

# Catholic Preschool and Primary Religious Education Curriculum for Ireland



CATHOLIC PRESCHOOL AND PRIMARY  
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CURRICULUM FOR IRELAND



Catholic Preschool and Primary  
Religious Education Curriculum for Ireland

Irish Episcopal Conference

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# Decree



## PONTIFICIUM CONSILIUM DE NOVA EVANGELIZATIONE PROMOVENDA

Prot. N. Cat/57/2015/P

God, the beginning and end of all things, has revealed himself to mankind in the person of Jesus Christ, the Word made Flesh, to see whom is to see the Father. The same Jesus Christ, the fullness of God's Revelation, commanded the Apostles to preach the Gospel, the source of saving truth and moral teaching to all men. Thus the Church throughout the ages is concerned with the faithful transmission of the divine Revelation, not least as it is realized through her catechetical mission in which pastors and catechists concur so as to ensure that the Gospel of Christ is faithfully handed on to the new generations. Accordingly, the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization, which is charged with the granting of the necessary approval of the Apostolic See for catechisms and other writings pertaining to catechetical instruction, has examined the *Catholic Preschool and Primary Religious Education Curriculum for Ireland*, submitted by the Irish Episcopal Conference as required by Canon 775 § 2 of the *Code of Canon Law* and Article 3 § 4 of the Apostolic Letter *Fides per doctrinam*, and hereby

### APPROVES

and confirms the aforementioned *Curriculum* in the version submitted to this Dicastery by the Most Reverend Eamon Martin, Archbishop of Armagh, President of the same Episcopal Conference, on February 25, 2015.

Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary.

*Given from the Seat of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization on March 17, 2015, the Solemnity of St Patrick, Bishop and Principal Patron of Ireland.*

✠ Salvatore Fisichella  
Titular Archbishop of Vicohabentia  
PRESIDENT

✠ Octavio Ruiz Arenas  
Archbishop Emeritus of Villavicencio  
SECRETARY

# Foreword

Religious education is important. We have evidence of many fine examples of it in Ireland. It has taken place in a variety of contexts and adopted several forms and methods – biography and hymn, art and sculpture, story and catechism, texts and devotions. It is never meant to be limited to just a fragment of life. It is dynamic, involving a spiralling and progressive lifelong movement of faith and life, insight and love.

Pope Francis reminds us that the first proclamation that must ring out over and over in our religious education is that ‘Jesus Christ loves you; he gave his life to save you; and now he is living at your side every day to enlighten, strengthen and free you.’ This first proclamation, Francis explains, is called ‘first’ not because it exists at the beginning and can then be forgotten or replaced by other more important things. Rather, ‘it is first in a qualitative sense because it is the principal proclamation, the one which we must hear again and again in different ways, the one which we must announce one way or another throughout the process of catechesis, at every level and moment’ (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 164).

It is a particularly significant moment in Ireland that we now have the first ever formal religious education curriculum for Catholic preschools and primary schools in the whole island of Ireland. As such it provides a structured outline of what religious education, as an academic discipline in Catholic schools, contributes to the Catholic education and formation of young children at preschool and primary level.

The curriculum has been written in conformity to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and in accordance with the vision outlined in *Share the Good News: National Directory for Catechesis in Ireland*. It has been devised on the basis of the partnership between home, school and parish. The four-fold structure of the curriculum provides a clear scope and sequence for religious learning, with clear signposts to the knowledge and understanding, skills and processes to be learned at each level of the primary school.

This curriculum provides a solid foundation for the development of religious education programmes and other resource material to enhance the teaching of Catholic religious education at preschool and primary level in the years ahead. It will be welcomed by parents and priests, Catholic teachers and lecturers, school leaders and parish communities the length and breadth of Ireland. We hope this new curriculum will provide a new impetus for the religious education and faith formation of Catholic children in Ireland in the twenty-first century.

✠ Eamon Martin  
*Archbishop of Armagh*  
*Primate of All Ireland*

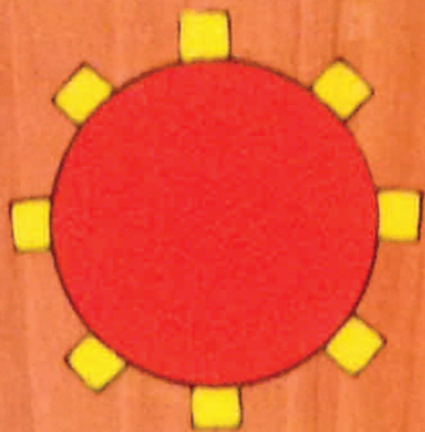
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*Archbishop of Dublin*  
*Primate of Ireland*

✠ Kieran O’Reilly  
*Archbishop of Cashel & Emyl*

✠ Michael Neary  
*Archbishop of Tuam*

# Introduction







## The Catholic Preschool And Primary Religious Education Curriculum

The Catholic vision of education is rooted in its ‘Christian concept of life centred on Jesus Christ; he is the One who ennobles people, gives meaning to human life, and is the model which the Catholic school offers to its pupils’(CS 33–37).<sup>1</sup> The Catholic Faith is a body of truth that is to be faithfully handed on through Religious Education and catechesis and this handing on is the Christian mission and duty of parents, clergy, religious, teachers and catechists (cf. LF 40, par 1). Religious education is never simply one subject among many in the Catholic primary school, but the foundation of the entire educational process. Catholic primary Religious Education is distinctive because it seeks to encourage and support the Catholic faith commitment of Catholic students (SGN 39). The National Directory for Catechesis, *Share the Good News* (2010), outlines principles for Religious Education in the Irish Catholic Church (SGN chapter 2).

This Religious Education curriculum was written for Irish Catholic preschools and primary schools, north and south. The curriculum has been developed to respond to the shifting cultural and educational context in which primary Religious Education is carried out today. It offers a common educational language for all those responsible for the quality of Catholic Religious Education at preschool and primary level. Religious education resembles other academic disciplines that are taught in Catholic schools. The GDC puts this notion in these terms:

It is necessary, therefore, that religious instruction in schools appear as a scholastic discipline with the same systematic demands and the same rigour as other disciplines. It must present the Christian message and the Christian event with the same seriousness and the same depth with which other disciplines present their knowledge. It should not be an accessory alongside of these disciplines, but rather it should engage in a necessary interdisciplinary dialogue. (GDC 73)

Religious education takes place in primary schools in the island of Ireland within circumstances supported by Education Acts in both jurisdictions.<sup>2</sup> The *Education Act* (1998) states the requirement that schools ‘promote the moral, spiritual, social and personal development of students ... in consultation with their parents, having regard for the characteristic spirit of the school’.<sup>3</sup> In the Irish Republic, the various patron bodies are responsible for the development and implementation of the curriculum of Religious Education in primary schools.<sup>4</sup> In Northern Ireland, the *Revised Core Syllabus for Religious Education* (2007), prepared by the four major churches – Church of Ireland, Presbyterian, Methodist and Roman Catholic – and negotiated with the Department of Education, Northern Ireland, sets out a common core for the teaching of Religious Education, which schools are free to build on in a way that suits the needs of their pupils and the ethos of the school.<sup>5</sup> In both jurisdictions, the Religious Education curriculum provides formal

<sup>1</sup> For further information on the vision of Catholic education see Irish Catholic Bishop’s Conference, *Catholic Primary Schools: A Policy for Provision into the Future* (Veritas, 2007); *Vision 08 – A Vision for Catholic Education in Ireland* (2008); The Catholic Bishops of Northern Ireland, *Proclaiming the Mission – The Distinctive Philosophy and Values of Catholic Education* (2001); *Building Peace Shaping the Future* (2001); and Council for Catholic Maintained Schools, *Life to the Full: A Vision for Catholic Education* (1996); Catholic Schools Partnership, *Catholic Primary Schools – Looking to the Future* (2012).

<sup>2</sup> For the Republic, see Government of Ireland, *Education Act* (Dublin: the Stationery Office, 1998); for Northern Ireland see the *Education Reform Act 1988* and the *Education Reform Order*, (Northern Ireland, 1989).

<sup>3</sup> Government of Ireland, *Education Act*, 9(d).

<sup>4</sup> Ireland, Department of Education and Science, *Primary School Curriculum: Introduction* (Dublin: The Stationery Office, 1999), p. vi.

<sup>5</sup> *Revised Core Syllabus for Religious Education* (CSRE). Available from [www.deni.gov.uk](http://www.deni.gov.uk). The core syllabus has been taken into account in the planning of this national curriculum and direct links are indicated in parentheses.

teaching in matters of belief, values and practice that equip the young child for a free and intelligent expression of personal faith within the family, Church and wider society (SGN 39).

### In the life of the Irish Church

The National Directory for Catechesis, *Share the Good News*, provides the vision for how Catholic Religious Education is understood, proposing a model of continuous and progressive Religious Education and faith formation across the years of schooling. In this vision, Religious Education in primary school contributes to the process whereby Catholic children are invited ‘to live in community and to participate actively in the life and mission of the Church’ (GDC 86; SGN 99). This kind of Religious Education assumes that the life and ethos of the Catholic school provides the witness and community context that enables this understanding to develop. Ideally, the work of the school stands alongside the lived experience of faith in home and parish (SGN 39, 91) and Religious Education in the school is co-ordinated with the catechesis and sacramental initiation offered in the family and in the parish (SGN 39, 102, 152). As catechesis of adults is now considered the chief form of catechesis in the Church (GDC 20; CT 43; SGN 68-9), school-based Religious Education of young children is to be carried out in the context of *lifelong learning* in religion. This has clear implications for the amount of content and the types of processes found in this primary Religious Education curriculum, as well as the kinds of knowledge and skills considered desirable for young children at the beginning of the third millennium.

*Share the Good News* outlines an educational vision for the Irish Church which draws on a pastoral model: ‘a vision of the parish community as a catechetical community; recognition of the ongoing need for the spiritual care of all educators, parents/guardians, teachers, parish ministers; and greater sharing of ideas, responsibilities and resources at diocesan and parish levels’ (SGN 100). In this pastoral model the home, school, and parish have differing and connected roles:

**The family:** Parents/guardians are the primary educators of their children in faith. In the home they can introduce young people to the lived reality of faith through prayer, moral formation, everyday expressions of love and reconciliation, good example and simple sharing of the faith journey. They also contribute appropriately to their children’s formal instruction in and initiation into the faith by participating in parish-based catechesis (SGN 91-8). Catholic schools build upon this foundation and work collaboratively with parents/guardians in the Religious Education of their children.<sup>6</sup>

**The parish** is where the child learns the meaning of worship, encounters Christ in the sacraments, and shares in the practical outreach of the Christian community in mission to the world. Parish-based catechetical programmes can support family catechesis, school-based sacramental preparation, liturgical formation, and provide many different opportunities for apostolic action and personal spiritual growth.

**The school:** Religious education in the Catholic primary school consists of two distinct but complementary dimensions, namely an educational dimension and a faith formation dimension (SGN 38, 39, 99-100). The first dimension, most commonly referred to as curriculum religion, is focused on a form of Religious Education which focuses on the

<sup>6</sup> It is envisaged that ‘Guidelines for Religious Education in the Home and Parish’ will complement this curriculum.

teachings and values of the Catholic Church. It enables children to learn skills of spiritual, moral and religious literacy which informs their minds and enhances their understanding of Christian faith, enabling them to develop an informed, mature response to God's call to relationship. The *Religious Education* outcomes in this curriculum reflect this first dimension. The second dimension, faith formation, forms children's characters in the virtues and values of Jesus; supports their faith development, and helps them to experience what it means to be a member of the Church community called to witness to Jesus in service of others (SGN 39, 101). In the context of the Catholic school, Religious Education is part of and completed by other forms of the ministry of the word (catechesis, liturgical celebration, social justice activities etc.). The *faith formation* goals in this curriculum reflect this second dimension. However, the school as a whole has many opportunities to foster faith formation.

### Responding to religious and cultural change

The Church's teaching requires that Catholic schools be places where each person is respected and valued and where the stages of faith of each individual are recognised realistically and responded to sensitively. For many children, the curriculum of Religious Education in the Catholic primary school supports their catechetical education and ongoing initiation as baptised Christians (GDC, 51; SGN 102, 152). Some baptised Catholics may not have been fully evangelised and other children may be preparing for Baptism (SGN 32). As a result, teachers may need to integrate approaches to pre-evangelisation, evangelisation and catechesis at different times for different pupils in the Catholic school.<sup>7</sup>

Children come to school with a range of experiences with regard to religious faith and religious concepts. Teachers too are representative of the diversity of our multi-cultural society, bringing to the task a wide variety of experience and varying levels of faith commitment. In drawing up and implementing schemes of work, all involved must respect not only the requirements of Religious Education as a serious academic discipline, but also the complexities and challenges to religious faith encountered by children, their families and teachers. A guiding principle on freedom enunciated by the Second Vatican Council applies in Religious Education:

... from the very origins of the Church, the disciples of Christ strove to convert people to faith ... not by the use of coercion or by devices unworthy of the gospel, but by the power, above all, of the Word of God. (DH 11)

John Paul II, in *Catechesis in Our Time*, upholds the school's 'grave duty' to 'offer religious training suited to the often widely varying religious situations of the pupils' (CT 69). This point is reiterated in *Lay Catholics in Schools – Witnesses to Faith*, which notes the importance of respecting conscience. It accepts that among Catholic pupils there will be 'many different levels of faith response' and states that 'the Christian vision of existence must be presented in such ways that it meets all these levels' (LCS 28; cf GDC 51, 75, 180).

<sup>7</sup> The Letter on Religious Education in schools from the Congregation for Catholic education (2009) clarifies that "Religious Education" in schools does not require the assent of faith, and is therefore different from and complementary to, "catechesis". Congregation for Catholic Education, *Religious Education in Schools Fits into the Evangelising Mission of the Church* (8 September 2009). See also RDEC 68-9, c.f. GDC 73; SGN 39; EIDCS 74.

### Inclusion of all children in the Catholic school

Catholic schools are communities which are open, welcoming and inclusive. Therefore Catholic schools may include children who adhere to other religions or other stances for living. While mindful of their duty to educate in the distinctive beliefs, values, and practices of the Catholic community, teachers will bear witness to an attitude of respect for and appreciation of all:

Catholic educators ... must have the greatest respect for those students who are not Catholic. They should be open at all times to authentic dialogue, convinced that in these circumstances the best testimony that they can give of their own faith is a warm and sincere appreciation for anyone who is honestly seeking God according to his or her conscience (LCS 42).





# The Contribution of Catholic Religious Education to the Primary School Curriculum (1999)

In the Republic, the Catholic Religious Education curriculum contributes to the specific aims and general objectives of the Primary School Curriculum (see PSC, Intro, 34) as follows:

## 1. *Religious education 'enables the child to live a full life as a child and to realise his or her potential as a unique individual' (PSC, Intro, 7).*

### Catholic Religious Education:

- provides children with an age-appropriate knowledge of the content of the Catholic faith as set out in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, the documents of Vatican II and other Church documents
- helps children to realise and develop their potential for relationship with Jesus Christ who came into the world so that we might 'have life and have it to the full' (Jn 10:10)
- helps children come to a knowledge that they and all human beings are created in God's image and likeness, created purposely by God with eternal life as their ultimate destiny
- cultivates a sense of the virtues and the essential role of grace in the human condition of sin and suffering
- enables children to develop fullness of life with God, fulfilled in eternal life which is not 'an imaginary hereafter ... [but] ... is present wherever God is loved and wherever his life reaches us' (*Spe Salvi*, Pope Benedict XVI, no. 31)
- aids children to develop Christian spiritual, moral and religious values and is concerned with how religious knowledge, concepts, skills and attitudes are integrated with the personal development and spiritual life of the child
- takes seriously the pupils' own context in the world in which they are growing up, and the necessity for structuring a programme of teaching and learning which takes account of their developing awareness, attitudes and abilities
- enables children to communicate clearly and confidently using a range of linguistic, symbolic, representational and physical expression
- develops children's capacity for open-mindedness, aesthetic appreciation, creative expression and response
- promotes children's emotional and physical development, health and well-being
- promotes children's cultural development, Catholic cultural identity and cultural practices.



2. *Religious education ‘enables the child to develop as a social being through living and cooperating with others and so contribute to the good of society.’ (PSC, Intro, 7).*

**Catholic Religious Education:**

- enables children to develop an understanding of what it means to belong to the Catholic Church and of the mission of the Church in service to the world
- develops interpersonal and intrapersonal skills, engendering a positive awareness of self, a sensitivity to others, self-discipline and responsible attitudes to self, others and the environment
- makes a significant contribution to inclusion and community cohesion, particularly in its focus on promoting respect for all
- supports children in developing and reflecting upon their values and their capacity for moral judgement, making an important contribution to the Common Good
- promotes the value of respect for religious diversity and cultural difference, combating prejudice and discrimination, and contributing to the promotion of tolerance and interfaith harmony in society
- has strong associations with learning for national and global citizenship and care for the earth
- helps children to engage with challenging spiritual, moral and social questions that arise in their lives and society
- helps children consider how religious commitment leads to particular actions and concerns in society.

3. *Religious education ‘prepares the child for further education and lifelong learning.’ (PSC, Intro, 7).*

**Catholic Religious Education:**

- makes a significant contribution to children’s literacy skills, including the use of information and communication technology (ICT)
- promotes the ability to think critically and evaluate their own and other’s views in a reasoned and informed manner, and to apply learning to new contexts
- teaches children how to engage in independent and collaborative learning, as well as to develop skills that facilitate the transfer of learning
- develops an appreciation of the value and practice of lifelong learning, which expresses itself in an enquiring mind and heightened curiosity
- encourages interdisciplinary work
- aims to facilitate the transition from primary to post-primary Religious Education.



## Defining Features of the Catholic Primary Religious Education Curriculum

In the Catholic school the overarching perspective for teaching and learning in religion is the Roman Catholic tradition and its beliefs and practices. The following twelve perspectives informed curriculum approaches to content, the development of skills and the appreciation of values.

### Church Perspective

The documents of the Second Vatican Council (1962–65) and a number of documents issued since the Council have led to significant development in understanding of the Church's mission to proclaim the gospel. In 1971, the *General Catechetical Directory* was published and this document was revised and updated to form a new *General Directory for Catechesis* in 1997. Sessions of the Synod of Bishops reflected upon evangelisation in 1974 and catechesis in 1977. In 1979 *Catechesi Tradendae* (On Catechesis in our Time) was published. In 1988, the Congregation for Catholic Education published a document on Religious Education, *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School*, and in 1994 the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* was published as a 'reference text' for bishops and for those preparing syllabi, curriculum materials and catechetical programmes (FD 3). These documents are a foundational resource for the Irish Catholic community as it reflects on its responsibility to proclaim and witness to the gospel, in this particular culture, at this particular time. The National Catechetical Directory, *Share the Good News*, distills the key principles from these and other documents for Religious Education in the Irish context. Programmes based on this curriculum will conform to the principles and guidelines outlined in *Share the Good News*.

This curriculum is based on Sacred Scripture and Tradition of which the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1994) is an authoritative, faithful and sure presentation. Other important sources for the content of this Catholic primary Religious Education curriculum are the documents of the Second Vatican Council, especially the four Constitutions (*Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation*, *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*, *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*), the *General Directory for Catechesis* (1997), the *Compendium of the Social Teaching of the Church* (2004), *Share the Good News*, the *Irish National Directory for Catechesis* (2010), the *Irish Catholic Catechism for Adults* (2014), documents on Catholic education, papal encyclicals, as well as significant Vatican documents which address the call for dialogue between Catholics and people of other faiths.<sup>8</sup>

### Sacramental Perspective

A key component of Catholic primary Religious Education is education for understanding of and participation in the Church's sacraments. During the course of primary school, Catholic children are usually prepared for three sacraments: First Eucharist, First Reconciliation/Penance and Confirmation. They are also enabled to develop their knowledge and understanding of these and

<sup>8</sup> *Nostra Aetate*. Decree on the Relation of the Church to non-Christian Religions (1965); *Dignitatis Humanae*. Declaration on Religious Liberty (1965); *Redemptoris Missio* (1991); *Attitude of the Church Towards the Followers of Other Religions* (1984); *Dialogue and Proclamation* (1991); *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1994); *Dominus Iesus*. On the Unicity and Salvific Universality of Jesus Christ and the Church (2000), *Educating to Intercultural Dialogue in Catholic Schools* (2013).

other sacraments (Baptism, Anointing of the Sick, Marriage, Holy Orders) in an age-appropriate fashion, laying the foundations for sacramental education in secondary school and beyond. The sacramental perspective presupposes that the primary agents of children's Religious Education – home, parish and school – work together in partnership, each playing an important role in the overall sacramental education of the child (see page 13). Religious education programmes based on this curriculum will be structured in such a way as to involve both home and parish in the sacramental education of children.

### **Spirituality/Prayer Perspective**

The Catholic Religious Education curriculum aims to foster a distinctly Christian spirituality. Christian spirituality is following Jesus in the practice of the love of God and neighbour. It is rooted in the experience of a personal encounter with Jesus Christ. Children are taught how to live their lives in the Spirit of Jesus as they encounter him in prayer, in the Word of God, in the sacraments and in their own lives. They are enabled to understand how a Christian spirituality is sustained in the community of faith, the Church.

Catholic faith 'requires that the faithful believe in it, that they celebrate it, and that they live from it in a vital and personal relationship with the living and true God. This relationship is prayer' (CCC 2558). Therefore, education to and for prayer is at the heart of this Religious Education curriculum. The ultimate goal is to teach children how to develop their relationship with God through prayer, so that they are drawn into the very life of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Trinity).

### **Educational Perspective**

In the Republic, Religious Education is one of seven curricular areas in the Primary School Curriculum (1999). Other documents supporting and extending the Primary School Curriculum which are relevant to Catholic primary Religious Education include: *Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum: Guidelines for Schools* (2007), *Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in the Primary School Curriculum: Guidelines for Teachers* (2004), *The ICT Framework* (2007), *Exceptionally Able Students: Draft Guidelines for Teachers* (2007), *Guidelines for Teachers of Students with General Learning Disabilities* (2007), *English as an Additional Language: Guidelines for Teachers* (2005) and *Arts in Education Charter* (2012).

This Catholic Religious Education curriculum is structured in a manner that correlates with the rest of the primary school curriculum in the Republic of Ireland. The curriculum model chosen provides teachers with a curriculum formula similar to the other six areas of the primary school curriculum in order to facilitate educational planning and integration with other areas of the curriculum.

*The Education Order Northern Ireland* (2007) outlines statutory requirements relating to curriculum in Northern Ireland. The statutory curriculum is made up of Religious Education and five broad areas of study at primary level. *The Northern Ireland Core Syllabus for Religious Education* (2007) is compulsory for all. Where possible, the core syllabus has been incorporated into this primary Religious Education curriculum.

### **Early Childhood Perspective**

*Síolta: The National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education* (2006) and *Aistear: The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework* (2009) set out expectation of the kinds of learning experiences

children should encounter up to the age of six in the Republic of Ireland. *Aistear* is a theme-based curriculum framework in which the spiritual dimension of young children's learning is understood as integral to the child's overall development (Ais 10, 17). In Northern Ireland, *Curricular Guidance for Preschool Education* (2000) provides guidelines for those working with children in the year prior to compulsory education. The guidance outlines the range of learning opportunities which children of this age should have through play and other relevant experiences.

The Catholic primary Religious Education curriculum draws on the national principles of early learning and development outlined in *Aistear* (Ais 7). Where possible, the ways in which each of the strands contributes to the early learning goals is noted in parentheses. Religious education themes in the early childhood classroom will be chosen to encourage interdisciplinary work (See also SGN 100).

Note: Catholic preschools are found, in the main, in Northern Ireland. It is not assumed that children engaging with the curriculum at Level 1 (Junior–Senior Infants; Foundation Stage) will have received Religious Education at preschool level.

### **Evangelisation, Mission and Justice Perspective (SGN 13, 112-25; EG 111)**

'Evangelisation takes place in obedience to the missionary mandate of Jesus. "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Mt 28:19-20). In these verses we see how the risen Christ sent his followers to preach the Gospel in every time and place, so that faith in him might spread to every corner of the earth.' (EG 19)

As part of its essential mission of evangelisation, the Church is involved in Religious Education in schools. (SGN 38-40)

The National Directory for Catechesis, *Share the Good News* (2010), clearly outlines the importance of mission and justice for Catholic schools and for the kind of Religious Education carried out in such schools:

Recognising and responding to the educational needs of all children, the Catholic school will exercise an option for justice, especially for the poor and disadvantaged (SGN 148).

The Catholic Church in Ireland desires to ensure that opportunities are provided for all learners to participate fully in its education processes, regardless of need, ability or background (SGN 113).

[Religious education will] always keep justice and generosity to the fore, seeking to overcome any sense of discrimination, prejudice or inequality (SGN 115).

In keeping with these goals, the primary religious curriculum incorporates a development education approach that will afford children a significant and real opportunity to put their developing faith into action. Through this approach children are introduced to the concepts of

solidarity, the option for the poor, compassion, generosity, inclusion, empathy and responsibility. Development education includes two key perspectives: the justice perspective and the global perspective. The global perspective will be reflected in the stories, prayers, songs, poems and images chosen by teachers and programme writers. The justice perspective is found in the ‘Christian Morality’ strand under the strand unit: ‘Social Teaching of the Church’. Opportunities for action on global and justice issues will be built into Religious Education programmes so that children are empowered to respond to the issues they are exploring. Trócaire’s Lenten materials will be integrated into the Religious Education curriculum.<sup>9</sup>

### Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Perspective

The Catholic primary Religious Education curriculum will promote a strong sense of the Christian missionary vocation; introducing students to the Church’s mission of evangelisation (CCC 767; EN 14), teaching them how to share the ‘Good News’ of Jesus Christ with others while entering positively into relationship with neighbours who belong to other religious traditions (RM 55; CCC 856). Inter-Religious Education at primary level, while affirming a student’s Catholic identity, will prepare young children for living alongside other Christians and people of diverse religious traditions (CT 32; SGN 62, GDC 197).

The restoration of Christian unity was one of the principal concerns of the Second Vatican Council and principles for ecumenical dialogue and exchange at all levels are outlined in *Unitatis Redintegratio* (1964). The teaching with regard to Other Faiths which arises from the Second Vatican Council and also from more recent Church pronouncements, also affects the kind of Religious Education and formation carried out in Catholic primary schools.<sup>10</sup> The document *Nostra Aetate* (1965) affirms that all the peoples of the earth with their different religions form one family, and that the Church ‘rejects nothing which is true and holy in these religions’ (NA 2). In witnessing to their own religious faith, Christians are called upon to ‘acknowledge, preserve and promote the spiritual and moral goods’ found amongst people of other faiths (NA 2). The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1994) reinforces this view and reminds us that ‘The Church’s bond with non-Christians is in the first place the common origin and end of the human race’ (CCC 842). Teaching about different religions and beliefs is carried out in a fair and balanced manner in Catholic schools.

### Inter-Cultural Perspective (SGN 17)

According to the Education Act (1998), all students should experience an education that ‘respects the diversity of values, beliefs, languages and traditions in Irish society’. Reflecting this principle, the Catholic primary Religious Education curriculum is guided by the Congregation for Catholic Education document: *Educating to Intercultural Dialogue in Catholic Schools* (2013).

Programmes and resources developed to support the Religious Education curriculum will reflect social and cultural diversity within the school and within society as a whole. They will provide positive images of religious and ethnic groups, gender and disability (SGN 125). Particular

<sup>9</sup> See Sheila Dillon, *Trócaire and Development Education* (Trócaire, 2009) for a description of Development Education at preschool and primary levels.

<sup>10</sup> NA (1965); DH (1965); AG (1965); (1991); *Attitude of the Church towards the Followers of Other Religions*, Secretariat for non-Christians (1984); DP (1991); CCC 839-56, 1747, 2108-09.



attention will be given to pupils who are learning English as an additional language. Teachers will integrate language learning and curriculum learning in Religious Education following the *EAL* (English as an Additional Language) *Guidelines* (NCCA, 2011). The connections between racism and religious prejudice will be explored where appropriate. Pupils will be educated, in accordance with gospel values, for good community relations, for respect, for understanding, and for social justice.

### **Christian Moral Perspective**

While knowledge, understanding and skills are central to the curriculum of primary Religious Education, it is also important that Religious Education enables children to develop positive Christian morals, virtues and values. Christian values, virtues and attitudes derive from belief in God, revealed in the person of Jesus Christ and are lived out in the grace of the Holy Spirit.

Some notable virtues, values and attitudes of the Christian tradition which permeate this primary Religious Education curriculum include: the theological virtues (faith, hope, love); the cardinal virtues (prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance); gratitude; joy; forgiveness; respect for truth; compassion; non-violence; justice; interdependence; respect for God, self and others; fair-mindedness; integrity; appreciation and wonder; enquiry and critical thought; social awareness and moral responsibility; confidence in one's own religious identity while valuing difference and diversity; acceptance of one's own fallibility; and appreciation of the sacred dimension of everyday life.



The curriculum will take into consideration children's feelings, values and attitudes towards that which is being taught. The contemporary social and cultural context is complex and young children regularly encounter attitudes and values incompatible with those promoted in the Catholic school. As a result, children may question the worldview of the curriculum, especially in senior classes. Hence the importance placed on encouraging critical reasoning and real engagement with children's culture in the curriculum. Programmes based on this primary Religious Education curriculum will have the task of inculturation and cultural adaptation as a primary goal (GDC 109-110, 170, 180, 192-3). Children will be taught that the teaching authority of the Church (the Magisterium) is an important factor in understanding the moral tradition.

The Christian Morality strand contains concepts which enable education in the true meaning of relationships and sexuality to be integrated into the Catholic Religious Education curriculum. In this way, 'formation in chastity and timely information regarding sexuality' can be provided 'in the broadest context of education for love' (HS 70). Because of 'the fundamental competency' of parents/guardians in this area, care and attention must be taken that they are consulted in the drawing up of any Relationships and Sexuality programme for the Catholic school (HS 23, 41-43, 48, 64). As Saint John Paul II affirmed:

Sex education, which is a basic right and duty of parents, must always be carried out under their attentive guidance, whether at home or in educational centres chosen and controlled by them. In this regard, the Church reaffirms the law of subsidiarity, which the school is bound to observe when it cooperates in sex education, by entering into the same spirit that animates the parents. (FC 37)

### **Special Educational Needs Perspective (GDC 189)**

Children with severe and profound general learning disabilities most often encounter the presence of God in social situations. Special guidelines for Religious Education have been designed for children with this in mind. They have been framed in conjunction with the curriculum guidelines for students with general learning disabilities (NCCA, 2007). They are particularly suitable for children who have an assessment of functioning within the Moderate\Severe and Profound levels of cognitive development. The guidelines enable teachers to adopt a similar approach to Religious Education as they would to other areas of the curriculum. Teachers will be cognisant of the need for individual planning for children with special educational needs (SGN 119).

The aims and activities in the guidelines allow pupils to explore the world of religion in terms of special people, books, times, places, objects and by regular visits to their local church. They will explore religious stories where sensory activities and experiences are included. They will be introduced to religious words and prayers. Opportunities will be provided so that they can experience special celebrations throughout the school year. They will be given the opportunity to explore and marvel at the wonders of God's world. In association with other areas of the primary curriculum, religious experiences will be viewed as further opportunities for teachers to provide these children with an opportunity to make the greatest possible use of their senses (SGN 119). Activities will be used to develop awareness, alertness, interest, and concentration in an enjoyable and interactive way with people and objects.



### ICT Perspective

The use of information technology is an integral part of Catholic primary Religious Education. The Religious Education curriculum will encourage children to research information about religion on the internet; use CD-ROMs and the internet selectively; develop their ideas using ICT tools; use email or videoconferencing to communicate with people on religious matters; use multimedia and presentation software to communicate responses to religious material or a stimulus for discussion; and use equipment such as digital cameras and digital video to enhance understanding of religious belief and practice.

### Ecological Perspective

In the Catholic school, ecological respect and concern are rooted in a scripturally-based theology of creation and related ethical considerations. God creates and gives us the gift of creation to care for and celebrate, and the Christian hope for the final renewal of all creation at the end of time encourages our commitment to cultivate and care for the earth (CCC 1042). Children are taught about the unique and special place of human beings in God's creation, the interconnection of all creation and are encouraged to develop affection, and care for all creation as a manifestation of the divine. Children are taught to contemplate and respect the earth in all its complexity and beauty. The Celtic tradition of respect for God's creation is woven into the curriculum at every level. A Christian ecological worldview criticises patterns of consumption that relate to ecological degradation. Children are enabled to understand the concept of eco-sin and to develop an ecological conscience which calls for prophetic challenges to forces destroying the earth.



# Guidelines for Religious Education in a Catholic Primary School Context

The following guidelines are provided for teachers engaging with this curriculum:

## Catholic primary Religious Education entails true freedom

- The Catholic school respects and supports the right of parents/guardians to withdraw their children from primary Religious Education (See *Rules for National Schools*; Rule 69; Irish Constitution, Art 44.2.4; Education Act 1998 s 30 (2) (e); PSC, p. 58; Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989).

