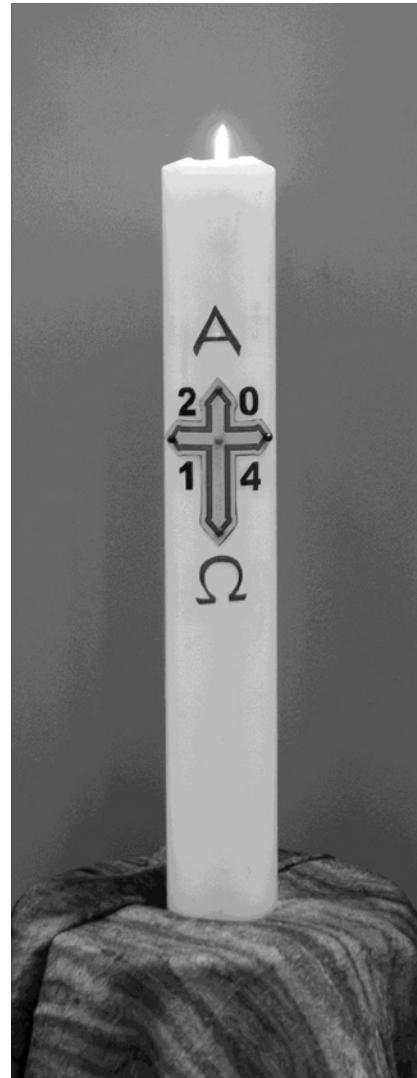
Then he traces on it the Greek letters, alpha and omega, because Jesus is the beginning and the end. (Alpha is the first letter of the Greek alphabet and omega is the last.) The priest inscribes the figures of the current year over and under the arms of the cross because all time belongs to Jesus.

The priest lights the candle from the new fire and says: 'May the light of Christ rising in glory dispel the darkness of our hearts and minds'.

Then the priest lifts the candle up high and sings, 'The light of Christ' and everyone answers, 'Thanks be to God'.

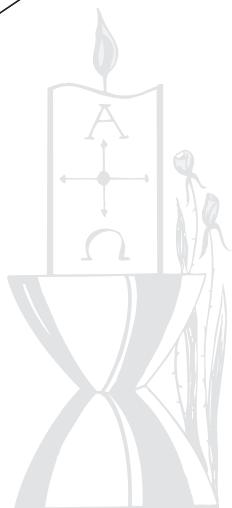
The priest takes the lighted Easter candle into the dark church and everyone processes in behind him as he sings two more times, 'The light of Christ'. Everyone holds a small candle or tape, which they then light from the Easter candle. Eventually, the light spreads throughout the church and it becomes bright with light. The lighted Easter candle reminds us of our baptism and of the candle we received then. The baptismal candle is always lit from the Easter candle. It reminds us to keep burning brightly the light of Christ in our lives.

This is what Jesus said about being the light of the world: 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life' (John 8: 12).

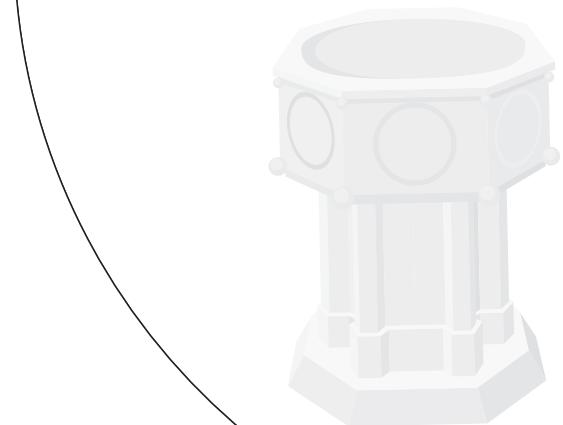


Questions about Easter Symbols

Why do you think
that light is a good
sign for the risen
Lord?



Why do you think
we write Alpha
and Omega and
the year on the
Easter candle?



Why do you think
that water is used
for baptism?

Why do you think
we often have a
baptism at the
Easter vigil?

Let us pray:

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

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

All: **I do.**

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

All: **I do.**

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

All **I do.**

Catechist: Please blow out your candle.

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

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

All: **Our Father ...**

Catechist: Let us conclude with the Glory Be.

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

The Lord's Prayer

Division of the ‘Our Father’

PRAISE:

PETITION:

FORGIVENESS:

Our Father

Our Father who art in heaven,
 Hallowed be thy name.
 Thy kingdom come.
 Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
 Give us this day our daily bread
 And forgive us our trespasses
 as we forgive those who trespass against us.
 And lead us not into temptation.
 But deliver us from evil.
 AMEN.

Contemporary Our Father

Our Father who are in heaven, praised be your name.

 Your Kingdom come ... in our family.

 Your will be done ... in our neighbourhood and throughout the earth,
 as it is in heaven.

 Give us this day our daily bread ... let no one go hungry.
 Forgive us our trespasses ... hurtful words, leaving people out,
 and taking more than our share.

 As we forgive those who ... overcharge us, call us names, leave us out.

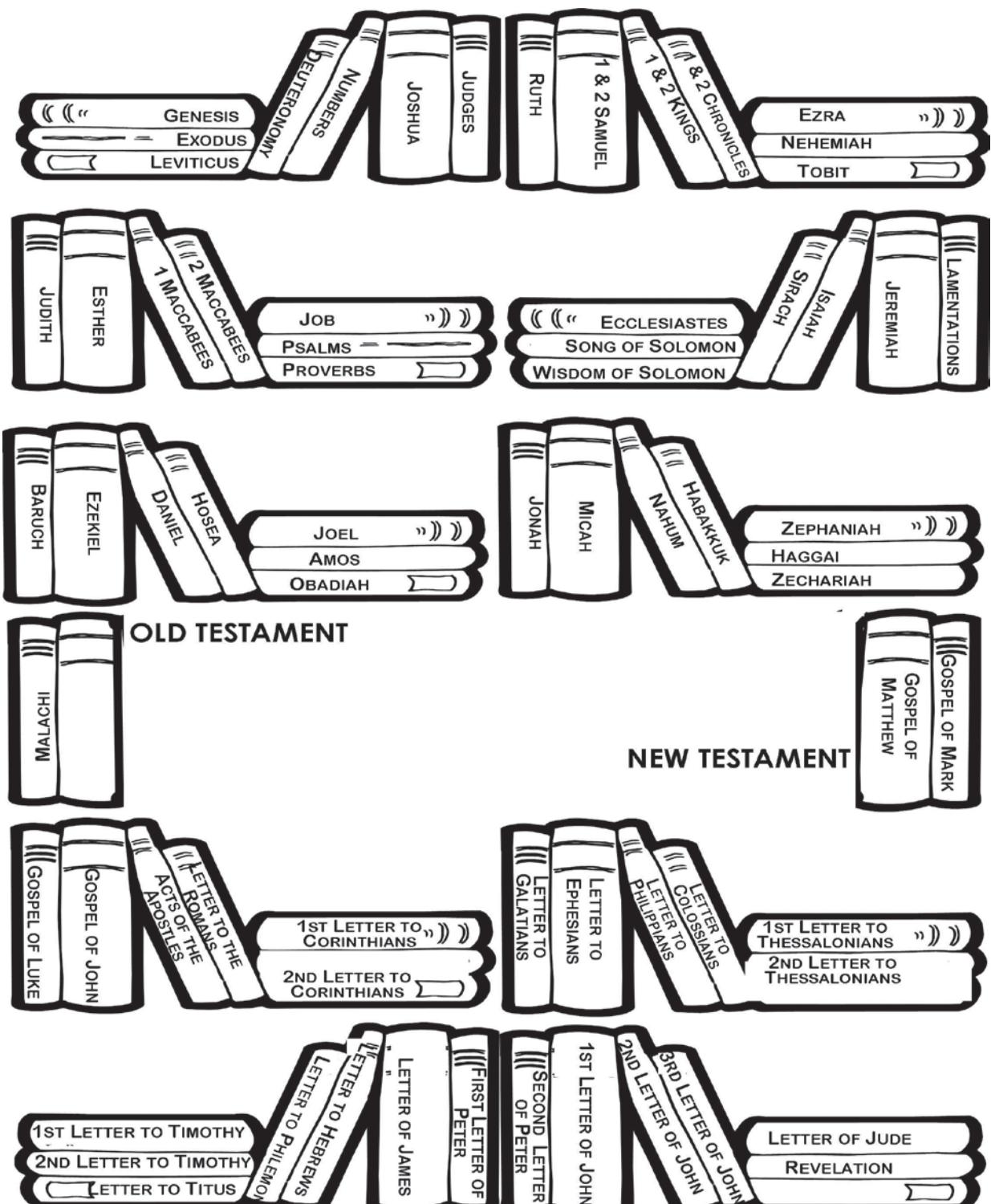
 Lead us not into temptation but towards a life of justice,
 reconciliation and peace. AMEN

SOMETHING TO REMEMBER

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

The Gospel Writers

The Books of the Bible



Gospel Jigsaw

Home Group: Gospel of _____

Discuss the three most important ideas about your gospel. Each person in the group needs to write these ideas down in the boxes below.

Main idea #1 for the Gospel of _____

Main idea #2 for the Gospel of _____

33

Main idea #3 for the Gospel of _____

Expert Group

Change groups so that you are in a group with people from four different 'home groups'. Each person will share their notes from the 'home group' with the new group. In the space below, record three important points from your notes about what each person says, below.

Gospel of Matthew



Gospel of Mark



Gospel of Luke



Gospel of John



35

SOMETHING TO REMEMBER

The gospels were written down for different communities.

Narrative in the Gospels

Let us pray:

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

All: **Now and forever.**

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

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

Catechist: Let us pray:

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

Readings from the infancy Narratives: Matthew 1: 18 – 2: 12

The Birth of Jesus the Messiah

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, ‘Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.’ All this took place to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

‘Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel’, which means, ‘God is with us.’

When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

The Visit of the Wise Men

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking,

‘Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.’ When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, ‘In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel’.

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

Commentary – Matthew 1: 18–2: 12

The section below is a commentary about the text you have just read from Matthew's Gospel. It has been written by a someone who has spent many years studying the gospels. What these writers offer us is the benefit of all their research. We can be helped to understand the scripture text better when we read what they have to say. Read this and then re-read the gospel passage.

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

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

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

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

Readings from the Infancy Narratives: Luke 1: 26–38 and 2:1–20

The Birth of Jesus Foretold

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

The Birth of Jesus

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary,

to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

The Shepherds and the Angels

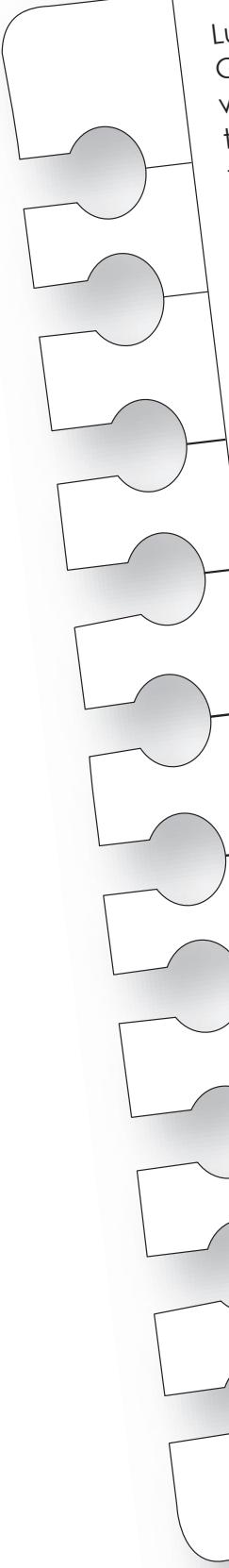
In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see – I am bringing you good news of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

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

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

Commentary – Luke 1: 26–38 and 2:1–20

Read this and then re-read the gospel passage.



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

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

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

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

Infancy Narrative

After reading the infancy narrative carefully, answer the questions below.

1. What is the plot in the narrative (the sequence of events)?

2. Name all the characters in the narrative (identify the main characters other than Jesus).

3. What problems might be in the Infancy narrative?

4. How is the problem solved?

5. What words are used to describe Jesus?

What comes next?