## Catholic primary Religious Education is theocentric

- The mystery of God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – is the centre of the curriculum.
- Children are introduced to the mystery of God through both Scripture and Church Tradition.
- The narrative of salvation is a key structuring principle for programmes based on this curriculum (GDC 108, 115; DV 14, 15; LG 13, 48; AG 3).
- Teachers will be attentive to the ‘analogy of faith’, i.e. the coherence of the truths of faith among themselves and within the whole plan of salvation (CCC, 114).

## Catholic Religious Education as a divine pedagogy

- Religious education must remain faithful to God’s Revelation and Church teaching must be presented in its fullness, not fragmented or impoverished.
- Religious education must be faithful to the child and to his/her age, maturity and stage of faith development (GDC 70; 149).
- Religious education should provide a creative dialogue between life experience and the unique light of the gospel (CT 22; EN 29; GDC 116, 117, 152).
- Inductive (existential or ascending) and deductive (kerygmatic or descending) methods can be used, attending faithfully both to human experience and to Revelation (GDC 118; CT 5).

## Jesus Christ is ‘at the centre of all teaching for Christians’ (CT, 1979; EG 164)

- The person of Jesus has priority at each and every stage of the curriculum.
- Christians are guided by the Church’s Magisterium in their understanding of Jesus Christ.
- The life and mission of Jesus Christ are made known to us through Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition (DV 9, 10, 19).

## Scripture is a primary source for Catholic Religious Education (GDC 94; CCC 50-83; 102, 106, 108, 111-17, 129, 168)

- Both Old and New Testament Scriptures are presented as the living Word of God, written through the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
- Sacred Scripture is to be presented in conformity with the teaching of the Catechism of the Catholic Church.
- Sacred Scripture is clearly related to the doctrines of the faith of the Church and is to be read within ‘the living Tradition of the whole Church’ (CCC, 113).
- The Scripture texts chosen for each level relate directly to the knowledge and concepts to be taught in each of the other three strands at each level: Christian Faith, Liturgy/Prayer, and Christian Morality. The Word of God strand should not be taught in isolation from the other strands. Programmes based on the curriculum will therefore be thoroughly scriptural throughout.

- The Sacred Scripture texts chosen for each level emphasise the narrative of salvation.
- Individual texts are to be set in the context of the history of salvation.
- Particular attention will be paid to Christological titles in Sacred Scripture that affirm the divinity and humanity of Jesus Christ such as ‘Saviour’, ‘Son of God’, ‘Messiah’, ‘Son of Mary’.
- The Sacred Scripture texts chosen for each level constitute a *minimum core* which must be taught at that level. Teachers/programme writers are not restricted to these texts in seeking to enhance their teaching of the Christian Faith, Liturgy/Prayer, Word of God and Christian Morality strands.
- Picture books and online resources of Bible stories for children are made available at all levels.
- A quality bound or covered Bible is used in class celebrations and it has its own special place in the classroom.
- Reverence for the Bible is demonstrated in the ways in which it is used and displayed.

#### **The Church’s liturgy is an essential element of Catholic Religious Education (CCC 1075)**

- Children become familiar with short responses and parts of liturgy by experiencing and using them.
- Teaching about the Eucharist includes helping children read the liturgical signs (CCC 1075).
- The intimate relationship of the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist is emphasised and each sacrament is presented as the action of Christ.
- The spiral curriculum introduces children gradually and progressively to an understanding of sacraments in the course of primary school, laying the foundations for sacramental education in second-level schools, where appropriate, and beyond.
- Children are invited to investigate the relationship between Biblical passages and moments of liturgical celebration (CCC 1094; GDC 108).
- The curriculum supports the role of the parents/guardians and the wider parish community in sacramental initiation (SGN 102, 152).
- Liturgy, sacraments and prayer are taught in the context of the history of salvation.

#### **The experience of prayer is integral to Catholic Religious Education**

- Jesus is presented as the model for prayer (CCC 520).
- At every level children learn a number of traditional Catholic prayers and are helped to develop an understanding of the meaning of these prayers (CCC 2688). Formal prayers are those prayers children will be invited to learn by heart. Additional prayers are suggested as they relate to the knowledge and concepts taught at each level.
- Prayers are to be primarily Trinitarian, directed to the Father, through Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit.
- Children are encouraged to express their prayers spontaneously in their own language.
- Children are introduced to different types of prayer (meditation, contrition, thanks, supplication, intercession).
- Prayer services are an integral part of the curriculum where appropriate e.g. Advent, Lent, Christmas, Easter, All Souls/Saints, Feasts of Our Lady.

#### **Catholic Religious Education always emphasises moral education**

- The moral life is presented as an expression and consequence of our relationship with God.
- Jesus is presented as the model for living a Christian life (CCC 459, 520, 564, 1698).
- Moral education concerns the development of knowledge and reasoning, as well as the affective and motivational bases for moral action.



- Moral education includes teaching children to love and worship God, to know themselves as loved always by God, to develop Christian virtues and values, to develop an awareness of sin and a sense of penance, and to understand the role of the sacraments and the Holy Spirit and the teachings of the Magisterium in helping them live as children of God.
- The eternal and eschatological dimension of the moral life is presented.
- Moral education aims to develop the skill of making moral decisions with an informed conscience.

**Music and song are an important part of Catholic Religious Education**

- Music is used to explore the key concepts of a lesson.
- Music is a primary resource for meditation and prayer and for the development of spiritual awareness.
- Music enables children to participate more meaningfully in liturgy and sacraments.
- Music provides a language with which to communicate spiritual/religious experience and understanding.
- Songs are often biblically inspired.
- Traditional Irish hymns will form part of the curriculum at levels 3 and 4, e.g. *Ag Críost an Síol*.

**Inculturation is an important principle for Catholic Religious Education (SGN 16, 21,29,)**

- It is the duty of teachers 'to speak a language suited to today's children and young people in general' (GDC 208).
- Children are helped to integrate religious meaning and cultural meaning in their daily lives (GDC 133; DP 70).

### **Memorisation is fundamental in Catholic Religious Education (CCC 2688; CT 55; GDC 154)**

- Children are provided with opportunities to learn by heart songs, hymns, poems, Mass responses, Biblical texts, traditional prayers and formulas which sum up and express the key concepts of a given lesson. (Note: It is not envisaged that children memorise all the concepts outlined in the strand units).
- The curriculum will introduce formulas that provide a common language of faith, though a full understanding of these formulas may come at a later stage (CCC 84). Such formulas will include texts from the Bible, the liturgy and the traditional prayers of Christian faith (e.g. Creed, Our Father, Hail Mary). Those formulas will be chosen which ‘while expressing faithfully the truth of the Faith’ are suited to ‘the capacity of the listeners’ (cf. GCD 73, 154).

### **The environment is important for Catholic Religious Education**

- Where possible, picture books of Bible stories will be available.
- Providing rich physical environments that include print-rich displays is desirable.
- Where possible, the classroom will contain a ‘prayer corner’/sacred space. Prayer will take account of the liturgical season and the prayer corner will express the seasonal mood.

### **Catholic Religious Education develops ecumenical and inter-religious awareness and respect for the cultures and religions of others (GDC 197; 200; SGN 62; LG16; EIDCS 63)**

- At primary level the process of learning about other Christian denominations and other religious traditions is mainly about awareness, attitudes, relationships and values. Inter-religious learning establishes the basis for appropriate relationships with religious others (EIDCS 42, 69).
- In this curriculum children are introduced to other Christian traditions and to the importance of ecumenical dialogue and endeavours. As members of the Christian family, Catholics have a unique and intimate relationship with other Christians.
- The first step toward inter-religious awareness is to make the connection between Christianity and Judaism. The teaching of Judaism receives special attention because of the close connections between it and Christianity (CCC 1076).
- This initial awareness is built upon through the exploration of the other great monotheistic faith – Islam.
- Catholic teachers do not present all religions as the same or as equally valid but reflect the reality of Christianity’s relationship to other world religions, whereby some are considered to be closer to Christianity than others.
- Catholic teachers will present what religions share in common while causing to emerge the particular and distinctive features of Christianity (EIDCS 13, 33).
- The teaching of other religious traditions prioritises the Irish cultural manifestation of those faiths where possible.
- The teaching approach is predominantly descriptive. The other religious traditions are taught discretely, not by comparisons or by isolated festivals, writings or key figures. That is not to say comparisons may not arise, but that comparisons are not the starting point of the teaching (SGN 38).
- Catholic Religious Education teaches the unique truth of Christian faith and the need for a lively missionary sense among Christians in relation to other religions (NA 1, 2, 4; CCC 813, 846-848; GDC 200, EIDCS 16).
- Where appropriate, members of other religions in the local area can be invited into the school to speak to the children.

- Timing: Level 2 will have one and a half hours of study of other faiths per year. Level 3 will have one week of study of other faiths per year. Level 4 will have two weeks set aside for the study of other faiths per year. It is envisaged that such timing will integrate with the proposed National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) guidelines issuing from the *Forum on Patronage Report* (2012).

**Religious education includes appropriate processes for assessment and evaluation**

- Catholic schools maintain appropriate and efficient means for ensuring that their Religious Education curriculum is relevant to the legitimate expectations of students and parents/guardians, and is accountable to the Board of Management and to Church authorities. Such means include regular assessment of student progress, meaningful reporting processes and regular review of the quality and effectiveness of the religion programme, in consultation with trained Diocesan Advisers for Religious Education (cf. SGN 146-7, 152).
- The curriculum enables teachers to build on the principles of *Assessment is for Learning*.
- Teachers will value learning that is unanticipated and learning that cannot be assessed.
- The curriculum values a counter-cultural sense of time and aims to nurture waiting and receptivity, acknowledging that some of the most important outcomes of Religious Education are not immediately achieved and may not be directly observable.



## Component Structure of the Catholic Primary Religious Education Curriculum

Catholic Religious Education is distinctive in that it takes place within the context of faith development (SGN 100). Faith in its essence is a gift of God. It may be understood in two ways: as a personal act (a process of developing personal belief and trust in God) and as content (the Catholic faith, a body of knowledge). But far from being an isolated act of the individual, faith is essentially ecclesial. Not only does personal faith have to be sustained by the believing community, but each Christian has a responsibility to share his or her faith with others and hand on the gift he or she has received (CCC 166-167). Each of these aspects is integral to Catholic Religious Education. The primary Religious Education curriculum enables children to enhance their spiritual lives, to gain knowledge of Christian beliefs, to develop key skills of religious literacy and to develop positive Christian attitudes and values. This is a holistic vision of Religious Education and alerts children and teachers to the realisation that religion and its practice are more than just 'knowing what you believe', so that they will see the vital relationship between Christian faith and living a particular way of life. Being religious in a Christian way requires a holistic approach to life where intellect is integrated with heart and body and where commitment to embodying gospel values in the world is the mark of the educated Christian.



The Religious Education curriculum framework below describes the content of Religious Education for Catholic primary schools. It is not a programme for use in the classroom. Its purpose is to guide and inform the teaching of Religious Education by expressing clearly the opportunities for investigation and reflection to be offered to children, the knowledge and understanding which they can acquire, and the ways in which the curriculum aims to foster faith commitment. It is addressed to bishops, trustees, principals, teachers, programme and resource writers, diocesan advisers, parents/guardians and lecturers in the field of primary Religious Education. It is envisaged that programmes and other resources will be developed to support teachers in their implementation of the curriculum.

## General Aim and Outcomes

The aim of this Religious Education curriculum is: **to help children mature in relation to their spiritual, moral and religious lives, through their encounter with, exploration and celebration of the Catholic faith.**<sup>11</sup>

### *Desired Outcomes*

Children will, in a way appropriate to age, maturity, and faith development<sup>12</sup>

- come to know God the Father, through Jesus Christ, in the Spirit
- value self as loved and gifted by God
- become aware of the religious, spiritual and moral dimensions of their own being
- come to a knowledge and understanding of the truths about human life, its origins and purpose as revealed by God and taught by the Church
- develop competence in the investigation, understanding, appreciation and communication of Catholic culture, tradition, prayer, sacramental life and practice, understanding the relationship between faith and life, and between faith and culture
- learn how to participate in the prayer and worship of the Church
- develop skills of religious literacy, in the Catholic religious tradition, appropriate to young children
- develop virtue, personal and social responsibility, ecological consciousness and the ability to act in accordance with an informed conscience when making moral decisions as a child
- develop an understanding of what membership of the Church means and of the Christian missionary vocation
- acquire a sensitivity to and knowledge of other Christian traditions (ecumenism)
- acquire a sensitivity to some other religious traditions and a basic knowledge of their principal beliefs, spiritual values and traditions (inter-Religious Education)<sup>13</sup>
- develop Christian attitudes and values: for example, love, justice, compassion, truthfulness and respect.

<sup>11</sup> This aim relates directly to the broad aim of the Primary School Curriculum: 'to enable children to develop spiritual, moral and religious values'. See Ireland, Department of Education and Science (PSC 34).

<sup>12</sup> Students in Catholic schools are acknowledged as believers, non-believers or searchers (GDC 75). The experience and faith journey of children is respected and their commitment to the religious tradition of their family is supported (SGN 58).

<sup>13</sup> These aims relate directly to the PSC objective: 'That the child should be enabled to develop a knowledge and understanding of his or her own religious traditions and beliefs, with respect for the religious traditions and beliefs of others' (PSC 36).



## The Levels

There are five levels to the curriculum:

### Preschool level

**Level 1:** years 1 & 2 (Junior and Senior Infants/foundation stage)

**Level 2:** years 3 & 4 (First and Second/Key stage 1)

**Level 3:** years 5 & 6 (Third and Fourth/Key stage 2)

**Level 4:** years 7 & 8 (Fifth and Sixth/Key stage 2)  
(year 8 Republic of Ireland only)



## The Four Strands

The next part of this curriculum document is a statement of the content of Religious Education for Catholic preschools and primary schools. It distinguishes four interrelated **strands** of Christian Faith,<sup>14</sup> The Word of God, Liturgy/Prayer and Christian Morality. Together these four strands outline the knowledge and understanding, skills and processes, distinctive of learning in this curriculum area. The detailed statement of content for each of the four strands encourages a rich variety of approaches to teaching and learning that cater for the differing needs of individual children. **Note: The strands are not discrete areas of learning, as they overlap and interact to form a holistic learning experience for the child.** Every facet reflects and reinforces the wholeness of the vision of Religious Education. Teachers and programme writers will build on the learning experiences and concepts across levels to provide continuity of teaching and learning.

Strand (Area of Study)	Vatican II	Catechism
Christian Faith	<i>Dei Verbum</i> <i>Lumen Gentium</i>	Part I: The Profession of Faith
The Word of God	<i>Dei Verbum</i>	Part I: The Profession of Faith
Liturgy/Prayer	<i>Sacrosanctum Concilium</i>	Part II: Celebration of the Christian Mystery Part IV: Prayer.
Christian Morality	<i>Gaudium et Spes</i>	Part III: Life in Christ

The Catholic Church, founded on the faith of the apostles, responds under the guidance of the Holy Spirit to the revelation of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Traditionally, four signs of commitment, noted in the Acts of the Apostles as attributes of the early Christian community, have been highlighted as characteristics of gospel living:

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching (*Kerygma*) and fellowship (*Koinonia*), to the breaking of bread and the prayers (*Leitourgia*). Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were done by the apostles (*Martyria*). 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 (*Diakonia*). 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 2:42-47)

This paragraph gives an ideal picture of the early Christian community, setting down what the Church should do, that is, the tasks of any Christian community. *Share the Good News* describes these tasks as follows:

<sup>14</sup> The term 'Christian' in this document reflects its use in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

Proclaiming and witnessing to the gospel message (*Kerygma/Martyria*).  
Building up a caring Church community based on gospel values (*Koinonia*).  
Celebrating faith in worship, prayer and through liturgical participation – in communion with God, in Jesus Christ, and with one another (*Leitourgia*).  
Service to neighbour, particularly the most poor and most vulnerable, the work of justice (*Diakonia*).

As one expression of the Irish Church's work of evangelisation, this Catholic preschool and primary Religious Education curriculum engages with these themes as a way of structuring the content of Religious Education and faith formation for young children.

### **Organisation of Strands (Christian Faith, The Word of God, Liturgy/Prayer, Christian Morality)**

The proclamation of the Christian message (*Kerygma*), the announcement of the Good News of Jesus Christ is found in the **Christian Faith** strand. The people of God announce God's loving plan of salvation revealed to us in Jesus Christ and brought to fruition through his Church. Teaching and learning in this strand enables children to become religiously literate in key truths, doctrines and practices of the Catholic religious tradition. By engaging with the sacred texts and beliefs of the Church community, children learn to respond to the revelation and presence of God in Scripture and Tradition, in creation and in their own lives. Children are invited to a deeper understanding and appreciation of what it means to be a disciple of Jesus, and of how to participate in the life and mission of the Church. They are taught about the witness to that mission given by the saints and by holy members of the people of God.

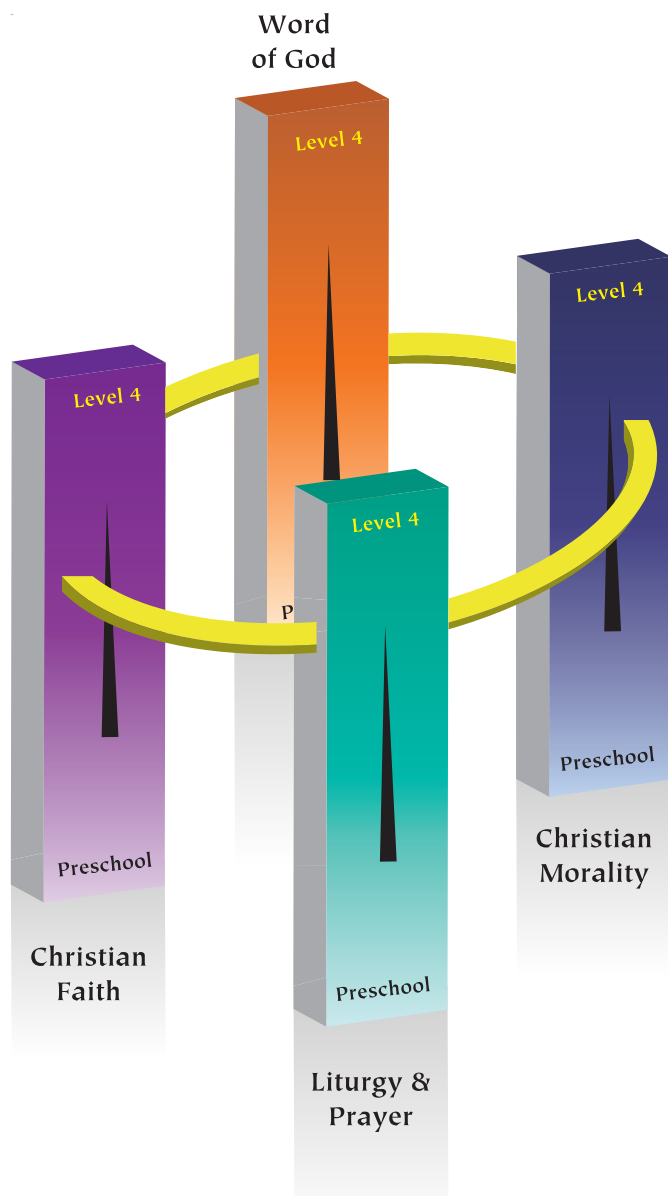
Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scripture make up a single sacred deposit of the Word of God, which is entrusted to the Church. **The Word of God** strand introduces children in an age-appropriate way to Sacred Scripture in the life of the Church. Sacred Scripture is the story of God's past blessings of the people of God, as well as an inspired Word for the present to enable the Church community to recognise God's presence among us. Children in Catholic primary schools grow in their familiarity with the Bible and develop the ability to authentically interpret Sacred Scripture in light of Church teaching, applying them in relevant and fruitful ways to the circumstances of their lives as children. By listening to and understanding Scripture, children come to know the person of Jesus Christ and begin to relate to him and to his salvific mission. They discover Biblical events in the three great 'moments' of salvation history (creation, salvation, fulfilment). They learn from the Bible what it means to be a disciple of Jesus in the community of faith. An awareness of the history of salvation in the age of the Church enables children to become more aware of God's ongoing salvific action in the life of his people.

Teaching and learning in the **Liturgy/Prayer** strand enables children to engage with liturgical signs, symbols and rituals which nurture their relationship with God as Father, Son and Spirit, and to develop their capacity for personal prayer and for participation in the liturgy of the Church. The people of God celebrate and praise God for the salvation won through Jesus' life, death, Resurrection, ascension and second coming. Children investigate the relationship between those Biblical passages that record the narrative of salvation with the liturgical celebrations they experience. They learn the centrality of prayer, liturgy and sacraments in creating and sustaining community life. Liturgy invites children to link their own ongoing story, their struggles and triumphs, successes and failures, sorrows and joys to the Paschal Mystery of Jesus Christ.

Teaching and learning in the **Christian Morality** strand enables children to grow in awareness of their identity as persons created in the image and likeness of God and called to live in loving, respectful, relationship with God, other human persons and the whole of creation. They are introduced to Jesus as the model for living an ethical life and to the moral teachings of the Church that teach them how to live as his disciples. They are formed in gospel values and in love of God and neighbour. They learn that the goal of Christian moral life is only reached by the aid of the grace of the Holy Spirit. They learn the importance of prayer, asceticism and the sacraments in nurturing their moral lives. They learn to cultivate an upright and informed conscience and develop their ability for moral reasoning as they confront moral dilemmas. By reflecting on their own actions and on the moral teachings of the Church, children are invited to live together in the community of faith.

**Note:** The Christian Morality strand focuses on philosophical and educational bases for morality and the contribution of the Biblical tradition to Christian moral development.

- Some concepts relating to God’s merciful love, the concepts of sin and forgiveness, grace and salvation, the Creed and the Our Father are listed under the Christian Faith and Liturgy/Prayer strands.
- Education in the Christian virtues of faith, hope and charity is found throughout the curriculum.
- Education in the role of the Holy Spirit as a gentle guest and friend who inspires, guides, corrects and strengthens Christian moral life is also found under the Christian Faith strand.
- The ecclesial dimension of moral life is also emphasised in other areas of the curriculum.
- The importance of our moral decisions for salvation is also treated under eschatology (‘Eternal Life’: Christian Faith strand).
- Concepts outlined under the Morality strand unit: *RSE in a Christian Context* complement the State Curriculum for Relationships and Sexuality Education in the Republic when taught in Catholic schools.





## Aims

A set of aims is included for each level of each strand. The aims indicate progressions of increasing sophistication and complexity in content and processes taught.

## Skills of Religious Literacy

The skills outlined under each of the strands reflect the skills of religious literacy desirable at each level. This section uses *an outcomes approach*, emphasising the educational alignment between Religious Education and the other six areas of the NCCA *Primary School Curriculum* (1999).

The curriculum applies a *religious literacy* framework to Religious Education. The term ‘religious literacy’ refers to the ability to understand and use, in the young child’s day-to-day life, a repertoire of practices and/or ‘ways of knowing’ related to the Christian religion using reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing, drawing, music, movement, critical and creative thinking, and multimedia texts of traditional and new information and communications technologies.

The concept of literacy applied to Religious Education:

- enables children to relate faith to life and life to faith
- equips young children with the competencies to use many types of communication, combining traditional and new literacy skills in different ways for new purposes and with new technologies
- provides multiple opportunities for integration and linkage with other subjects
- enables young children to develop the critical literacy skills essential for interaction with new and traditional information and communication technologies
- empowers young children to be open, responsible and wise as they encounter the Christian religion
- prepares children for Religious Education as an academic subject in secondary school.

### Understanding

Skills for understanding are rooted in children’s capacity for attentiveness, intelligence, reasonableness and responsibility.<sup>15</sup> By studying the given content of the Catholic Faith, children are invited to investigate and interpret religious concepts and to apply them to their own lives. They are enabled to acquire knowledge and organise it effectively and to make informed judgements and decisions. Much emphasis is placed on higher-order thinking skills such as explaining, problem-solving, predicting, analysing, questioning, evaluating and justifying. The use of the imagination, creative process and metaphorical thinking are integral to the process of understanding. Critical literacy skills enable learners to approach new and traditional communication technologies with discernment.

### Communicating

Communication involves developing a rich spiritual, moral and religious vocabulary; reading and responding to a range of written, spoken and visual texts (including sacred texts, stories, poetry, prayers, ritual, drama, art); talking and writing with understanding and insight about spiritual,

<sup>15</sup> The critical realist epistemology of Bernard Lonergan underpins skills of understanding, judgement and decision.

moral and religious ideas; reflecting critically and creatively on spiritual, moral and religious issues; debating and using reasoned arguments.

### Participating

Participation in experiences of prayer, silence and meditation develops children's capacity for personal prayer and for participation in the Church's liturgy. Engaging in practical activities associated with Christian charity, stewardship of creation and social justice helps children grow in moral awareness and authentic Christian concern for human dignity and the integrity of creation. Working with others in research projects and other educational activities teaches responsibility and interdependence.

### Developing Spiritual Literacy

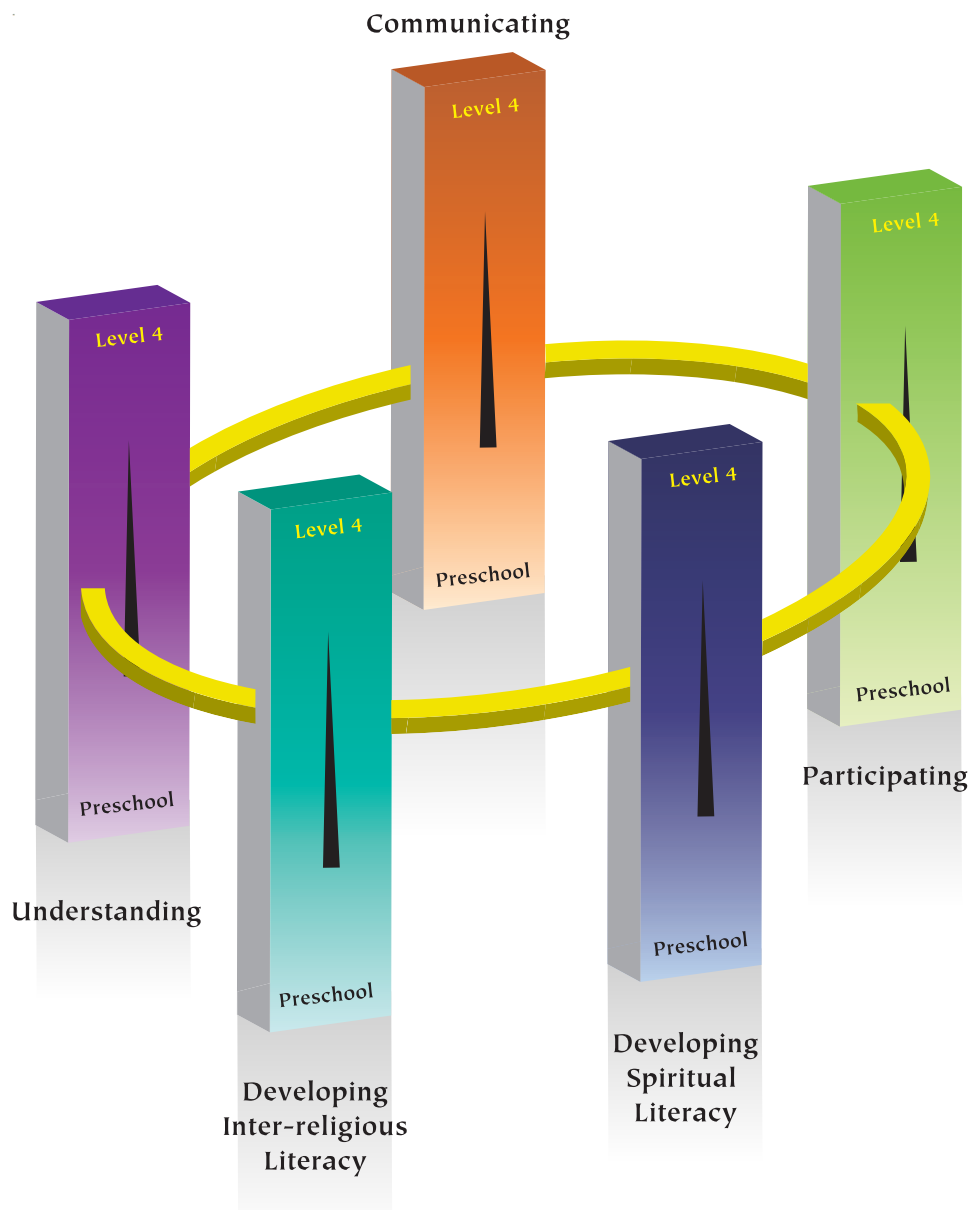
The curriculum seeks to foster a Christian spirituality (see glossary). Skills of spiritual literacy foster the development of spiritual awareness as well as a sacramental and prophetic imagination. Children are enabled to identify Christian spiritual practices that will enhance their spiritual lives. Spiritual literacy also includes reflecting critically and creatively on ultimate questions, on ethical issues and on the challenges to Christian spirituality posed by the other frameworks of meaning found in Irish culture.

### Developing Inter-religious Literacy

Skills of inter-religious literacy enable children to be able to speak the public language of religion; to comprehend and appreciate the place of religious and philosophical beliefs and practices in human life; to understand the need for dialogue among Christians; to develop powers of empathy for and sensitivity towards people of other religions and beliefs; to explore the beliefs and practices of other world religions; and to enter into dialogue with people of other religions and beliefs; to foster awareness of shared values such as justice, peace, the dignity of the human person and openness to the transcendent.

### Skills

- describe in broad outcomes what children are expected to know and understand, and how they will interact with the contents of Religious Education
- are to be considered in conjunction with the 'Knowledge and Concepts' outlined for each level (Note: lessons will simultaneously cover numerous skills and concepts at the same time)
- are sequenced conceptually across levels. Outcomes at each level are qualitatively different from the outcomes at the levels before and after. This sequencing across levels assists teachers in planning learning activities to cater for diverse student abilities
- will be returned to at every level where appropriate. (See Appendix A for a sample of how learning outcomes are carried forward and developed further at each level of the spiral curriculum)
- will be used to develop a range of *specific* learning outcomes/objectives which are tailored to the individual needs of students. These outcomes will incorporate terms which include all forms of verbal and nonverbal communication, including signed and the use of communication aids
- allow for differentiation and adaptation for special needs
- can be used in assessment for learning and for summative use
- can be considered in an interrelated and complementary way for the purposes of planning and assessment.



### Discretionary Learning Outcomes

Describe skills of religious literacy beyond what is considered essential at a particular level. Often, these are developed for children whose attainments significantly exceed the expected level of attainment at any level. As well as drawing on materials from later levels of study, teachers may plan further differentiation by extending the breadth and depth of study beyond the curriculum. At other times, schools and teachers may develop discretionary learning outcomes that are specific to the local school community context and the needs and interests of individual children or groups of children.

## Faith Formation Goals

A set of 'faith formation goals' complement the Religious Education outcomes for each level. While Religious Education is seen as a scholastic discipline in distinction from catechesis (GDC 73; RDECS 68), this Catholic Religious Education curriculum aims to support baptised children's faith development with a focus on their developing relationship with Jesus Christ. Therefore, teachers will ensure that 'faith formation goals' are taken into consideration in every lesson. For example, while children will learn about the story of a saint as a Religious Education outcome, it is hoped that they will seek to emulate the life of the saint, as a faith formation goal. In sum, the provision of faith formation goals ensures that the specific academic focus of Religious Education is maintained while recognising the faith formation dimension of the discipline that often correlates with catechetical goals.

## Strand Units

The strand units contain knowledge and concepts which:

- contain the doctrinal content prescribed by the Irish Episcopal Conference. This content is an expression of the teaching of the Catholic Church as contained in official documents, particularly the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and the National Directory for Catechesis in Ireland, *Share the Good News*
- are written in a language which is accessible to teachers/programme writers and are referenced to Sacred Scripture and official Church documentation. These documents can be consulted for an elaboration of a particular concept<sup>16</sup>
- can be adapted by teachers and programme writers according to the age, culture, experience and ability of children (cf. DP 70; EG 11, 27, 41)
- indicate where prescribed content is normally introduced. Content prescribed for introduction at a particular stage of schooling is revised and explored in more depth at subsequent stages
- may be chosen from earlier or later levels so that individual children can make progress and show what they can achieve. Where it is appropriate for children to make extensive use of content from an earlier level, there may not be time to teach all aspects of the age-related levels of study.

**Note:** for a summary of the strands and strand units see Appendix C.

The **spiral curriculum** describes a sequence for developing **skills** and **knowledge**. The skills and knowledge provide a basis for planning for both lateral (broadening and enriching) and vertical (becoming more challenging) progression.

<sup>16</sup> The introduction to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* advises that teachers 'must suit their words to the maturity and understanding of their hearers' (CCC 24).



# Preschool Level

# Overview

## *Strand*

Christian Faith

## *Strand Units*

- Mystery of God
- Mystery of Jesus Christ
- Creation
- Mystery of the Church
- Eternal Life

## *Strand*

Word of God

## *Strand Units*

- Bible
- Sacred Scripture

## *Strand*

Liturgy and Prayer

## *Strand Units*

- Prayer
  - ◇ Prayer Gestures
  - ◇ Formal Prayer
  - ◇ Mass Responses
  - ◇ Spontaneous Prayer
- Liturgical Year
- Mass

## *Strand*

Christian Morality

## *Strand Units*

- Human Dignity
- RSE in a Christian Context

## Strand: Christian Faith

### Aims

Children will:

- explore central Christian beliefs and how they relate to their own lives
- become aware of what it means to be part of the Church community
- learn basic religious words, persons, facts and concepts
- learn that life has a meaning and purpose (Ais 17).

### Skills

The child should be enabled to:

#### Understanding:

- investigate Christian beliefs, symbols, images and persons through creative process, play, story, visual arts, poetry, rhyme, dance, drama, music, language and using information and communication technologies.

#### Communicating:

- discuss Christian beliefs using a range of religious words
- respond to the revelation, presence and activity of God in Sacred Scripture/Tradition, in his/her life and in all creation, through language and the expressive arts.

#### Developing Spiritual Literacy:

- explore, describe and record spiritual feelings, questions, experiences and concepts using words, poetry, pictures, music, sign language, braille, symbol, rhythm, number, movement, gesture, drama, art, play, and information and communications technologies.

## Strand Units

Children at this level will engage with the following knowledge and concepts:

### Mystery of God

- Names of the three Divine persons: God the Father, God the Son (Jesus Christ) and God the Holy Spirit. Respect for these names in our speech and the use of these names in prayer (CCC 198-202, 222-27, 232-240, 253, 258-260, 261, 316, 320, 422-23, 731 733, 737).
- Christians bless themselves in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
- God is our loving Father and Creator (Gn 1:26-27).
- God created us to share life with him in heaven, our true home (CCC 355-84, 1691-98).
- God is good (Ps 116:1).
- God knows us and loves us (Ps 139).
- God loves us like a mother loves her child (CCC 239; Is 66:13; Ps 131:2).
- God cares for us, especially when we are sick, sad, lonely, angry or disappointed.
- God loves and cares for every family.

### Mystery of Jesus Christ

- Jesus is the Son of God (Mk 1:1; Mt 16:16-17; 27; 54; Jn 20:31; CCC 422, 441-46, 454).
- Jesus is the Son of Mary (Mt 1:18; Lk 1:26-38).
- Jesus is our friend (Jn 15:14).
- Jesus loves us.
- Jesus was born on Christmas day.
- Jesus lived in Nazareth with Mary and Joseph (Lk 2:39-40).
- Jesus loves and welcomes little children (Mk 10:13-16).
- Jesus died on the cross for us, rose from the dead and ascended into heaven (Mk 15:37; 16:6; 16:19; CCC 616-17, 620-21, 623, 638-40, 656, 665).

### Creation

- God created everything there is: the earth, people, stars, animals, birds, plants and trees (Gn 1; LG 2; CCC 212, 290, 325).
- God cares for all creation (Wis 8:1; CCC 303).

### Mystery of the Church

- God in every home and family.
- Jesus, Mary and Joseph are the Holy Family of Nazareth (CCC 437, 532, 534, 564, 583, 1655).
- Mary is the Mother of Jesus and our Mother (Lk 1:26-38; Gal 4:26-8; Jn 19:26-7; CCC 723, 744, 963, 967-71, 973-975; LG 53).
- Our family helps us to become friends of Jesus.
- The priest can help us to become friends of Jesus (LG 10).
- The Catholic Church as the family of God (CCC 747, 759, 777-78, 959, 1655, 2233).
- The Church is a special place where God's people gather to pray.
- Saints are God's special friends who are part of the family of the Church in heaven (CCC 828, 956-57, 960-62, 1195, 2013, 2030, 2683, 2692). Saint Patrick.

### Eternal Life

- God wants all people to be happy with him forever in heaven (CCC 1023).



## Strand: Word of God

### Aims

Children will:

- listen to, explore and reflect upon a variety of Sacred Scripture texts
- come to an understanding of the key characters, events and settings of gospel texts
- understand that Jesus is the most important person in the Bible, God's own Son.

### Skills

The child should be enabled to:

**Understanding:**

- listen to, narrate, view and dramatise a range of Sacred Scripture texts
- recognise people, places, actions and things depicted in Sacred Scripture texts.

**Communicating:**

- represent ideas, feelings, and questions about Sacred Scripture texts through oral language, socio-dramatic play, improvising, moving, story-telling, music, ritual, poetry, process drama, art, and digital media.

## Strand Units

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

### Bible

- The Bible is the holy book of the family of the Church (CCC 103-8, 131-33, 135, 136-39).
- The Bible is used in church by the parish family.
- The Bible is the book in which we read about God and creation (CCC 279, 315-17, 319).

### Sacred Scripture

- Gn 1-2:3. Creation story in seven days.
- Gn 6-8. Noah and the ark.
- Ex 2:1-10. The birth of Moses.
- 1 Sm 17: 1-50. David and Goliath.
- Dn 6: 16-23. Daniel in the lion's den.
- Mt 2:1-3, 7-12. The three wise men.
- Mk 10:13-16. Jesus and the children.
- Lk 1:26-38. The Annunciation.
- Lk 2:1-20. The story of Jesus' birth. The adoration of the shepherds.
- Jn 2:1-12. The Wedding at Cana.
- Jn 10:2-5, 11-16. The Good Shepherd.

## Strand: Liturgy and Prayer

### Aims

Children will:

- develop a concept of prayer and ritual
- recognise some signs, symbols, seasons, celebrations, sacred places and rituals of the Catholic tradition
- make connections between celebrations and the Church seasons and feasts
- develop a familiarity with prayers (formal and informal), rituals, songs, and other expressions of Christian spirituality. (Ais 22)

### Skills

The child should be enabled to:

**Communicating and Participating:**

- pray simple formal and informal prayers
- listen to music and singing as a form of prayer
- make non-verbal gestures used in prayer.

## Strand Units

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

### Prayer

- When people pray they talk and listen to God, and get to know and love God better. (GDC 139; CCC 2653).
- God wants to talk to us (GS 18; CCC 2567).
- God always hears our prayers.
- The church is God's house where his family comes together (CCC 1180; LG 6; 1 Tm 3:15).
- God's family gathers in the parish church to pray and celebrate (CCC 1069-71, 2179).
- The church is a holy place where people go to pray and talk to God (CCC 1181).
- Prayers of blessing, thanksgiving, praise (CCC 2626, 2629, 2637, 2639; CSRE 2b).

#### *Prayer Gestures*

Sign of the cross (CCC 2157), genuflecting, prayer with movement.

#### *Formal Prayer*

Sign of the Cross, Grace before and after Meals.

#### *Mass Responses*

Amen, Thanks be to God.

#### *Spontaneous Prayer*

e.g Prayer to God who loves and protects us, prayer to Mary, prayer for parents and families, prayer for those who are sick or dying.

### Liturgical Year (CCC 1168-1173, 1194-1195; CSRE 2b).

- Advent is a time to get ready to celebrate Jesus' birthday at Christmas. Advent wreath.
- Christmas is a time to celebrate the birth of Jesus.
- Christmas is a time to say thanks to God for sending Jesus to us.
- Ash Wednesday is a time when ashes are placed in the form of a cross on our foreheads.
- Easter is a time to remember that Jesus is alive.
- Feasts of Mary.
- May is the month to remember Mary. May Altar.
- Although we worship only God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, we can also pray to Mary, the Mother of Jesus and our Mother, and to the other saints, asking them to pray for us (LG 53, CCC 2679).

### Mass

- Sunday is a special day when Catholics gather together to celebrate the Mass (CCC 1167,1343).
- The parish family gathers to celebrate with Jesus and with one another.



## Strand: Christian Morality

### Aims

Children will:

- explore God's love as reflected in self, relationships and creation
- develop self-esteem and respect for others and the natural environment (CCC 1004; Ais 16, 17, 26)
- listen to and discuss stories that reflect Christian moral virtues and values
- develop empathy, fairness, friendship, healthy attitudes to diversity and peace-making skills (GS 82; Ais 8, 23)
- develop an understanding of rules, and of right and wrong behaviour
- learn to make choices and take responsibility for their actions.

### Skills

The child should be enabled to:

#### Understanding:

- show respect for self and others
- identify and interpret moral situations (moral sensitivity)
- engage in rule-making and decision-making (moral praxis)
- identify Christian moral values and teachings
- explore and respect the environment.

## Strand Units

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

### Human Dignity

- God loves each one of us (Jer 31:3; 1 Jn 4:10-11).
- God gave us people who take care of us and show us how to love.
- I am unique/special because God created me (Gn 1:26-27).
- God knows my name (Is 43:1-4; Is 49:15).

### RSE in a Christian Context

- Life is a gift from God (CCC 2260).
- God created me (CCC 1004).
- God made me a boy/girl.
- Jesus was part of a family: I am part of a family.
- God gave me feelings.
- I can love, share, express thanks, and care for myself, for others and for creation (CCC 224).
- I can show respect and kindness.
- I can say 'sorry' when I hurt other people.
- I can help people who are poor and people who are hungry.
- Include: Stories of saints, of good vs evil, of right and wrong actions; stories that convey Christian moral values such as sharing, caring, love, forgiveness, friendship, importance of family, care of the earth.
- Stories that encourage an awareness of others and respect for difference.
- Stories which help children distinguish right from wrong and to make moral judgements about situations.

Level 1

# Overview

## *Strand*

## *Strand Units*

Christian Faith

- Mystery of God
- Mystery of Jesus Christ
- Creation
- Mystery of the Church
- Eternal Life

## *Strand*

## *Strand Units*

Word of God

- Bible
- Sacred Scripture
  - ◇ God's Loving Plan of Salvation
  - ◇ Jesus' Birth and Youth
  - ◇ Jesus' Public Life
  - ◇ Passion, Death and Resurrection

## *Strand*

## *Strand Units*

Liturgy and Prayer

- Prayer
  - ◇ Prayer Gestures
  - ◇ Formal Prayer
  - ◇ Additional Prayers
  - ◇ Spontaneous Prayer
- Liturgical Year
- Sacraments
- Mass

## *Strand*

## *Strand Units*

Christian Morality

- Human Dignity
- Social Teaching of the Church
- RSE in a Christian Context

## Strand: Christian Faith

### Aims

Children will:

- understand central Christian beliefs and how they relate to their own lives
- understand what it means to be part of the Church community
- develop a growing awareness of the mystery and dignity of being a child in light of Christian beliefs
- explore foundational Christian concepts in their experience: belonging (community); friendship, love, care
- learn basic religious language, persons, facts and concepts
- learn that life has a meaning and purpose (Ais 17)
- become aware of, value and respect the cultural and religious identities of self and others (cf. Ais 8).

### Skills

The child should be enabled to:

#### Understanding:

- investigate Christian beliefs, symbols and images through creative process, play, visual arts, poetry, rhyme, dance, drama, music, language and using information and communication technologies.

#### Communicating:

- discuss Christian beliefs using a range of religious words
- express personal responses to the revelation, presence and activity of God in his/her life and in all creation through language and the expressive arts.

#### Developing Spiritual Literacy:

- explore, describe and record spiritual feelings, questions, experiences and concepts using words, poetry, pictures, music, sign language, braille, symbol, rhythm, number, movement, gesture, drama, art, and information and communications technologies.



## Strand Units

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

### Mystery of God

- Names of the three Divine persons: God the Father, God the Son (Jesus Christ) and God the Holy Spirit. Respect for these names in our speech and the use of these names in prayer (CCC 198-202, 222-27, 232-40, 253, 258-60, 261, 316, 320, 422-23, 731, 733-37).
- Christians are baptised in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (CCC 232).
- Christians bless themselves in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
- God is our loving Father and Creator (Gn 1:26-7).
- God is good (Ps 116:1).
- God knows us and loves us (Ps 139).
- God is my friend.
- God loves us like a mother loves her child (CCC 239; Is 66:13; Ps 131:2).
- God cares for us, especially when we are sick sad, lonely, angry or disappointed.
- God is always with us (Ps 63:8).
- God gave us the gift of Jesus (Gal 4:4-5; Lk 1:55, 68; CCC 422).
- God loves and cares for every family.
- God chose Mary to be the mother of Jesus (Lk 1:26-38).
- God created us to share life with him in heaven, our true home (CCC 355-84; 1691-98).

### Mystery of Jesus Christ

- Jesus is called 'Christ' (CCC 436, 453).
- Jesus is the Son of God (Mk 1:1; Mt 16:16-17; 27-54; Jn 20:31; CCC 422, 441-46, 454).
- Jesus is the Good Shepherd (Ps 23:1).
- Jesus is our friend (Jn 15:14).
- Jesus loves us.
- Jesus tells us about God his Father.
- Jesus is the Light of the World (Jn 8:12).
- Jesus was born on Christmas day.
- Jesus was born in Bethlehem and grew up in Nazareth (Lk 2:4; 2:39-40; CCC 422, 531).
- Jesus was born in a humble stable, into a poor family (CCC 525).
- Jesus loves and welcomes little children (Mk 10:13-16).
- Jesus helped the sick (Lk 17:11-19).
- Jesus loved and cared for the poor (Jn 6:1-13).
- Jesus celebrated the Last Supper with his disciples on Holy Thursday (Lk 22:14-23; Mk 14:17-25).
- Jesus died on the cross for us on Good Friday (Mk 15:37; Lk 23:46; CCC 624).
- Jesus rose from the dead on Easter Sunday (Mk 16:6; Lk 24:5; CCC 638).
- Jesus appeared to his disciples after he had risen from the dead (Jn 21:1-14).
- Jesus ascended into heaven (Mk 16:19; Lk 24:51; CCC 659-64, 670, 673, 665-67).

### Creation

- God created everything there is: the earth, people, stars, animals, birds, plants and trees (Gn 1; LG 2; CCC 212, 290, 325; CSRE 1b).

- God created man and woman as the crown of his creation (CCC 343).
- God has given each person a guardian angel to watch over and protect him/her (CCC 328-36, 350-52)
- God cares for all creation (Wis 8:1; CCC 303).
- God's creation is good (Gn 1:31; CCC 299, 339; CSRE 1b).

### **Mystery of the Church**

- God is in every home and family (GDC 133).
- Jesus, Mary and Joseph are the Holy Family of Nazareth (CCC 437, 532-34, 564, 583, 1655).
- The Catholic Church as the family of God (CCC 747, 759, 777-78, 959, 1655, 2233).
- Mary is the Mother of Jesus, God's Mother and Our Mother (Lk 1:26-38; Gal 4:26-8; Jn 19:26-7; CCC 495, 508-10, 723, 744, 963, 967-71, 973-75; LG 53).
- The Saints: God's special friends who are part of the family of the Church in heaven (CCC 828, 956-57, 960-62, 1195, 2013, 2030, 2683, 2692). St Patrick, St Brigid, St Columba (Colum cille).
- The way of life of the parish involves caring, sharing, and praying together (CCC 2179; CSRE 2a).
- The Church is a special place where God's people gather to pray.
- Our family helps us become friends of Jesus.
- The priest/teacher helps us to become friends of Jesus (LG 10).

### **Eternal Life**

- God wants all people to be happy with him forever in heaven (1 Jn 3:2; 1 Cor 13:12; CCC 1023).
- When we die we go home to God (CCC 1020).

## Strand: Word of God

### Aims

Children will:

- listen to, explore and reflect upon a variety of Sacred Scripture texts
- develop an understanding of the key characters, events and settings of Sacred Scripture texts
- bring the meaning of Sacred Scripture texts into dialogue with their own life story (CSRE 1)
- understand that Jesus is the most important person in the Bible, God's own Son
- develop reverence and respect for the Bible as the Word of God.

### Skills

The child should be enabled to:

#### Understanding:

- listen to, discuss, narrate, view and dramatise a range of Sacred Scripture texts
- recognise people, places, actions and things depicted in Sacred Scripture texts
- describe the behaviour, intentions and feelings of characters in Sacred Scripture texts.

#### Communicating:

- represent ideas, feelings, and questions about Sacred Scripture texts through oral language, socio-dramatic play, improvising, moving, writing, story-telling, music, ritual, poetry, process drama, art, and digital media.

## Strand Units

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

### Bible

- The Bible is the holy book of the family of the Church (CCC 103-108, 131-133, 135, 136-139).
- The Bible is the book in which we read about God and creation (CCC 279, 315-317, 319).
- The Bible is used in church on Sunday by the parish family (CSRE 1a).
- The Bible teaches how to love God and to live the way God wants people to.
- Jesus listened to Scripture when he was a child (Lk 2:46; CSRE 1a).
- We learn about Jesus from the Bible (CCC 65).
- Jesus is the most important person in the Bible, God's own Son.
- The Bible is a precious book because it is the Word of God.

### Sacred Scripture

#### *God's Loving Plan of Salvation*

- Gn 1-2:3. Creation story.
- Gn 1:26-7. Made in God's image.
- Gn 2:4-9; 15-17; 3:1-14. Story of the first sin.
- Gn 6:1-8:22. Noah and the ark.
- 1 Sm 17:1-50. David and Goliath.
- Ps 8:1, 3, 7-9. Psalm of praise.
- Ps 63:8. God is always with me
- Ps 66:5. Creation is wonderful.
- Ps 104. Praise of God the creator.
- Ps 139:7-14. Praise and thanksgiving.
- Ps 137:14. I am fearfully and wonderfully made.
- Ps 150. Praise the Lord.
- Is 43:1-4. 'I have called you by your name, you are mine.'
- Is 49:15. 'I will not forget you.'
- Jer 31:3. 'I have loved you with an everlasting love.'
- Dn 6:16-23. Daniel in the lion's den.

#### *Jesus' Birth and Youth*

- Mk 1:1. Jesus the Son of God.
- Jn 8:12. Jesus, the light of the world.
- Lk 1:26-38. The Annunciation.
- Lk 2:1-20; Mt 1:18-25. Jesus' birth.
- Mt 2:1-3, 7-12. The three wise men.
- Lk 2:22-40. Jesus is presented in the temple.
- Lk 2:41-50. Jesus is found in the temple.

### *Jesus' Public Life*

- Lk 3:2-3; 15-18. John the Baptist.
- Lk 11:1-4; Mt 6:9-13. Our Father
- Lk 17:11-19. The ten lepers.
- Mt 22:34-40; Mk 12:28-34; Lk 10:25-8. The greatest commandment.
- Mk 4:35-41/Mt 8:23-7. Calming of storm.
- Mk 10:13-16; Mt 19:13-15; Lk 18:15-17. Jesus and the children.
- Jn 6:1-13. Feeding the five thousand.
- Jn 10:2-5, 11-16. The Good Shepherd.
- Jn 13:34. Love one another

### *Passion, Death and Resurrection*

- Mt 26:26-29. Last supper.
- Lk 24:1-12. The empty tomb.
- Mk 14:12-17, 22-4. Last supper.
- Mk 15: 25-37, 15: 42-47. Jesus' death and burial.
- Lk 22:7-19. Last supper.
- Jn 19:18, 25, 30. Crucifixion.
- Jn 21:1-14. Jesus' appearance (Tiberias).



## Strand: Liturgy and Prayer

### Aims

Children will:

- learn how to pray using a variety of prayers and prayer forms of the Catholic tradition
- explore some signs, symbols, seasons, celebrations, sacred places and rituals of the Catholic tradition
- develop a vocabulary of ritual and prayer
- develop their knowledge and understanding of the attitudes, human values and life concepts embedded in the sacraments (DCM, n.9; GCD, 25)
- connect to the local Church community/ies through prayer rituals, involving priest, parents/guardians, grandparents etc (SGN 97)
- develop a familiarity with prayers (formal and informal), rituals, songs, and expressions of Christian spirituality (Ais 22).

### Skills

The child should be enabled to:

#### Understanding:

- explore symbols, feelings, words, gestures and actions in prayer, liturgy and sacraments
- explore the symbols and spirit of Church seasons and feasts
- memorise formal prayers and prayers used in rituals.

#### Communicating and Participating:

- pray simple formal and informal prayers
- memorise formal prayers
- listen to music and singing as a form of prayer
- make non-verbal gestures used in prayer
- engage in meditative prayer.

## Strand Units

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

### Prayer

- When people pray they talk and listen to God, and get to know and love God better (GDC 139, CCC 2653).
- God calls us to prayer and we respond (GS 18, CCC 2567).
- God always hears our prayers.
- The church is God's house, where his family comes together (CCC 1180; LG 6; 1 Tm 3:15).
- God's family gathers in the parish church to pray and celebrate (CCC 1069-71, 2179).
- The church is a holy place where people go to pray and talk to God (CCC 1181).
- Objects in the church: altar, tabernacle, crucifix, holy water, holy water font, Paschal candle, baptismal font, pictures and statues, seats, kneelers.
- Prayers of praise, blessing, petition, intercession, thanksgiving, (CCC 2626, 2629, 2637, 2639).
- Blessings (including Celtic blessings) (CCC 1671).

### Prayer Gestures

Sign of the cross, genuflecting, sitting, kneeling, standing. Prayer with movement.

### Formal Prayer

- Sign of the Cross
- Prayer to God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- Glory be to the Father
- Hail Mary (CCC 2676)
- Our Father (CCC 2759)
- Morning prayer
- Night prayer
- Grace before and after meals
- Angel guardian prayer
- Responses at Mass: e.g. Amen. Peace be with you. Thanks be to God. Greeting the gospel: Alleluia.

### Additional Prayers

- Psalm 8:1, 3, 7-9. Psalm of praise.
- Psalm 23:1. The Lord is my Shepherd.
- Psalm 66:5. Creation is wonderful.
- Psalm 104. Praise of God the creator.
- Psalm 139:7-14. Praise and thanksgiving.
- Prayer for the dead/for those who are sick and dying
- Prayer for parents and families
- Prayer to Jesus
- Prayer to the Holy Family
- Prayer to Mary

### *Spontaneous Prayer*

- E.g. Prayer to God who loves and protects us, prayer for parents and families, prayerful reflection on the day.

### **Liturgical Year (CCC 1168-73, 1194-95)**

- Advent is a time to get ready to celebrate Jesus' birthday at Christmas. Advent wreath.
- Christmas is a time to celebrate the birth of Jesus.
- Christmas is a time to say thanks to God for sending Jesus to us.
- Christmas is a time when Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, the light of the world.
- Lent is a time to turn back to God and to look forward to Easter.
- Ash Wednesday is a time when ashes are placed in the form of a cross on our foreheads.
- Jesus died on the cross for us on Good Friday (CCC 624).
- Easter is a time to remember that Jesus rose from the dead.
- The Paschal candle reminds us that Jesus is alive.
- Sunday is a day of rest for the Church family (CCC 2184-87).
- May is the month to remember Mary in a special way. May Altar.
- Although we worship only God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, we can also pray to Mary, the Mother of Jesus and our Mother, and to the other Saints, asking them to pray for us (LG 53; CCC 2679).

### **Sacraments**

- Baptism: When people are baptised they become members of the Church family. (CCC 1213, 1226, 1239-41, 1243, 1257, 1267, 1272, 1278-80, 1282).
- Water is poured on the person's head while the priest says: 'Name ... I baptise you in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit' (CCC 1278).
- Jesus told us to use this sign (Mt 28:19; CCC 1131).
- The baptismal font and the Paschal candle remind us of Baptism.
- Blessing ourselves with holy water can remind us of Baptism.
- Symbols of Baptism: Anointing with Chrism, water, light, white garment (CCC 1238, 1241, 1243).

### **Mass**

- The parish family gathers to celebrate with Jesus and with one another at Mass.
- We gather together to listen to stories about Jesus.
- Special times and places the Church family gathers to pray and celebrate Mass (e.g. Christmas day).
- On Sunday Catholics gather together to celebrate the Mass (CCC 1167, 1343).
- The Eucharist: The priest says the words of Jesus at Mass. The bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ. We see people going to Communion to receive Jesus Christ. We will receive Jesus Christ in our First Communion.

## Strand: Christian Morality

### Aims

Children will:

- understand their dignity and worth as created in God's image
- explore God's love as reflected in self, relationships and creation
- develop their conscience in light of the Word of God, the teachings of the Church and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (CCC 1783-1789)
- develop a positive awareness of the value of self, of their gender, of their bodies, and of the importance of their own well-being (GE 1; CCC 1004; Ais 16ff, 26)
- understand and appreciate difference and diversity and value and respect people with particular abilities and needs
- develop their concern for others, for animals and for the natural environment (moral awareness, ecological awareness; mission and social justice orientation)
- develop empathy, a sense of justice, fairness, friendship, healthy attitudes to diversity and peace-making skills (GS 82; Ais 8, 23)
- reflect on their emotions, decisions and actions and on those of characters in stories (moral agency, critical moral orientation, emotional development: empathy; moral sensitivity)
- develop an understanding of rules and of right and wrong behaviour
- follow rules and respect legitimate authority, make choices, and develop autonomy.

### Skills

The child should be enabled to:

#### Understanding:

- engage with Sacred Scripture and Church Teachings to identify Christian moral values and teachings
- show respect towards self and others
- respect and respond to difference and diversity among peers
- identify, debate, resolve and evaluate moral dilemmas in life, in story and other texts (moral sensitivity, moral reasoning)
- examine the effects of words and actions and their reciprocal implications
- engage in rule-making and decision-making
- apply Christian moral teachings to their own lives (moral judgement and imagination)
- explore and respect the environment.

#### Communicating:

- engage in moral discussion and debate using arguments (conversational virtues).

## Strand Units

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

### Human Dignity

- God loves each one of us (Jer 31:3; 1 Jn 4:10-11; CSRE 3a).
- I am unique/special because God created me (CCC 1004; Gn 1:26-7; Ps 137:14).
- I am called to love God and to love others (Mt 22:36-40).
- Every person is special in the eyes of God (CCC 225, 356-61, 369, 1604, 1700-01, 1944-46, 2319, 2334; CSRE 3a).
- God knows my name (Is 43:1-4; Is 49:15).
- God gave me people (e.g. families) who take care of me and show me how to love.
- Jesus shows me how to love and care about others (CCC 478, 544, 2443-46).
- Jesus helps me to do the right thing.
- I can love, share, express thanks, and care for myself and for others (CCC 224).
- Love the Lord your God alone, with all your heart (First Commandment).
- Respect the Lord's name (Second Commandment).

### Social Teaching of the Church

- I can use my gifts to help others.
- I can be fair and just (CCC 1944-45, 2255, 2319).
- I can be honest, truthful and kind (CSRE 3b).
- I can respect the property of others.
- I can include and accept others.
- I can respect and care for all creation (RH 15; CCC 373).
- I can say 'sorry' when I hurt other people.
- I can help people who are poor and people who are hungry.

### RSE in a Christian Context

- Life is a gift from God (CCC 2260).
- God gave me feelings.
- God made me a boy/girl.
- My body is a gift from God (Ps 137:14).
- Importance of care for my body created by God (CCC 1004; CSRE 3a).
- Jesus grew in his mother's womb. I grew in my mother's womb.
- Jesus was part of a family. God gave me my family.
- Honour your parents/godparents/guardians (fourth commandment).
- Include: Stories that encourage an awareness of others and respect for diversity and difference.
- Stories which help children distinguish right from wrong and help children to make moral judgements about situations.
- Stories of saints, of good versus evil, of right and wrong actions, stories that convey Christian moral values such as sharing, caring, love, forgiveness, friendship, welcoming the stranger, importance of family, care of the earth.





# Level 2



## Strand: Christian Faith

### Aims

Children will:

- develop their experience, knowledge and understanding of God and of the person of Jesus, his life, his historical context, his redemptive mission, his teachings (in word and deed), his identity as the Second Divine Person of the Most Holy Trinity
- reflect on how Jesus' person, words and actions influence their own lives and the lives of Christians past and present
- explore how through the community of the Catholic Church, people can experience God's love and care
- learn about roles and responsibilities within the Catholic Church community
- learn that care for the marginalised is a central part of belonging to the Catholic Church community
- develop a growing awareness of diversity in beliefs.

### Skills

The child should be enabled to:

#### **Understanding:**

- identify and explain Christian beliefs
- apply Jesus' actions and teaching to their own lives.

#### **Communicating:**

- express feelings, questions, ideas and understandings about Christian beliefs
- memorise faith summaries, expressing Christian beliefs.

#### **Developing Spiritual Literacy:**

- explore awareness of the presence of God in self, others and world.

#### **Developing Inter-religious Literacy:**

- identify his/her own religious identity and religious and/or cultural identity of others
- identify Christian and other faith communities in his/her locality
- listen to and discuss stories about children in a Christian or other faith community (Jewish/Muslim) in Ireland.



## Strand Units

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

### Mystery of God

- God is love (1 Jn 4:8).
- God invites us to respond in love (Jn 13:34-5; 1 Jn 4:11-12).
- God is loving and forgiving (merciful) (Ps 86:15; Ps 103:8).
- God our Father sent his son, Jesus, to tell us the 'Good News' (CCC 422).
- God sent Jesus to show us how much he loves us and to teach us how to love others (LG 3; RDEC, 80; Jn 17:21).
- God our Father gives us friends to love us.
- There is only one true God.
- God is eternal – he always was, he is and he always will be.

### Mystery of Jesus Christ

- Jesus is the Father's greatest gift to us (CCC 426).
- Jesus is called 'Christ' (Mt 4:1-11; Lk 4:1-13; CCC 436, 453).
- 'Son of God', 'Redeemer' and 'Saviour' (CCC 429, 455).
- Jesus reveals the 'Good News' of God his Father (GDC 102; Mk 1:14-15; Jn 5:36-37).
- Jesus showed us God's love (1 Jn 4:9).
- Jesus came to do the will of God who sent him (LG 4; CCC 534, 606; Jn 17:4).
- Jesus had a special love for God his Father (CCC 473: uniqueness of Jesus; Mk 14:32-6; Lk 10:21-2).
- Jesus showed his love for God his Father by praying to God, by his actions and by his preaching of the 'Good News' (CCC 2599; Mk 6:46; Lk 6:12; Mt 14:23).
- Jesus spent forty days and forty nights in the wilderness praying to God his Father (Mt 4:1-11; Lk 4:1-13; CCC 538).
- Jesus worked as a carpenter (Mk 6:3; LG 41, GS 32, 43, CCC 2427).
- Jesus had many friends (Mary, Martha, Lazarus, Peter, Joanna, Susanna, Salome etc) (Jn 11:5).
- Jesus loved to celebrate and share with his friends (Lk 10:38-42).
- Jesus called disciples (men and women) to share his life and mission (Mk 15:40-1; Lk 8:2-3).
- The disciples responded to the call of Jesus to follow him (Mk 1:18; CCC 765).
- Jesus invites us to spread the 'Good News' of God's love and to become his disciples (CCC 520, 544).
- We can be Jesus' disciples when we trust in God and follow Jesus (Jn 15:14).
- Jesus called twelve apostles to be with him and work with him (LG 19; CCC 551, 858).
- Jesus made Peter the leader of the apostles (LG 19; Mt 16:18).
- Jesus came to call sinners (RP 7; CCC 588-89).
- Jesus brought healing and forgiveness to sinners (CCC 545).
- Jesus healed many people and we call the healing actions of Jesus miracles.
- Jesus welcomed and healed those who were excluded (Lk 19:1-10).
- Jesus was a teacher (Mk 2:13; Mt 5:2).
- Jesus taught his disciples to trust in God (Mt 6:25-34; CCC 227).
- Jesus taught his disciples how to pray (Mt 6:9-13; Lk 11:1-4).
- Jesus taught his followers through stories and we call these stories parables (Mk 4:2).



- Jesus taught that God Our Father loves us and wants us to be his children.
- Jesus taught us to live in love: love of God, love of others (Mt 22:36-40; CCC 458-59, 1709).
- Jesus shared 'The Last Supper' with his friends on Holy Thursday and it was the first Eucharist (1 Cor 11:23-26).
- Jesus washed his disciples' feet to show them how to serve others (Jn 13:4-14).
- Jesus died on the cross out of love for God his Father and for us on Good Friday (CCC 616).
- On Easter Sunday, God his Father raised him from the dead (CCC 638).
- Jesus ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty (CCC 659-64).
- The Lord Jesus is still with us for he said, 'I am with you always' (Mt 28:20).
- Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to help us become holy and to help us pray (Jn 14:16-17; CCC 733, 741).

### Mystery of the Holy Spirit

- The Holy Spirit is our friend.
- The Holy Spirit can help us to live like Jesus and to remember the words of Jesus.
- The Holy Spirit came to empower the disciples at Pentecost (Acts 2:1-13; MD 27; CCC 731).

### Creation

- God our Father is our creator, who loves us as his children (Gn 1:26-27; Gn 2:5-7).
- God created us with a body and soul (CCC 362-67).
- The gift of creation is a sign of God's love for us.
- Angels are spirits who have been created by God. They are sent as his messengers on important occasions. They act as our guardians. They serve God and they serve us (Lk 1:26-38; Lk 2:8-20; Mt 1:18-25; Mt 2:13-14; Mt 28:1-8; CCC 328-36).
- Adam and Eve were created good and without sin. They were happy because they were friends with God in paradise. Adam and Eve were tempted by Satan to choose a self-centred life and to sin (Gn 2-3; CCC 355-84, 397, 415). They disobeyed God and lost their original holiness (CCC 399). This event is called 'The Fall' and the first sin is called 'Original Sin' (CCC 355-86, 389, 417).
- God sent his only Son, Jesus Christ to redeem the human race from sin through his sacrifice on the cross (CCC 55-8, 385-90, 399, 409-10, 412).