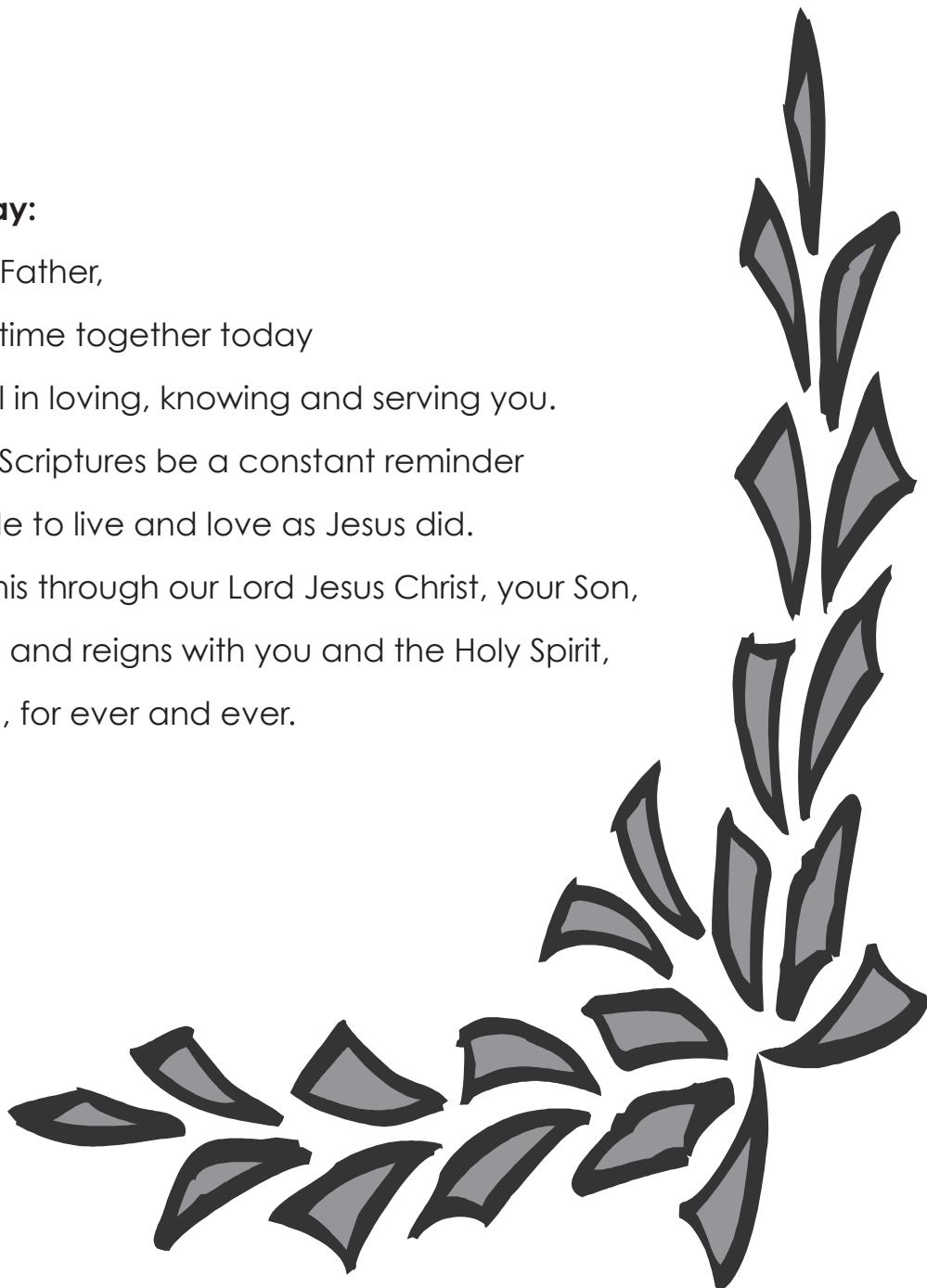
SOMETHING TO REMEMBER

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

The Parables

Let us pray:

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



The Parable of the Sower

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

Matthew 13: 1–8



Parts of a Parable

The Parable of the Sower (Matthew 13: 1–8)

Repetition

Setting

Opposites and contrasts

Use of three

Rule of end stress

Parable of the Good Samaritan

Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. 'Teacher,' he said, 'what must I do to inherit eternal life?' He said to him, 'What is written in the law? What do you read there?' He answered, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself.' And he said to him, 'You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.'

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

Luke 10: 25–37



Parts of a Parable

The Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10: 25–37)

Repetition

Setting

Opposites and contrasts

Use of three

Rule of end stress

SOMETHING TO REMEMBER

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

Miracles

Let us pray:

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

Pattern of Healing Miracle Stories	Pattern of Nature Miracle Stories
Setting: A description of the person and the illness. Cure: The method used for the cure and then the cure performed. Acclamation: The people praise God after they see the cure.	Setting: Description of the situation. Miracle: Occurrence of the miraculous event. Reaction: Description of how participants/observers react.

Jesus Calms the Sea

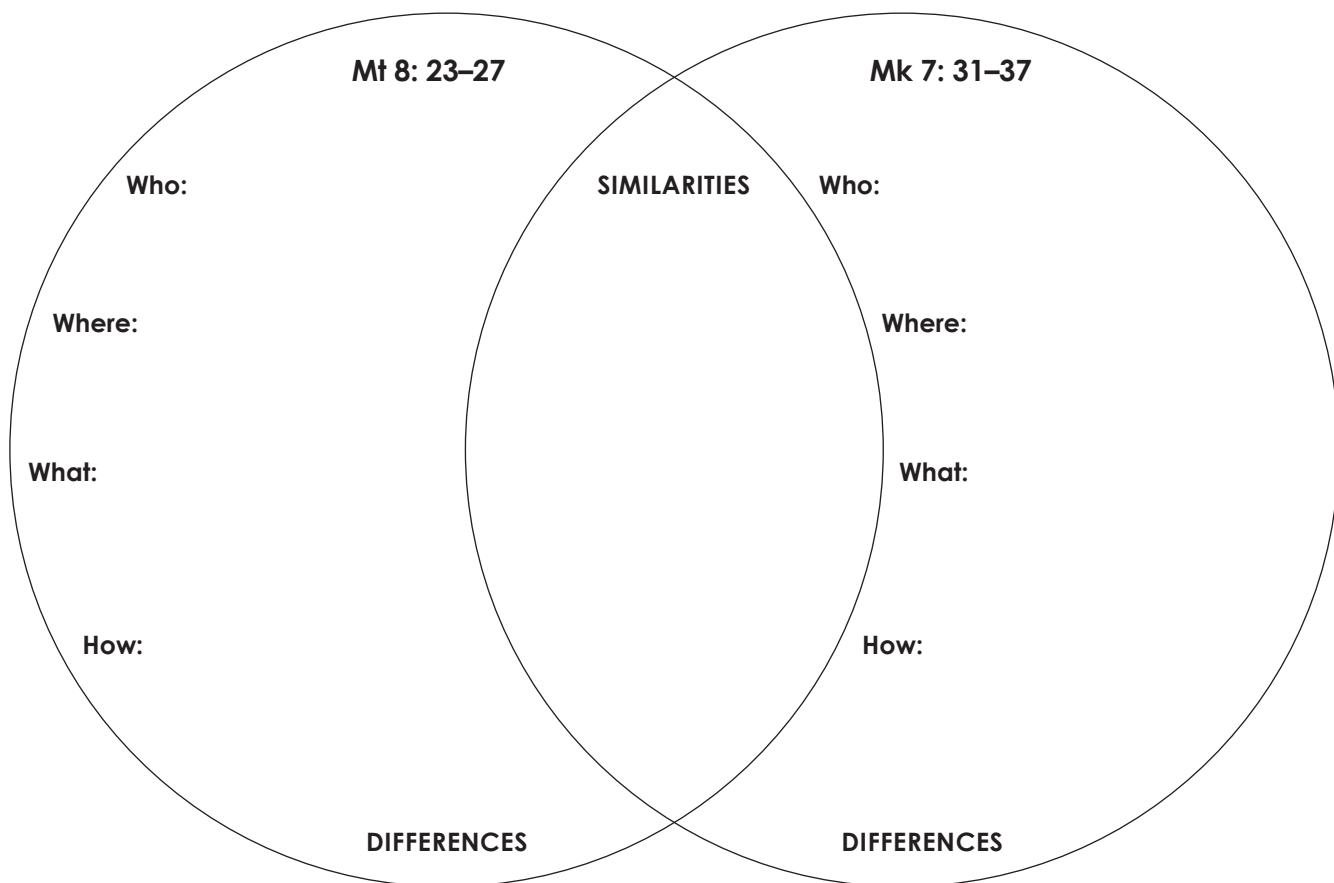
And when he got into the boat, his disciples followed him. A gale arose on the lake, so great that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but he was asleep. And they went and woke him up, saying, 'Lord, save us! We are perishing!' And he said to them, 'Why are you afraid, you of little faith?' Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a dead calm. They were amazed, saying, 'What sort of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?'

Matthew 8: 23–27

Jesus Cures a Deaf Man

Then he returned from the region of Tyre, and went by way of Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. They brought to him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they begged him to lay his hand on him. He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his tongue. Then looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, 'Ephphatha', that is, 'Be opened.' And immediately his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. Then Jesus ordered them to tell no one; but the more he ordered them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. They were astounded beyond measure, saying, 'He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.'

Mark 7: 31–37

Venn Diagram – Similarities and Differences**Form of The Miracles**

Mt 8: 23–27 Jesus Calms the Sea	Mk 7: 31–37 Jesus Cures a Deaf Man
Setting:	Setting:
Miracle occurs:	Cure:
Reaction:	Acclamation:

A Version of _____ for Today

51

Let us pray:

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

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

SOMETHING TO REMEMBER

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

Penance

Let us pray:

52

Catechist:

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

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

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

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

All:

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

Our Father ...

A Short Story or a Play

Record your short story or play in the space below. Everyone in the group has to record the story/play into their own workbook.

The Sacrament of Penance

Let us pray:

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

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

All: Glory be to the Father ...

SOMETHING TO REMEMBER

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

Together With Christ

Let us pray:

Catechist: Grant, almighty God, that we may celebrate with heartfelt devotion these days of joy, which we keep in honour of the risen Lord, and that what we relive in remembrance we may always hold to in what we do. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

(Collect taken from the Sixth Sunday of Easter, Year A)

All:

Amen.

Some Thoughts

What might the author be trying to convey to the reader/listener?

How does this speak to the friendship we can have with Jesus?

What does it say about you sharing in the Eucharist?

Ways of Praying

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.
Amen.



HAIL MARY

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.

Blessed art thou amongst women
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners,
now and at the hour of our death.

Amen.



1. Draw a red circle around the part of the prayer that praises Mary.
2. Draw a green circle around the part where we ask Mary to pray for us.
3. Underline in red, some of the things for which we praise Mary.
4. Underline in green what we ask for.

Definition of Prayer

My Prayer Song

59

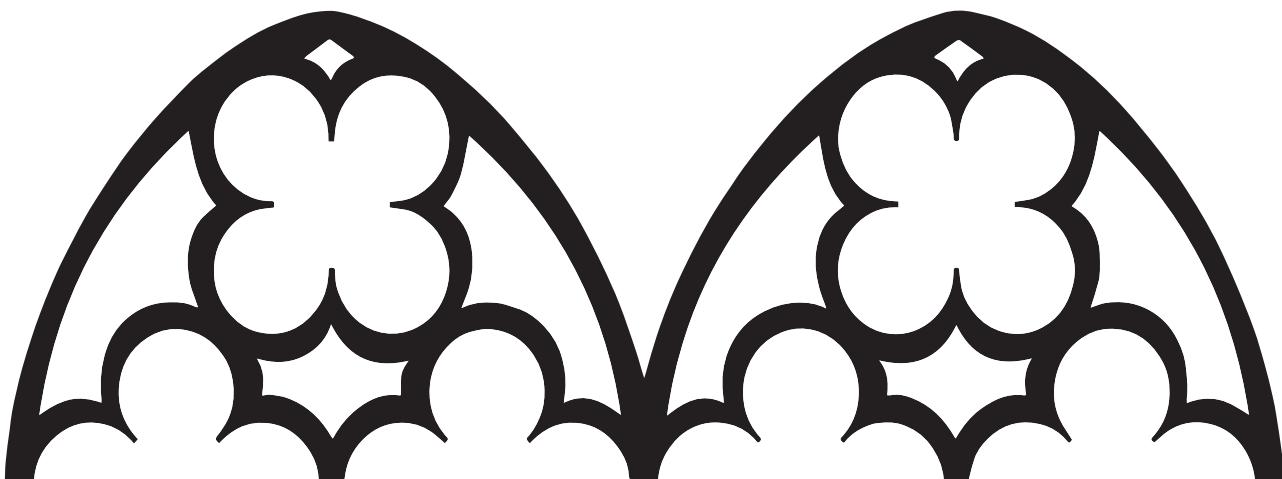
SOMETHING TO REMEMBER

I can pray in many ways.

Sing Your Prayer



The Spread of the Good News



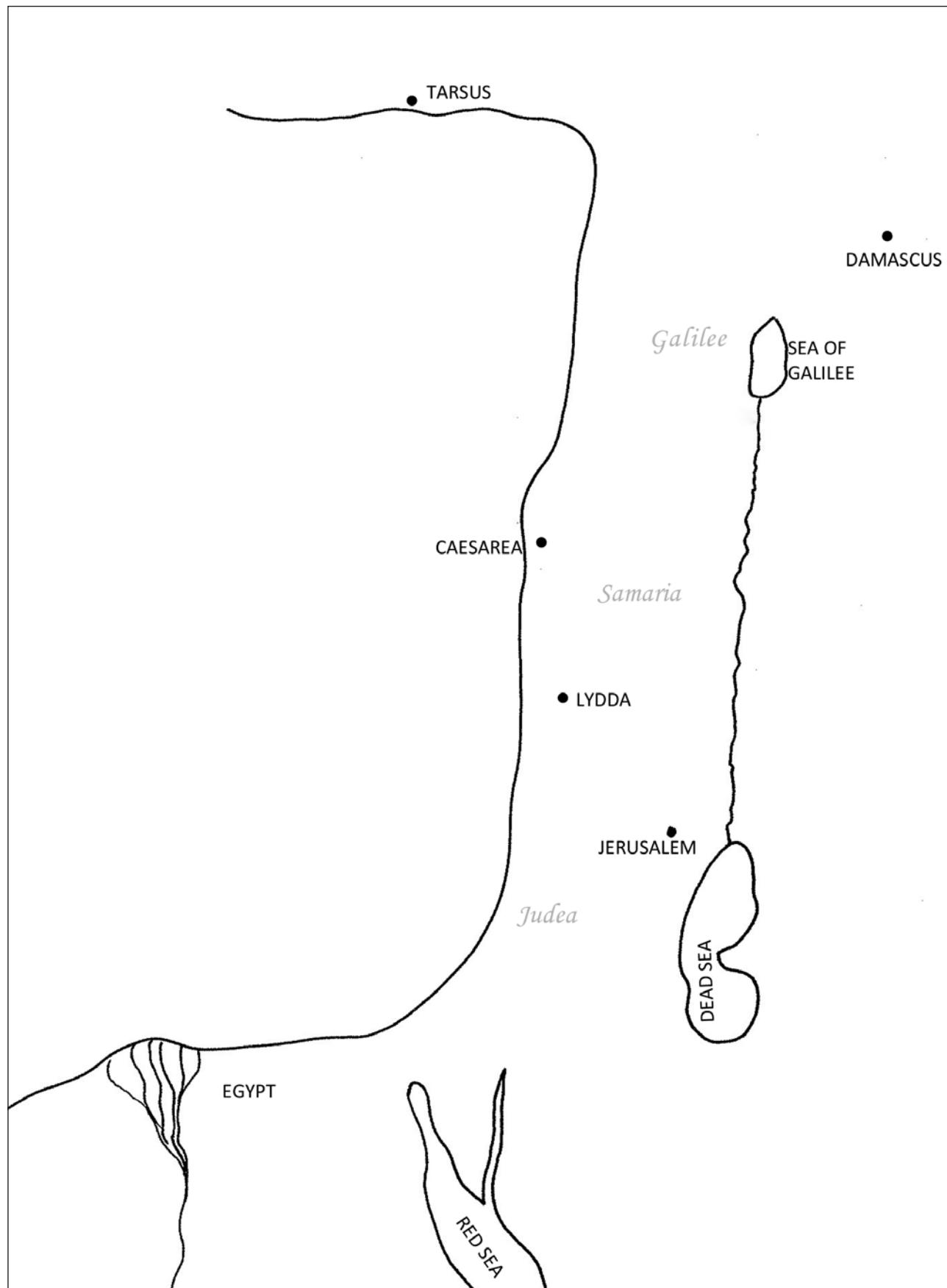
The Acts of the Apostles

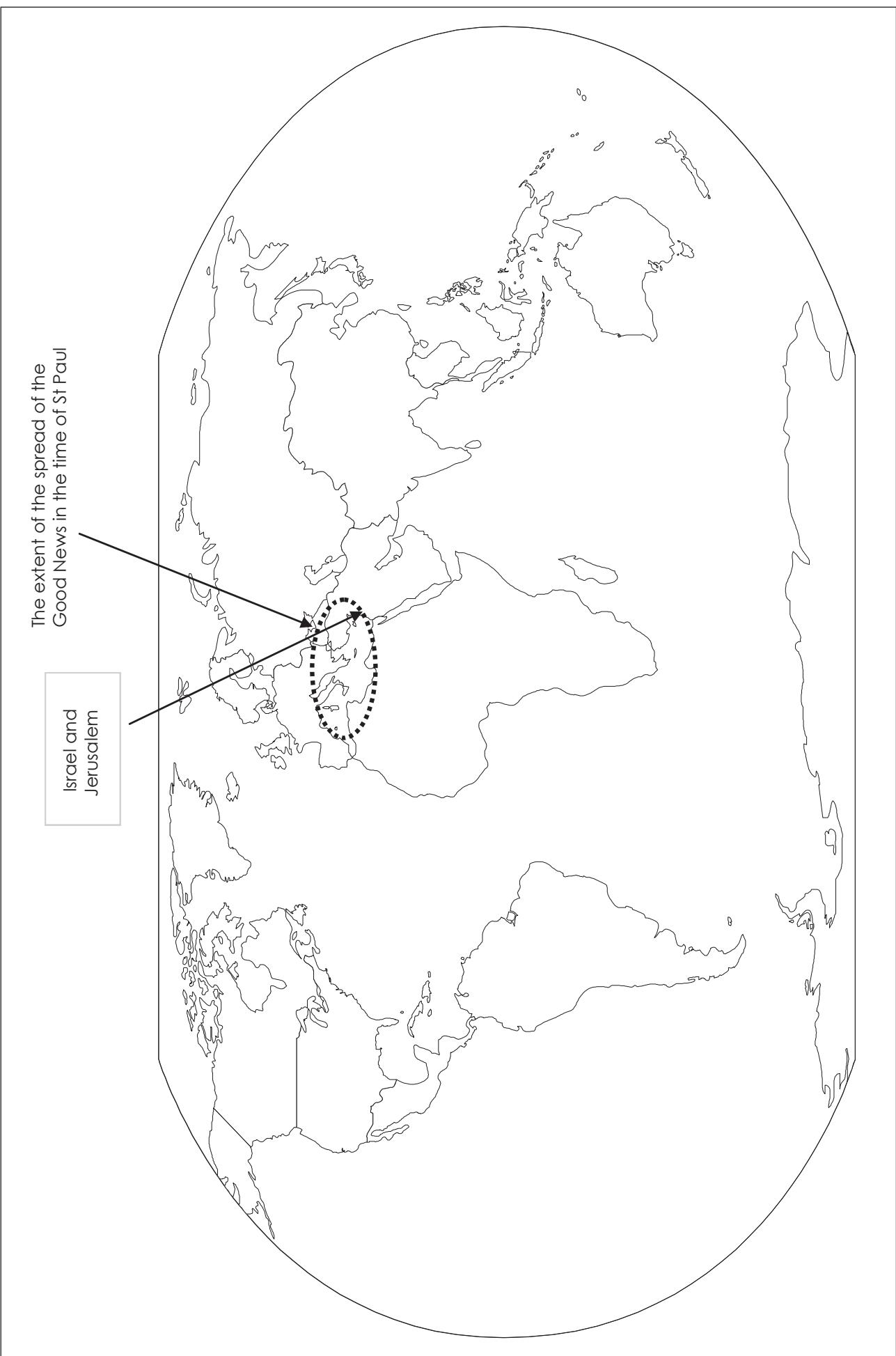
When he [Saul] had come to Jerusalem, he attempted to join the disciples; and they were all afraid of him, for they did not believe that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him, brought him to the apostles, and described for them how on the road he had seen the Lord, who had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had spoken boldly in the name of Jesus. So he went in and out among them in Jerusalem, speaking boldly in the name of the Lord. He spoke and argued with the Hellenists; but they were attempting to kill him. When the believers learned of it, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him off to Tarsus.

Meanwhile the church throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and was built up. Living in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it increased in numbers.

Acts 9: 26–31

The Spread of the Good News





St Paul's First Journey (Acts 13: 1 – 14: 28) – A Summary

Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a member of the court of Herod the ruler, and Saul. While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.' Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off.

So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia; and from there they sailed to Cyprus. When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. And they had John also to assist them. When they had gone through the whole island as far as Paphos, they met a certain magician, a Jewish false prophet, named Bar-Jesus. He was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, an intelligent man, who summoned Barnabas and Saul and wanted to hear the word of God. But the magician Elymas (for that is the translation of his name) opposed them and tried to turn the proconsul away from the faith. But Saul, also known as Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him and said, 'You son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, full of all deceit and villainy, will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord? And now listen—the hand of the Lord is against you, and you will be blind for a while, unable to see the sun.' Immediately mist and darkness came over him, and he went about groping for someone to lead him by the hand. When the proconsul saw what had happened, he believed, for he was astonished at the teaching about the Lord.

Then Paul and his companions set sail from Paphos and came to Perga in Pamphylia. John, however, left them and returned to Jerusalem (Acts 13: 1–13).

Paul then travelled from Perga to Antioch in Pisidia where he and his companions preached about Jesus to the people they met. The Jewish leaders in the region did not like the way Paul spoke to the Jews, so they worked on the crowd to drive them out. Paul and Barnabas 'shook the dust off their feet in protest against them and went to Iconium' (Acts 13: 51). In Iconium the same thing happened but they decided to stay longer. Eventually, when they heard that they were going to be mistreated they fled to Lystra.

While in Lystra the Jews from other towns came and stirred up trouble amongst the gentiles, who eventually stoned Paul. They thought him dead, but he got up and went to a disciple's home. The next day, he and Barnabas went on to Derbe. After they had proclaimed the good news in Derbe Paul and his companions went back by way of Lystra, Iconium and Antioch. In each place they encouraged those who had believed. They appointed leaders for the Church and then continued on their journey. They passed through Pisidia, Pamphylia and Perga on to Attalia. From there they sailed back to Antioch in Syria.



St Paul's Second Journey (Acts 15: 22 – 18: 22) – A Summary

The Council of Jerusalem sent Paul, Barnabas, Judas called Barsabbas and Silas to carry a letter to the gentile churches. They left Jerusalem for Antioch in Syria. After a while in Antioch, Paul and Barnabas parted company. Paul and Silas set out by land through Syria to Derbe and Lystra. While in Lystra, Paul took Timothy with him as one of his disciples. As they moved from town to town they read the letter from the Council to each Church. Paul, Silas and Timothy went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, travelling down to Troas as the Holy Spirit directed them.

While in Troas Paul had a dream that a Macedonian man was calling them to go to him and help them know more about Jesus. When Paul awoke, he and his companions set sail for Macedonia stopping at Philippi.

While in Philippi Paul met Lydia, a believer in God. She was a merchant who dealt in expensive purple cloth. Paul baptised her and then went to her home.