### Mystery of the Church

(family: domestic Church, community: local Church)

- The Church was established by Jesus Christ (LG 5; CCC 763).
- The Church is a community of people gathered together to hear God's Word and live out his gospel commands (CCC 749-52).
- God's family includes people of every age, race, culture and ability (CCC 775).
- The Church is a community that proclaims the 'Good News' of Jesus (mission).
- The Church is a community where Mary, as mother of Jesus, has a special place (LG 63).
- Catholics come together to worship as a community in the parish (CCC 1069, 1071, 2179).
- We do not live our faith alone, but in the community of the Church.
- Within the context of an introduction to the Mass, present the priest and explain his role within the local parish church/es (CCC 1547-53, 1562-68, 1577-79, 1581, 1592, 1595, 1597-98).
- Introduce the Pope as the visible head of the Church on earth (CCC 880-82; 936-37).

- Introduce people who carry out work in the local church/es e.g. sacristan, lectors.
- Discuss families as part of the local Church community/ies. Christian presence in the family.
- Explore the Catholic school as part of the Church community. What happens in our Catholic school. Patron Saint of the School.
- Missionaries are men and women who share the Good News in Ireland and abroad. Local missionaries (The Society of Missionary Children).
- We can share the Good News that Jesus loves us within our families and community (mission).
- Saints are those who love God and are in heaven with God after death. The Church honours them with a feast day (SC 104; CCC 828).
- Saints are a great example of how to live and Christians ask their help in prayer (CCC 828).
- Saints: explore St Patrick, St Bernadette, St Francis of Assisi and a selection from the following list – St Joseph, St Ita, St Gobnait, St Stephen, Saints associated with the school or parish.
- St Francis of Assisi is the patron saint of animals and ecology.

### Mary

- Mary listened and responded to God (Lk 1:38; LG 53).
- Mary was called by God to be the Mother of Jesus (LG 56; CCC 495).
- Mary had courage and trusted in God (CCC 494, 511).
- Mary loves and cares for us.
- Mary is a model for all Christians (LG 53; CCC 501).
- Mary's months of October and May (CCC 971, 2678, 2708).

### Eternal Life

- Jesus promised new life here on earth and after we die.
- We believe that:
  - when we die, God calls us to heaven (CCC 1011).
  - God's plan is that when we die we will live on with God, Jesus, Mary, the angels and saints in heaven (CCC 1024).
  - heaven is our true and final home after our life on earth where we will be happy with God.
  - one day Christ will come in glory and in his Kingdom there will be no more suffering, no more tears, no more sadness (Mt 16:27-8).

### Other Religious Traditions

- Christians love everyone because we all have the same Father in heaven who loves us and wants us to love one another (CCC 1877-78).
- We are members of one human family and community on earth.
- Each person is unique and precious in God's sight.
- Catholics are called to respect other people's ways of praying, their holy objects, religious stories, sacred writings and beliefs.

## Strand: Word of God

### Aims

Children will:

- listen to and explore gospel accounts of Jesus' childhood, public ministry and teaching
- explore how people's lives were changed by their encounter with and response to Jesus
- develop their ability to listen to, understand, interpret and respond creatively to Sacred Scripture texts
- develop a familiarity with the language and contexts of Sacred Scripture texts
- develop their understanding of Sacred Scripture as the revealed Word of God.

### Skills

The child should be enabled to:

#### Understanding

- recall and explain Biblical terms, images and sayings.
- evaluate the truth/rightness of characters' words/actions in Sacred Scripture texts
- apply ideas and principles in Biblical texts/parables to his/her own life.

#### Communicating

- read sentences/phrases/passages from Sacred Scripture.

## Strand Units

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

### Bible

- The book which contains the Gospels: four important books which tell us about Jesus (CCC 124-27, 139).
- Jesus Christ is the central person in the Bible for Christians (CCC 129).
- God makes himself known to us in the Bible so we can love him (CCC 50-141).
- As members of God's family, we listen to Jesus speak to us through the Gospels (CCC 104, 131, 134).
- God speaks to us through the Bible which is the Word of God (DV 11-13; 21-26).
- The Bible, as a privileged means of the transmission of divine Revelation, teaches us how to live.

### Sacred Scripture

#### *God's Loving Plan of Salvation (CCC 355-84)*

- Gn 1:1-2:4. The story of creation.
- Gn 1:26-27. Made in God's image.
- Gn 2:4-9; 15-17; 3:1-12. Story of the First Sin.
- 1 Sm 16:1, 6-13. David chosen by God.
- 1 Sm 17:1-50. David and Goliath.
- Ps 9:1. Thanking God.
- Ps 23:1-4. The Lord is my shepherd.
- Ps 25:12; 38:15; 56:4. Trusting in God.
- Ps 95:1-7. Hymn of praise.
- Ps 100:3-5. Hymn of praise.
- Ps 105:1-6. Thanksgiving for creation.
- Is 9:2. The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.
- Is 49:15. I will not forget you.
- Is 66:13. God comforts his people as a mother comforts her child.

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

- Mt 1:18-25. Birth of Jesus.
- Mt 2:1-12. Wise men.
- Mt 2:13-16, 19-23. Flight into Egypt/Joseph's dream/return to Nazareth.
- Lk 1:26-38. The Annunciation.
- Lk 1:39-45. The Visitation.
- Lk 2:1-20. Story of Jesus' birth.
- Lk 2:22-40. Presentation: Anna and Simeon.
- Lk 2:41-52. Jesus is found in the temple.

#### *Jesus' Public Life (CCC 543-56; 857-62)*

- Mt 4:23-5. Jesus and the sick.
- Mt 6:9-13. Our Father.
- Mt 6:25-32. Jesus' teaching apostles to trust in God.
- Mt 9:1-8; Mk 2:1-12. Healing of man born paralysed.
- Mt 18:12-14; Lk 15:1-7. The lost sheep.

- Mt 28:20. 'I am with you always.'
- Mk 1:14-15. Proclaiming the Good News.
- Mk 1:16-20; Mk 3:13-19; Lk 6:13-16; Mt 10:1-42. Appointment of the Twelve.
- Mk 1:29-31. Cure of Simon's mother-in-law.
- Mk 1:32-38. Jesus at work.
- Mk 1:40-5; Mt 8:1-3; Leper healed.
- Mk 2:13-19; Mt: 9:9. Call of Matthew/Levi tax collector.
- Mk 2:15-17. Tax collectors & sinners.
- Mk 5:21-24; 35-43. Jairus' daughter.
- Mk 6:46; Lk 6:12; Mt 14:23. Jesus praying.
- Mk 10: 46-52 Blind Man (Bartimaeus).
- Mk 14:32-36; Lk 10:21-22. Jesus' special relationship with God the Father.
- Lk 3:2-3, 15-18. John the Baptist.
- Lk 4:1-13; Mt 4:1-11. Jesus in the desert.
- Lk 5:1-11. Disciples called.
- Lk 6:12-16. The choice of the twelve.
- Lk 19:1-10. Zacchaeus.
- Lk 21:1-4; Mk 12:41-44. The widow's mite.
- Jn 5:36-37. The Father has sent me.
- Jn 6:35. 'I am the Bread of Life.'
- Jn 6:38. 'For I have come down from heaven.'
- Jn 8:12. Jesus light of the world.
- Jn 12:1-8. Jesus shares a meal with his friends.
- Jn 13:34-35. Love commandment.
- Jn 14:9-10. 'Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.'
- Jn 15:14. 'You are my friends if you do what I command you.'

*Jesus' Passion and Death (CCC 575-637).*

- Lk 22:7-20/Mt 26:17-29. Last Supper.
- Lk 22:47-53. Betrayal and arrest.
- Lk 22:54-62. Peter's denial.
- Lk 23:33-49. Christ's death and burial, good thief.
- Jn 10:1-16. The Good Shepherd
- Jn 13:3-15. The washing of the feet.
- Jn 12:12-16. Entry into Jerusalem.
- Jn 19:17-30. Christ's death.

*Jesus' Resurrection and Pentecost (CCC 638; CCC 731-41)*

- Mt 28:1-8. The empty tomb.
- Mk 16:1-8. The women at the tomb (read first).
- Jn 20:1-10; 11-18. Disciples at the tomb.
- Jn 20:1, 11-18. Mary Magdalene meets the Risen Jesus.
- Acts 2:1-12. The first Pentecost.

*For memorisation*  
Jn 15:12. Love commandment.

## Strand: Liturgy and Prayer

### Aims

Children will:

- develop their capacity for personal and communal prayer, using appropriate signs, symbols, music, rites and rituals
- learn about the importance of Sunday as an element of the liturgical year
- develop their understanding of the Sacrament of Baptism
- explore Jesus' call to forgiveness and reconciliation and develop an understanding of how to participate in the sacrament of penance
- learn about the real presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist and develop an understanding of how to participate in this celebration
- explore the events, celebrated by the Catholic community in the liturgical year and especially during the times of Advent/Christmas, Lent/Holy Week and Easter/Pentecost.

### Skills

The child should be enabled to:

#### Understanding:

- sequence actions and activities in rituals.

#### Communicating and Participating:

- use periods of stillness and silence for reflection and prayer (contemplative prayer)
- communicate understandings, questions and feelings about prayers, symbols, music, songs, sacred objects, liturgy and sacraments
- participate in preparation for liturgical celebrations (where appropriate).



## Strand Units

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

### Prayer

- Praying is listening and talking to Jesus (GDC 139).
- Jesus prayed frequently and especially when he faced important decisions (Mk 6:46; Lk 6:12; Mt 14:23; CCC 2600).
- In the 'Our Father' Jesus taught his followers how to pray (CCC 2607).
- Jesus teaches us to pray to God Our Father (Mt 6:9-13; CCC 2608).
- God knows what we need even before we ask for it (Mt 6:8; GDC 139).
- We can ask the help of God, of Jesus of the Holy Spirit or Mary or the saints (Intercession; LG 50).
- Catholics have customs and traditions to remind them that God is present in all of life (e.g. putting a cross on bread, blessing oneself with holy water before leaving the house, lighting baptismal candle on your birthday, palms on Palm Sunday, making Brigid's crosses) (CCC 1180; CCC 1674).
- Prayers of adoration, petition, intercession, thanksgiving, praise, sorrow and repentance. (CCC 2628, CCC 2634).
- Prayers from the Celtic tradition.

### Formal Prayer

- Act of Contrition/Sorrow (CCC 1451-54)
- Prayer for Forgiveness
- Prayer after Forgiveness
- Journey Prayer
- Prayer before Communion
- Prayer after Communion
- The Rosary: Joyful Mysteries (CCC 971)
- All Mass responses: Confiteor, Kyrie, Sanctus, Our Father, Agnus Dei, Lord I am not worthy.

### Additional Prayers

- Blessing of advent wreath and candles (CCC 1672)
- Praying to respect others
- Prayer to be Jesus' friend (CCC 2665)
- Praying to be like Jesus
- Family blessing
- Some stations of the cross (CCC 1674, 2699):
  - Jesus receives his cross
  - Jesus falls
  - Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus to carry his cross
  - Jesus meets the women
  - Jesus dies (Jesus is risen)
- Prayer to Mary, Jesus' mother and ours.
- Prayer to saints
- Simple examination of conscience

- Blessing and giving of ashes
- Simple versions of Psalms praising God for creation (e.g. Ps 148, Ps 150)
- Ps 9:1. Thanking God.
- Ps 23:1-4. The Lord is my Shepherd.
- Ps 25:12; 38:15; 56:4. Trusting in God.
- Ps 95:1-7. Hymn of Praise.
- Ps 100: 3-5. Hymn of Praise.
- Ps 105:1-6. Thanking God.

### Liturgical Year

- Sunday is the Lord's Day because Jesus rose from the dead on the first day of the week (CCC 2174).
- Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day (Sunday). (Third commandment).
- Advent: four weeks of longing to celebrate Christmas, the birthday of Jesus.
- Advent is a time to prepare for the coming of Jesus into the world.
- God prepared for Jesus' coming by sending John the Baptist (Acts 13:24; Mt 3:3; CCC 523).
- Christmas is a time when Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus, the light of the world (Is 9:2, Is 9:6; Mic 5:1; Jn 8:12)
- Lent is a time of preparation for Holy Week and Easter – the most important feast in the Church's year.
- Lent lasts for forty days because Jesus fasted in the desert for forty days and forty nights.
- Lent is a time to turn back to God and believe the Good News.
- Lent is a time for me to show the ways that I can be a friend like Jesus.
- Ash Wednesday is the first day of Lent when ashes are placed on the forehead of Catholics as a reminder to believe the Good News and to follow Jesus more closely.
- On St Patrick's Day we remember that St Patrick brought the 'good news' to Ireland.
- Holy Week is a time to remember the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem (Palm Sunday), his Last Supper, his passion and death.<sup>17</sup>
- The palms remind us of Jesus' journey into Jerusalem.
- At Mass on Holy Thursday the priest washes people's feet to remind everyone of what Jesus did. Jesus wanted to show his friends how they must behave towards each other – caring for and looking after each other.
- The cross is the sign of Jesus' love for his Father and for us.
- The Stations of the Cross are pictures that tell the story of Jesus' death.
- On Easter Sunday Christians celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus.
- Easter Sunday celebrates God giving new life to Jesus. Jesus is alive and with us now.
- God raised Jesus from the dead to be with us.
- The Paschal candle is a reminder of 'Jesus the Light of the World'. It is lit during the Easter season, for Baptisms and funerals.
- At Pentecost the Church family celebrates the gift of the Holy Spirit and the Good News of Jesus.
- The Feast of All Saints is a time to celebrate the lives of all those women, men, and children who show us how to follow Jesus.
- On the Feast of All Souls the Church remembers those who have died and prays for them.
- Feast Days of Mary: Annunciation (CCC 484). Our Lady's birthday.

<sup>17</sup> Note the presentation of the Last Supper is to be integrated with what is presented on the Mass emphasising a) Jesus' will to remain with people of all times, and b) Jesus' making the bread and wine signs of his presence in the midst of humankind.

## Sacraments

- Baptism is the sacrament through which people become children of God and members of the family of the Church (CCC 1213, 1226, 1239-41, 1243, 1257, 1267, 1272, 1278-80, 1282).
- In baptism, as in all of the sacraments, we receive God's grace.
- Grace is a gift from God that helps us to be holy (CCC 1999, 2021-24).
- Baptism uses symbols of water, sign of the cross and anointing with Chrism, white garment, light (CCC 1234).
- The baptismal candle is lit from the 'Paschal/Easter' candle: the light of Christ for everyone.
- The Sacrament of Reconciliation is a celebration of God's forgiveness and love.
- In the Sacrament of Reconciliation we admit how we have failed to love God and each other (CCC 1455, 1458).
- God continues to love us even when we sin (CCC 1468).
- When we choose to do wrong we have sinned against God, whom we should love above all things (CCC 1849, 1850).
- God calls us always to be sorry for our sins and accept his forgiveness (CCC 1425, 1451).
- Jesus asked his followers to forgive (RP 12). We remember this when we pray the Our Father.
- Jesus gave us the Sacrament of Reconciliation to forgive our sins and to give us grace to do good and avoid future sins (CCC1446).
- Christ, the Good Shepherd, always seeks out the lost sheep (Mt 18:12-14; Lk 15:1-7).
- The Lord Jesus forgives us in the Sacrament of Reconciliation (CCC 987, 1422, 1462, 1486; RP 29).
- The Sacrament of Reconciliation is a whole consisting in three actions of the penitent and the priest's absolution. The Penitent's acts are sorrow or contrition, confession of sins to the priest, and the intention to make reparation and improve behaviour (CCC 1488, 1491; RP 31). The priest's role is to forgive sins in God's name, give absolution and give act of satisfaction (penance) (CCC 1494, 1495).
- Through penance Christians seek to undo the harm caused by sin (CCC 1431, 1459-60).
- Sin is not living as Jesus asked his followers to live.
- Sin is not loving like Jesus.
- Sin is intentional not accidental. It means 'I know and choose to do wrong' (CCC 1745).
- The Word of God helps me discern right from wrong (CCC 1785).
- When the priest says the prayer of absolution, we are forgiven in God's name through the power of the Holy Spirit.

## Mass

At this level work on the Mass pivots on six points:

1. Eucharistic Presence (SC 7, MF 35-8, CCC 1088, 1373-77).
2. Sacred Meal (CCC 1347)
3. Memorial Sacrifice (CCC 1357, 1362-72).
4. Praise and Thanksgiving (CCC 1328, 1359-61).
5. Communion (CCC 1382).
6. Structure of the Mass (CCC 1348-55).

### 1. *Eucharistic Presence*

- The Mass is a sacred banquet in which we receive the Body and Blood of Jesus. In doing so, we become more like him (CCC 1382).
- The Holy Eucharist is the Body and Blood of Jesus under the appearance of bread and wine (CCC 1333-36; 1373-81; 1410; 1412; 1418).
- Jesus is present in the Eucharist. The Eucharist is the Real Presence of Jesus, and the Eucharist nourishes us and strengthens us to follow Jesus (CCC 1088, 1374, 1377-78).

### 2. *Sacred Meal*

- The Last Supper was the first Mass. Jesus celebrated the Last Supper with the apostles on the night before he died (Mt 26:20-29; CCC 1323).
- At Mass the parish family shares a holy/sacred meal like Jesus did at the Last Supper (SC 10).
- Jesus gave us the Eucharist at the Last Supper (SC 10).

### 3. *Memorial Sacrifice*

- Jesus asked us to 'do this in memory' of him (LG 22:19; CCC 1333).
- At Mass we remember that Jesus died and rose again to save the world.
- The Eucharist makes present the death and Resurrection of Jesus, which accomplished our salvation (CCC 1359, 1366-1367).

### 4. *Praise and Thanksgiving*

- *Mass*: a special time for saying thank you to God the Father for everything and especially for the gift of Jesus.

### 5. *Communion*

- Jesus wants us to be united with him and with one another.
- When we eat the 'Bread of Life' Jesus comes to us and we grow in friendship with God and with one another (Jn 6:35).

### 6. *Structure of the Mass (Liturgy of the Word and Liturgy of the Eucharist, CCC 1088, 1346, 1349)*

- Basic elements of the celebration and children's participation in it: example: At Mass we gather, listen to the Word of God, give thanks, share in the Bread of Life, are sent out to live like Jesus. When we read aloud from Sacred Scripture we are proclaiming the Word of God.
- Preparation for Communion: To honour Jesus, we are asked to fast from food and drink for at least one hour prior to the reception of Holy Communion. (Water and/or medicine do not break the Eucharistic fast).
- We receive with reverence – on the tongue; in the hand.
- Making thanksgiving.

### *Names, functions and meaning of objects used in celebrating the Eucharist*

- e.g. altar, altar cloth, vestments, chalice, paten, cruets, altar candles, alb, chasuble, stole.

## Strand: Christian Morality

### Aims

Children will:

- understand that following Jesus is living according to the example and teaching of Jesus, especially the Love Commandment (CCC 1694)
- understand their need for God's grace to live as his children
- explore the stories of holy people and saints as people who live in the way of Jesus (modelling)
- become aware of moral failure, of the need for forgiveness and appreciate the Mercy of God (moral awareness; development of conscience; CCC 1779). (See Liturgy/Prayer strand for the development of understanding of the Sacrament of Reconciliation at this level)
- develop their understanding of objective morality by reflecting on the reasons for moral precepts, rules and actions
- develop a sense of interdependence, of justice and of fairness as reciprocity
- understand that they are accountable for their decisions and responsible for their words and actions (moral agency)
- reflect on their freedom to make choices and the relationship between choice and consequence (freedom of choice and human responsibility; agency, self-reflection; moral judgement)
- develop respect for the views, feelings and possessions of others, in their own community and in other communities
- explore their responsibility to care for and preserve the local environment (CSRE 3d).

### Skills

The child should be enabled to:

#### Understanding:

- apply Christian moral precepts, maxims and rules to their own lives
- examine reasons for Christian moral precepts, ideas and actions (critical moral perspective)
- respect and respond to difference and diversity among peers
- define moral failure (sin) and the steps to conversion
- identify ways of caring for creation.

#### Communicating:

- justify moral choices made (moral agency, critical moral orientation).

## Strand Units

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

### Human Dignity

- God's plan is that all people would love and respect one another and be happy together.
- God gave us talents, human senses, the body, language, the gift of life in self, others and world (CCC 1004).
- Each person has been given gifts and talents that make him or her unique (CSRE 3a).

### Human Freedom and Responsibility

- We can make good and bad choices.
- Choices affect ourselves and others.
- We can choose to act like Jesus.
- When we choose to respond to God's love, we become more like him.
- Following Jesus also means being just and fair in our treatment of others.

### God's Graceful Presence and Assistance

- We need God's grace to live as his children (CCC 1747, 1749, 1759-61, 1776-77, 1781, 1783-85, 1789, 1811, 1996, 2021-22).
- Jesus will help us forgive others who hurt us if we ask him (CCC 1421).
- Jesus gives us a new commandment – the law of love (CCC 1823).
- Jesus' law of love is: love one another as I have loved you (Jn 13:34-5).
- The Holy Spirit helps us to live like Jesus.
- I am the Lord your God: you shall not have strange gods before me (Ex 20:2-3).
- You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain (Ex 20:7).
- Remember to keep holy the Lord's day (Ex 20:8).
- Honour your father and your mother.
- You shall not kill.
- You shall not steal.
- You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.
- The voice of God urges us to do what is good and avoid what is evil (CCC 1706, GC 16: Conscience).

### Social Teaching of the Church

- We were made for one another (interdependence) (CCC 1877-1948; GS 25, 30).
- Jesus taught that his followers should have a special love for the poor (Mt 25:31-46; CCC 544).
- God calls us to show love, justice and peace in our relationships with others.
- Our Church family prays and cares for the sick in special ways.
- Everyone and everything is made by God and belongs to God. Therefore Christians reverence and take care of people and the world (CCC 2452).
- Jesus cared for creation.
- Each person has a responsibility to care for the environment (CCC 373; 2402, 2456; RH 15).
- God gave us the intelligence and skill to care for the earth.



### RSE in a Christian Context

- My family is a gift from God.
- Qualities and values of the Holy Family of Nazareth.
- Jesus' love is present when our parents/guardians love each other and love us.
- Each member of a family has responsibilities to the others (CCC 2201).
- Christians respect their bodies and the bodies of others because they were created by God (CCC 364; CSRE 3a).
- It is important to prepare responsibly for new life which comes from God.
- Jesus is present with us as we grow and change.
- Include: Stories of good vs evil, of right and wrong actions; stories that convey Christian moral values such as peacemaking, charity, social justice, interdependence, care for the sick, care for the earth, forgiveness, friendship, welcoming the stranger, importance of family, courage in the face of disability.
- Stories that facilitate an understanding of fair reciprocity (i.e., developing a concept of fairness as requiring the reciprocal co-ordination of two or more points of view).



# Lent



## LENT,



## HOPE

CONFESSION

PRAYING

CARING

FASTING

LENT

SHARING

FORGIVING

PEACE

PROMISES

I AM THE  
LIVING  
WATER



NOW  
THE  
GRABLE  
ME

Our  
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es



Level 3

# Overview

## *Strand*

## *Strand Units*

Christian Faith

- Mystery of God
- Mystery of Jesus Christ
- Mystery of the Holy Spirit
- Creation
- Mystery of the Church/Kingdom
- Mary
- Eternal Life
- Other Religious Traditions

## *Strand*

## *Strand Units*

Word of God

- Bible
- Sacred Scripture
  - ◇ God's Loving Plan of Salvation
  - ◇ Jesus' Birth and Youth
  - ◇ Jesus' Public Life
  - ◇ Jesus' Passion and Death
  - ◇ Jesus' Resurrection and Ascension
  - ◇ Pentecost

## *Strand*

## *Strand Units*

Liturgy and Prayer

- Prayer
  - ◇ Formal Prayer
  - ◇ Additional Prayers
- Liturgy
- Liturgical Year
- Sacraments
- Mass

## *Strand*

## *Strand Units*

Christian Morality

- Human Dignity
- Human Freedom and Responsibility
- God's Graceful Presence and Assistance
- Social Teaching of the Church
- RSE in a Christian Context

## Strand: Christian Faith

### Aims

Children will:

- develop their understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- develop their knowledge of the person of Jesus, his identity as God's Son, his historical context, the Kingdom of God, the meaning of discipleship, Christian beliefs, and relate these understandings to their own lives and the lives of others
- explore the significance of Mary and the Saints within the Catholic tradition and learn from their spirituality
- demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of the Church as a community which continues the mission of Jesus and explore their part (vocation) in it
- develop an understanding of the growth and organisation of Christianity in Ireland, the development of their local Christian community/ies and of the missionary tradition in the Irish Church
- explore a variety of expressions of Irish Christian spirituality in the past (e.g. pilgrimages, Celtic spirituality, sacred places)
- begin to explore other Christian, Jewish and Muslim communities, developing respect for how they worship (cf. LG 17)
- begin to distinguish between a religious and non-religious worldview, showing sensitivity and respect for people who hold beliefs different from their own. (CSRE 2)

### Skills

The child should be enabled to:

#### **Understanding:**

- research, investigate and analyse Christian religious concepts and beliefs
- investigate and imagine the meaning and significance of Christian beliefs for today
- recognise and explore Christian beliefs presented in art, architecture, music and digital texts
- evaluate the truth of religious statements for his/her life (judgement)
- make decisions about how religious truths, beliefs and values might affect his/her behaviour (decision).

#### **Communicating:**

- gather, utilise and present research and projects on religious concepts and beliefs.

#### **Developing Spiritual Literacy:**

- pose and respond imaginatively to ultimate questions of meaning and truth that arise from his/her experiences in the world
- investigate how the liturgical life of the Church relates to his/her own spiritual life.

#### **Developing Inter-religious Literacy:**

- discuss the importance of religious or philosophical beliefs in the lives of people in his/her community
- investigate the religious practice of children in other Christian, Jewish and Muslim communities in Ireland and relating it to his/her own religious practice.



## Strand Units

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

### Mystery of God

- God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit (CCC 152, 234).
- The Trinity is one God in three persons. They do not share divinity among themselves, but each is God whole and entire (CCC 253).
- God is faithful and compassionate (CCC 205).
- God is all-knowing and all-powerful (CCC 268).
- God knows and loves me personally (CCC 300).
- God promised to send us a Saviour (CCC 705-6).
- God sent Jesus to save us from our sins (CCC 620-21; GDC 102).
- On Easter Sunday, God the Father raised Jesus from death to new life in a glorious body. This is called the Resurrection.
- God our Father sends us the Holy Spirit to help us to be like Jesus.
- When Christians say 'I believe in God' they mean that they know and trust God's words, works, promises and commandments (CCC 154, 1064: faith as believing).
- God calls people and they respond (vocation).
- Christians live their faith in God through prayer and action (faith as living/witnessing).
- Abraham and Sarah are models of faith (CCC 145).
- Faith challenges Christians to work for the Kingdom/Reign of God (CCC 542).
- People's faith has helped them in difficult times.
- God's existence can be denied or ignored (GS 19).

### Mystery of Jesus Christ

- Jesus is the Second Divine Person of the Most Holy Trinity. Jesus, Son of God, came to earth to save us. He is our Redeemer, who came in love to forgive our sins. Jesus invites us to accept the Father's love and then to live that love in imitation of him.
- Jesus is called 'Saviour' because by his life, death and Resurrection he freed us from sin (SC 6; GS 22; GDC 97; cf. CCC 517, 1248).
- Jesus is called 'the Lord' because with the Father he holds all things in being and enables us to enter into relationship with the Father (CCC 202, 446-51, 454-55).
- Jesus brings peace to our world (PT, 169-70).
- Jesus is the Second Divine Person of the Most Holy Trinity.
- Jesus was a Jew and was obedient to the Law of God (CCC 423): religious practices Jesus observed, the great Jewish feasts, pilgrimages to the Temple, Jesus' anger that the Temple was defiled, work as a carpenter's son, Jesus' Jewish beliefs, Jewish prayers (CCC 531-32, 583-84).
- Jesus called people to repent and believe in the Good News, that is, the coming of the Kingdom of God (Mk 1:14-15; Lk 17:21; EN 11-14; LG 5; GDC 101-2; CCC 544, 1427).
- Jesus related to others, especially the poor and outcasts, with justice and compassion (Mk 1:40-45; Mk 2:1-12; Mk 7:31-37).
- Jesus helped people to change and 'grow' (conversion).
- Jesus spoke and acted with authority (Mt 7:28-9).
- Jesus insisted that his teaching must not only be acknowledged, but also acted upon (Mt 21:28).



- Jesus was tempted in the desert (Lk 7:11-17; CCC 538).
- Jesus healed many who were sick and even brought some back to life (Lk 7:11-17; CCC 547, 548-49).
- Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Salome, Susanna and many other women accompanied Jesus as he journeyed and provided for him out of their resources (Lk 8:23; MD 13).
- Jesus made Peter the 'rock' of his Church. He gave him the keys of his Church and made him shepherd of the whole flock (LG 8; LG 18; CCC 881; Mt 16:18-19).
- Jesus revealed himself risen from the dead to Mary Magdalene whom he commissioned as 'apostle to the apostles' (Jn 20:11-18; MD 16).
- Jesus was willing to suffer and die to show how much he loved God his Father and us (CCC 569, 608).
- Jesus offered Himself to God at the Last Supper and at Calvary (CCC 610, 621).
- After his Resurrection, Jesus ascended into heaven to prepare a place for us (CCC 659, 665).
- At his Ascension Jesus entrusted his life's mission to the apostles and the Church (CCC 669).
- At his Ascension Jesus promised to be with us forever (Mt 28:20); the sending of the Holy Spirit as part of the promise.
- Jesus is the head of the Church, the One who leads God's People.

### Mystery of the Holy Spirit

- On the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came down upon the disciples to remain with them forever (Acts 2:1-13; AG 4).
- The gift of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost marks the beginning of the Church (CCC 732).
- The Holy Spirit was sent by the Father and Son to help us become more like God (CCC 682-747).
- The Holy Spirit guides and cares for the Church (GS 11; LG 4; CCC 739, 747).
- The Holy Spirit will remain with us forever (CCC 729).
- The Holy Spirit enables Christians to spread the Good news of Jesus in different ways.
- Christ gives the Holy Spirit through the sacraments, especially in Baptism and Confirmation (CCC 1116).
- The Holy Spirit gives grace to all God's people.
- Grace is the presence and work of the Holy Spirit in us. We need the gift of grace which we receive in a special way through the sacraments and prayer.

### Creation

- God created the entire universe, including our earth and all that is in it by his Word, from nothing (Jn 1:1-3; Col 1:16-17; 2 Mac 7:28; CCC 290-91, 296).
- God so loved us that he created the world and us in it to share his life and love (Eph 1:5-6; CCC 279-95).
- God keeps everything in existence (DV1; CCC 301, 320).
- Angels are spiritual creatures who worship God without ceasing and who serve God's saving plans for other creatures (CCC 350).

### Mystery of the Church/Kingdom

- The Kingdom of God is a reign of justice, peace and love (CCC 865, 2046).
- Jesus invites sinners to the table of the Kingdom (CCC 545; Mk 2:17; Lk 15:7; Lk: 7:11-32).
- People witness to the Kingdom of God and help it grow by acting justly, loving others and caring for God's creation (Mic 6: 6-8; GS 33; CCC 2045-46).
- The Church is the People of God made one by Jesus, a community which shares his love and life (CCC 804; 781-86).

- The Church is a liturgical assembly and it is a community of believers (CCC 752).
- The Church shows people what God is like and brings God's loving care to all (CCC 780: Church as sacrament of salvation; GS 3: Church as servant).
- The Church is the community which continues Jesus' mission to proclaim Good News to the whole world (LG 8, LG 17; AG 1; CCC 3, 849: mission; Mk 16:15).
- Jesus sent the apostles to make all people his disciples and so spread his Church (LG 19: mission).
- The Pope represents Jesus in leading the Church on earth, in succession to St Peter, the leader of the apostles (LG 18; CCC 880-82, 936-37).
- The family/Catholic school builds up the Kingdom of God by participating in the life and mission of the Church (GS 48; FC 49, 17-18).
- Every person has his/her own role in the Church (domestic and local) (LG 12).
- Every Christian is called to spread 'the Good news' (LG 17: vocation).
- Living as a friend of God/disciple of Jesus needs the support of the Church family.
- Study of local parish communities: worship, mission and service.
- Ways of taking part in the life and worship of the domestic and local church (e.g. celebrating Eucharist, prayer for others, parish activities).
- Some roles and responsibilities within the local Church community/ies are: parish priest, deacon, religious communities, laity, ministers of the word, parish pastoral council, leaders of prayer, school leadership, youth ministry, faith development co-ordinator etc. (LG 10, LG 12; cf CCC 910-11, 913).
- Local Christian groups in the community (e.g. The Society of St Vincent de Paul, altar servers, choir, etc.).
- History of local Christian community/ies.
- Early Christian Ireland.
- Work of Irish Missionaries (e.g. The Society of Missionary Children).
- Saints: explore St Patrick, St Mary Magdalene and a selection from the following or similar list – St Brendan, St Thérèse of Lisieux, St Clare, St Kevin, St Columban, local saints. Other witnesses to Christ in the past.
- Christian spirituality and pilgrimage: places of pilgrimage in Ireland and wider world, e.g. Glendalough, Knock, Fatima, Lourdes, famous churches, Celtic crosses: (CCC 1674).
- Introduction to other Christian churches present in the local community: e.g. Church of Ireland; Methodists and Presbyterians, Orthodox Christians, Evangelical Christians, Eastern Rite Churches.
- All those who are baptised, who identify Jesus as God's son and who believe in his Resurrection are called Christians.
- All members of the Christian family are called to worship God and to serve their communities in imitation of Jesus.

### Mary

- The Church honours with special love the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God (SC 103; LG 66).
- Jesus gave us Mary, His mother, as Mother of the Church (LG 53, 63; CCC 963).
- Mary is God's Mother and Our Mother (GS 22, LG 52-3, 60-2; CCC 744, 963, 968, 971, 973-75, 495, 508-10).
- Mary always leads us to Jesus (MC 57).
- Mary was specially preserved by God from all sin (LG 55; CCC 411, 491, 493: Immaculate Conception).

- Mary and the saints can intercede for us with God (CCC 956, 969).
- The Virgin Mary is the supreme model of faith in God the Father Almighty for she believed that ‘nothing is impossible with God’ (Lk 1:37; CCC 273).
- The Church encourages many great prayers of Mary: eg. The Rosary, the Magnificat, the Memorare, the Hail Mary, the Angelus.
- Icons and images of Mary (e.g. Mother of God, Mary of Perpetual Help, Our Lady of Guadalupe, Our Lady of Czestochowa).

### Eternal Life

- God’s Kingdom, begun on earth, is everlasting (Dn 7:14; CCC 670, 664).
- God wants all people to live happily with him in heaven forever, through the salvation brought by Jesus (GS 18; CCC 1026).
- Jesus rose from the dead in his own body and entered heaven so we might join him one day and share in eternal life (CCC 666–67).
- The Lord Jesus said: ‘Whoever believes in me shall have eternal life and I shall raise him up on the Last Day.’ Christians believe and hope that they too will rise to new life with the risen Jesus. This is called eternal life (1 Cor 15:23–4).
- ‘Just as Christ is risen and lives forever, so all of us will rise at the last day’ (CCC 1016; 1 Cor 15:54–7).
- Christians believe that when they die they shall be with Christ, and they shall see God (1 Cor 13:12).
- Christians believe that their bodies and souls will rise from the dead (GS 22; CCC 990).
- Images of Heaven: life, light, peace, wedding feast, wine of the Kingdom, the Father’s house, Paradise (Lk 13:29; Rev 22:5; Jn 14:1–4; CCC 1027).

### Other Religious Traditions

- Christians consider their every neighbour as another self (Mk 12:31; GS 27; CCC 1944).
- The parable of the Good Samaritan reminds us that ‘loving our neighbour’ means being a neighbour to people of other religious traditions.
- Dialogue with people of other religions is obeying the command to love our neighbour.
- Catholics are called by God to respect the beliefs of others, to respect religious freedom, to honour differences and to work for unity (GS 28).
- Judaism, Christianity and Islam are the three great monotheistic faiths.
- Judaism, Christianity and Islam are sometimes called Abrahamic religions because they all revere Abraham.
- Catholics are called to dialogue and co-operation with other religious communities (DP 82).
- Catholics are called to witness to their faith in Christ in word and deed (DP 59, 82; EN 5).
- **Judaism:** Jews believe in God. Jesus was a Jew. Friday sunset – Saturday sunset as God’s special day; Sabbath, day of rest, worship and the family meal. Going to the synagogue to worship. Irish synagogues.
- **Islam:** Muslims believe in one God. Muslims pray five times a day; they call God Allah and respect his name. Friday, day of special prayer; the call to prayer; worship in the mosque, decorations with patterns and texts; men and women pray separately; the holy book is called the Qu’ran- how it is treated. Irish mosques.

## Strand: Word of God

### Aims

Children will:

- enhance their understanding of discipleship of Jesus and of the Kingdom of God
- study the basic structure of the Bible
- demonstrate basic Bible study skills
- begin to explore the concept of 'covenant' in the Hebrew Scriptures
- begin to understand that God's will for his people is made clear through the lives of Biblical characters (revelation) (CSRE).
- develop their understanding of the inspiration and truth of Sacred Scripture as the revealed Word of God.

### Skills

The child should be enabled to:

#### **Understanding:**

- gather, record and present information about people, places and things in scriptural texts, in a variety of formats (audio/video clips, PowerPoint, documents, collages, photostory).

#### **Communicating:**

- construct timelines and storymaps to represent Biblical events and the organisation of information.

## Strand Units

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

### Bible

- The Holy Spirit guided the people who wrote the books of the Bible.
- The Holy Spirit helps us to listen to, understand and respond to God's Word today.
- The Bible is a library of books (CCC 112).
- The Bible is the name given to the Sacred Scriptures for Christians; it contains the Old Testament writings sacred to the Jews.
- There are four Gospels: the gospel according to Matthew, the gospel according to Mark, the gospel according to Luke and the gospel according to John. These occupy a central place because Jesus Christ is their centre (CCC 139).
- The Old Testament for Catholics comprises forty-six books that deal with God's revelation prior to the coming of the saviour, Jesus Christ (CCC 120).
- The Old Testament contains the Pentateuch, the Historical Books, the Wisdom books, and the Prophetic books (CCC 120).
- The Old Testament relates God's teachings and actions prior to the coming of Jesus Christ. It focuses on the covenant God made with the Jewish people, which is called the 'Old Covenant' to distinguish it from the 'New Covenant' made by Jesus Christ (CCC 121-123).
- The people of Israel had a covenant with God, a promise of love and faithfulness often compared to a loving marriage (Is 54:10) or devotion between a parent and child (e.g. Is 49:15; Hos 11:1-4).
- God made an everlasting covenant with Noah and with all living things. It will remain in force as long as the world lasts (CCC 71; Gn 9:8-16).
- God chose Abraham and made a covenant with him and his descendants (CCC 72; Lev 26:11-12).
- By the covenant God formed his people and revealed his Law to them through Moses (CCC 72).
- The New Testament comprises twenty-seven books that deal with the life and teaching of Jesus and of the early Christian community (CCC 120).
- The New Testament contains the Four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, Epistles or Letters and the Book of Revelation (Apocalypse).
- For Christians the Gospels are at the heart of all Scriptures (CCC 125, 139).
- The Gospels lead us to accept Jesus Christ in faith and apply his teaching to our lives.
- The wise men recognised Jesus as God, and knelt and worshipped him, an event known as the Epiphany (Mt 2:1-12; CCC 422-24).

### Sacred Scripture

*God's Loving Plan of Salvation (CCC 62-4,71-2; 522, 761-62, 781, 1164, 2056-63, 2077)*

- Gn 9:8-17. Covenant between God and every living creature (Noah).
- Gn 12:1-10. Call of Abraham.
- Gn 15:1-6, 18-21. Promise to Abraham.
- Gn 17:1-10, 15-22. Covenant with Abraham and Sarah. Birth of Isaac.
- Ex 1-2. Pharaoh and the Israelites; the young Moses.
- Ex 3:1-22. God calls Moses; God's name.
- Ex 5:1-11:10. Moses and Pharaoh; God's promise of deliverance.
- Ex 12. The Passover.
- Ex 14. God saves the Israelites; Exodus story.

- Ex 19:3-8. The Covenant at Sinai; God's chosen people.
- Ex 20:1-17; Deut 5:1-22; Ex 19:3-8. The Ten Commandments.
- Ex 24:3-8. Sealing the covenant.
- Ex 34:6-7. God's love is everlasting.
- Ps 18:1-3. God my Rock.
- Ps 23. The Lord is my Shepherd.
- Ps 31:14-15. My times are in your hand.
- Ps 37. Trust in the Lord.
- Ps 70:1. Asking God for Help.
- Ps 131. Like a weaned child.
- Ps 148. Cosmic Hymn of Praise.
- Ps 104. Celebrating nature.
- Is 9:6-7. Jesus is Saviour.
- Is 40:3-5. 'A voice cries out ...'
- Is 43:1-5. I have called you by your name, you are mine.
- Is 49:15. I will not forget you.

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

- Mt 1:18-25. Birth of Jesus. Mt 2:1-12. Wise men.
- Lk 1:5-25. Elizabeth and Zechariah.
- Lk 1:26-38. Annunciation.
- Lk 1:39-45. Visitation.
- Lk 2:1-20. Christmas.

#### *Jesus' Public Life (CCC 535-50; 1716-29)*

- Mt 5:38-48. Love your enemies.
- Mt 6:1-18. Beware of practising your piety ...
- Mt 9:1-8; Mk 2:1-12. Healing of the man born paralysed.
- Mt 13:31-2; Lk 13:18-19. Parable of the mustard seed.
- Mt 13:33; Lk 13:20-1. Parable of the yeast.
- Mt 13:44-46. The treasure and the pearl.
- Mt 18:1-5; Mk 9:33-7; Lk 9:46-8. Who is the greatest?
- Mk 7:32-37. Healing deaf man.
- Mk 8:22-26. Healing the blind man.
- Lk 3:3-6:15-6. John the Baptist.
- Lk 4: 1-13; Mt 4: 1-11 Temptations.
- Lk 7:11-17. Widow's son at Nain.
- Lk 8:1-3; Mk 15: 40-1. Women provide for Jesus.
- Lk 9:12-17. Jn 6: 1-13. Feeding of the five thousand.
- Lk 10:25-37. The Good Samaritan.
- Lk 10:27. The Greatest Commandment.
- Lk 11: 5-13. Parable of the insistent friend.
- Lk 13:10-17. Healing of woman bent over.
- Lk 15:4-7. Parable of the lost sheep.
- Lk 15:8-10. Parable of the Lost Coin.
- Lk 18:1-8. Widow and judge.
- Lk 18:9-13. Pharisee and tax collector.
- Jn 13:34-35. New Commandment.



*Jesus' Passion and Death (CCC 575-637)*

- Mt 21:1-11. Entry into Jerusalem.
- Mt 26:36-66. Gethsemane – High Priest.
- Lk 22:13-23. The Last Supper.
- Lk 22:31-34; 54-62. Peter betrays Jesus.
- Lk 22:66-71, Lk 23:1-43. Trial and crucifixion.
- Jn 19:1-16. Crowning with thorns.
- Jn 19:18, 25, 30, 38-42. Jesus dies on the cross.
- Jn 19:26-27. Woman, here is your son.

*Jesus' Resurrection and Ascension (CCC 631-67)*

- Mt 28:1-10; Lk 24:1-12. Women at tomb.
- Mt 28:16-20. 'Go therefore ...'
- Jn 20:1-9. Peter and John at tomb.
- Jn 20:19-23. Jesus appears to his disciples.
- Jn 20:19-29. Doubting Thomas.
- Acts 1:6-11. Ascension of Jesus.

*Pentecost (CCC 731-41)*

- Acts 2:1-13. Pentecost.
- 1 Cor 12:4-7. Varieties of gifts.
- Eph 4:5-6. 'There is one body ...' (ecumenism).
- 1 Pt 5:7. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

*For memorisation*

Mt 22:37. Two commandments of love:

1. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,  
with all your soul, and with all your mind.
2. You shall love your neighbour as yourself.
  - Ex 20:1-17; Deut 5:4-21. Ten commandments.
  - Mt 7:12. Do to others as you would have them do to you.
    - Jn 6:35. 'I am the bread of life.'
    - Ps 23. 'The Lord is my Shepherd.'
  - Is 43: 1-5. 'I have called you by your name, you are mine.'
    - Jn 3:16. 'For God so loved the world ...'
    - Jn 15:12. 'No one has greater love than this ...'

## Strand: Liturgy and Prayer

### Aims

Children will:

- develop an understanding of how prayer, liturgy and sacraments enable us to encounter and celebrate the presence of Christ today
- understand that the source of the grace of all the sacraments is Christ's saving work (CCC 1128)
- develop their understanding of the liturgical year
- learn how celebrating the feast days of Mary and the Saints and praying to God through Mary and the Saints can enrich their lives
- develop an understanding of what a sacrament is
- develop their understanding of the sacraments of Baptism, Eucharist, Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick
- investigate how a range of resources can be used to create prayers and rituals for a variety of purposes
- develop an appreciation of sacred art, architecture and music.

### Skills

The child should be enabled to:

#### Understanding:

- use the Bible as a source of prayer
- name sacraments and explain these in their own words
- explore sacraments and seasons in relation to the actions of Jesus.

#### Communicating and Participating:

- create objects, symbols and spaces to communicate understanding of the liturgical year and to support personal and classroom prayer.

## Strand Units

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

### Prayer

- Jesus promised to be present where people gather in his name (Mt 18:20).
- Jesus tells his followers to ask God for what they need 'in his name' (Jn 14:13-14).
- Jesus tells his followers always to pray and not lose heart (Lk 18:1).
- Jesus advised his followers to pray in secret (Mt 6:6; SC 12).
- We can pray by being God's hands in helping others (praying by doing).
- By prayer Christians can work for the coming of the Kingdom (CCC 2632).
- We can pray anywhere and any time (CCC 2660; CSRE 2c).
- Special places of worship Catholics respect e.g. Irish monasteries, sacred wells, pilgrimage sites (CSRE 2c).

### Formal Prayer

- *Comhartha na Croise*
- *Glóir don Athair*
- Prayer to the Trinity
- Gloria
- St Patrick's Breastplate
- Apostles' Creed
- Stations of the Cross (CCC 1674, 2699)
- The Rosary: Sorrowful Mysteries (CCC 971)
- Memorial Acclamations 2 and 3
- The Angelus
- Sanctus (Holy Holy)
- Agnus Dei (Lamb of God)
- All Mass responses

### Additional Prayers

- Prayer to the Trinity
- Prayer for peace and unity: 'Lord Jesus you said to your apostles.'
- Prayer for Lent ('This is the wood of the cross')
- Praying for the intercession of all Holy Women
- Psalms 23, 37, 104, 148.
- Num 6:24-6. The Lord bless you and keep you.
- Saints' prayers: e.g. Prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi/Teresa of Avila
- Prayer of Commendation (Order of Christian Funerals, CCC 1020)
- Prayer to Jesus as Teacher, leader and friend
- Prayer to the saints
- Prayer for Christian unity
- Prayer for peace
- Prayer for the mission
- Prayer for vocations

## Liturgy

- The liturgy is the public prayer of the Church, in which she celebrates above all the death and Resurrection of Christ which accomplished our salvation. The members of the Church come together, usually in the church building, and all participate. The Holy Spirit helps us to pray with Jesus to God the Father, uniting us to God and to one another. Liturgical celebration can include sign and symbol, words and actions, song and music, and sacred art (CCC 1067, 1071-1073).
- The liturgy is led primarily by Jesus Christ, our redeemer. Bishops, priests and deacons take the place of Christ in leading the prayer and worship (CCC 1142, 1188).

## Liturgical Year

- During the liturgical year the Church family journeys with Jesus through the major events of his life (CCC 1194).
- The Liturgical year is celebrated in seasons as follows: Advent, Christmas Season, Ordinary Time, Lent, Easter Season.
- Throughout the liturgical year our Church recognises and celebrates the lives of the martyrs and saints (CCC 1173).
- The colours of Church vestments used for the Sundays in different seasons of the liturgical year are: Green – Ordinary Time; Violet – Advent and Lent, Sacrament of Reconciliation; Red – Good Friday, Pentecost, Palm Sunday, Confirmation Masses; White – Christmas, Holy Thursday, Easter, Weddings, Baptisms.
- Ordinary time: What and when it is. History (based on the word ordinal: refers to the Sundays of the year).
- Advent and Christmas: the Church's seasons of preparing for and celebrating the birthday of Jesus.
- The people of God waited in hope for the coming of God among them.
- The Season of Advent (four weeks) is the beginning of the Church year.
- The Advent Calendar.
- The custom of the crib and the story of the first Crib (St Francis in Greccio).
- Lent is a time to turn back to God, repent of our sins and believe the Good News.
- Lent lasts for forty days, beginning with Ash Wednesday and ending the day before Passion (Palm) Sunday.
- Lent is a time to grow and change through prayer, fasting and almsgiving, to prepare for Easter.
- The ritual of Ashes on Ash Wednesday reminds us of the need to turn back to God, to repent of our sin, and to live the gospel.
- On Ash Wednesday Catholics fast as Jesus did in the desert.
- On Saint Patrick's Day we celebrate the coming of Christianity to Ireland.
- Holy Week is a time to remember that Jesus shared the gift of himself: at the Last Supper/on the cross.
- On Holy Thursday the Church recalls the events of the Last Supper.
- On Good Friday Jesus' followers recall his death and burial by reflecting on the Stations of the Cross.
- The cross reminds Christians of the sufferings of Jesus and of his love for the Father and for us.
- Easter is the greatest feast of the Church's year when Christians celebrate the death and Resurrection of Jesus.
- During the Easter Season Christians celebrate their new life in the risen Lord.

- Pentecost: the celebration of new life in the Holy Spirit and the birthday of the Church.
- Jesus returned to his Father in heaven on Ascension day.
- The Feast of All Saints is a holy day of the Church honouring all saints, known and unknown. It is a holy day of obligation. The eve of All Saints is known as All Hallows eve, or Hallowe'en.
- On the Feast of All Souls Catholics pray for the dead to ask God to purify them with his love and bring them to eternal happiness in heaven (CCC 1032).
- The Church offers prayers, especially the Mass, on behalf of the dead (LG 50; CCC 1055).
- On Sunday, the Lord's Day, the Church remembers the Lord's Resurrection by resting from work and by gathering to celebrate the Eucharist (SC 102; 106; CCC 1163, 1166, 1167, 1193; Gn 2:1-3; Deut 5:15).
- Liturgical feasts of Mary (the feast of Mary, the Mother of God; Our Lady of Lourdes; the Annunciation; Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary; the Immaculate Conception) and prayers such as the Rosary express devotion to Mary (MC 49).
- Hymns to Mary.
- The Feast of the Presentation, the Feast of Epiphany (Holy day of obligation: *Nollaig na mBan*), the Feast of St Joseph, the Feast of the Ascension, the Feast of Pentecost, the Feast of All Saints, the Feast of All Souls.
- Irish liturgical art and music.
- Objects in the church: reconciliation rooms, presidential chair, tabernacle, lectern, sanctuary lamp, stations of the cross, ciborium, pyx, censer and monstrance.

### Sacraments

- The seven sacraments of the Catholic Church are Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick, Marriage and Holy Orders (CCC 1113; 1210).
- The seven sacraments are signs established by Jesus to give us grace, his own life and love (CCC 1113-16; 1123; 1127-29; 1131; 1996-2005).
- A sacrament is a special meeting with the risen Jesus (SC 7; CCC 1097).
- 'Sacramental grace' is the grace of the Holy Spirit which is given by Christ in each Sacrament. (SC 59-60; CCC 1129).
- In the sacrament of Baptism Christians become children of God and brothers and sisters of every other member of the Christian community (CCC 1265).
- In baptism, God gives the Christian God's own life. This is called grace. (CCC 460, 1266, 1999: sanctifying grace).
- In the sacrament of Baptism God gives Christians the gift of the Holy Spirit to help them to follow Jesus (CCC 1266, 1996).
- When children are baptised as babies; the parents and godparents make the baptismal promises on the baby's behalf, to believe in God and to reject Satan and sin. These promises are renewed at Confirmation.
- Godparents promise to help parents bring up their children as members of the Church.
- Importance of the Christian name given in Baptism (CCC 2156, 2158).
- The grace of Baptism comes from the redemptive death and Resurrection of Jesus.
- Baptism lasts forever and can only be received once.
- The sacraments of Healing are Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick.
- Jesus had a special love for the sick (Lk 7:16; Mt 4:24; CCC 1503).
- In the Anointing of the Sick, Christ continues to 'touch' us in order to heal us (CCC 1504).
- The Anointing of the Sick celebrates the presence of Christ to those who are seriously ill, giving them strength, hope and peace (CCC 1509, 1514-15).

- The sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is not only for the dying but also for those suffering from serious illness, for the elderly and for those facing major surgery (CCC 1509, 1511, 1527).
- The sick person is given the grace of the Holy Spirit, the strength, peace and courage to overcome the difficulties that go with serious illness or the frailty of old age, and the fortitude to bear suffering patiently (CCC 1520, 1527).
- Only a priest (or bishop) is the Minister of the Anointing of the Sick. Those who are seriously sick should be encouraged to call for a priest to receive this sacrament (James 5:13-16; CCC 1516, cf. 1526, 1532).
- The celebration of the sacrament consists in the anointing of the forehead and hands of the sick person and the prayer of the celebrant asking for the special grace of this sacrament (CCC 1531).
- The sacrament also provides the sick person with the forgiveness of sin and reconciliation with God.
- In addition to the Anointing of the Sick, the Church offers those who are about to die Eucharist as Viaticum that gives them strength for the last part of the journey through death (CCC 1524).
- Organisations that work with people who are sick, disabled or dying, e.g. the hospice movement, L'Arche.
- In the Sacrament of Reconciliation the Church celebrates the gift of the love and mercy of God and calls people to confess sin, seek forgiveness and be reconciled to God and to one another (RP 31).
- Jesus forgave sinners and restored them to the community (Lk 15; 19:9; CCC 1443).
- Christians show their faith in Jesus by being forgiven and forgiving.
- Jesus calls his followers to turn the other cheek to the one who strikes them and to give their cloak to the one who has taken their coat (Mt 5:38-40).
- The Law of forgiveness: Mt 5:44.
- Jesus said that his followers are to forgive without limit (Mt 18:21ff.).
- Jesus began his risen life by giving his apostles power to forgive sins (Jn 20:23; RP 8, 29; CCC 1461).
- The Sacrament of Reconciliation continues his work of forgiving and reconciling.
- In the Sacrament of Reconciliation we meet the risen Jesus (CCC 1484).
- The grace of forgiveness of sins in the Sacrament of Reconciliation comes from the redemptive death and Resurrection of Jesus.
- Sin: anything you think, say, do or anything you should do and don't, that spoils or breaks your friendship with God, other people and creation (sins of omission and commission).
- We sin when we refuse to love God and to love our neighbours as ourselves, and respect creation as Jesus taught. (GS 13; CCC 1487; 1849; 1853).
- Sin is anything that breaks Jesus' law of love (RP 14).
- While all sin displeases God, there are some sins which are less serious (venial sins) and some that are very serious (mortal sins) (CCC 1855).
- While the individual celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation is the norm, this Sacrament may take place within the context of a communal celebration where 'the personal confession of sins and individual absolution are inserted into a liturgy of the Word of God with readings and a homily, an examination of conscience conducted in common, a communal request for forgiveness, the Our Father and a thanksgiving in common' (CCC 1482).



## Mass

- At this level work on the Mass pivots on six points
  1. Eucharistic Presence (SC 7, MF 35-8, CCC 1088; 1373-77).
  2. Memorial Sacrifice (CCC 1357, 1362-72).
  3. Praise and Thanksgiving (CCC 1328, 1359-61).
  4. Communion (CCC 1382).
  5. Pledge of Eternal Life (CCC 1378-81; 1391-1401; 1418).
  6. Structure of the Mass (CCC 1348-55).

### 1. Eucharistic Presence

- Jesus Christ, present in the world in many ways, is uniquely present in the Eucharist.
- Jesus Christ is present: in the community gathered by God; in the word proclaimed; in the priest who celebrates the Mass, and above all, under the appearances of bread and wine changed into the Body and Blood of Christ.
- The Lord Jesus is present in a special way after the Consecration, when the bread and wine are changed into his body and blood (CCC 1375).
- The bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ (CCC 1333-36; 1373-81; 1410; 1412; 1418).
- The priest begs the Father to send the Holy Spirit, so that the bread and wine may become the Body and Blood of Christ (CCC 1105).
- Jesus Christ is present in the Blessed Sacrament which is kept in the tabernacle to foster adoration (MF 66; CCC 1379).
- The sanctuary lamp which burns before the tabernacle is a sign of our faith in the presence of the Risen Jesus.

### 2. Memorial Sacrifice

- At Mass we remember that Jesus Christ died and rose again to save the world.
- The sacrifice of Jesus Christ on Calvary is made present in the celebration of the Eucharist which brings us all its graces (CCC 601-14; 619-23; 1365-71; 1545; 2020-21; 2009-100).

### 3. Praise and Thanksgiving

- We celebrate the Eucharist to show thanks to God the Father for the unique gift of salvation given to us by Jesus on the cross and in the Mass.

### 4. Communion

- At Mass Jesus Christ gives us his Body and Blood, to share his life with us and to help us to grow in friendship with God and with others (CCC 1391, 1396).
- Receiving Jesus Christ, the 'Bread of Life', gives us the strength to love and serve like Jesus.

### 5. Pledge of Future Glory

- Holy Eucharist nourishes our souls with grace and helps us to love and serve God and others in this life and be happy with him forever in heaven (CCC 1378-81; 1391-1401; 1418).

## 6. *Structure of the Mass*

- The origins of the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist in the actions of Jesus (CCC 611, 1337-44).
- The importance of being 'active participants' in the Mass (DCM 12; GIRM 5).
- The Mass is made up of the Liturgy of the Word and Liturgy of the Eucharist (SC 56; DV 21, CCC 1346).
- In the Introductory Rites, the community gathers. Penitential Act. Opening Prayer/Collect.
- The Liturgy of the Word in the Eucharist contains different elements: First Reading/Psalm/Second Reading/Alleluia or Acclamation/Gospel reading/Homily/Creed/Prayer of the Faithful/Universal Prayer of the Church.
- The Liturgy of the Word invites us to listen, proclaim and respond to the word of God.
- The Liturgy of the Eucharist, invites us to bring our gifts to the altar, to give thanks, offer sacrifice, remember, share a meal and we are challenged to live a life of service (CCC 1346).
- In Communion, we receive the Body and Blood of Christ who offered himself 'for the life of the world' (CCC 1355).
- In the Dismissal Rite we are sent forth to carry on Christ's mission in the world. (CCC 1332, 1397).
- The faithful are obliged to attend Mass on Sundays and certain Holy Days (Immaculate Conception, Christmas, Epiphany, St Patrick's day, the Feast of the Assumption, the Feast of All Saints) and to receive the Eucharist at least once per year, if possible during the Easter season. The Church encourages more frequent, even daily, attendance at Mass and reception of Holy Communion (CCC 1389).

## Strand: Christian Morality

### Aims

Children will:

- understand their identity as people of the covenant (i.e. understanding morality as a response to a God who has taken the initiative in love)
- develop their understanding of Christian moral living as uniting themselves with Jesus' way of love and faithful loyalty to the Father
- develop a knowledge of the two-fold commandment of love, and the Ten Commandments, and explore challenges posed by them (CCC 117)
- grow in understanding of their own growth and development, emotionally, mentally, physically and spiritually and the support they receive from others for that growth
- understand the call to appreciate and develop their gifts and talents and to share them with others, becoming co-workers with God for a better world (vocation; CSRE 3d)
- develop their understanding of freedom of choice, sin, moral judgement and human responsibility (critical moral orientation, development of conscience: GS 59)
- begin to develop an ethic that respects, defends, and promotes the rights and wellbeing of every person regardless of gender, race, social status, personal achievement or social contribution (justice orientation)
- co-ordinate concerns for equity (taking into account the special needs, situations or contributions of others) with reciprocity in structuring moral decisions
- continue to develop an ecological ethic.

### Skills

The child should be enabled to:

#### Understanding:

- explore the knowledge, motives and emotions that influence Christian choices
- evaluate his/her own actions, values and relationships according to Christian moral principles (moral integrity and moral judgement, critical moral orientation).

#### Communicating:

- practice effective interpersonal skills in order to relate to others in peaceful, tolerant, and non-discriminatory ways.

## Strand Units

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

### Human Dignity

- Worship and obedience to God's commandments are responses to God's love.
- God gives us gifts and talents to use them for his glory, for our own growth, for the wellbeing of others and the care of creation.
- When we use our God-given talents, the likeness of God grows in us (Gn 2:27).
- God entrusts human beings with the duty of working for God's Kingdom on earth (CCC 307).
- My gifts are signs of God's love.

### Human Freedom and Responsibility

- God gives us the freedom to choose between good and evil and this is a sign of his love. This is called freewill (Mt 4:1-11; GS 17, CCC 1705,1730-34).
- We need God's help (grace) to use our freedom responsibly. (CCC 1692)
- Prayer plays an important role in our decision-making.
- When we choose to respond to God's love, we become more like him, e.g. loving, compassionate, merciful.
- Note: teaching concepts relating to sin and forgiveness are found in the liturgy and prayer strand.

### God's Graceful Presence and Assistance

- Grace is the help God gives people to answer God's call (CCC 1996; 2021).
- The Holy Spirit gives us the strength to love God and one another.
- The golden rule is 'In everything do to others as you would have them do to you' (Mt 7:12; Lk 6:31; CCC 1970)
- All human beings are limited and fallen, and for this reason God in his great love for us provided teaching on what is right and wrong, initially in the Old Testament (typified most clearly in the Ten Commandments) and then again in the teaching of Jesus and the New Testament Epistles. The Church has always followed this divine example and has sought to teach clearly on what is right and wrong.
- Human persons are obliged to follow the moral law, which urges them to do what is right and avoid what is evil (GS 16). This law makes itself heard in their conscience.
- One way to inform conscience is through reflecting on the Word of God.
- Christians inform their conscience through daily prayer and faithfulness to the teaching of the Church.
- The Ten Commandments (Ex 20:1-17; Deut 5:6-22). (Note: work on commandments 6 and 9 will reflect the RSE policy of the school).
- The Ten Commandments sum up God's Law (CCC 2058).
- God gave the chosen people the commandments to help them to be faithful to God's love (CCC 2059).
- The greatest commandment of the Law is to love God with one's whole heart and one's neighbour as oneself (Mt 22:37-40; Lev 19:18; CCC 2067).
- Jesus taught that the love of God cannot be separated from love of neighbour (cf. GS 24; CCC 1878).

- The first three commandments are guides in loving God; the other seven are guides to true love of oneself and others (CCC 2067).
- Following Jesus involves keeping the Ten Commandments (CCC 2053).
- The commandments guide us in making moral decisions (CCC 2052).
- Jesus teaches that keeping the commandments will enable us to possess eternal life (Mt 19:16-22).
- The grace of God is needed to overcome temptation and avoid sin (HS 123).

### Social Teaching of the Church

- Jesus saw the gift and worth of each person. Therefore, the Christian is called to show love to everyone without exception (CCC 1825).
  - Christians value every person: young and old, sick and people with disabilities.
  - People with disabilities are to be assisted to lead their lives to the full (CCC 2276).
  - All people have equal dignity as they are all made in the image and likeness of God (CCC 225, 356-61, 369, 1604, 1700-01, 1944-46, 2319, 2334).
  - People deserve respect regardless of their religious, social or ethnic background (CCC 2104).
  - God gives us the gift of peace and we are called to be peacemakers (CCC 1829, 1832, 2305).
  - Every kind of discrimination whether based on sex, race, colour, social condition, language or religion is against God's will (GS 29).
  - Care for creation is a duty, since the world is God's gift to all generations (CCC 373, 2402, 2456).
  - God blesses those who care for the poor (Mt 25:31-36; CCC 2443-47).
  - Jesus was angry with those who inflicted hurt on the poor (Mt 21:12-17).
  - Man and woman are called by God to be stewards of creation (Gn 1:26).
  - Include: Stories of organisations that care for the poor (GS 88): Trócaire, the Samaritans, Society of St Vincent de Paul, The Society of Missionary Children, etc.
  - Contemporary Christian stories of welcoming the stranger, of justice, of love of enemy, of courage in the face of disability, of service to others and healing of the earth.
- Stories of contemporary role models who live out of their Christian beliefs.

### RSE in a Christian Context

- **Note:** work on the fifth commandment should foster a respect for human life and for all creation, and an understanding of the sacredness of human life and the importance of care for the body.
- The human body shows us that we are mortal and limited – dependent on God who gives and sustains our life.
- The importance of looking after ourselves physically, emotionally and spiritually.
- As I grow I change spiritually through greater love of God and neighbour and through my awareness of the interconnectedness of all creation.







Level 4



## Strand: Christian Faith

### Aims

Children will:

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

### Skills

The child should be enabled to:

#### **Understanding:**

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

#### **Communicating:**

- justify judgements and decisions about religious concepts and beliefs.