One day, as we were going to the place of prayer, we met a slave -girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners a great deal of money by fortune-telling. While she followed Paul and us, she would cry out, 'These men are slaves of the Most High God, who proclaim to you a way of salvation.' She kept doing this for many days. But Paul, very much annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, 'I order you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.' And it came out that very hour.

But when her owners saw that their hope of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the market-place before the authorities. When they had brought them before the magistrates, they said, 'These men are disturbing our city; they are Jews and are advocating customs that are not lawful for us as Romans to adopt or observe.' The crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates had them stripped of their clothing and ordered them to be beaten with rods. After they had given them a severe flogging, they threw them into prison and ordered the jailer to keep them securely. Following these instructions, he put them in the innermost cell and fastened their feet in the stocks.

About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was an earthquake, so violent that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were unfastened. When the jailer woke up and saw the prison doors wide open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, since he supposed that the prisoners had escaped. But Paul shouted in a loud voice, 'Do not harm yourself, for we are all here.' The jailer called for lights, and rushing in, he fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. Then he brought them outside and said, 'Sirs, what must I do to be saved?' They answered, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.' They spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. At the same hour of the night he took them and washed their wounds; then he and his entire family were baptized without delay. He brought them up into the house and set food before them; and he and his entire household rejoiced that he had become a believer in God (Acts 16: 16 – 34).

That morning they were released from the prison and encouraged to leave the town. From Philippi they travelled to Thessalonica where Paul preached in the synagogue. Once again this caused an uproar and Paul and his companions had to leave. Trouble followed Paul wherever he preached. So much so that the believers sent him away to the coast and on to Athens to await Silas and Timothy, who stayed behind. After preaching in Athens Paul went to Corinth where he met Priscilla and Aquila, who were tentmakers. Since Paul was also a tentmaker, he decided to live and work with them. Paul preached regularly on the Sabbath in the synagogue and after quite a while left Corinth. On his journey back to Jerusalem, Paul stopped off in Ephesus where he preached in the synagogue and promised them that he would return. Paul then set sail for Caesarea. After he landed there 'he went up to Jerusalem and greeted the church, and then went down to Antioch' (Acts 18: 22).



St Paul's Third Journey (Acts 18: 23 – 21: 14) – A Summary

Paul left Antioch and revisited many of the places where he had established churches on his previous journeys. He travelled through Galatia and Phrygia and stopped in Ephesus. After some time in Ephesus and the regions around the city, Paul and his companions caused a disturbance amongst the silversmiths of Ephesus, who believed that Paul's teaching would take away their business. When the people had been persuaded that their temples were still going to require silver and that Paul and his companions were not 'temple robbers or blasphemers' the town clerk dismissed the gathering (Acts 19 : 37).

After the uproar had ceased, Paul sent for the disciples; and after encouraging them and saying farewell, he left for Macedonia. When he had gone through those regions and had given the believers much encouragement, he came to Greece, where he stayed for three months. He was about to set sail for Syria when a plot was made against him by the Jews, and so he decided to return through Macedonia. He was accompanied by Sopater son of Pyrrhus from Beroea, by Aristarchus and Secundus from Thessalonica, by Gaius from Derbe, and by Timothy, as well as by Tychicus and Trophimus from Asia. They went ahead and were waiting for us in Troas; but we sailed from Philippi after the days of Unleavened Bread, and in five days we joined them in Troas, where we stayed for seven days. When Paul had finished preaching in Troas he travelled to Assos where he met the boat to take him to Miletus avoiding Ephesus. Paul called the leaders of the Ephesian church to him so that he might speak with them. When he had finished he set sail for Caesarea, keeping to the right of Cyprus. Paul and his companions stopped first at Tyre and then Ptolemais and then finally at Caesarea (Acts 20: 1–6).



Let us pray

- Catechist: Let us close our eyes and think about the task of spreading the Good News. Let us think about how much St Paul did to bring the message of Jesus to all the people he met. Let us acknowledge how lucky we are to have the New Testament to help us know and understand what the message of Jesus is and how it was spread.
- To each of these prayers answer Lord, hear our prayer
- Student: God, our Father, you gave us Jesus to bring us closer to you. We thank you for his message of your love. Help us to respond to you in love.
- All: **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- Student: God of all goodness, St Paul took your message and carried it across the countryside. May we be like Paul and carry your message with us to share with others.
- All: **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- Catechist: Together let us pray Jesus' words in the Lord's Prayer.
- All: **Our Father ...**

Jacob's Dream

Jacob's Dream

Jacob left Beersheba and went towards Haran. He came to a certain place and stayed there for the night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place. And he dreamed that there was a ladder set up on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. And the Lord stood beside him and said, 'I am the Lord, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring; and your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and all the families of the earth shall be blessed* in you and in your offspring. Know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.' Then Jacob woke from his sleep and said, 'Surely the Lord is in this place—and I did not know it!' And he was afraid, and said, 'How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.'

So Jacob rose early in the morning, and he took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up for a pillar and poured oil on the top of it. He called that place Bethel but the name of the city was Luz at the first. Then Jacob made a vow, saying, 'If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and clothing to wear, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then the Lord shall be my God, and this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house; and of all that you give me I will surely give one-tenth to you (Gen 28: 1—22).

Story Analysis Chart

List the characters in the story	List the main actions	List the significant words used

SOMETHING TO REMEMBER

The stories of the Old Testament tell us about God's covenant with the people of Israel.

Our Agreement with God

Think about the questions below. After sharing with your group, chose one answer for each question and write in the space provided .

How might God fulfil God's part of the agreement for us today?

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What can I do to fulfil my part of the agreement?

People Reveal God to Us

The pictures tell me this about God ...

Describe the picture in a few words	This picture tells me ...	This picture tells me this about God ...

This person reveals God to me ...

Sit quietly and think about a member of your family, a friend, or someone you admire or know reasonably well. In the space below, prepare a **cinquain poem** about what the person reveals about God.

A **cinquain poem** is a ‘mini poem’ that describes something in five lines.

- 1st line: one word – that is the title of the poem
- 2nd line: two words – that describe the title
- 3rd line: three words – that express action
- 4th line: four words – that express a feeling
- 5th line: one word – a synonym (or another word) for the title

SOMETHING TO REMEMBER

Let us pray

Catechist: Through the generosity of people, we know you are generous in your love. Let us now listen to _____ poem.

Student: (reads poem)

All: **Praise and thanks to you, Lord God.**

Catechist Through the beauty of people, we know you are beautiful.

All: **Praise and thanks to you, Lord God.**

Catechist Through the way people love others, we see your love.

All: **Praise and thanks to you, Lord God.**

All: **Amen.**

Marriage

Let us pray

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

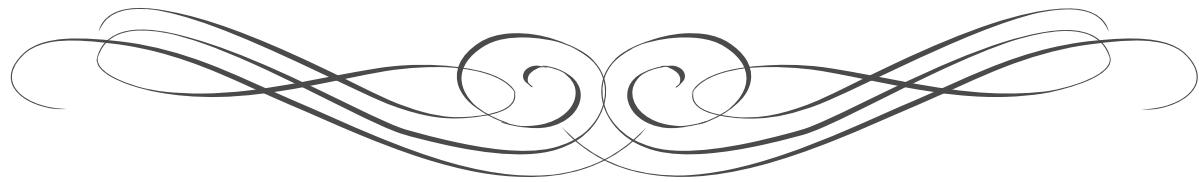
All: **In the name of the Father ...**

Catechist: Today we pray for all married people and those who are preparing to be married.

All: **God bless them and strengthen them.**

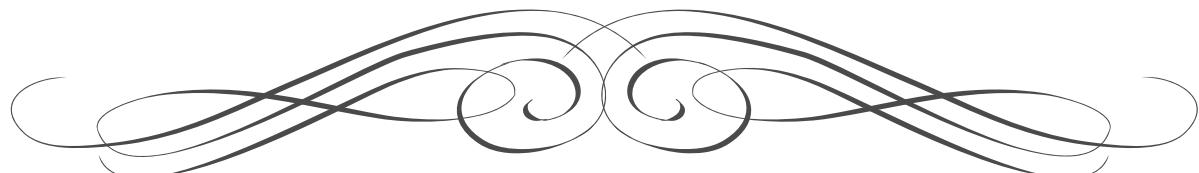
All: **In the name of the Father ...**





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**This couple is getting married. What might this mean
for them and for the community?**



Who's who?

Identify each person in the image below and their role in the celebration of the sacrament of marriage.

1.



2.

3.

Complete the sentence ...

When a couple gets married ...



SOMETHING TO REMEMBER

Marriage is a sacrament in which husband and wife reflect and share God's love.

Ordained Leaders of the Church

Let us pray

Catechist: Let us prepare ourselves to pray.

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

**God, our Father,
you call all who believe in you to grow perfect in
love by following in the footsteps of Christ, your Son.**

**May those whom you have chosen to serve you as
shepherds and deacons fill your Church with the spirit
of courage and love.**

We ask this through our Christ, our Lord. Amen.

(Adapted from the Roman Missal: Masses for Priestly and Religious Vocations)

Ministers to my parish:

Parish priest:

Archbishop:

Regional bishop:

Deacon:

Fact Sheet – Bishop

The bishop is the person ordained to guide, teach, lead and serve the people of God in a particular geographical area. The bishop has been ordained into the position after having been through ordination as deacon and then as a priest.

The bishop is ordained to serve the people of God as prophet, priest and shepherd. The bishop functions as prophet when he speaks on behalf of God, as priest when he takes on the responsibility for how the sacraments and the liturgy are celebrated within his diocese, and as a shepherd through his care for the people in the diocese in which he serves. The bishop is acting as shepherd when he follows in the footsteps of Jesus in caring for the poor, the suffering and the marginalised members of the community. The bishop uses a ‘crosier’ that looks like a shepherd’s crook, as the special symbol of his authority and service to the people.

A list of some of the roles and tasks of the bishop is found below.

Roles and Tasks

A bishop:

- is responsible for a diocese
- ordains bishops, priests and deacons
- celebrates the Sacrament of Confirmation
- celebrates the sacrament of Anointing
- celebrates the sacrament of Baptism
- can officiate at the sacrament of marriage
- celebrates the Sacrament of Penance
- celebrates the Mass
- celebrates the Rite of Christian Burial
- proclaims the Gospel preaches the homily
- gives an Episcopal blessing
- blesses objects and people
- prays the Prayer of the Church (Liturgy of the Hours)
- Is a spiritual leader of the faithful in his diocese.



A shepherd's crook

Fact Sheet – Priest

When a priest is ordained he is taking on the responsibility to serve the people of God. A priest shares this ministry with the bishop, seeking to fulfil his responsibility to God's people as Jesus would. The priest has responsibility for the people in his parish, delegated by the bishop to care for their needs. The priest serves the people by celebrating the sacraments and by preaching the word of God, Jesus' message. The priest is the leader of the community of the faithful, modelling the life and teachings of Jesus. The list below provides some of the tasks and the role of the priest.

Roles and Tasks

The priest:

- celebrates the Mass
- blesses people and objects
- celebrates the sacrament of Baptism
- celebrates the sacrament of Penance
- celebrates the sacrament of Anointing
- officiates at the sacrament of Marriage
- celebrates the Rite of Christian Burial
- represents the bishop in a local parish
- is responsible for a parish or assists in a parish
- can be a member of a religious congregation, order or community
- proclaims the gospel
- preaches the homily
- prays the Prayer of the Church (Liturgy of the Hours).



Fact Sheet – Deacon

A deacon is ordained and welcomed into the service of the Church, by the bishop of the diocese in which he will serve. The deacon might have chosen to become a 'permanent' deacon in the diocese, serving the bishop. Alternately, the ordination as a deacon is also one of the stages on the journey to becoming a priest.

After being ordained, a deacon serves the Church through the ministry of the word, through worship, through pastoral care and charity. The role of the deacon is to support the bishop of the diocese in service of the people. Below is a list of some of the tasks undertaken by a deacon. The deacon cannot preside over the Eucharist or give absolution in the sacrament of Penance.