#### **Developing Spiritual Literacy:**

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

#### **Developing Inter-religious Literacy:**

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

## Strand Units

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

### Mystery of God

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

### Mystery of Jesus Christ

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

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

### Mystery of the Holy Spirit

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

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

### Creation

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

### Mystery of the Church/Kingdom

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



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

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

### Mary

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

### Eternal Life

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

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

#### Other Religious Traditions

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

#### Judaism

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

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

### **Islam**

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

## Strand: Word of God

### Aims

Children will:

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

### Skills

The child should be enabled to:

#### Understanding:

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

#### Communicating:

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

## Strand Units

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

### Bible

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



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

### Sacred Scripture

#### *God's Loving Plan of Salvation*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### *Jesus' Resurrection and Ascension (CCC 638-67)*

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

#### *Pentecost (CCC 731-41)*

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

#### *For memorisation*

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

## Strand: Liturgy and Prayer

### Aims

Children will:

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

### Skills

The child should be enabled to:

#### Understanding:

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

#### Communicating and Participating:

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

## Strand Units

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

### Prayer

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

### Formal Prayer

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

### Additional Prayers

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

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

### Liturgy

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

### Liturgical Year

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



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

### Sacraments

- It is in the sacraments that Jesus meets us at important moments in life and turns these moments into opportunities of grace (CCC 1210).
- The sacraments confer grace but they also require an active faith on our part, a desire to respond in faith and to deepen our faith through the sacrament. (CCC 1128)
- We receive sacraments to become more holy, to build up the Church, and to give worship to God (SC 59; CCC 1123).
- It is important to prepare carefully to celebrate the sacraments (CCC 1098).
- The sacraments are the continuation of the Paschal Mystery of Christ in the age of the Church (CCC 1116).
- The sacraments of initiation are Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist (CCC 1212)
- Through the sacraments of initiation Christians are received into full membership of the Church and lay the foundations for their Christian life (LG 7; CCC 1121-22).
- Baptism and Confirmation confer a sacramental 'seal' or spiritual mark and so can never be repeated (CCC 1121, 1280, 1317).
- When the person is anointed with Chrism s/he becomes a Christian.
- Baptism frees people from original sin and all personal sin, makes them children of God and members of the Church and gives them a share in the Church's mission. It is necessary for salvation. (CCC 1213, 1262, 1279).
- Baptism calls us to participate in establishing God's Kingdom (GS 38).
- The rite of Baptism consists in immersing the candidate in water or pouring water on his/her head, while saying 'I baptise you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit' (CCC1278).
- The promises of Baptism and how they are to be lived and renewed.
- The symbols of Baptism: water as life-giving and cleansing, oil as strengthening and healing, light as driving out darkness, the white garment as 'putting on Christ', the community as the setting in which Christ is present.
- In Confirmation we receive the Holy Spirit, who strengthens us to live a holy life, proclaim the gospel and serve others as Jesus did.
- Confirmation increases and strengthens the reception of the Holy Spirit received at Baptism: it is the sacrament which gives the Holy Spirit in order to unite us more firmly to Christ, strengthen our bond with the Church, help us take part in her mission, and to bear witness to Christ in words and deeds (LG 11; CCC 1285,1288, 1316).

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

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

### Mass

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

#### 1. *Eucharistic Presence*

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

#### 2. *Memorial Sacrifice*

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

### 3. *Praise and Thanksgiving*

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

### 4. *Communion: sign of unity*

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

### 5. *Pledge of future glory*

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

### 6. *Structure of the Mass*

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

## Strand: Christian Morality

### Aims

Children will:

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

### Skills

Children should be enabled to:

#### Understanding:

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

#### Communicating:

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

## Strand Units

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

### Human Dignity

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

### Human Freedom and Responsibility

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

### God's Graceful Presence and Assistance

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



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

### Social Teaching of the Church

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

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

### RSE in a Christian Context

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

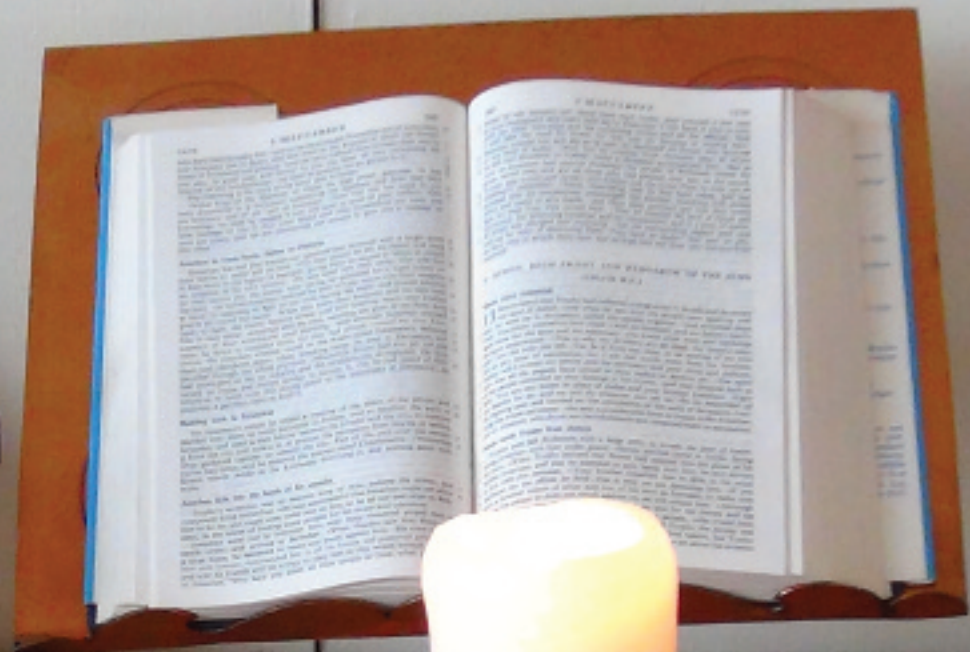
- Chastity is a spiritual power which frees love from selfishness and aggression for the sake of true self-giving realised in each person's specific vocation (HS 4, 16-21; LFL 138).
- A Christian practises the virtue of chastity by cultivating decency and modesty in behaviour, dress and speech (HS 4,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





# Faith Formation Goals







The development of lived Christian faith, in discipleship of Jesus, is the ultimate horizon within which Religious Education is carried out in Catholic schools. While Religious Education ‘does not require the assent of faith,<sup>18</sup> nevertheless, it is expected that many children in Catholic preschools and primary schools will be baptised Catholics, and good Religious Education will aim to help them to grow towards maturity in faith (CS 51). Teachers will always be conscious of the need to support the on-going faith development of these children when planning lessons (SGN 38–9). Faith formation goals are provided here to guide teachers in this important work.

The relationship between teaching and faith development is different from the way teaching relates to knowledge and skill development in Religious Education. This is because of the complexity of spiritual development and of the complex ways in which it may or may not be related to classroom teaching/learning processes. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge that our hopes or goals in the area of faith development will not be assessed, as it is inappropriate to formally assess personal or spiritual change in students. Faith is always a gift from God and no person’s faith can be determined by another (GDC 55). Nevertheless, the aforementioned distinction should not lead to a false dichotomy between a holistic approach to Religious Education and faith formation in Catholic schools. It simply means that Religious Education outcomes are distinguished from faith formation goals in such a way that the distinct nature of Religious Education as a discipline is respected (GDC 73).

The primary focus of faith formation goals in the primary school is on fostering an encounter with the person of Jesus and on enabling the experience of intimacy and communion with him (worship). Children are taught to learn from Jesus, to think and judge like him, in the Religious Education curriculum (sound instruction in the content of the Faith). It is hoped that children will develop a commitment to participate in the mission and ministry of Jesus, our Saviour, living their Christian faith, in the Church community, for the Kingdom of God (ethical living as Jesus’ disciples) (GDC 122).

The following is a list of faith formation goals appropriate to young children engaged in the Catholic preschool and primary school Religious Education curriculum. This is not a prescriptive or exhaustive list and teachers may add goals more suitable to the unique circumstances in which they teach. Teachers/ programme writers will return to the faith formation goals outlined for earlier levels, at every level, adding a deeper dimension of complexity and richness as the curriculum progresses.

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<sup>18</sup> Congregation for Catholic Education, ‘Religious education in Schools fits into the Evangelizing Mission of the Church’ (Vatican City, 8 September 2009), nos 17–18. This is the first Magisterial document dedicated to Religious Education in the school.

## Preschool

Children will:

- begin to develop a relationship with **God the Father**.
- begin to develop a relationship with **Jesus**.
- begin to develop a relationship with the **Holy Spirit**.
- come to know God's love for them.
- appreciate that **Jesus** loves them in a special way.
- desire to act like **Jesus**.
- develop a sense of being cared for by **God**.
- appreciate their dignity and worth as created and loved by **God**.
- know themselves as unique and that God calls them by name.
- recognise **God's** presence and action in their lives and give thanks.
- appreciate signs of **God's** care and providence in the seasons.
- develop a sense of wonder and awe in the created world.
- develop a sense of gratitude to God for the blessings of creation and all of **God's** gifts (family etc).
- learn to trust the dependability of those who love and care for them as a basis for the attitude of faith.
- recognise **God's** presence in their own family.
- desire to respect others and the natural environment as created by **God**.
- develop a sense of belonging to the Catholic Church community.
- honour **Mary** the Mother of Jesus and Our Mother too.
- become enriched by the lives of **saints** and by their faith and trust in God.
- connect their own experience of death and loss with the Christian message of eternal life.
- develop a sense of wonder in relation to Bible stories.
- show respect for the Bible as a sacred text.
- deepen their love for Bible stories.
- relate to the person of **Jesus** in Bible stories.
- develop their relationship with the **Trinity** through prayer.
- value the importance of praying.
- develop a sense of reverence in prayer.
- relate celebrations in their lives to their Christian faith.
- enter into the spirit of Advent (waiting/preparing).
- welcome **Jesus**, the light of the world, at Christmas.
- link their experience of celebrating Christmas with the birth of **Jesus**.
- experience the joy of the Easter story.
- appreciate that they belong to **God's** family through Baptism.
- respect the Church as a place of prayer and celebration.
- develop a Christian spirituality and identity.

## Level 1

Children will:

- know themselves as unique and that God calls them by name.
- come to know **God's** love for them.
- develop a sense of being cared for by **God**.
- recognise **God's** presence and action in their lives and give thanks.
- develop a growing awareness of the dignity of being children in light of Christian beliefs.
- appreciate their dignity and worth as created and loved by **God**.
- begin to develop a relationship with **God**.
- grow in trust that God will be with them at all times.
- come to know and love **Jesus Christ**.
- begin to develop a relationship with **Jesus**.
- appreciate that **Jesus** loves them in a special way.
- relate to **Jesus** as their friend.
- desire to act as a follower of Jesus.
- develop their faith in the **Risen Jesus**.
- develop a passion for fairness and justice following **Jesus'** example.
- celebrate **God's** gift of **Jesus**.
- develop a sense of wonder and awe in the created world.
- develop a sense of gratitude to **God** for the blessings of creation and all God's gifts (family etc).
- appreciate their feelings as gifts of **God**.
- become aware that **God** is with them however they feel.
- appreciate that **God** is involved in the creation of each new life.
- appreciate signs of **God's** care and providence in the seasons.
- desire to respect others and the natural environment as created by **God**.
- appreciate the love and care of people around them which helps them to know the love of God.
- recognise **God's** presence in their own family.
- develop a sense of belonging to the local Catholic Church community.
- appreciate the call to live in community with others.
- develop an attitude of reverence for the Church building.
- honour **Mary** the Mother of Jesus and Our Mother too.
- become enriched by the lives of **saints** and by their faith and trust in God.
- connect their own experience of death and loss with the Christian message of eternal life.
- develop a sense of wonder in relation to Bible stories.
- show respect for the Bible as a sacred text.
- deepen their love for Bible stories.
- relate to the person of **Jesus** in Bible stories.
- be inspired to love **God** and to live the way **God** wants them to through the Bible.
- develop their relationship with **the Trinity** through prayer.
- become aware of **God** dwelling within them.
- develop a sense of reverence in prayer.
- value the importance of praying.
- relate celebrations in their lives to their Christian faith.
- enter into the cycle and rhythms of the Liturgical year.
- enter into the spirit of Advent (waiting/preparing).
- welcome **Jesus**, the light of the world, at Christmas.

- Welcome Jesus, the **Son of God**, at Christmas.
- link their experience of celebrating Christmas with the birth of **Jesus**.
- enter into the spirit of Lent.
- participate fully in an Ash Wednesday ritual.
- participate fully in class prayer services.
- experience joy that the risen **Jesus** is still with us.
- appreciate that they belong to **God's** family through Baptism.
- respect the Church as a place of prayer and celebration.
- remember to pray for those who have died belonging to them.
- develop Christian virtues (e.g., truthfulness, prayerfulness, thankfulness, obedience, a sense of wonder and reverence for God's creation, respect, courtesy, helpfulness, chastity).



## Level 2

Children will:

- learn to trust in **God**.
- encounter **God** in the stillness and quiet of prayer.
- value **God**'s commandments in their own lives.
- appreciate their own growth and development as a sign of **God**'s providence in their lives.
- appreciate that the people who help us are signs of **God** and they reveal his love, care, wisdom and justice.
- encounter **Jesus** in Bible stories.
- experience **Jesus**' healing presence in their own lives.
- experience **Jesus**' forgiving presence in their own lives.
- become aware that **Jesus** is calling them personally to be disciples.
- desire to love **God** and love others as **Jesus** taught.
- come to value **Jesus**' teachings in word and deed.
- relate their Christian actions to those of **Jesus**.
- respond to the commandment of **Jesus** (Love one another...).
- develop their relationship with **Jesus** in prayer.
- decide to follow **Jesus** in their moral lives.
- be able to respond to the promptings of the **Holy Spirit** to love as **Jesus** asks.
- seek to emulate **Mary**'s obedience and trust in God.
- seek to emulate the **saints** and to ask their help in prayer.
- desire to share the 'Good News' of **Jesus** with others.
- identify their own role in the Church community.
- develop an appreciation of the unity between themselves and others in the community of faith.
- show respect for people of other faiths.
- appreciate the 'deeper meaning' conveyed by Biblical texts.
- reverence the Bible as the inspired **Word of God**.
- celebrate their identity as baptised children of **God**.
- appreciate that **God** called them at Baptism to be a follower of **Jesus**.
- appreciate the connection between their own baptism and that of **Jesus** in the Jordan.
- desire to keep the **Lord's Day** holy.
- participate more fully in the celebration of the Eucharist.
- reverence the presence of **Jesus Christ** in the Eucharist.
- become aware of Jesus as the '**Bread of Life**'.
- express gratitude to **God the Father** for everything and especially for the gift of **Jesus** at Mass.
- appreciate the importance of the Mass.
- participate in school/class Masses.
- see Lent as an opportunity to turn back to **God**.
- enter into the spirit of Lent by undertaking a Lenten sacrifice.
- enter into the spirit of the Church's celebration of Holy Week.
- enter into the Stations of the Cross.
- develop an understanding of their sins and their need for **God**'s forgiveness.
- appreciate **God**'s forgiveness and love and celebrate it in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- experience **God**'s mercy in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- relate to **Jesus** as the Good Shepherd in the context of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- desire to say sorry when they do what is wrong.



- desire to change as Zacchaeus did.
- celebrate the feast days of **Mary**.
- associate their own behaviour with Christian moral values and teachings.
- Identify moral failure (sin) in their own lives.
- desire to complete the steps to conversion.
- appreciate and desire to follow Christian moral precepts, maxims and rules (e.g. love one another as I have loved you).
- appreciate that their gifts and talents have been given to them by **God**.
- respect their bodies and the bodies of others because they were created by **God**.
- appreciate their interdependence upon one another, upon the earth, and upon **God**.





## Level 3

Children will:

- experience the ‘Good News’ of the Kingdom of **God**.
- realise that they are called to cooperate with **God** in the building of his Kingdom.
- experience the faithful, strong and ever present love of **God** (as a basis on which their moral response to God will rest).
- become aware of **God**’s covenant love and desire to respond to that love.
- desire to live their faith in **God** through prayer and action.
- believe in **Jesus**’ promise to be with us forever.
- celebrate **God**’s saving action through **Jesus**.
- value peace and see it as a gift of **Jesus**.
- believe and hope in their own Resurrection with **Jesus**.
- be willing to witness to their faith in **Christ** in word and deed.
- unite themselves with **Jesus**’ way of love and faithful loyalty to the Father.
- enter imaginatively into **Jesus**’ parables of the Kingdom of God.
- be aware of the presence of the **Holy Spirit** in their lives.
- appreciate the gift of the **Holy Spirit** in their lives.
- become more aware of their membership of the Church.
- appreciate their dependence on others in the community of faith.
- desire to take part in the life and worship of the domestic and local church.
- have a sense of belonging to a diocese.
- value their part in the Church’s mission to the world.
- be inspired by the faith of their Christian ancestors.
- engage with people of other Christian faiths and thereby foster the coming of **God**’s Kingdom.
- show sensitivity and respect for people who hold beliefs different from their own.
- journey with **Jesus** through Holy Week.
- appreciate the cross as a symbol of salvation.
- experience the joy of the Easter season.
- enter into sacraments as special meetings with the **Risen Jesus**.
- come to a deeper appreciation of the presence of the **Risen Jesus** at Mass, especially his presence under the appearances of bread and wine.
- appreciate the gift of grace received at baptism, which helps them to follow Jesus.
- appreciate Lent as a liturgical season of conversion.
- appreciate the coming of **God**’s Son at Christmas.
- desire to enter into the Church’s liturgical events at Easter.
- appreciate the importance of the Liturgy of the Word at Mass.
- integrate the meaning of **God**’s Word into their lives.
- accept the gift of the real presence of **Jesus** at Mass.
- trust in the Eucharist as nourishment for them as followers of **Jesus**.
- come to a deeper appreciation of the reconciling love of **God** for each one of them.
- accept the mission and challenge that the **Risen Jesus** gives to us as we go out from Mass.
- persevere in prayer.
- develop an appreciation of the rosary.
- honour **Mary** as God’s Mother through prayer.
- choose to use their freedom responsibly in moral decision-making.
- incorporate prayer into their decision-making.

- respond to the ten commandments in their lives as children.
- desire to extend forgiveness to others as **Jesus** taught.
- encounter the **Lord Jesus** in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- identify actions of stewardship of creation and carry them out.
- reflect on how s/he can relieve the suffering and misery of others.
- desire to use their talents in the mission given to the Church by the **Risen Jesus**.
- desire to follow **Jesus** in relating to others in peaceful, tolerant, and non-discriminatory ways.
- see their role in organisations that care for the poor.
- be inspired by contemporary Christian models in their moral lives.
- grow in appreciation of the sacredness of human life.



## Level 4

Children will:

- develop a growing awareness of the mystery of **God**, of **Jesus Christ** and of the **Holy Spirit**.
- value themselves as precious in **God's** eyes.
- relate to **Jesus** as the role model.
- become aware of belonging to the **communion of saints**.
- respond to the call to live in relationship with **God**, with other people and with the earth.
- appreciate the work of the **Holy Spirit** in creation.
- realise that they are personally called to be partners with **God** in the on-going work of creation.
- recognise and respond to **God's** covenant call in their own lives.
- appreciate their dependence on **God** and respond with thanks.
- reflect on the presence of the **Holy Spirit** in their own lives and of how the **Holy Spirit** allows them to respond to the needs of others.
- recognise the **Holy Spirit** dwelling within them.
- See the **Holy Spirit** as an advocate/consoler.
- desire to receive the gifts and charisms of the **Holy Spirit**.
- desire to express the fruits of the **Holy Spirit** in their lives as children.
- be aware of the gifts and charisms of the **Holy Spirit** in their own lives.
- desire to model their lives on **Mary**, the perfect disciple.
- see themselves as part of a Church community, the People of God, that nourishes and supports faith.
- see themselves as part of the Body of Christ.
- desire to show people the love, compassion and forgiveness of **Jesus**.
- discern their own gifts of the **Holy Spirit** in carrying on Christ's work of making **God's Kingdom** present here and now (vocation).
- desire to enter into dialogue with people of other faiths and beliefs.
- extend respect and love to those who think or act differently than they do in religious matters.
- be inspired to work together with people of other faiths to promote human rights, social justice, good morals, peace and freedom.
- desire to direct their lives towards God, to love God and others, and to seek the truth.
- appreciate the importance of **God's word**.
- appreciate that the Bible contains wisdom for their lives.
- be open to receiving wisdom for their lives from the Bible.
- grow in confidence in their ability to read the Bible.
- come to a deeper appreciation of the layers of meaning in Biblical texts.
- be inspired by the prophets to witness to the truth in their own lives.
- invoke the help of the **Trinity** in striving to live like **Jesus**.
- recognise God's call to them to pray.
- appreciate that **God** is always present in their experiences of suffering.
- consider how sacraments contribute to their life journeys.
- develop their appreciation of the role of symbols in sacramental celebration.
- examine their conscience.
- renew their baptismal promises.
- celebrate the fulfilment of the promise to send the **Messiah** into our world at Christmas.
- wait in hope for the coming of **Immanuel, God with us**.
- renew their commitment to the mission of **Jesus** in Lent.

- become aware of Jesus as the **Lamb of God**.
- enter into the Easter Vigil in their local church.
- become aware that they are united with the **Risen Jesus**.
- prepare carefully to celebrate the sacraments.
- appreciate how the sacraments help them to become more holy.
- desire to be united more firmly to **Christ**, to strengthen their bond with the Church, to take part in her mission, and to bear witness to Christ in words and deeds.
- strengthen their relationship with **Jesus Christ** through the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- desire to participate fully and actively in the Mass.
- participate in the preparation for a class Mass.
- respond to **Jesus Christ**'s presence in the Eucharist.
- respond to **Jesus Christ**'s presence in others by loving and serving them.
- participate as fully as possible in the Confirmation liturgy.
- appreciate their need for **God's grace** to live as his children.
- desire to live and act with justice and love towards **God** and neighbour.
- reflect on how they can contribute to the well-being of others.
- promote and protect the dignity of every person.
- cherish their own difference as **God's** way of creating them.
- reflect on **God's** providence in their own lives.
- be a responsible steward of the earth.
- explore how they can respond to **God's call** in their lives.
- be inspired to follow the example of a **saint**.
- use the gifts of the **Spirit** in their daily lives in making moral decisions.
- reflect on what their personal relationship with **Jesus** might mean for their moral behaviour.
- develop the attitudes mandated by **Jesus** in the Sermon on the Mount.
- respond to the invitation to love and justice as laid out in the Beatitudes.
- appreciate how they should respect the world, themselves, other people and **God**.
- begin to incorporate Christian moral ideals of conduct into their identity.
- choose practices to support their Christian spirituality.
- deepen their awareness of belonging to the diocese.
- continue to develop an ecumenical spirit.
- engage with contemporary culture with a Christian consciousness.
- develop confidence in their ability to respond to make Christian choices in their lives.
- desire to counteract influences that damage or destroy the natural world.

# Special Education Curriculum Guidelines







The general Religious Education curriculum identifies relevant learning opportunities that are suitable for children with mild general learning disabilities. However, it is envisaged that teachers will engage in a planning process and adapt and interpret the curriculum guidelines to take account of the diversity in aptitudes and interests among these students. They are likely to adopt a similar approach in teaching the other subjects in the curriculum.

There is a group of students – those with low incidence disabilities – including those with moderate, severe and profound general learning disabilities who have very individual learning needs. The special Religious Education curriculum is aimed at meeting the needs of these students.

These guidelines deal with presenting meaningful religious experiences for young people at the foundation stages of learning. The needs of these students can be varied and complex. Lessons for these young people need to take account of their strengths and interests. Active participation needs to be encouraged in the learning process.

The Curriculum Guidelines for teachers of students with mild, moderate, severe and profound general learning disabilities (NCCA, 2007) provide interesting strategies for teachers to use when working with this group of students. However, in keeping with the NCCA aims, where it is stated that their educational experience should reflect what is available to their peers, teachers are encouraged to plan and find a suitable entry point for each student. Teachers can also revisit various themes and incorporate a different and more age-appropriate range of materials that take account of the maturity of older students.

Guided by the approach taken by the *NCCA Curriculum* content is presented in three bands (NCCA, 2007 5):

Attending Band	Responding Band	Initiating Band
This band is suitable for students who are in the very early stages of awareness of their immediate environment.	This band is suitable for those young people who appear to show interest in their environment but who still need adult prompting and guidance.	This band is suitable for students who are beginning to take control of their own environment, develop curiosity and initiate activities and communication.

The bands above are designed to provide a framework within which teachers can identify the level of functioning of young people and to structure learning activities that take account of these levels. Age appropriate opportunities should be a consideration of teachers when planning material and resources.

While these students may have complex learning needs it is important that the learning experience that they receive in religious education matches that afforded to their peers without disabilities.

Students at the early stages of learning may begin to explore the world of religion in terms of special people, books, times, places and objects and by visiting their local church. They will listen to and talk on various religious stories. They will be introduced to religious signs, symbols and words. They will experience a number of religious celebrations and practices. They may reflect on the wonders of God's world.

## Curriculum Planning

The introduction to the *Primary School Curriculum* (NCCA, 1999) reminds schools that a continuing process of reflection, self-evaluation, review and innovation is necessary to realise the optimum learning experience for all students and in particular for those with special educational needs. Many students with SEN have very individualised learning needs. Religious education provides opportunities where teachers can structure individual lessons but as a subject it also lends itself quite readily to the promotion of group activities.

### Choosing and Using Resources

It is important that the teacher collects a range of items and materials for lessons. These are likely to:

- Arouse interest
- Evoke pleasure
- Elicit curiosity and surprise
- Provide pleasurable experiences
- Provide opportunities for communication
- Promote an awareness of sharing with others
- Provide opportunities to explore the good things that God has given us to enjoy in this world.

The children are helped in lessons to realise that the world is full of beautiful things for them to enjoy. They are therefore helped to smell flowers, spices, scents of different kinds. They are helped to touch objects of different texture. They are assisted to look at objects of different colour. The children are helped to realise that certain colours and objects are associated with special occasions and feasts throughout the year. The children are given the opportunity to listen to music, different sounds and to respond accordingly. Foster a sense of delight among the students in all of the beautiful things that they come across in this world.

The children are given a clear message in lessons that God has given us many nice things in this world and that he wants us to enjoy and explore them. He has given these things to us because he loves us and he wants us to be happy.

Provide opportunities for the children to see objects associated with worship such as candles, altar cloth, crucifix and incense. They are also helped to realise that many of the stories that are read to them come from the Bible. These objects are given a special place in the classroom and the children are helped to regard them with reverence.

The children are introduced to key words and imagery used to describe God through speech, sign, symbol and gesture. The students are provided with an opportunity to listen to and participate in stories that demonstrate that God loves them.

### Meeting for Worship

The children are encouraged to experience different forms of worship in an educational context. Class or whole school assemblies should be used for this purpose. Regular visits to the church should be facilitated. Prayer and worship can take many forms: meditation, listening to God's word, giving praise, giving thanks, saying sorry, prayer through drama, dance, movement and song. Different forms of worship used on a regular basis allow for a meaningful spiritual experience for the children.

## Christian Faith

### AIMS

Children will:

- become aware of the presence of God
- develop awareness that God is the creator of all things
- know that all good things come from God
- know that God loves us and wants us to be happy
- become aware that Mary is the mother of Jesus
- develop awareness of how we can honour Mary
- develop knowledge of Jesus, God's own Son.

<b>Attending</b> The child should be enabled to:	<b>Responding</b> The child should be enabled to:	<b>Initiating</b> The child should be enabled to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• listen to stories about God and Jesus.</li> <li>• attend to a variety of beautiful things.</li> <li>• listen to stories that illustrate God's love for everyone.</li> <li>• listen to stories about Mary the mother of Jesus.</li> <li>• attend to prayers and hymns to God, Jesus and Mary.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• show interest and respond to stories about God and Jesus.</li> <li>• respond appropriately to a range of beautiful things in their surroundings.</li> <li>• show an awareness of God's love for everyone.</li> <li>• show interest in stories about Mary the mother of Jesus.</li> <li>• participate in praying and singing to God, Mary and Jesus.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• talk about God and Jesus.</li> <li>• thank God for beautiful things.</li> <li>• communicate about how God shows his love for us.</li> <li>• talk about Mary the mother of Jesus.</li> <li>• seek out opportunities to give praise to God, Jesus and Mary in prayer and in song.</li> </ul>

## Word of God

### AIMS

Children will:

- become aware that the Bible is a special book about God
- develop awareness that the Bible contains writings about God
- develop a sense of God's love from listening to readings from the Bible
- show reverence for the Bible as God's Word
- understand that Jesus is the most important person in the Bible, God's own Son.

<b>Attending</b> The child should be enabled to:	<b>Responding</b> The child should be enabled to:	<b>Initiating</b> The child should be enabled to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• listen to stories/texts from the Bible.</li> <li>• listen to and explore sensory artefacts associated with short stories/texts read from a children's' Bible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• listen to and show an interest in sensory artefacts associated with Bible stories/texts.</li> <li>• participate in simple dramas and improvisations based on Bible stories/texts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• independently seek out the reading of Bible stories/texts by locating appropriate sensory artefacts.</li> <li>• show engagement with and follow the story line of certain Bible stories/ texts.</li> </ul>

### Suggested Bible Texts

- The Annunciation
- The Journey to Bethlehem
- Jesus is born
- The shepherds
- The Wise Men bring presents
- The Last Supper
- The Story of Creation
- Jesus Calms the Sea
- The Story of the Loaves and Fishes
- The Daughter of Jairus
- The Wedding Feast at Cana
- Jesus Loves the Children
- The Passion
- The Crucifixion
- The Resurrection
- Pentecost

## Liturgy and Prayer

In this strand the pupils will be looking at the ways in which faith is celebrated, and how this can take different forms. They will explore different liturgies and different sacraments. They will learn about the significance of these celebrations/rituals for believers.

### AIMS

Children will:

- learn how to pray
- experience a number of Christian celebrations
- experience being in a church
- experience sensory associations with various celebrations
- listen to and explore a number of Bible stories that are associated with Christian celebrations and events
- be given an opportunity to see and touch objects associated with prayer and celebrations
- develop a familiarity with prayer (formal and informal)
- experience what it means to say sorry to God and Jesus
- participate in the Sacrament of Penance
- participate in the Sacrament of the Eucharist
- participate in the Sacrament of Confirmation.

<b>Attending</b> The child should be enabled to:	<b>Responding</b> The child should be enabled to:	<b>Initiating</b> The child should be enabled to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develop an awareness of objects that have a religious significance e.g. candle, crucifix, church, incense.</li> <li>• become aware of the smells, sounds and sights that are associated with different celebrations throughout the year.</li> <li>• observe new life in the growth of flowers, new leaves, and in the birth of new babies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• show and name objects that have a special religious significance: candle, cross, Holy Communion.</li> <li>• show interest in smells, sounds and sights that are associated with different celebrations throughout the year.</li> <li>• respond to and display awareness of signs of new life in the environment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• manipulate with a sense of care and reverence religious objects such as: a crucifix, a baptismal candle, a children's Bible.</li> <li>• recognise certain smells, sounds and sights that are associated with different religious feasts and celebrations throughout the year.</li> <li>• show curiosity about signs of new life in the environment.</li> </ul>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• notice changes in the immediate environment throughout the year.</li> <li>• develop an awareness that s/he can exert control over choice of stories, prayers, songs.</li> <li>• develop awareness and understanding of and participation in Christmas celebrations through the use of carols, Advent calendars and Advent wreaths.</li> <li>• develop awareness that the birth of Jesus was a very special occasion.</li> <li>• participate in a nativity play.</li> <li>• touch and look at the figures in a crib.</li> <li>• develop awareness that Christmas is a time for giving and receiving cards and presents.</li> <li>• buy, cook, taste and smell Christmas foods.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• show an awareness of changes that are taking place in and outside the classroom throughout the school year.</li> <li>• with some prompting and choice making, select prayers, stories and songs.</li> <li>• develop awareness of objects, music and symbols that are associated with various feasts throughout the year: St Patrick's Day, Easter, Advent.</li> <li>• show interest in the story of the birth of Jesus.</li> <li>• with assistance and encouragement participate in a nativity play.</li> <li>• with prompting identify the various figures in the crib.</li> <li>• show awareness that Christmas is a time for giving and receiving presents.</li> <li>• participate in buying, cooking, smelling and tasting Christmas foods.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• independently communicate and explore changes that are occurring in the environment.</li> <li>• co-operate with an adult or other students in saying prayers either verbally or performing gestures.</li> <li>• understand that objects, symbols and music have specific relevance for certain religious feasts and occasions.</li> <li>• demonstrate a recollection of the story of the birth of Jesus Christ</li> <li>• have the opportunity to participate and assume a role in a nativity play.</li> <li>• show ability to name the figures in a crib.</li> <li>• participate in the giving and receiving of presents at Christmas, at birthdays and at Mothers'/Fathers' day.</li> <li>• independently or with assistance participate in the cooking of different foods.</li> </ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have opportunities to experience darkness and light.</li> <li>• participate in awareness of Easter by making Easter eggs, eating hot-cross buns, lamb and mint sauce.</li> <li>• have experience of saying sorry to God and Jesus.</li> <li>• receive Jesus in the Eucharist.</li> <li>• receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit in the Sacrament of Confirmation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• show awareness of an understanding of darkness and light.</li> <li>• develop awareness of signs and symbols associated with Easter: crucifix, Paschal candle, hot-cross bun.</li> <li>• develop an awareness of saying sorry to God and Jesus in prayer and in song.</li> <li>• show awareness that Jesus is present in the Eucharist.</li> <li>• show interest in the gifts associated with the Sacrament of Confirmation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• experiment with activities that allow for the creation of darkness and light.</li> <li>• show an awareness that certain objects, music and symbols are associated with Easter: a crucifix, an Easter egg or a Paschal candle</li> <li>• independently or with assistance say sorry to God and Jesus.</li> <li>• demonstrate a willingness to receive Jesus in the Eucharist.</li> <li>• participate in the preparation and the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation.</li> </ul>
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### Prayers

- Sign of the Cross
- Act of Sorrow
- Our Father
- Hail Mary
- Grace before and after meals
- Prayer before and after Communion

### Note

- Focus on the fact that birthdays are often celebrated as part of a community.
- Help the children to understand that Christmas is synonymous with the birth of one special baby – Jesus.
- Make celebration of achievement an integral part of the school year for the children.
- Provide opportunities for the students to share in and participate in group activities.
- Help the children to realise that there are people in the world who care for us and that God cares for everyone.

## Christian Morality

### AIMS

Children will:

- ask and respond to questions about their own and other's experiences and feelings
- listen to stories that reflect Christian moral virtues and values
- develop an understanding of right and wrong behaviour
- explore God's unconditional love
- develop self-esteem and respect for others
- express feelings by vocal/gesture means
- engage in interaction with adults and other children
- realise that everyone has the right to say 'yes', 'no' and 'maybe'
- have an awareness of belonging to a 'class' or to a 'group'
- show respect for other people's possessions.

<b>Attending</b> The child should be enabled to:	<b>Responding</b> The child should be enabled to:	<b>Initiating</b> The child should be enabled to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• listen to religious stories which emphasise feelings and emotions.</li> <li>• become aware of various feelings such as happiness, love, joy, excitement, surprise, pain and fear and to have these feelings described by an adult and acknowledged when they occur.</li> <li>• participate in turn-taking activities/ games.</li> <li>• become aware of the feelings of others, recognise how others are feeling in certain situations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• show interest in stories that illustrate different emotions and feelings.</li> <li>• express a range of feelings in response to particular experiences.</li> <li>• participate in activities that require everyone to give and share something.</li> <li>• identify and name the feelings that other people are experiencing in various situations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• communicate about a variety of feelings and link them with experiences where these may be experienced.</li> <li>• use the language of feelings in everyday situations to describe how s/he and others are feeling.</li> <li>• care for and co-operate with each other.</li> <li>• talk about the feelings of other people in various situations.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• listen to accounts of people who respond to the feelings of others.</li> <li>• have opportunity to participate in group games and activities.</li> <li>• listen to stories about families: feel the love and care that comes from a family.</li> <li>• listen to accounts of happenings in the lives of other students and adults.</li> <li>• listen to religious stories illustrating how God values everyone.</li> <li>• receive praise and affirmation for effort: develop a sense of achievement.</li> <li>• attend to a variety of 'beautiful' things, flowers, music, a lovely piece of fabric, and the sea.</li> <li>• become aware of rules in the school and community that may concern him/her.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• show awareness that an individual's actions can affect the feelings of another.</li> <li>• use laughter and smiles to express their emotions when participating in pleasurable group activities.</li> <li>• show awareness of the love and care that is received from his/her family.</li> <li>• show interest and respond to the happenings in the lives of other students.</li> <li>• show an awareness of the love that God holds for everyone.</li> <li>• accept opportunities to display personal ability and talents.</li> <li>• respond appropriately to beautiful things in the environment.</li> <li>• observe appropriate school and community rules.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• adjust his/her behaviour in consideration of the feelings of others: apologise where necessary.</li> <li>• initiate interpersonal interactions with other pupils and adult.</li> <li>• communicate about the ways in which families care and show love for each other.</li> <li>• communicate about the happenings in his/her family: special occasions, celebrations, loss and routines.</li> <li>• communicate about God's love for everyone.</li> <li>• seek out opportunities to display special abilities or to demonstrate new achievements.</li> <li>• care for plants, animals and surroundings.</li> <li>• independently observe community and school rules.</li> </ul>
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Friend Ship Tree

Silhouette



Handwritten text on a notebook page, including the words 'Silhouette' and 'Friend Ship Tree'.



# Appendices



# Appendix A

## Skills in the Spiral Curriculum: Some Examples

The exemplars below illustrate how the broad learning outcomes of the curriculum (i.e. the skills) can be expressed as particular educational outcomes at each level. The same outcomes are returned to at higher levels but at a different level of complexity and richness.

### Samples from the strand: 'Christian Faith'

The child should be enabled to:

- investigate Christian beliefs, symbols, images and persons through creative process, play, story, visual arts, poetry, rhyme, dance, drama, music, language and using information and communication technologies.

#### Preschool Level/Level 1

- Retell the story of Christmas using props or puppets.
- Engage in collaborative reading of large-format books with religious themes.
- Retell religious stories in the correct sequence drawing on language patterns of stories.
- Draw and paint the Christmas story.
- Dramatise the Christmas story.
- Recite a rhyme about the goodness of God.
- Tell the story of a saint.
- Relate to Jesus as the Good Shepherd through imaginative reflection or drawing.
- Sequence events in a religious story when prompted by a computer game.
- Role-play acts of love/loving things to do.
- Listen to a song about God's love and making gestures and movements of love suggested by the music.
- Construct the temple in Jerusalem with blocks or other construction materials after hearing about Jesus being lost there.
- Role-play Baptisms in a 'baptismal' area set up in the classroom.

#### At Level 2

- Predict and speculate about actions of characters in religious stories.
- Use a variety of media to explore Christian beliefs (e.g. a webquest on life in Jesus' times).
- Role-play aspects of Church celebrations with classroom altar.
- Recite a poem about Jesus.
- Retell the story of the last supper using puppets.

#### At Level 3

- Build models of homes and villages in Jesus' time.
- Create 'who's who directory' for role holders within the church community.
- Explore symbols: e.g. of the Holy Spirit: wind, fire, dove; God as Mother, water as a religious symbol.
- Engage in a process drama activity exploring the events of Holy Week.
- Retell the story of Easter in the form of a big book.
- Recognise artistic representations of religious beliefs and concepts – e.g. contemporary religious art.

# Appendix A

## At Level 4

- Engage in the act of creating by painting, sculpting and building materials such as Lego to enable the body, as a source of knowledge, to experience and name the act of creating.
- Share songs and poems that illustrate the idea of God as mystery.
- Explore artists' and musicians' representations of key Christian beliefs.
- Examine online debates about religious issues.
- Debate challenging Christian beliefs (e.g. non-violence, preferential option for the poor, stewardship of the earth, importance of forgiveness).
- Explore how people of today can hear and respond to God's call.
- Develop a drama around a specific event, photograph/photostory, film it, choose music to match mood and events.

### The child should be enabled to:

- **respond to the revelation, presence and activity of God in Sacred Scripture/Tradition, in his/her life and in all creation through language and the expressive arts.**

## Preschool Level/Level 1

- Undertake a nature walk identifying creatures and plants in the natural world.
- Reflect on experiences of being loved by God,
- Reflect on their neighbourhood and how they belong, to develop the concept of community.
- Identify how the love and care of people around them helps them to know the love of God.
- Reflect on being part of a loving family/community.
- Name and celebrate good in self and others.
- Explore their senses as gifts from God.
- Recognise relationships of love (e.g. parent, child) and love received and given (e.g. sharing).
- Respond to creation in prayer, art, music, drama etc.

## At Level 2

- Explore God's goodness as reflected in self, relationships and creation.
- Reflect on experiences of promise and trust.
- Explore God's natural world and seeing the wonder and awe of this gift of God.
- Reflect on experiences of waiting and anticipation around Advent.
- Reflect on the gift of friends.
- Draw pictures of when they felt God was close to them in their lives.

## At Level 3

- Reflect on gifts we receive from beyond ourselves and that these are signs of God's love.
- Reflect on God's love in relation to themselves, their senses and their gifts.
- Recognise in relationship with family and friends the presence of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

## At Level 4

- Reflect on the presence of the Holy Spirit in their own lives and of how the Holy Spirit allows them to respond to the needs of others.
- Reflect on how God might be present in experiences of suffering.
- Identify ways we can be aware of the presence of the Holy Spirit.



# Appendix A

The child should be enabled to:

- identify and explain Christian beliefs.

## At Level 2

- Explain that Jesus teaches us about God the Father.
- Name the qualities of Mary and the saints and identify ways Mary and the saints responded to God.
- Name those healed by Jesus.
- Recall details about Jesus and his life (e.g. names of the disciples).
- Identify the qualities of Jesus identified in stories.
- Describe the characteristics of Jesus' life as a child (beliefs, practices, games, clothing, home, etc).
- Recall the story of the life of a saint.
- Recognise symbolic representations of religious beliefs and concepts (e.g. the crucifix, anoint with oil, sign of peace).
- Explain *why* Christians love God/talk about God/praise God.
- Explain *why* people choose to follow Jesus.

## At Level 3

- Name God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Trinity);
- Explore the Church's teaching about God as a loving father and mother.
- Identify the need for each to develop and use their gifts.
- Identify characteristics of the Church community.
- View documentaries about Christian beliefs and retrieve information.
- Recall that Jesus was Jewish and grew up in the Jewish tradition.
- Identify key moments in Mary's life.
- Name ways in which the Church continues the mission of Jesus to bring about the Reign of God.
- Explore how the ten commandments relate to the two commandments of Jesus.

## At Level 4

- Identify that the Spirit works in all Christian communities (ecumenism).
- Gather images, words and ideas to create a collage illustrating the goodness of God's creation.
- Explore what it means to be a priest/nun in everyday life.
- Explore Christian purposes in life and the reasons Christians trust in God and hope for the future.
- Discover and reflect on the achievements of human creativity.
- Explore how humans misuse their creative power.
- Outline the three phases in the narration of salvation history (OT, the life of Jesus, and the history of the Church).



# Appendix A

The child should be enabled to:

- investigate ways of respecting and learning about and from people who adhere to other religions or belief systems.

## At Level 3

- Examine religious artefacts from another religious tradition.
- Discuss how you can make a person of another faith welcome at home or in the school.
- Discuss how we can learn about people of other religious faiths.
- Discuss appropriate behaviour when in the worship place of another religious faith.
- Reflect on a story from another world religion that shows appreciation of creation.
- Share festivals with children of another faith.

## At Level 4

- Explore the concept of hospitality in relation to people of other faiths.
- Discuss religious prejudice.
- Identify the duties of Christians towards people in differing ethnic and religious groups.
- Discuss how to engage in dialogue with a person of another religious faith.
- Reflect on a story from another world religion that shows a thirst for justice and peace.

## Sample from the strand: 'The Word of God'

The child should be enabled to:

- represent ideas, feelings, and questions about Sacred Scripture texts through oral language, socio-dramatic play, improvising, moving, writing, story-telling, music, ritual, poetry, process drama, art and digital media.

## At Preschool Level/Level 1

- Dramatise the story with friends using figurines.
- Draw their impression of a story,
- Complete 'I wonder.' statements (Godly Play).
- Enact the Christmas story.

## At Level 2

- Use play dough to make a model of the Good Shepherd story.
- Use this model to explore the story on my own or with a partner.
- Develop Biblical language through process drama.
- Record response to a Sacred Scripture story through pictures and writing.
- Respond to characters and events in a story (drawing and captions, discussion, drama).

## At Level 3

- Perform a giant puppet play with a jointly constructed script involving key characters from a Scripture story.
- Mime a Sacred Scripture story.
- Illustrate a story map of a story to demonstrate a sequence of events.
- Read aloud scriptural passages.
- Construct story maps of Biblical stories.

## Appendix A

- Compare life in the twenty-first century to life in first-century Palestine. (e.g. discuss foods Jesus might have eaten; constructing a model of a typical village and/or house in the time of Jesus; comparing and contrasting daily life actions: collecting water, obtain food, clothing, occupations, housework, buying and selling).
- Construct word and picture mobiles depicting imagery found in stories.

### At Level 4

- Complete a 'before and after' chart to indicate the effect of God's activity in the lives of key figures from scriptural stories.
- Discuss purposes of parables.
- Create a web to represent the relationships between characters in a story.
- Give a considered personal opinion of a Sacred Scripture story in oral or in written form.
- Prepare and present a radio or TV broadcast about Peter and John.
- Highlight and explain words and images in a parable that help to convey the message and purpose of the parable.
- Create a collage based on a symbol or metaphor in a scriptural text.
- Write a portrait of a friend of Jesus.
- Create simple meditations on scriptural passages.
- Examine illustrations of Biblical stories (e.g. in text books, children's literature, in digital media etc.).
- Put a modern twist on a story e.g. who would the ten lepers be today?
- Animate a story using digital media.
- Write a Sacred Scripture story in your own words.

## Appendix B

### Religious Education and Integration in the Primary School Curriculum

Catholic Religious Education makes a strong contribution to the goals of the primary school curriculum in other areas of knowledge. As Saint John Paul II explained, Religious Education will always seek to ‘keep in touch with the other elements of the pupil’s knowledge and education; thus the gospel will impregnate the mentality of the student in the field of their learning, and the harmonization of their culture will be achieved in the light of faith’ (CT 69).

The Northern Ireland Curriculum includes a number of educational (or ‘cross-curricular’) themes. These are topics whose scope is defined by a series of objectives specified by Statutory Order. The objectives are interwoven with, and taught through, the compulsory subjects of the *NI Curriculum* and through Religious Education. The cross-curricular themes relevant to primary schools are Information Technology, Education for Mutual Understanding, Cultural Heritage and Health Education.

In the Republic, the *Primary School Curriculum* (1999) is founded on the principle of the integration of learning: ‘For the young child, the distinctions between subjects are not relevant: what is more important is that he or she experiences a coherent learning process that accommodates a variety of elements. It is important, therefore, to make connections between learning in different subjects’ (PSC 16).

While every subject has its own integrity and must be taught according to its own particular principles and methods,<sup>19</sup> teachers will recognise the potential for valuable links between spiritual, moral and Religious Education and all other areas of the curriculum. Every effort should be made to respect the freedom of conscience of children who have withdrawn from Religious Education. Some cross-curricular links and opportunities for integrated studies are noted below.

#### 1. Language and Literacy

##### Religious Education

- incorporates the use of listening and speaking as central learning strategies, providing opportunities for the enrichment and extension of children’s oral language
- provides a treasure of rich and varied texts for oral language and reading development including sacred texts, stories, prayers, liturgical texts, poetry, historical narrative, parable, proverb, miracle story, psalm, wise sayings
- develops a range of comprehension strategies, research strategies and problem-solving skills
- enables children to compose and write their own stories and poems
- enables children to understand the conventions of social language interaction in the domain of religion
- enables children to express intuitions, feelings, impressions, ideas and reactions in response to real and imaginary situations, through talk, discussion and writing
- enables children to create, develop and sustain imaginary situations through talk, discussion and improvisational drama
- enables children to write in a variety of genres appropriate to school and outside needs (e.g. composing a class liturgy)
- enables children to use computer technology for information retrieval
- will integrate with the following strands of the **Language and Literacy Curriculum**.

## Appendix B

<b>Infants</b>	
Strands	
<i>Oral Language</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active listening to religious stories, poems, songs and rhymes.</li> <li>• Developing a religious vocabulary and syntax.</li> <li>• Asking questions and giving descriptions.</li> <li>• Enjoying imaginative play with religious language (metaphor, allegory, symbol).</li> <li>• Discussing experience and new concepts: e.g. discussing religious/spiritual/moral issues and sustaining a conversation on a particular topic.</li> <li>• Sharing solutions and opinions: e.g. engaging in moral discussion and debate using arguments; identifying, debating and resolving moral dilemmas.</li> <li>• Sharing feelings and imagination: e.g. exploring and describing spiritual feelings, questions, experience and concepts.</li> </ul>
<i>Reading</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enjoying listening to stories in Religious Education.</li> <li>• Print-rich environment (children's Bibles, sacred space).</li> <li>• Responding to reading.</li> <li>• Comprehension skills.</li> <li>• Information retrieval skills.</li> </ul>
<i>Writing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oral language and writing: hearing religious stories and songs and drawing/writing about them.</li> <li>• Early writing: drawing a picture of a religious theme and writing about it.</li> <li>• Valuing children's writing: seeing personal writing displayed in prayer corner/sacred space.</li> </ul>

<b>First and Second</b>	
Strands	
<i>Oral Language</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active listening to religious stories, poems, songs and rhymes.</li> <li>• Developing a religious vocabulary and syntax.</li> <li>• Asking questions and giving descriptions.</li> <li>• Enjoying imaginative play with religious language (metaphor, allegory, symbol).</li> <li>• Discussing experience and new concepts: e.g. discussing religious/spiritual/moral issues.</li> <li>• Sharing solutions and opinions: e.g. engaging in moral discussion and debate; identifying, debating and resolving moral dilemmas.</li> <li>• Sharing feelings and imagination: e.g. exploring and describing spiritual feelings, questions, experiences and concepts.</li> </ul>
<i>Reading</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enjoying listening to reading stories in Religious Education.</li> <li>• Responding to reading: e.g. Recalling and relating a simple religious story, asking questions, role-playing, relating characters, situations and story details in religious stories to personal experience, reading a phrase/line from a Sacred Scripture story aloud.</li> <li>• Comprehension skills: e.g. retelling a Sacred Scripture story in sequence, predicting future incidents and outcomes in religious stories.</li> <li>• Information retrieval skills.</li> </ul>

## Appendix B

<i>Writing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oral language and writing: hearing religious stories and songs and drawing/ writing about them.</li> <li>• Early writing: drawing a picture with a religious theme and writing about it.</li> <li>• Writing genres: writing a prayer/poem; drawing and writing stories and poems. Writing a version of a religious story told by the teacher.</li> <li>• Exploring different genres: parable, psalm, prayer.</li> <li>• Personal experience and choice: writing about spiritual experiences, writing about my Baptism, my Communion.</li> <li>• Responding through writing: listening to the spiritual experiences of others and expressing reactions to them in writing.</li> <li>• Valuing children’s writing: having personal writing displayed in prayer corner/sacred space.</li> <li>• Spelling moral and religious terms.</li> </ul>
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Strands	<b>Third and Fourth Classes</b>
<i>Oral Language</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enjoying religious language.</li> <li>• Performing social functions: e.g. expressing appreciation of others’ gifts and talents.</li> <li>• Exploring religious story and poetry: e.g. taking the perspective of people in texts: telling the Easter story from the point of view of Mary.</li> <li>• Discussing religious experiences: e.g. asking questions about existential issues and spiritual concerns: Who are we? Where are we? What’s wrong with the world? What’s the solution?</li> <li>• Discussing religious/ethical issues, concerns and new concepts: e.g. using explanations to inform, clarify and elaborate: explaining the significance of Church practice such as fasting, Mass on Sunday, praying the Rosary.</li> <li>• Sharing solutions and opinions: e.g. identifying, debating and resolving moral issues; justifying moral choices made.</li> <li>• Sharing feelings and imagination: e.g. using mime to convey religious ideas, reactions, emotions, desires and attitudes.</li> <li>• Active listening: to religious narratives, poetry, song; listening to a presentation on another religion and deciding which are the most important questions to ask.</li> <li>• Experiencing a more challenging religious vocabulary, monastic life, environmental ethics.</li> </ul>
<i>Reading</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enjoying listening to reading in Religious Education.</li> <li>• Reading genres: religious texts; fables and moral tales.</li> <li>• Responding to reading of moral/religious texts.</li> <li>• Using comprehension strategies in relation to religious texts: e.g. creating a web to represent the relationships between characters in a story; creating a story-map of a story to demonstrate a sequence of events; completing a point-of-view activity about one of Jesus’ teachings in the role of, for example, a widow, Roman soldier, disciple, tax collector. Developing information retrieval skills in relation to projects in Religious Education, e.g. choosing relevant Scripture readings for a class Mass or liturgy.</li> </ul>



## Appendix B

<i>Writing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oral language and writing: experiencing a rich religious vocabulary as part of the preparation for writing.</li> <li>• Writing genres: prayer, lists, journaling, poems, moral tales, writing a Sacred Scripture story in his/her own words.</li> <li>• Personal experiences and choice: writing about spiritual, moral and religious experiences in diary form.</li> <li>• Responding through writing to religious stories/poems.</li> </ul>
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Strands	<b>Fifth and Sixth Classes</b>
<i>Oral Language</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enjoying religious language.</li> <li>• Performing social functions related to religion: e.g. welcoming visitors of another faith community, practising appropriate conduct when visiting a place of worship; practising effective interpersonal skills in order to relate to others in peaceful, tolerant, and non-discriminatory ways.</li> <li>• Exploring religious story and poetry.</li> <li>• Discussing religious experiences.</li> <li>• Discussing religious issues, concerns and new concepts, e.g. discussing injustice, discussing the value of moral maxim, discussing plays, films and television programmes in the light of Christian values; generating hypotheses and explanations related to religious concepts and beliefs – life after death, inter-religious dialogue, violence and war.</li> <li>• Sharing feelings and imagination: e.g. using mime to convey religious ideas, reactions, emotions, desires and attitudes.</li> <li>• Active listening: e.g. to narratives, radio broadcasts, visitors from other religions; following detailed instructions on the creation of a class liturgy; giving detailed instructions or directions for a class.</li> <li>• Developing a more complex religious vocabulary and sentence structure: e.g. discussing the meaning and origin of religious words with the teacher.</li> </ul>
<i>Reading</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enjoying listening to reading in Religious Education.</li> <li>• Reading genres: e.g. <i>textual features of Biblical texts</i>: sequence of events, plot, characterisation, imagery, metaphor, simile, allegory, repetition, contrast, symbols, messages, grammatical features, Biblical referencing system.</li> <li>• Responding to reading texts: e.g. developing critical reading and viewing skills – looking at stereotyping, distortions and omissions in the presentation of old people in the media; examining online debates on religious issues; fictional characters in literature can be evaluated for their personal moral qualities.</li> <li>• Using comprehension strategies in relation to religion texts: e.g. examining illustrations of Biblical stories; locating passages of Sacred Scripture by book, chapter and verse; creating a concept map for a story; presenting variant or alternative positions to those of a Biblical text (e.g. presenting the story of Jesus and the woman at the well with the woman as narrator).</li> </ul>

## Appendix B

<i>Writing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oral language and Writing: experiencing a rich religious vocabulary as part of the pre-writing process.</li> <li>• Writing genres: e.g. prayer, lists, journaling, poems, stories, arguing the case in writing for a particular point of view (morality).</li> <li>• Personal experiences and choice: e.g. keeping a journal.</li> <li>• Spelling moral and religious terms.</li> <li>• Responding through writing to religious stories, poems etc.</li> <li>• Range of audiences: writing a Church bulletin, responding to the letters page in a Catholic newspaper, writing to seek information about a church or charitable organisation.</li> </ul>
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## 2. Mathematics

### Religious Education

- provides opportunities to apply mathematical concepts and processes.
- enables children to collect, classify, organise and represent dates in a variety of forms.
- will integrate with the following strands of the **Mathematics Curriculum**:

Strand	<b>Infants</b>
<i>Measures</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time: sequencing stages in a story, e.g. sequencing events in a Sacred Scripture story when prompted by a computer programme; stating the order of what happens at a Baptism, counting number of days in a story, counting people involved in a religious story.</li> </ul>

Strand	<b>First and Second</b>
<i>Measures</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time: significant dates in the liturgical year, e.g. identifying from the calendar the day of the week on which St Patrick's day occurs.</li> <li>• Sequencing liturgical events using the vocabulary of time.</li> </ul>

Strand	<b>Third and Fourth</b>
<i>Measures</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time: putting seasons of the liturgical year in sequence; using calendars to work out dates in the liturgical year; using the internet to check the times of sunrise and sunset during Ramadan.</li> <li>• Sequencing actions and activities in rituals e.g. Stations of the Cross, events in Holy Week, baptismal signs.</li> <li>• Exploring timelines; e.g. the story of Moses.</li> </ul>

## Appendix B

	<b>Fifth and Sixth</b>
Strands	
Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading timetables: e.g. researching times of prayer of Irish Muslims during Ramadan.</li> <li>• Constructing timelines for Biblical events e.g. Hebrew Scriptures, Christian Scriptures, Time of the Church, The three great 'moments' of salvation history: creation, salvation, fulfilment; working out number of years between events; developing timelines to illustrate important themes, e.g. timeline showing significant people who have worked for peace over history.</li> <li>• Making a timeline of the liturgical year.</li> <li>• Sequencing actions and activities in rituals e.g. steps in Confirmation.</li> </ul>
Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collecting, organising and representing data, e.g. piechart representing religious traditions in Ireland; trend graph showing amount of money given to Trócaire over a number of years.</li> </ul>

### 3. Social, Environmental and Scientific Education

#### Religious Education

- begins with personal experience, experience within family, the immediate environment of the child and then moves beyond to the local and wider communities.
- is concerned with the identity and role of the child in the local and wider community, with a sensitivity towards the way of life of other peoples, both locally and globally.
- promotes an ecological consciousness by helping children consider the origins and value of life, the interdependence of all things, and the importance of looking after the environment (Science Curriculum 11).
- 'cultivates humane and responsible attitudes and an appreciation of the world in accordance with beliefs and values' (SPHE aim).
- 'helps children learn about people, events, issues and cultural experiences which have helped shape the local community and environment' (History Curriculum 13).
- develops empathy with people from diverse environments and an understanding of human interdependence (Geography Curriculum 14).
- challenges use of imagination and evidence to reconstruct elements of the past (History Curriculum 13).
- develops a sense of responsibility for, and a willingness to participate in, the preservation of heritage (History Curriculum 13).
- helps children develop an understanding of time and chronology through timelines and storymaps.
- helps children research, record and use evidence for projects and to act as historians.
- will integrate with the following strands of the **History Curriculum**:

## Appendix B

<b>Infant Classes</b>	
Strands	
<i>Myself and my Family</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exploring my Baptism (using evidence: photographs, clothes, candle etc).</li> <li>• Discussing how family members care for one another.</li> <li>• Exploring celebrations in the family (using evidence: photos).</li> </ul>
<i>Story</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stories about the lives of people from a range of religious backgrounds (communication).</li> <li>• Discussing chronology of events in religious stories (time and chronology: beginning, middle and end).</li> </ul>

<b>First and Second Class</b>	
Strands	
<i>Myself and My Family</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Myself growing and changing (RSE in a Christian context).</li> <li>• Discussing religious family events (using evidence: Baptism, First Communion etc).</li> <li>• Feasts and festivals in the Past (Christmas, November and remembering the dead, local Christian festivals: change and continuity).</li> </ul>
<i>Story</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stories about the lives of people from a range of religious backgrounds.</li> <li>• Discussion of sequences in stories (time and chronology).</li> <li>• Discussing cause and effect in stories.</li> <li>• Developing empathy: imagining and discussing the feelings of characters in religious stories.</li> <li>• Studying the lives of Christians who have made a contribution to local or national life.</li> </ul>

<b>Third and Fourth Class</b>	
Strands	
<i>Local Studies</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buildings, sites or ruins in my locality (local church, well, cemetery, monastery etc).</li> <li>• History of local Christian community.</li> <li>• History of the local school: story of the school's founder.</li> <li>• Local places of pilgrimage.</li> <li>• Feasts and festivals in the past – religious festivals and customs celebrated by various members of the school and local community (Catholics, Muslims, Jews etc).</li> </ul>
<i>Story</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stories from the lives of Christians or other religious figures in the past e.g. stories of Holy women in the Old Testament, story of Abraham, Muhammad.</li> </ul>

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<i>Early People and Ancient Societies</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early Christian Ireland.</li> <li>• Life in first century Palestine (Jewish religion, economic structure, housing, clothing, food, daily life and customs).</li> <li>• Moses, the Israelites and Egyptian society.</li> <li>• Irish Christian spirituality in the past (pilgrimages, Celtic spirituality, sacred places).</li> </ul>
<i>Life, Society, Work and Culture in the Past</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• History of the local Catholic community.</li> <li>• History of other Christian communities in local area.</li> <li>• The missionary tradition in the Irish Church.</li> <li>• Examining Christian beliefs presented in art, architecture, and music in the past.</li> </ul>

Strands	<b>Fifth and Sixth Class</b>
<i>Local Studies</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feasts and festivals in the past: feasts and festivals of the major world religions.</li> <li>• Feasts celebrated by locals of other religious traditions.</li> <li>• Buildings, sites or ruins in my locality: exploring an old monastery, graveyard, Mass path, Mass rock, holy well.</li> <li>• Schools: work of the religious orders.</li> <li>• My locality through the ages: studying history of the parish/diocese; using parish records as evidence.</li> </ul>
<i>Story</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stories from the lives of Christians and others who have fought for peace, human rights and justice in the past (Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King Jr.) or who have contributed to local/national, international life.</li> </ul>
<i>Early People and Ancient Societies</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Early Church: The life and growth of the first Christian communities (BC, AD: time and chronology).</li> </ul>
<i>Continuity and Change Over Time</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timeline of salvation history past, present and future (time and chronology).</li> </ul>



## Appendix B

- will integrate with the following strands of the **Geography Curriculum**:

Strands	<b>Infants</b>
<i>Human Environments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Living in the local community: the local parish/es, priests, church building.</li> </ul>
<i>Natural Environments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exploring God's creation.</li> </ul>
<i>Environmental Awareness and Care</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exploring and respecting the environment: God's world.</li> </ul>

Strands	<b>First and Second Classes</b>
<i>Human Environments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Living in the local community: how people in the parish work together, discussing my role in the parish community, ways in which we help others in the community, the work of the priest and others in the local community, those who work in the Catholic school.</li> <li>• People and places in other areas: family faith life for other religious faith communities.</li> </ul>
<i>Environmental Awareness and Care</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding individual and communal responsibility for taking care of the environment.</li> <li>• Identifying strategies for improving and caring for the environment.</li> </ul>

Strands	<b>Third and Fourth Classes</b>
<i>Human Environments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Study of local parish community.</li> <li>• Church-based groups in the community (e.g. Society of St Vincent de Paul).</li> <li>• Learning about minority groups in Ireland.</li> </ul>
<i>Natural Environments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finding places of pilgrimage on maps: holy wells, Lough Derg, Croagh Patrick, Knock, Lourdes, Fatima.</li> <li>• Finding Biblical locations on maps (e.g. Bethlehem, Nazareth, and Jerusalem).</li> </ul>
<i>Environmental Awareness and Care</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Duty of Christians to care for the earth.</li> <li>• The value of every creature created by God.</li> </ul>

## Appendix B

Strands	<b>Fifth and Sixth Classes</b>
<i>Human Environments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Study of religious faith communities in Ireland (Muslim, Jewish etc).</li> <li>• Ecumenical activity and inter-religious dialogue.</li> <li>• Respecting and valuing diversity in the community.</li> <li>• Role of Christian community groups and organisations (e.g. Society of St Vincent de Paul, Trócaire).</li> <li>• People at work: profile of local bishop.</li> <li>• Study of local diocese and dioceses in Ireland.</li> <li>• Fair trade issues and development aid.</li> </ul>
<i>Natural Environments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maps of the ancient Biblical world (e.g. 1st-century Palestine and surrounds, River Jordan, Sea of Galilee, vegetation, key towns and settlements).</li> <li>• Finding Biblical and other religious locations on maps (e.g. Bethlehem, Nazareth, and Jerusalem; location of Mecca).</li> </ul>
<i>Environmental Awareness and Care</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The universal destination of earthly goods.</li> <li>• Stewardship.</li> </ul>

- will integrate with the following strands of the **Science Curriculum**.