Roles and Tasks

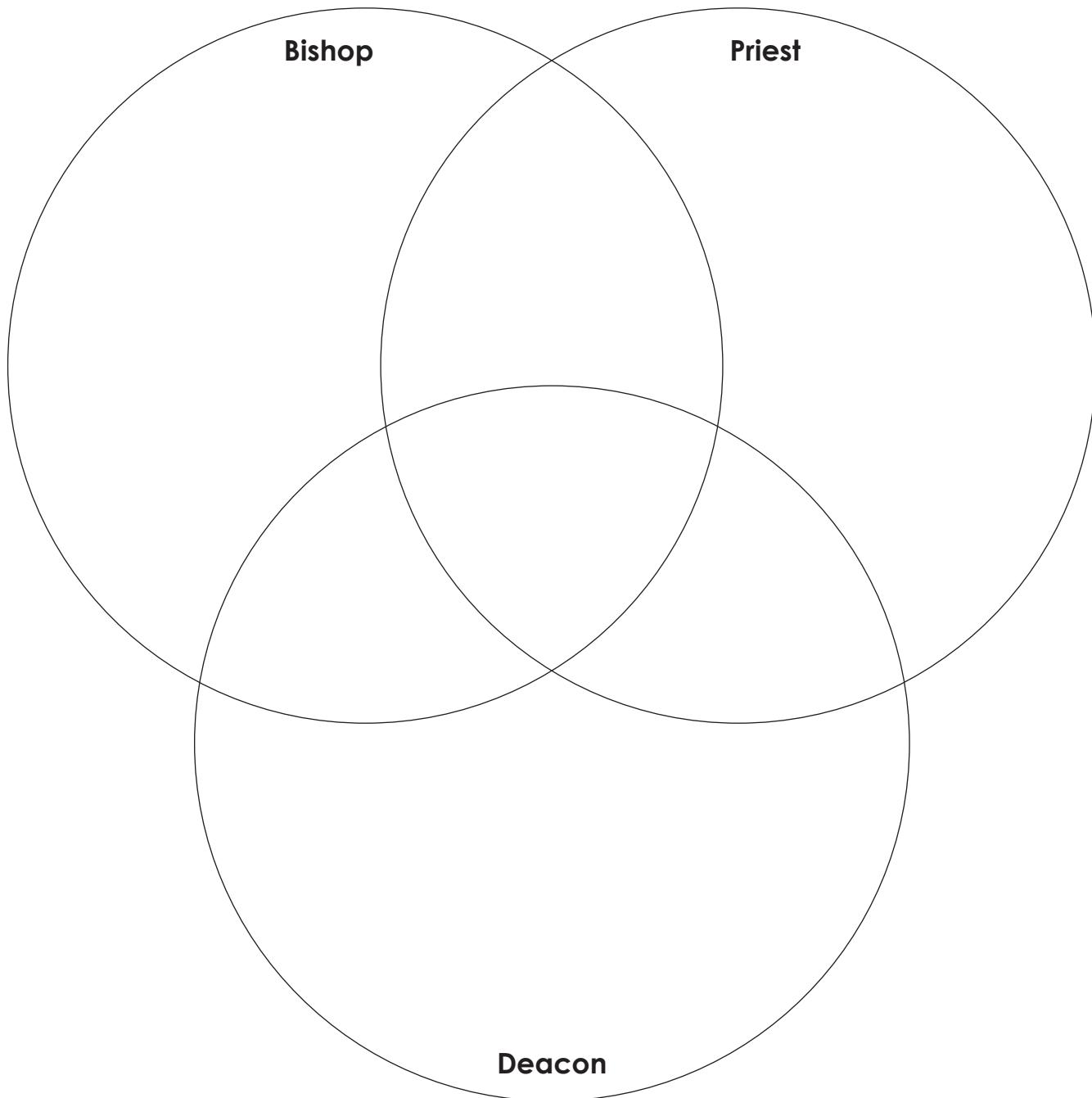
The deacon:

- assists the bishop or priest
- serves through pastoral care and charity
- prays the Prayer of the Church (Liturgy of the Hours)
- celebrates the sacrament of Baptism
- officiates at the sacrament of Marriage
- celebrates the Rite of Christian Burial
- proclaims the Gospel
- can preach the homily
- distributes Holy Communion
- blesses objects and people
- can be a member of a religious congregation, order or community
- leads the community in prayer.



A Venn Diagram

Compare and contrast the three roles of ministers to the parish. Complete the Venn Diagram using the 'Fact Sheets'. Write details that tell how the subjects are different in the outer circles. Write details that tell how the subjects are alike, where the circles overlap.



Let us pray

Catechist: Let us pray together, remembering particularly the leaders of our Church. (Pause)

Let us pray for Father (add the parish priest's name), may he be strengthened in his service of the people in the parish. Lord, hear us.

Students: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Catechist: Let us pray for Pope Francis, may the Holy Spirit guide and assist him in his decision-making and guidance of the Church. Lord, hear us.

Students: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

All: **Our Father ...**

Some definitions

An ordained minister: Someone called to serve the people of God, the Church, in a particular way, and receiving the sacrament of ordination, the blessing of the bishop and the Church, and sent to serve the Church, usually in a parish.

Ministry: A service taken up on behalf of, and to serve, the people of the Church and particularly the parish or community of the faithful.

SOMETHING TO REMEMBER

The Pope (Bishop of Rome), bishops and priests continue Jesus' leadership.

Anointing of the Sick

Jesus' Care of the Sick

Luke 7: 18–23

The disciples of John reported all these things to him. So John summoned two of his disciples and sent them to the Lord to ask, 'Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?' When the men had come to him, they said, 'John the Baptist has sent us to you to ask, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?"' Jesus had just then cured many people of diseases, plagues, and evil spirits, and had given sight to many who were blind. And he answered them, 'Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offence at me.'

Jesus answers the disciples

Analyse the text above and list the signs that Jesus is 'the one who is to come'.

Mark 6: 6a–18

Then [Jesus] went about among the villages teaching. He called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. He ordered them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts; but to wear sandals and not to put on two tunics. He said to them, ‘Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave the place. If any place will not welcome you and they refuse to hear you, as you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them.’ So they went out and proclaimed that all should repent. They cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them.

The disciples go out

What did the disciples do?

Praying for the Sick

Prayer 1: _____

Title for God: _____

How the sick person is described: _____

What we ask for the sick person: _____

What words or phrases appeal to me? Why? _____

Prayer 2: _____

Title for God: _____

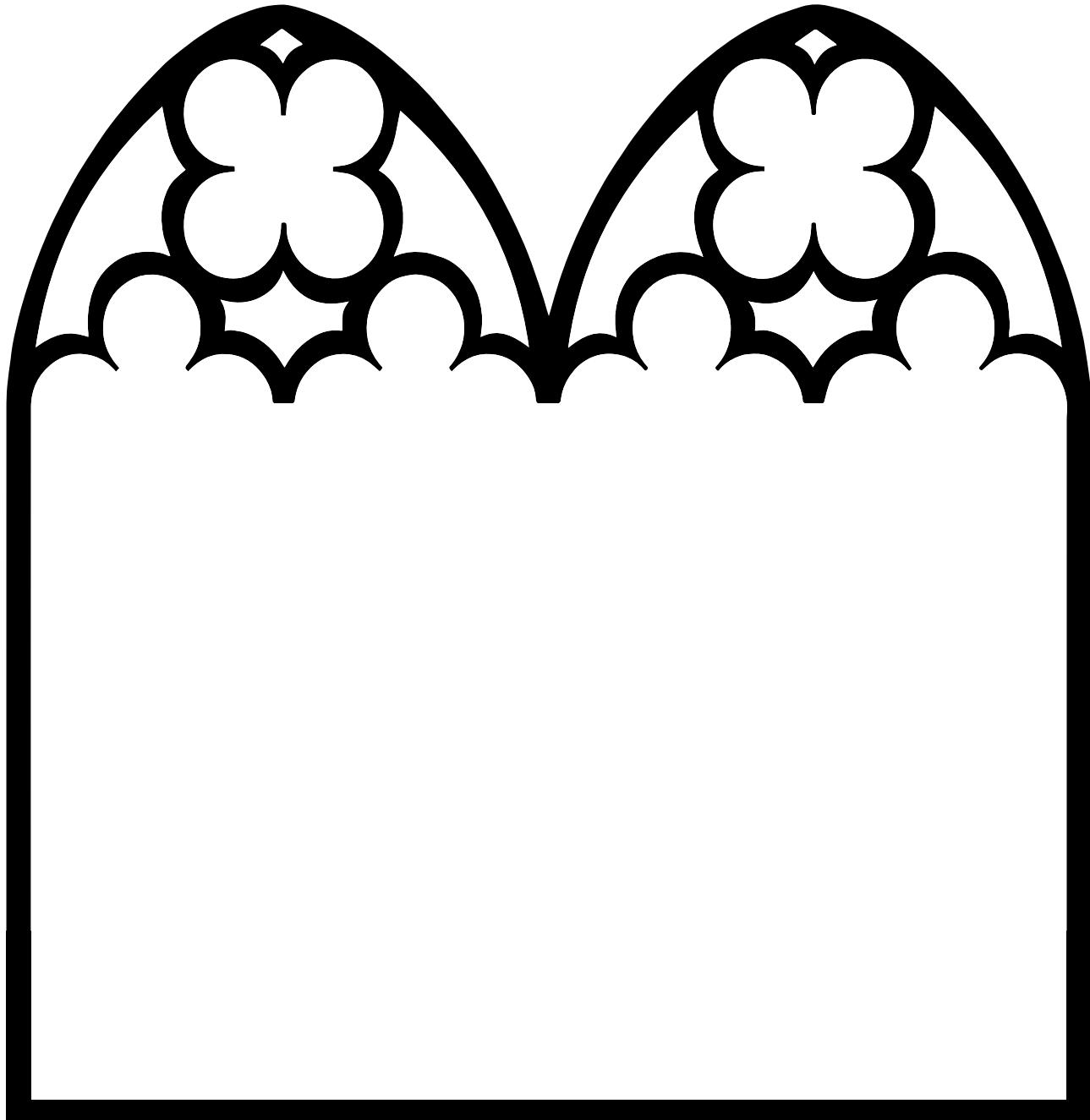
How the sick person is described: _____

What we ask for the sick person: _____

What words or phrases appeal to me? Why? _____

Prayer for the Sick

In the shape below write a prayer for someone who is sick.
Use the ideas from the prayers you have examined.



SOMETHING TO REMEMBER

Those who are sick can share in Christ's love
through the sacrament of Anointing of the Sick.

St Patrick's Cathedral

The Cathedral

Complete the questions of the Fact Sheets you have discussed in your group.
Write answers for your Fact Sheet in the corresponding space.

Card 1 How does God's love protect you?

Card 2 How is the Holy Spirit your helper or advocate?

How is the Holy Spirit's action in your life like a golden light?

Card 3 How do you witness to God?

How do you show the way to God?

Card 4 How does the Eucharist nourish me?

Card 5 How does my life reveal God's truth to others?

Card 6 How do I continue the mission of bringing
God's saving love to the people in my life?

SOMETHING TO REMEMBER

Let us pray:

Catechist: Let us close our eyes and think about the people who built St Patrick's Cathedral and all those who have prayed there since the beginning. Let us call on the Holy Trinity to be with us as we make the Sign of the Cross.

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

Catechist: Let us pray,
Bless us, your people, O God.

Students: **May the strong walls of our cathedral always be a sign of your protecting love.**

Catechist: May the golden light which fills it be a sign of your Holy Spirit living among us.

Students: **May the witness of Christ and the saints show us the way to you.**

Catechist: May the table around which we gather as your Church be a sign of the nourishment you give us.

Students: **May the book of your word be a sign of your truth among us.**

Catechist: And may all people who gather in that holy place be a sign of your saving love in the midst of our world.

We make this prayer through Christ, our Lord.

All: **Amen.**

St Thérèse of Lisieux and St Thomas More

Let us pray:

Catechist: Let us prepare for prayer by being still and quiet.

(Pause)

All: In the name of the Father ...

Catechist: We place the coloured cloth, in our prayer space because we are celebrating God's love.

All: We celebrate your love, O God.

Catechist: We place the Bible on the cloth, remembering that it contains the word of God.

All: Help us to remember your word, O God.

Catechist: We place the candle and light it, remembering that Jesus wants us to spread the light of God's word.

All: Help us to spread the light of your word, O God.

Catechist: We place images of St Thérèse of Lisieux and St Thomas More on the cloth because they lived as Jesus did.

All: Help us to learn from St Thérèse of Lisieux and St Thomas More to live as Jesus did, O God.

Catechist: Hear our prayers, O God, and help us to be faithful to you. We make our prayer in the name of Jesus, your Son.

All: Amen.

St Thérèse of Lisieux (1873–1897)

Thérèse Martin was born in 1873 in Alençon in the north of France, the youngest of five daughters. When Thérèse was four her mother died. The family moved to Lisieux and her sister Pauline became Thérèse's second mother. In 1882 when Thérèse was nine, Pauline left the family to become a Carmelite nun at the monastery in Lisieux. Thérèse was very sad. One day she was looking at a statue of Mary and she suddenly realised that Mary was her spiritual mother, who would never leave her.

When Thérèse was 13, her sister Marie entered the Carmelite monastery at Lisieux. There were then only Léonie, Céline and Thérèse at home with their father. When she was 14, Thérèse decided she too wanted to be a Carmelite nun. When she was 15 she entered the Carmelite monastery at Lisieux where she was welcomed by her two sisters.

At first Thérèse was a novice (beginner). There were lots of strict rules, times to pray, times to work, and times to eat and relax. The most difficult was the rule of enclosure, which meant she was not able to leave the monastery, even to visit her father when he became very ill. Yet, Thérèse was very happy. In 1890, when she was 17, her time as a novice was over and Thérèse professed her vows, giving her whole life to God.

Thérèse always imagined herself as a little child in God's loving arms. She trusted God's love totally and wanted to show her love for God by loving others as she loved God. She decided to do lots of little things for God because she was convinced that she could never do big things. She called it her 'little way'. It included:

- showing friendship to those who annoyed her

- doing the jobs nobody else wanted to do
- helping those who never said thank you
- keeping cheerful even when she was sick
- sharing her time and ideas with everyone. She decided that she would be love for all people.

She prayed especially for missionaries all over the world, including those working here in Australia.



Thérèse's sister, Pauline, was the prioress (in charge) of the monastery. She asked Thérèse to write the story of her life. Thérèse called it Story of a Soul. That is how we know so much about her. The next year (1896) Thérèse was given the important job of looking after the novices, teaching them how to live as nuns.

During that same year she became very ill. Not being able to pray as she had before, she gave all the pain to God so God could turn it into prayer. She did everything as an act of love. This was her Little Way of praying for missionaries, priests, brothers and sisters, who were working in other parts of the world. She died on 30 September 1897 when she was only 24, saying, 'My God, I love you'.

On 17 May 1925 Pope Pius XI declared her a saint and proclaimed her a universal patron of the missions. We now celebrate St Thérèse of Lisieux on 1 October.

Word Meanings

nun – a woman who makes solemn promises to God to be chaste (not marry), to be poor (not own anything), and to be obedient (to those in charge) **monastery** – a place where nuns live together to work and pray

Carmelite – a group of nuns who follow a particular rule honouring Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

spiritual – relating to the spirit, something that cannot be touched or seen

profess – to make solemn promises in the presence of witnesses

missionaries – men and women who dedicate their lives to teaching about Jesus to people who have never heard of him

St Thomas More (1478–1535)

In 1478 Thomas More was born in London, England. His family was well off and he was very well-educated and studied at Oxford University. Obeying his father's wishes, Thomas left Oxford and studied law in London. In 1502 he was called to the bar.

As a young man, Thomas considered becoming a monk and often joined the monks as they prayed. However, he decided to be a layman and when he was 27 he married Jane Colt. Together they had four children, Margaret, Elizabeth, Cicely and John. They had been married for only six years when Jane died. Thomas then married Alice Middleton, a widow, but they did not have any children together. He was a loving father who made sure that all his children learnt to read and write and were educated in Latin and Greek. At this time, education was a privilege and usually only boys of rich families were educated. His daughter, Margaret, proved to be the most scholarly of his children. Thomas wrote a letter to his family whenever he was away and encouraged them to write to him.

In 1504 Thomas was elected to parliament. He was appointed undersheriff of the City of London in 1510 and four years later he was appointed Privy Councillor. In 1516 Thomas wrote a book called *Utopia*, which became famous, and important people began to take notice of him. King Henry VIII appointed him to a number of important positions and missions. He was secretary to the king and also his personal adviser. In 1521 Thomas was knighted and

became known as Sir Thomas More. In that same year he was made the under-treasurer of the Exchequer (Treasury). In 1523 Thomas was elected the Speaker of the House of Commons.

About this time, Martin Luther had begun his revolt against the Catholic Church and wrote a number of works promoting his position. In 1521 King Henry VIII, with Thomas' assistance, published a response criticising Luther.

Later, Thomas wrote a number of articles and books defending the Catholic Church and attacking the position of the reformers. Subsequently, Thomas came to believe that the Reformation was dangerous, not only to the Catholic faith, but to society in general.



In 1529 Henry VIII appointed Thomas More the Lord Chancellor. King Henry wanted to annul his marriage to Catherine so that he could marry Anne Boleyn. When the Pope would not grant an annulment, Henry refused to recognise the Pope's authority. Thomas More found he could not be loyal to the King and still be faithful to the Catholic Church. Therefore Thomas refused to take the Oath of Supremacy acknowledging Henry as superior to the Pope. This led him to resign from the Chancellorship. When he refused to give allegiance to the Act of Succession, King Henry imprisoned Thomas in the Tower of London. In 1535 Thomas was tried and found guilty of treason. On the scaffold he said that he was 'the king's good servant, but God's first'. He was beheaded on 6 July

1635. In 1935 Pope Pius XI declared Thomas More to be a saint. We now celebrate St Thomas More on 22 June.

Word Meanings

called to the bar – when a lawyer qualifies as a barrister

monk – a man who makes solemn promises to God to be chaste (not marry) to be poor (not own anything), and to be obedient (to those in charge)

monastery – a place where monks live together to work and pray

layman – a man who is not ordained

Martin Luther – a monk who could no longer follow the Catholic Church's teaching and began his own church, the Lutheran Church

reformation – a time in the 1500s when people refused to follow the Catholic Church's teaching and began their own churches, e.g. the Church of England
annulment – decision by Church authorities that a marriage is unlawful and is therefore void (over)

Chancellor – title of a very important position in government

treason – the act of betraying one's country or king

The aim of each of these activities is to show how St Thérèse or St Thomas lived like Jesus.

A Letter

Put yourself into the shoes of your saint and write about a day in the saint's life in such a way that it shows how she or he lived like Jesus.

A Day in the Life of Saint _____



A Logo

Put yourself into the shoes of your saint and design a logo that expresses how she or he lived like Jesus.

Saint _____

SOMETHING TO REMEMBER

St Thérèse of Lisieux and St Thomas More
show us how to live like Jesus.

An Acrostic

Put yourself into the shoes of your saint. Using the name of the saint, create an acrostic that speaks about how she or he lived like Jesus.

Saint _____

Complete the following sentence in the space below:

I can live like Jesus by ...

The Holy Spirit

Let us pray:

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

Catechist: We received the Holy Spirit at baptism that we might always have someone to help us on our journey of faith.

May we always call upon the Spirit in times of doubt, believing that the Spirit will help us deepen our faith.

Let us pray:

Student 1: Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful

All: **and kindle in them the power of your love.**

Student 2: Send forth your Spirit and we they shall be created

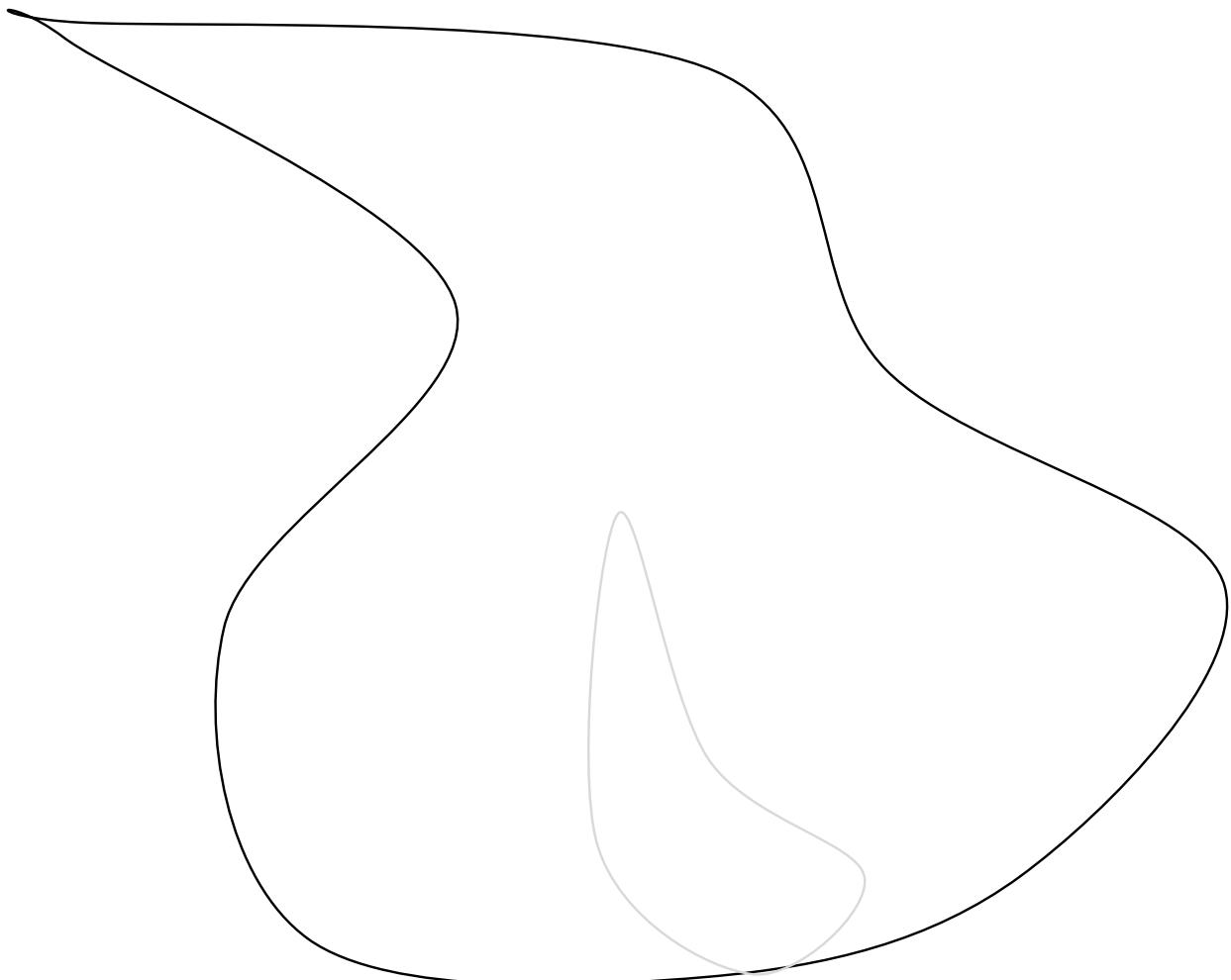
All: **and you will renew the face of the earth.**

Jesus tells us about the Holy Spirit

I have said these things to you while I am still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you (John 14: 25–26).

The Holy Spirit helps me each day

Record your example in the flame below.



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This week I will ...

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

SOMETHING TO REMEMBER

The Holy Spirit helps deepen our faith.

The Gift of the Spirit in Mission

Let us pray

Catechist: As we light this candle we are reminded that Christ is present with us always.

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

Catechist: As we gather today to understand more about the love of God, we pray in thanksgiving and praise that in Jesus we have the example to follow, and the gift of the Holy Spirit to strengthen us on our mission.

Ps 138: 1–6, 8

Left side: I give thanks, O Lord, with my whole heart; before the gods I sing your praise; I bow down toward your holy temple and give thanks to your name for your steadfast love and your faithfulness; for you have exalted your name and your word above everything. On the day I called, you answered me, you increased my strength of soul.