Strands	<b>Infants</b>
<i>Living Things</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Myself: RSE in the Christian Context.</li> <li>• Plants and Animals: exploring God's creation.</li> </ul>
<i>Environmental Awareness and Care</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caring for my locality: Exploring and respecting the environment: God's world.</li> </ul>

Strands	<b>First and Second</b>
<i>Living Things</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Myself: RSE in a Christian context.</li> <li>• Plants and Animals: exploring God's creation.</li> </ul>
<i>Environmental Awareness and Care</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caring for my locality; understanding individual and communal responsibility for taking care of the environment.</li> <li>• Identifying strategies for improving and caring for the environment.</li> </ul>

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Strands	Third and Fourth
<i>Living Things</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human life: RSE in a Christian context.</li> </ul>
<i>Environmental Awareness and Care</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examining the interrelationship of living and non-living elements of local and other environments.</li> <li>• Duty of Christians to care for the earth.</li> <li>• The value of every creature created by God.</li> <li>• Appreciating the need to conserve resources.</li> </ul>

Strands	Fifth and Sixth
<i>Living Things</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human life: RSE in a Christian context.</li> </ul>
<i>Environmental Awareness and Care</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Realising personal and community responsibility for taking care of the environment.</li> <li>• Examining the interrelationship of living and non-living elements of local and other environments.</li> <li>• Identifying how religion and science contribute positively to the use of the earth's resources.</li> <li>• Identifying some ways science and religion work together for the good of local and wider environments.</li> </ul>

## 4. Arts Education

### Religious Education

- enables children to use art, drama and music for personal expression and reflection, spiritual awareness, developing understanding of different views and beliefs and promoting critical and creative thinking, discussion and debate.
- enables children to communicate ideas using the creative and expressive arts.
- provides aesthetic experience and develops aesthetic awareness and appreciation of the arts.
- helps children begin to appreciate the context in which great art and artefacts are created and the culture from which they grow (Visual Arts Curriculum 11).
- enables children to listen to enjoy and respond to a range of music from different periods.
- will integrate with the following strands of the **Visual Arts Curriculum**:

## Appendix B

<b>Infant Classes</b>	
Strands	
<i>Drawing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpreting (in drawing) themes explored in Religious Education, e.g. imaginary drawing of the Good Shepherd parable; responding to a nature walk in a drawing; drawing what Jesus might have looked like.</li> <li>• Looking and talking about his/her work, the work of other children and work of artists.</li> </ul>
<i>Paint and Colour</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpreting (in paint and colour) themes explored in Religious Education, e.g. paint the Christmas story; discussing paintings of religious themes/book illustrations; paint the colour of love as they feel love.</li> </ul>
<i>Construction</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• e.g. construct a temple in Jerusalem with blocks or other construction materials after learning about Jesus being lost there.</li> </ul>

<b>First and Second</b>	
Strands	
<i>Drawing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpreting (in drawing) themes explored in Religious Education, e.g. responding to the creation story in an imaginative drawing; illustrating the concept, God is love; imagining what heaven is like through a drawing; interpreting what God is like in a drawing; designing a pattern in mosaic.</li> </ul>
<i>Paint and Colour</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpreting (in paint and colour) themes explored in Religious Education.</li> <li>• Using colour expressively to interpret themes based on his/her spiritual life, e.g. particular moments when I felt mystery/wonder/God's presence.</li> <li>• Talking about the work of artists in text books/other religious art.</li> </ul>
<i>Clay</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpreting (as sturdy clay figures) characters explored in Scripture stories.</li> </ul>
<i>Making Constructions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making imaginative structures e.g. building models of homes and villages in Jesus' time; looking at and talking about the local church and at pictures of buildings in Jesus' time;</li> <li>• Making a model of a mosque using a shoebox and cardboard roll; making a Qur'an stand; designing your own spice box.</li> </ul>

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Strands	Third and Fourth
<i>Drawing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpreting (in drawing) themes explored through Religious Education, e.g. making a cartoon strip of a Biblical story; using a computer art program to explore images of water and organising a composition; creating a big book of drawings of Easter week; designing a Bar and Bat Mitzvah card to send to a Jewish friend.</li> </ul>
<i>Paint and Colour</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpreting (in paint and colour) themes explored in Religious Education.</li> <li>• Discovering colour in the visual environment: liturgical year colours; making a stained glass window.</li> <li>• Recognising and discussing artistic representations of religious beliefs – contemporary religious art, church architecture, objects of piety through the ages; comparing depictions of the Resurrection over history; examining illustrations of Biblical stories in children’s literature, digital media etc.</li> <li>• Using their own paintings as a bridge to religious language and concepts, e.g. symbol of island lends itself to explorations of existential questions of longing, meaning and maturity.</li> </ul>
<i>Clay</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpreting (in clay and papier maché masks) characters explored through Religious Education.</li> </ul>
<i>Fabric and Fibre</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inventing a costume for a character explored in a Scripture story.</li> </ul>
<i>Construction</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating objects to communicate understanding of the liturgical year, e.g. constructing a classroom crib.</li> <li>• Exploring the interior of a Catholic church and comparing it to a church of another Christian denomination/worship space of another religion.</li> <li>• Making a concertina book of symbols of Baptism.</li> </ul>

Strands	Fifth and Sixth
<i>Drawing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpreting (in drawing) themes explored through Religious Education e.g. drawing one’s own impression of the gifts/fruits of the Holy Spirit; using religious clip art to design a leaflet for a classroom ritual; drawing a symbol to illustrate a religious belief; exploring personal images of God through drawing; creating a rangoli pattern for the hands; decorating a Sedar plate and drawing the special food which goes on it; creating a collage based on a religious symbol.</li> </ul>



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<i>Paint and Colour</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpreting (in paint and colour) themes explored in Religious Education: e.g. creating an icon and meditating on it.</li> <li>• Recognising and discussing artistic representations of religious beliefs: exploring images of Jesus/Mary in contemporary art; examining sacred art and how it inspires people to prayer and to a deeper understanding of God; examining Christ through the eyes of artists of different cultures; examining the composition of a religious painting; creating a PowerPoint presentation of images of Jesus through the ages.</li> </ul>
<i>Clay</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpreting (in clay or papier maché) characters explored through Religious Education.</li> </ul>
<i>Fabric and Fibre</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpreting (as puppets or in costume) characters from stories, e.g. retelling the Christmas story using puppets.</li> </ul>
<i>Construction</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpreting (as large-scale papier maché forms and structures) characters and symbols explored through Religious Education.</li> <li>• Creating a sacred space for Advent, Lent, and Easter etc.</li> <li>• Creating a harvest festival display for the local church.</li> <li>• Creating objects to communicate understanding of the liturgical year, e.g. constructing a classroom crib; St Brigid's crosses, a Jesse tree, an Advent calendar, a liturgical year calendar.</li> <li>• Constructing picture mobiles depicting imagery/symbols found in Scripture stories.</li> </ul>

- will integrate with the **Music Curriculum** as follows:

	<b>Infants</b>
Strands	
<i>Listening and Responding</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listening to short pieces of music with religious themes.</li> <li>• Responding to religious songs through movement and hand rhymes.</li> <li>• Listening to music while being quiet and still.</li> </ul>
<i>Performing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognising familiar religious songs.</li> <li>• Showing a steady beat while listening to or accompanying religious songs or rhythmic chants.</li> <li>• Performing songs and rhymes with a sense of dynamic (loud/soft) control where appropriate.</li> </ul>
<i>Composing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using sound effects to accompany religious stories and poems.</li> </ul>

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Strands	<b>First and Second</b>
<i>Listening and Responding</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listening and responding to religious music.</li> </ul>
<i>Performing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Singing a range of songs with religious themes.</li> </ul>
<i>Composing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using sound effects to illustrate a character or a sequence of events in an Religious Education story.</li> </ul>

Strands	<b>Third and Fourth</b>
<i>Listening and Responding</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listening to and describing sacred music, recognising its function and historical context where appropriate.</li> <li>• Responding to music from world faiths and the place of music in religion.</li> </ul>
<i>Performing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Including religious songs in a widening repertoire.</li> <li>• Using instruments to accompany singing of religious songs.</li> </ul>
<i>Composing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selecting different kinds of sounds to portray religious characters, sequences of events or an atmosphere in religious stories.</li> </ul>

Strands	<b>Fifth and Sixth</b>
<i>Listening and Responding</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listening to and describing sacred music, recognising where appropriate its function and historical context, e.g. the Wexford Carol; recordings from Glenstal Abbey.</li> <li>• Responding imaginatively to sacred music through movement/dance, drawing, writing.</li> </ul>
<i>Performing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Widening repertoire of religious songs with an awareness of the music's historical and cultural contexts, e.g. hymns and carols.</li> <li>• Using instruments to accompany singing of religious songs.</li> </ul>
<i>Composing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select from a wide variety of sound sources (voice, percussion, melodic instruments and technology); to illustrate characters or sequences of events in religious stories; to accompany a religious song, story, prayer, poem or psalm; to illustrate an abstract religious concept, e.g. love, spirit; for a particular religious occasion e.g. a class liturgy.</li> </ul>

## Appendix B

- will integrate with the **Drama Curriculum** as follows:

Strand	<b>Infants</b>
<i>Drama to explore feelings, knowledge and ideas, leading to understanding</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Investigating Christian beliefs through drama:</i> retelling the story of Christmas using props or puppets; dramatising the Christmas story, role-playing acts of love; role-playing Baptisms; exploring the themes of belonging, welcoming, community, identity, connectedness, sharing, celebrating, forgiveness, guilt, reconciliation.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Exploring Christian moral values and teachings:</i> e.g. role playing how to respond to someone with special needs, role playing ways to resolve difference; exploring values such as being truthful, being fair, being co-operative, being honest, showing respect, love for others, sharing, respect for self and for the natural world.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Identifying, debating and resolving moral dilemmas in life, in story and other texts:</i> determine what is happening in dramas/enactments and decide how one might respond.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Dramatising Sacred Scripture stories:</i> attending to main elements of storyline, taking on different roles in a Sacred Scripture drama, using space and objects to create the Biblical world; developing awareness of tension in dramas (e.g. what will Mary and Joseph do now that there's no room in the inn?).</li> </ul>

Strand	<b>First and Second</b>
<i>Drama to explore feelings, knowledge and ideas, leading to understanding</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Investigating Christian beliefs through drama:</i> telling the story of the last supper using puppets (improvisation); developing an imaginative drama around the last supper; dramatising the story of the lost sheep taking role of sheep, shepherd or lost sheep; exploring the themes of belonging, welcoming, community, identity, connectedness, sharing, celebrating, forgiveness, guilt, reconciliation.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Exploring Christian moral values and teachings:</i> e.g. role-playing the rule Jesus gave to help his friends choose well.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Identifying debating and resolving moral dilemmas in life, in story and other texts:</i> thinking about problems in a drama from two perspectives; discussing the choices characters have to make; thinking through moral dilemmas based on the actions of Jesus.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Dramatising Sacred Scripture stories:</i> developing Biblical language through process drama.</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Reflecting on drama</i>: e.g. evaluating the truth/rightness of a character's behaviour; applying ideas and principles in Sacred Scripture stories; applying actions of characters to their own lives; playing out a Biblical scene from a different perspective; suggesting possible alternative courses for action.</li> </ul>
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Strand	Third and Fourth
<i>Drama to explore feelings, knowledge and ideas, leading to understanding</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Investigating Christian beliefs through drama</i>: engaging in a process drama activity exploring the events of Holy Week; expressing a religious belief through drama; taking a role in a presentation to non-Christians on what Christians believe and do; taking the role of the priest and explaining your job; imagining what the Church community could look like if everyone worked for the Kingdom of God; imagining living as a child in another Irish faith community; imagining you are a Muslim and describing your religion.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Exploring Christian moral values and teachings</i>: dramatising real-life scenarios that require the application of moral messages identified in religious and other texts, e.g., respect for other, relating peacefully, being gentle; exploring the concept of following a leader.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Identifying debating and resolving moral dilemmas in life, in story and other texts</i>: e.g. carrying out a role-play on the theme of fair distribution, justice, bullying, punishment or rules and reflecting on it.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Dramatising Scripture</i>: developing Biblical language through process drama; creating a mock interview with a Biblical character; performing puppet plays with jointly constructed scripts involving the characters from Scripture stories; Scripture character-in-role; telling the story from differing points of view; putting a modern twist on a story; participating in hot-seating the Good Samaritan, the Levite, the priest; writing the poem the prodigal son might have written before he decided to go home and then deciding what course of action he is likely to take.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Reflecting on drama</i>: e.g. evaluating the truth/rightness of character's statements/ actions; applying ideas and principles; playing out alternative workings of Scripture stories; imagining themselves in Scripture stories (imagine you are Moses: what would you say to God?); creating your own ten commandments; 'hot-seating' Biblical characters and religious figures to explore the motives which influenced their choices.</li> </ul>

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Strand	Fifth and Sixth
<i>Drama to explore feelings, knowledge and ideas, leading to understanding</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Investigating Christian beliefs through drama:</i> exploring differing images of God; exploring images of the Spirit; exploring the idea of humans being co-creators with God; exploring challenging Christian beliefs (e.g. non-violence, preferential option for the poor, stewardship of the earth); devising a new model of Church; imagining the trip to Compostela (work out the route you might take to get there, tensions on the way); dramatising practices the support a Christian identity; exploring tensions (e.g. the Early Christians have to decide whether to let Gentiles into the community or not); developing a code of conduct for a religion; exploring ways of welcoming people of other cultures and religious traditions; constructing scenarios of how God can be present in relationships; imagining a dialogue between people of different faiths; exploring religious prejudice.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Exploring Christian moral values and teachings:</i> e.g. exploring how one might witness to a Christian value that is counter-cultural; practising skills in order to relate to others in peaceful, tolerant and non-discriminatory ways; developing strategies to promote a more just society.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Identifying debating and resolving moral dilemmas in life, in story and other texts:</i> creating your own moral maxims and dramatising dilemmas based on these rules; arguing for or against an issue.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Dramatising Sacred Scripture:</i> developing Biblical language through a process drama; creating a mock interview with a Biblical character; presenting variant or alternative positions to those of the story (e.g. creating a new creation myth); choosing key symbols from within a Sacred Scripture drama that collectively distinguish the story (e.g. Prodigal Son – corn, coins, pig, ring); dramatising the meaning of a Sacred Scripture text for the original and contemporary audience; performing puppet plays with jointly constructed scripts involving the characters from Sacred Scripture stories; Scripture character-in-role, telling the story from differing points of view; putting a modern twist on a story; devising a script for a Sacred Scripture story to move into drama texts; inventing an extra character/group whom Jesus might meet and doing a scene he might have with them.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Reflecting on drama:</i> e.g. evaluating the truth/rightness of character's actions and words; applying ideas and principles; interpreting figurative language and imagery; 'hot-seating' Biblical characters and religious figures to explore the motives which influenced their choices.</li> </ul>



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exploring 'crises' of meaning that have emerged in relation to their own spirituality/ religion through drama: e.g. exploring the pressures that require them to repress or deny the spiritual dimension of life; examining the way their attention can be diverted away from what really matters to them in this culture; examining the conflicts between Christian values and money culture; examining the concept of consumerism; exploring images of self offered by contemporary culture.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Researching and evaluating the spirituality of significant people for resources for their own spiritual lives e.g. making an 'in character' presentation about a significant person and how their spirituality influenced others.</li> </ul>

### 5. Physical Education

#### Religious Education

- promotes healthy living – mind, body and spirit
- promotes equality (fair-play) and sensitive co-operation with others
- promotes physical expression (dance, expressive movement, prayer gestures, participation in ritual), creative and aesthetic development
- will integrate with the following strands of the PE Curriculum:

Strand	<b>First and Second</b>
Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Religious gestures for rituals (e.g. bowing and genuflecting, sign of peace, actions to accompany the Our Father).</li> <li>• Using periods of stillness for reflection and prayer.</li> <li>• Learning how to relax the body.</li> </ul>

Strand	<b>Third and Fourth</b>
Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liturgical Dance.</li> <li>• Creating a personal prayer through dance.</li> <li>• Illustrating favourite words in a psalm through dance.</li> <li>• Communicating spiritual moods and feelings through movement.</li> </ul>

Strand	<b>Fifth and Sixth</b>
Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liturgical Dance.</li> <li>• Creating dances to unfold religious narratives and ideas (e.g. the Exodus story).</li> </ul>

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## 6. Social, Personal and Health Education

### Religious Education

- promotes self awareness, as children become aware of the spiritual and religious dimensions of their being
- offers a basis for self-esteem and self-worth in God’s love for every person
- teaches about the moral dimensions of life including relationships, diversity, and how to challenge prejudice, racism, discrimination, and bullying
- invites children to explore religious teachings on life, leisure, relationships and human sexuality, marriage and family life
- enables children to make informed decisions and to express their own views in a respectful manner
- enables children to recognise and name their own and other’s feelings and those of characters in stories
- helps children become aware of and discerning about the various influences on choices and decisions (SPHE Curriculum 10)
- develops social skills of communication, co-operation, and conflict resolution (SPHE 10)
- helps children to develop skills for meeting and encountering people whose beliefs, views and lifestyles are different from their own.

### Citizenship

#### Religious Education

- develops children’s knowledge and understanding about the diversity of cultural and religious identities in Ireland and the need for mutual respect and understanding
- offers opportunities to raise contemporary spiritual, moral, social, cultural and ethical issues in a local and global context and teaches children how to resolve conflict fairly
- promotes respect for social responsibility, community cohesion, diversity and challenges religious prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination
- enables children to develop communication skills essential to participation in public debate in a democracy
- develops children’s knowledge of the positive contributions of religious groups to Irish society (SPHE Curriculum 10)
- Promotes the value of a just and caring society and helps children understand the importance of seeking truth and peace (SPHE Curriculum 10)
- Will integrate with the following strands of the **SPHE Curriculum**:

Strands	<b>Infants</b>
<i>Myself</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human dignity (Morality strand unit).</li> <li>• RSE in the Christian context (Morality strand unit).</li> <li>• Exploring God’s love as reflected in self.</li> <li>• Showing respect towards self.</li> <li>• Recognising my feelings.</li> <li>• Exploring creation through the senses.</li> </ul>

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<i>Myself and others</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Showing respect towards others and their property.</li> <li>• Identifying the cultural/religious identity of others.</li> <li>• Respecting and responding to difference and diversity among peers.</li> <li>• Recognising the feelings of others.</li> <li>• Importance of using our gifts to help others.</li> <li>• Christians help the poor.</li> <li>• Stories that encourage awareness of others and respect for diversity and difference.</li> <li>• Understanding fair reciprocity.</li> </ul>
<i>Myself and the wider world</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Teaching (see Morality strand unit).</li> <li>• Christians respect and care for all creation.</li> <li>• Recognising and appreciating how people in the Church serve the local community.</li> </ul>

Strands	<b>First and Second Classes</b>
<i>Myself</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human Dignity (Morality strand unit).</li> <li>• Human Freedom and Responsibility (Morality strand unit).</li> <li>• Exploring personal skills, abilities and achievements as well as personal limitations and weaknesses.</li> <li>• Critically evaluating moral choices (making decisions)</li> <li>• Respect for the body created by God.</li> <li>• God's presence with us as we grow and change.</li> <li>• Identifying factors that promote spiritual growth and change.</li> </ul>
<i>Myself and others</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Teaching (Morality strand unit).</li> <li>• RSE in a Christian context (Morality strand unit).</li> <li>• Treating others with respect.</li> <li>• Bullying and the Sacrament of Reconciliation.</li> </ul>
<i>Myself and the wider world</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsibility to care for God's creation.</li> <li>• Developing a sense of belonging to the local community.</li> <li>• Appreciating the diversity of religious groups in the community.</li> </ul>

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Strands	Third and Fourth Classes
<i>Myself</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human dignity (Morality strand unit).</li> <li>• Human freedom and responsibility (Morality strand unit).</li> <li>• Understanding the call to develop their gifts and talents and to share them with others.</li> <li>• Developing their understanding of freedom of choice, moral judgement and human responsibility (personal and social).</li> <li>• Recognising their own limitations.</li> <li>• Growing in understanding of their own growth, emotionally, mentally and <i>spiritually</i>.</li> <li>• The human body dependent on God who gives and sustains life.</li> <li>• Making decisions: exploring the motives and emotions that influence choices.</li> </ul>
<i>Myself and others</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RSE in a Christian Context (Morality strand unit).</li> <li>• Social Teaching (Morality strand unit).</li> <li>• Developing an ethic that respects, defends and promotes the rights and wellbeing of every person.</li> <li>• Learning interpersonal skills in order to relate to others in peaceful, tolerant and non-discriminatory ways.</li> <li>• Appreciating that relationships involve response and responsibility.</li> </ul>
<i>Myself and the wider world</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Researching other religious faith communities.</li> <li>• Investigating ways of welcoming and learning about and from people from other religious faiths in Ireland.</li> <li>• Environmental care.</li> </ul>

## Appendix B

Strands	Fifth and Sixth Classes
<i>Myself</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human Dignity (Morality strand unit).</li> <li>• Human Freedom and Responsibility (Morality strand unit).</li> <li>• RSE in the Christian context (Morality strand unit).</li> <li>• Reflecting on practices that support the values and ideals that are important to them</li> <li>• Examining the cost and challenge of living morally.</li> <li>• Discerning and evaluating the values, attitudes and expectations with which they are surrounded in contemporary culture.</li> <li>• As I grow I change <i>spiritually</i>.</li> <li>• Examining how being religious influences decisions.</li> </ul>
<i>Myself and others</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Christian family.</li> </ul>
<i>Myself and the wider world</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Teaching (Morality strand unit).</li> <li>• Critically reflecting on the Media and popular culture from a Christian perspective.</li> <li>• Developing strategies to promote a more just society.</li> <li>• Examining the contribution made to the community by religious groups (citizenship).</li> <li>• Exploring inequality and justice issues (poverty, homelessness, prejudice, discrimination, stereotyping) and how they might be addressed.</li> <li>• Developing an understanding of the importance of ecumenical activity and inter-religious dialogue.</li> <li>• Learning about other world faiths.</li> <li>• Examining how religions co-operate together to work for social justice.</li> </ul>



## Appendix C

### Summary Chart: Curriculum Strands and Strand Units

	Preschool	Level 1 Years 1 & 2	Level 2 Years 3 & 4
Christian Faith	Mystery of God. Mystery of Jesus Christ. Creation. Mystery of the Church. Eternal Life.	Mystery of God. Mystery of Jesus Christ. Creation. Mystery of the Church. Eternal Life.	Mystery of God. Mystery of Jesus Christ. Mystery of the Holy Spirit. Creation. Mystery of the Church. Mary. Eternal Life. Other Religious Traditions.
Word of God	Bible. Sacred Scripture.	Bible. Sacred Scripture. • God's Loving Plan of Salvation. • Jesus' Birth and Youth. • Jesus' Public Life. • Passion, Death and Resurrection.	Bible. Sacred Scripture: • God's Loving Plan of Salvation • Jesus' Birth and Youth • Jesus' Public Life • Jesus' Passion and Death • Jesus' Resurrection and Pentecost.
Liturgy & Prayer	Prayer: • Prayer Gestures • Formal Prayer • Mass Responses • Spontaneous Prayer. Liturgical Year. Mass.	Prayer: • Formal prayer • Additional prayers • Spontaneous Prayer. Liturgical Year. Sacraments. Mass.	Prayer: • Formal prayer • Additional prayers. Liturgical Year. Sacraments. Mass.
Christian Morality	Human Dignity. RSE in a Christian context.	Human Dignity. Social Teaching of the Church. RSE in a Christian context.	Human Dignity. Human Freedom and Responsibility. God's Graceful Presence and Assistance. Social Teaching of the Church. RSE in a Christian context.

## Appendix C

### Curriculum Strands and Strand Units

	Level 3 Years 5 & 6	Level 4 Years 7 & (8 ROI)
Christian Faith	Mystery of God. Mystery of Jesus Christ. Mystery of the Holy Spirit. Creation. Mystery of the Church/Kingdom. Mary. Eternal Life. Other Religious Traditions.	Mystery of God. Mystery of Jesus Christ. Mystery of the Holy Spirit. Creation. Mystery of the Church/Kingdom. Mary. Eternal Life. Other Religious Traditions.
Word of God	Bible. Sacred Scripture: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• God's Loving Plan of Salvation</li> <li>• Jesus' Birth and Youth</li> <li>• Jesus' Public Life</li> <li>• Jesus' Passion and Death</li> <li>• Jesus' Resurrection and Ascension</li> <li>• Pentecost.</li> </ul>	Bible. Sacred Scripture: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• God's Loving Plan of Salvation</li> <li>• Jesus' Birth and Youth</li> <li>• Jesus' Public Life</li> <li>• Jesus' Passion and Death</li> <li>• Jesus' Resurrection and Ascension</li> <li>• Pentecost.</li> </ul>
Liturgy & Prayer	Prayer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formal prayer</li> <li>• Additional prayers.</li> </ul> Liturgy. Liturgical Year. Sacraments. Mass.	Prayer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formal prayer</li> <li>• Additional prayers.</li> </ul> Liturgy. Liturgical Year. Sacraments. Mass.
Christian Morality	Human Dignity. Human Freedom and Responsibility. God's graceful Presence and Assistance. Social Teaching of the Church. RSE in a Christian context.	Human Dignity. Human Freedom and Responsibility. God's graceful Presence and Assistance. Social Teaching of the Church. RSE in a Christian context.

## Glossary

**Assessment is for learning:** ‘Any assessment for which the first priority in its design and practice is to serve the purpose of promoting pupils’ learning. It thus differs from assessment designed primarily to serve the purposes of accountability, or of ranking, or of certifying competence. An assessment activity can help learning if it provides information to be used as feedback, by teachers, and by their pupils in assessing themselves and each other, to modify the teaching and learning activities in which they are engaged. Such assessment becomes “formative assessment” when the evidence is actually used to adapt the teaching work to meet learning needs’.<sup>19</sup>

**Biblical literacy** refers to children’s developing capacity to appreciate the uniqueness of the Bible as the divinely inspired Word of God and to develop the basic skills needed to read it with a critical and creative imagination (e.g. understanding metaphor, finding a Bible reference, understanding the structure of the Bible). It is the Church as a community with a living Tradition that provides the context for doctrinal and moral interpretation of Sacred Scripture.

**Catechesis** describes the educational process whereby the Good News of the gospel is announced and the faith of the Church is handed on to believers in the Church community. Catechesis presumes an initial conversion and openness to ongoing conversion. Through the experience of learning about the faith, liturgy, morality and prayer, ‘catechesis prepares the Christian to live in community and to participate actively in the life and mission of the Church’ (GDC 86).

**Christian Spirituality:** ‘In effect the term spirituality means a mode or form of life in keeping with Christian demands. Spirituality is “life in Christ” and “in the Spirit”, which is accepted in faith, expressed in love and inspired by hope, and so becomes the daily life of the Church community. In this sense, by spirituality, which is the goal of conversion, we mean “not a part of life, but the whole of life guided by the Holy Spirit”. Among the many elements of spirituality which all Christians must make their own, prayer holds a pre-eminent place. Prayer leads Christians “little by little to acquire a contemplative view of reality, enabling them to recognise God in every moment and in everything; to contemplate God in every person; to seek his will in all that happens” ... Christian spirituality is nourished above all by a constant sacramental life, since the Sacraments are the root and endless source of God’s grace which believers need to sustain them on their earthly pilgrimage ... It should also be noted that this spirituality is not opposed to the social responsibilities of the Christian life. On the contrary, in following the path of prayer, believers become more conscious of the Gospel’s demands and of their duties towards others.’ (John Paul II, *Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation Ecclesia in America*, 22 January 1999, 29)

**Contemplative Prayer** is a form of prayer where one quiets and stills the mind and body so as to become receptive to the communication of God in the silence and depth of one’s own heart. The gift of contemplative prayer enables the person to see and respond to God’s purposes in the world.

**Conversion** describes the opening of a human person to God’s love. It literally means ‘to turn around’ or ‘to change direction’. It is a turning away from sin and selfishness and a re-orientation of one’s desires, thought processes and actions towards God. Conversion is first of all a work of the grace of God (CCC 1427-39).

<sup>19</sup> Black et al., *Assessment for Learning: Putting it into Practice* (2002), p. 1.

## Glossary

**Curriculum** describes any programme of study or training. A distinction can be made between curriculum as content (what needs to be studied) and curriculum as process (educational activities that have intrinsic value, regardless of any visible outcome or product). In this curriculum the content is described as ‘knowledge and concepts’ and the processes are described as ‘skills’. The ‘skills’ are based on a holistic theory of knowing that assumes that the process of coming to ‘know’ in Christian faith includes cognitive, affective and behavioural dimensions. The **Spiral Curriculum** is a curriculum structured on consecutive levels in which concepts and skills are revisited at each level so that children’s learning develops in complexity and richness.

**Doctrine** refers to what the Church believes, teaches and confesses. Church doctrines are those aspects of Christian teaching which faithfully interpret the meaning of the words and deeds of Christ (e.g., the doctrines of God, Christ, the Holy Spirit and Salvation). The Church’s doctrine expresses the fullness of divine revelation.

**Ecumenism** refers to dialogue between Christians, with the aim of restoring unity in Christ, in one visible Church.

**Grace:** ‘Grace is *favour*, the *free and undeserved* help that God gives us to respond to his call to become children of God, adoptive sons, partakers of the divine nature and of eternal life. Grace is *participation in the life of God*. The grace of Christ is the gratuitous gift that God makes to us of his own life, infused by the Holy Spirit into our soul to heal it of sin and to sanctify it. It is the *sanctifying or deifying* grace received in Baptism. It is in us the source of the work of sanctification’ (CCC 1996, 1997, 1999, 2020–24).

**Holistic:** A holistic approach to education attends to the whole person and to his/her capacities for full human development. A holistic understanding of the person includes his/her physical, intellectual, affective, aesthetic, spiritual, moral and religious development. A holistic approach to Religious Education pays attention to the cognitive, affective and behavioural aspects of religious faith.

**Inter-religious dialogue** refers to dialogue between the various religions of the world. The aim is growth in respect and understanding for the purpose of peace and the growth of the Kingdom of God. Saint John Paul II defined such dialogue as a way of living in positive relationship with others.

**Inter-Religious Education** involves learning about and from the religious faiths of others, while growing in understanding of one’s own religious faith. The goal of such learning is a greater understanding of self and other which enables the development of a rooted and adaptive Christian religious identity capable of healthy inter-religious living in a multi-religious world. Inter-Religious Education invites young children to deepen their awareness and knowledge of difference, to respect the religious faiths and/or beliefs of others, to develop positive attitudes towards people of other faiths, to enter into respectful dialogue with others, and to grow in appreciation of their own religious experience, commitment and beliefs in light of the experiences, commitments and beliefs of others.

## Glossary

**Kingdom of God:** The coming of the Kingdom (Reign) of God was the main focus of Jesus' mission and preaching. It is the central theological symbol for understanding his ministry. As a symbol the Kingdom of God suggests God's saving power in history. As a metaphor it expresses God's promise of peace and justice, love and freedom, of fullness of life for all. Jesus' redemptive death and Resurrection accomplished the coming of the Kingdom. The Church is the beginning and seed of the Kingdom on earth, and the ultimate fulfilment of the Kingdom is in Jesus' Second Coming at the end of time.

**Religious Education:** 'Religious education is a process that contributes to the faith development of children, adolescents and adults. Religious education helps people to develop religious ways of thinking, feeling and doing, which give expression to the spiritual, moral and transcendent dimensions of life and can lead to personal and social transformation. Religious education can also teach people to think profoundly, allowing them to make free and consistent choices in the way they live their religious, and other, commitments' (*Share the Good News*, 38).

**Tradition** is the living transmission of the message of the gospel in the Church (CCC 81).



# Abbreviations

## Ecclesial Documents

- AG: *Ad Gentes*. Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church  
*Attitude of the Church towards the followers of Other Religions*
- CCC: *Catechism of the Catholic Church*
- CD: *Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church*
- CSDC: *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*
- CPMS: *Consecrated Persons and their Mission in Schools*
- CS: *The Catholic School*
- CSTTM: *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*
- CT: *Catechesi Tradendae*. On Catechesis in our Time
- DCM: *Directory for Masses with Children*
- DeV: *Dominum et Vivificantem*. The Holy Spirit in the Life of the Church and the World
- DH: *Dignitatis Humanae*. The Declaration on Religious Liberty
- DP: *Dialogue and Proclamation*
- DM: *Dives in Misericordia*. The Mercy of God
- DS: *Enchiridion Symbolorum*
- DV: *Dei Verbum*. The Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation
- EG: *Evangelii Gaudium*. Apostolic Exhortation on the Proclamation of the Gospel in Today's World
- EGHL: *Educational Guidance in Human Love*.
- EIDCS: *Educating to Intercultural Dialogue in Catholic Schools*
- EN: *Evangelii Nuntiandi*. On Evangelisation in the Modern World
- FC: *Familiaris Consortio*
- FD: *Fidei Depositum*. Apostolic constitution on the publication of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*
- GCD: *General Catechetical Directory*, Congregation for the Clergy, 1971
- GDC: *General Directory for Catechesis*, Congregation for the Clergy, 1997
- GIRM: *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*
- GS: *Gaudium et Spes*: The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World
- HS: *The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality*
- LCS: *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith*
- LF: *Lumen Fidei*. Encyclical Letter of Pope Francis on Faith
- LG: *Lumen Gentium*: The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church
- MC: *Marialis Cultus*. For the Right Ordering and Development of Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary
- MD: *Mulieris Dignitatem*. On the Dignity and Vocation of Women
- MF: *Mysterium Fidei*. Encyclical of Paul VI on the Holy Eucharist
- NA: *Nostra Aetate*. Decree on the Relation of the Church to non-Christian Religions
- PO: *Presbyterorum ordinis*: Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests
- PT: *Pacem in Terris*. Encyclical of Pope John XXIII on Establishing Universal Peace in Truth, Justice, Charity and Liberty
- RDECS: *The Religious Dimension of Education in the Catholic School*
- RH: *Redemptor Hominis*
- Rmat: *Redemptoris Mater*
- RM: *Redemptoris Missio*
- RP: *Reconciliatio et paenitentia*. Reconciliation and Penance
- SC: *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy
- SRS: *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*

# Abbreviations

UR: *Unitatis Redintegratio*. The Decree on Ecumenism

VS: *Veritatis Splendour*. Splendour of the Truth

## Irish Ecclesial Documents

CE: *The Cry of the Earth: A Pastoral Reflection on Climate Change*, Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference

CPS: *Catholic Primary Schools: A Policy for Provision into the Future*, Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference

PM: *Proclaiming the Mission: The Distinctive Philosophy and Values of Catholic Education*, The Catholic Bishops of Northern Ireland

SGN: *Share the Good News: National Directory for Catechesis in Ireland*, Irish Episcopal Conference

LFL: *Love is for Life*, Pastoral letter of the Irish Episcopal Conference

V08: *Vision 08: A Vision for Catholic Education in Ireland*, Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference

## Education Documents

Ais: *Aistear: The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework* (Dublin: NCCA, 2009).

CSRE: *Joint Syllabus for Northern Ireland* (1996).

PSC: *Primary School Curriculum*, Department of Education and Science (1999).