Right side: All the kings of the earth shall praise you, O Lord, for they have heard the words of your mouth. They shall sing of the ways of the Lord, for great is the glory of the Lord.

Left side: The Lord will fulfil his purpose for me; your steadfast love, O Lord, endures forever.

Right side: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be.

All: **Amen.**

Pentecost

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability (Acts 2: 1–4).

Life Among the Believers

Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved (Acts 2: 43–47).

The Holy Spirit after Pentecost

How was the early Church influenced by the Holy Spirit after Pentecost?

Responding to the Holy Spirit active in my life

Over the next three weeks my group will ...

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SOMETHING TO REMEMBER

The Holy Spirit enables the people of God
to continue Jesus' mission.

Let us pray

Catechist: Let us now pray together and ask the Holy Spirit to help us fulfil the task that we have set ourselves.

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

All: Spirit of right judgment and courage, guide us and make us firm in our baptismal decision to follow Jesus' way of love and to carry on his mission in the world. Spirit of knowledge, help us to see the lasting value of justice and mercy in our everyday contact with one another. Spirit of God, spark our faith, hope and love into new action each day. Amen.

Love One Another

Let us pray

Catechist: Let us make the Sign of the Cross.

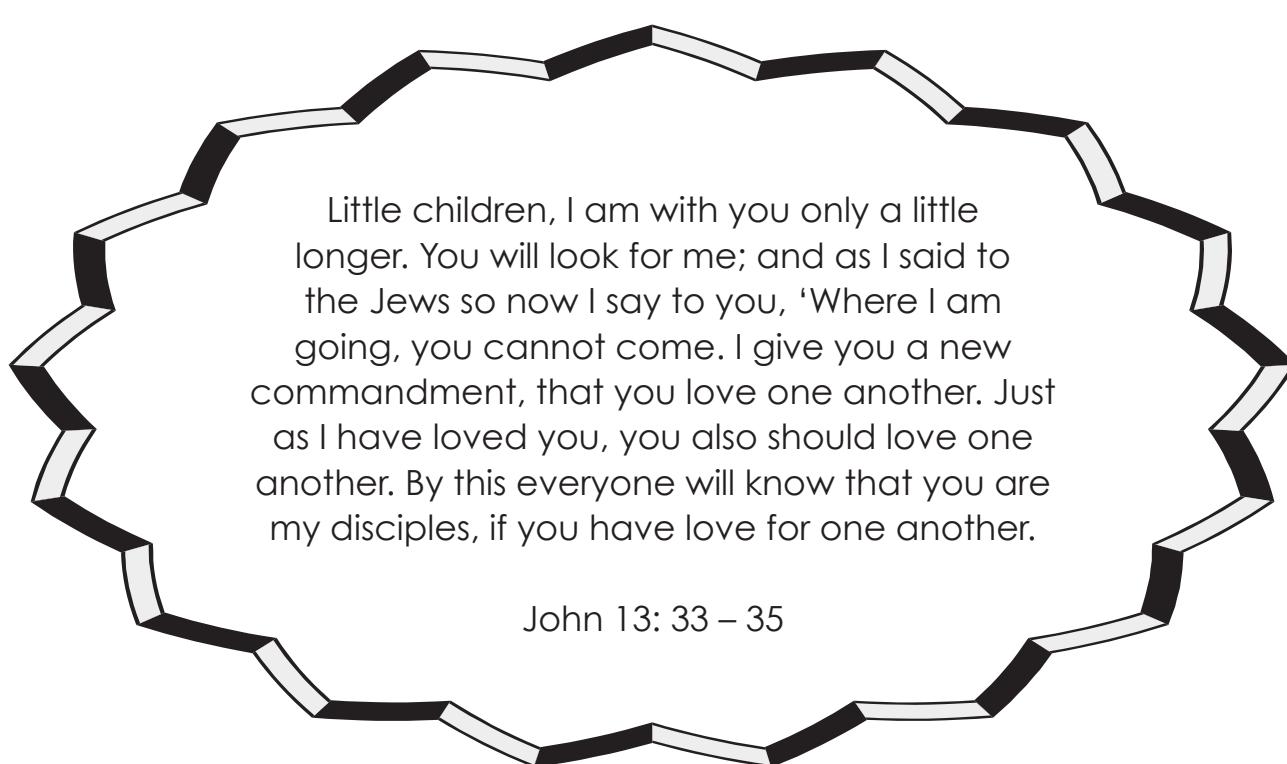
All: **In the name of the Father ...**

Catechist: Join me as I sing the hymn, 'A New Commandment'. I will play it twice, so you might like to join me during the second time.

All: **A new commandment I give unto you that you love one another as I have loved you. That you love one another as I have loved you.**

By this shall all know that you are my disciples, if you have love one for another.

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



Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, 'Where I am going, you cannot come. I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.'

John 13: 33 – 35

Jesus' new commandment

Living the love of Jesus

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Let us pray

In the name of the Father ...

Loving Father, we thank you for calling us to be disciples of your Son, Jesus Christ. Spirit that guides us, help us to be disciples who put love into action. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

SOMETHING TO REMEMBER

Jesus asks us to love one another as he has loved us.

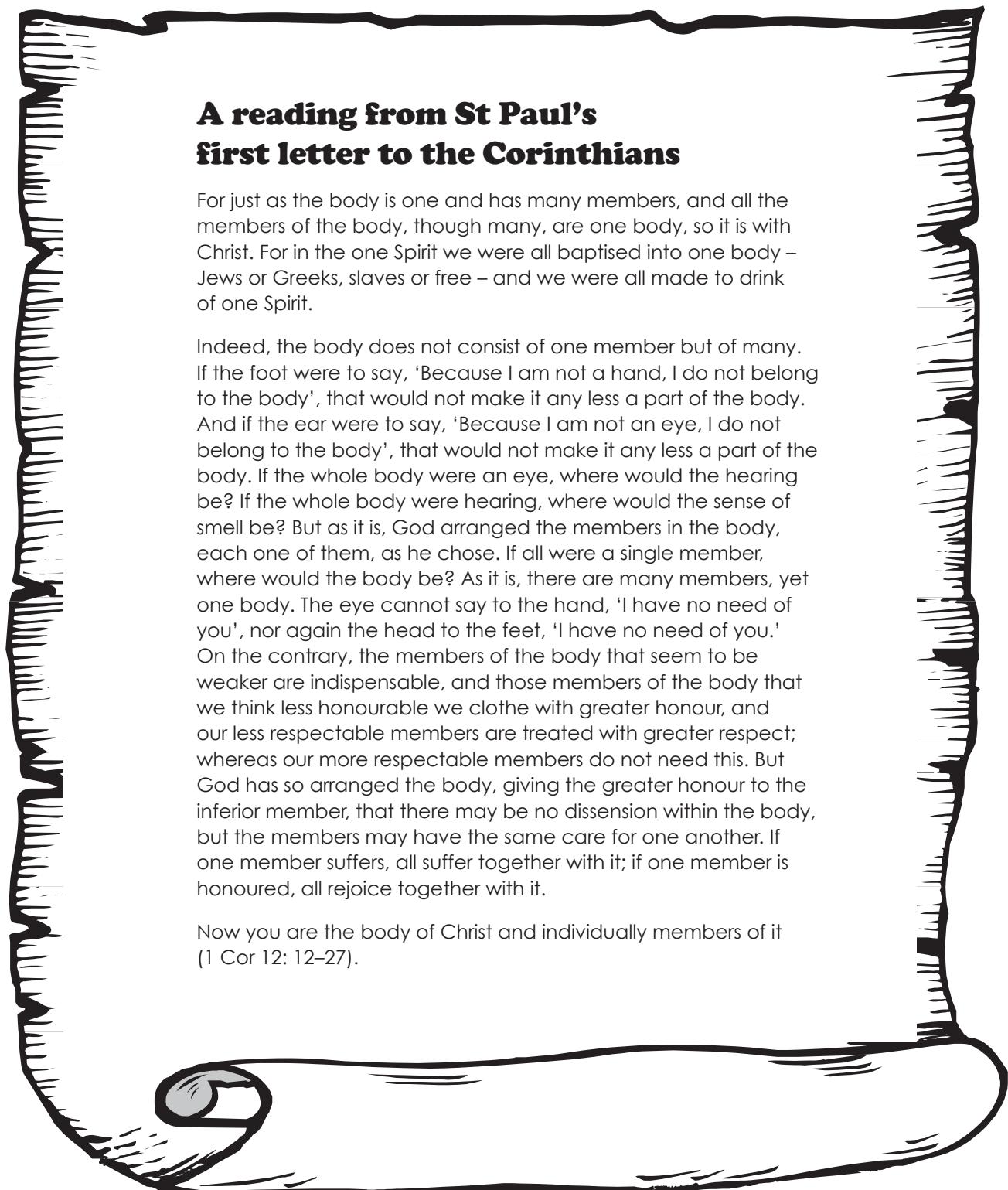
The Church is the Body of Christ

A reading from St Paul's first letter to the Corinthians

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptised into one body – Jews or Greeks, slaves or free – and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

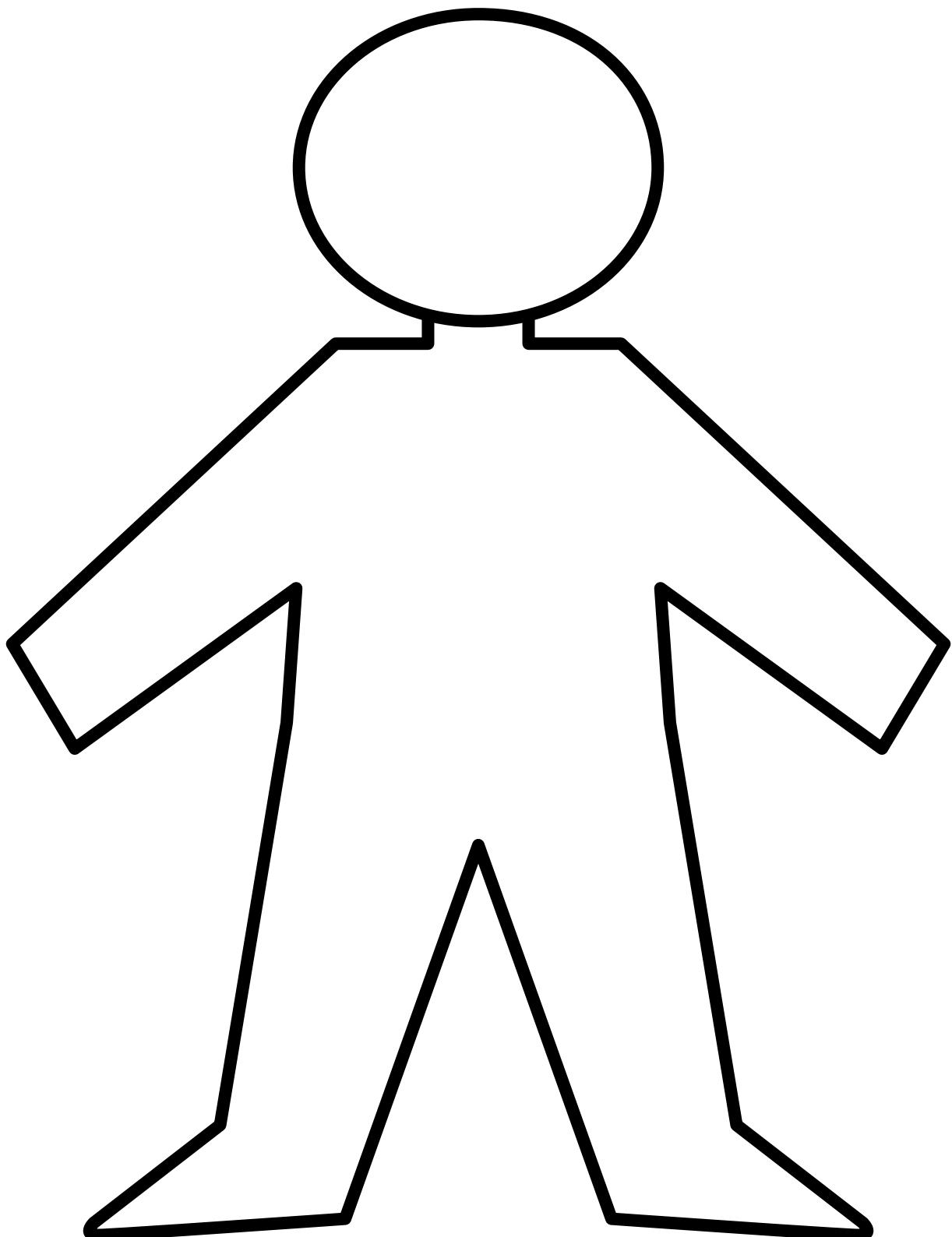
Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot were to say, 'Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body', that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear were to say, 'Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body', that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many members, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you', nor again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you.' On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and those members of the body that we think less honourable we clothe with greater honour, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honour to the inferior member, that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together with it.

Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it (1 Cor 12: 12–27).



I am part of the body of Christ

Inside the outline below write all the ways you might be part of the body of Christ.



Let us pray**Prayer of Saint Teresa of Avila**

Christ has no body now on earth but yours;
No hands but yours;

No feet but yours;

Yours are the eyes through which the
compassion of Christ must look out on the world;

Yours are the feet with which
he is to go about doing good;

Yours are the hands with which
he is to bless his people.

Amen.

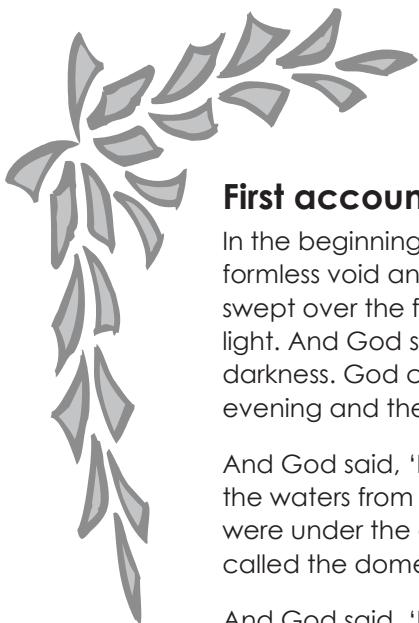
SOMETHING TO REMEMBER

We are the Church,
the Body of Christ.

Creation

Creation Texts

Read the account of creation assigned to you. Underline, in different colours, two of your favourite sentences.



First account of the Creation (Gen 1: 1–27)

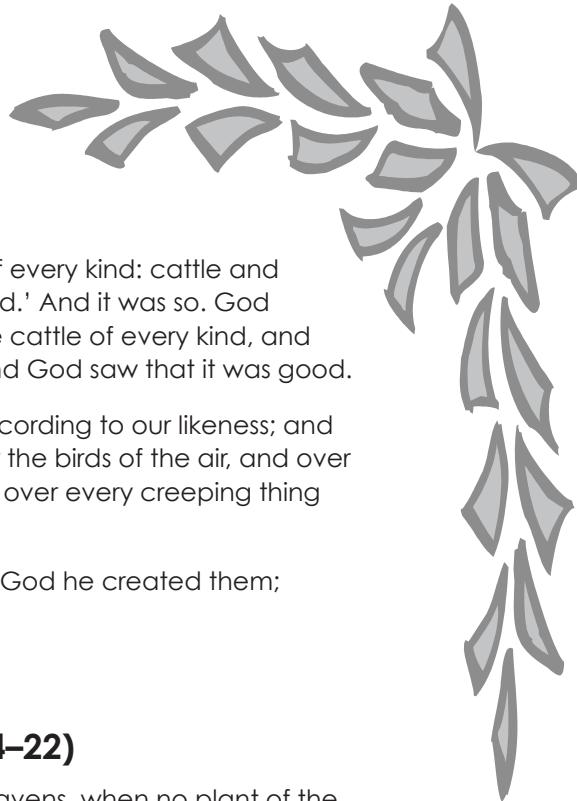
In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

And God said, 'Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.' So God made the dome and separated the waters that were under the dome from the waters that were above the dome. And it was so. God called the dome Sky. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

And God said, 'Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.' And it was so. God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. Then God said, 'Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it.' And it was so. The earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seed of every kind, and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

And God said, 'Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth.' And it was so. God made the two great lights – the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night – and the stars. God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth, to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

And God said, 'Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky.' So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm, and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. God blessed them, saying, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.' And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.



First account of the Creation (continued)

And God said, 'Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind.' And it was so. God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind, and the cattle of every kind, and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good.

Then God said, 'Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.'

So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

Another Account of the Creation (Gen 2: 4–22)

In the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens, when no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up – for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no one to till the ground; but a stream would rise from the earth, and water the whole face of the ground – then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being. And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed. Out of the ground the Lord God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

A river flows out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it divides and becomes four branches. The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one that flows around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; and the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one that flows around the whole land of Cush. The name of the third river is Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, 'You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.'

Then the Lord God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner.' So out of the ground the Lord God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said,

'This at last is bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;
this one shall be called Woman,
for out of Man this one was taken.'

Exploring the Text

First Creation account (Gen 1: 1–27)

Where (verses)	What God created	When	How

Second Creation account (Gen 2: 4–22)

Where (verses)	What God created	When	How

SOMETHING TO REMEMBER

We explore what God's creation shows us about God.

Mary, First Among the Saints

Mary in Scripture

Luke 1: 26–31

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.' But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus.'

Characteristics of Mary as suggested in the scripture text.



Luke 1: 39–56

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leapt for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.'

'My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for he has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.'

He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.'

And Mary remained with her for about three months and then returned to her home.

Characteristics of Mary as suggested in the scripture text.

John 2: 1–12

On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, 'They have no wine.' And Jesus said to her, 'Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come.' His mother said to the servants, 'Do whatever he tells you.' Now standing there were six stone water-jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, 'Fill the jars with water.' And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, 'Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward.' So they took it. When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom and said to him,

'Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now.' Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

After this he went down to Capernaum with his mother, his brothers, and his disciples; and they remained there for a few days.

Characteristics of Mary as suggested in the scripture text.

Luke 2: 41–51

Now every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. Assuming that he was in the group of travellers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends. When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, 'Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety.' He said to them, 'Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?' But they did not understand what he said to them. Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart.

Characteristics of Mary as suggested in the scripture text.

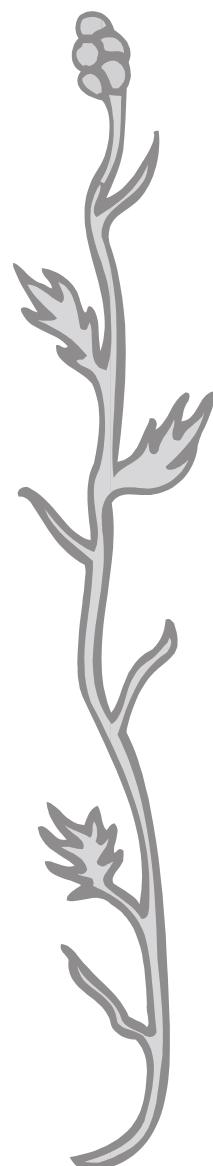
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I can live like Mary ...



Let us pray**A Litany in Praise of Mary, Mother of God**

Catechist:	Lord, have mercy on us.	All:	Christ, have mercy on us.
Catechist:	Lord, have mercy on us.	All:	Christ, have mercy on us.
Catechist:	God the Father of Heaven,	All:	Have mercy on us.
Catechist:	God the Son, Redeemer of the world,	All:	Have mercy on us.
Catechist:	God the Holy Spirit,	All:	Have mercy on us.
Catechist:	Holy Trinity, one God,	All:	Have mercy on us.
Catechist:	Holy Mary,	All:	Pray for us.
Catechist:	Holy Mother of God,	All:	Pray for us.
Catechist:	Mother of divine grace,	All:	Pray for us.
Catechist:	Mother most pure,	All:	Pray for us.
Catechist:	Mother most chaste,	All:	Pray for us.
Catechist:	Mother most admirable,	All:	Pray for us.
Catechist:	Mother of our Creator,	All:	Pray for us.
Catechist:	Mother of our Saviour,	All:	Pray for us.
Catechist:	Mirror of justice,	All:	Pray for us.
Catechist:	Seat of wisdom,	All:	Pray for us.
Catechist:	Cause of our joy,	All:	Pray for us.
Catechist:	Mystical rose,	All:	Pray for us.
Catechist:	Morning star,	All:	Pray for us.
Catechist:	Refuge of sinners,	All:	Pray for us.
Catechist:	Comforter of the afflicted,	All:	Pray for us.
Catechist:	Help of Christians,	All:	Pray for us.
Catechist:	Queen of angels,	All:	Pray for us.
Catechist:	Queen of patriarchs,	All:	Pray for us.
Catechist:	Queen of prophets,	All:	Pray for us.
Catechist:	Queen of apostles,	All:	Pray for us.
Catechist:	Queen of all saints,	All:	Pray for us.
Catechist:	Queen conceived without Original Sin,	All:	Pray for us.
Catechist:	Queen assumed into Heaven,	All:	Pray for us.
Catechist:	Queen of the most holy Rosary,	All:	Pray for us.
Catechist:	Queen of peace,	All:	Pray for us.



All: Almighty Father of our Lord, Jesus Christ,

You have revealed the beauty of your power by raising Mary, a lowly young woman of Nazareth, and making her the mother of our Saviour and first among the saints.

May her example guide us so that we may grow ever closer to you. We make this prayer through Christ, our Lord.

Amen

SOMETHING TO REMEMBER

I can live my life like Mary, first among the saints.

Advent

Advent Wreath Symbolism



Picture of an advent wreath

When we use a circle for the Advent Wreath it reminds us ...

The green leaves in the Advent Wreath reminds us ...

The coloured candles symbolise ...

Pink

Violet

White

Complete the sentence:

The Advent Wreath is a valuable symbol for Advent because ...

Let us pray

All: In the name of the Father ...

Catechist: As we come closer to Christmas,
we look on these symbols of light and green branches.
We recall the promise God made to our world:
that Christ, our light and our hope, will come again.

Let us listen to the words of the prophet Isaiah as he calls the people of Israel,
and us, to be aware of the great event about to happen in the birth of Jesus.

Student: A reading from the prophet Isaiah

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness –
on them light has shined.
You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder (Is 9: 2–3).

Catechist: Let us think about these words, what they might mean for us as we set out on
this time of waiting.

The first candle is lit.

All: **Oh God,**
we remember your promise to send us your Son, Jesus. As we light this candle,
may your blessings come upon us,
brightening our way
and guiding us in your truth.
May this light remind us that Christ, our Saviour, brings life into our world,
and to us, as we wait for his coming.
We ask this through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen

SOMETHING TO REMEMBER

The symbolism of the Advent wreath helps us understand Advent.

The Christmas Season

My Family

Write down six fun or interesting things about your family.

The Importance of Christmas

Text 1: Matthew 2: 13–15, 19–23

Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, ‘Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.’ Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, ‘Out of Egypt I have called my son.’ When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, ‘Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child’s life are dead.’ Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, ‘He will be called a Nazorean.

Text 2: Luke 2: 22–40

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, ‘Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord’), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, ‘a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons.’

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, ‘Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.’

And the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, ‘This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.’

Text 2: Luke 2: 22–40 (continued)

There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband for seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshipped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favour of God was upon him.

Text 3: Luke 2: 41–51

Now every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. Assuming that he was in the group of travellers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends. When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, 'Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety.' He said to them, 'Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?' But they did not understand what he said to them. Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart.

Analysing the Scripture

Scripture Mt 2: 13–15,	Mary	Joseph	Jesus	Angels
What the character said				
What the character did				

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Scripture Lk 2: 22–40	Mary	Joseph	Jesus	Simeon	Anna
What the character said					
What the character did					

Scripture Lk 2: 41–51	Mary	Joseph	Jesus
What the character said			
What the character did			

What does the story tell me about Jesus' parents and family life?

Family Life

Write your insights or learning from today in the space below.

SOMETHING TO REMEMBER

*During the Christmas season
the Church celebrates the
Holy Family of Jesus.*

