



Catholic Schools Week 2025

# Catholic Schools: Alive in Christ

19–25 January 2025

Junior and Senior Infants/P1 and P2





## Strand Units – Level 1

CHRISTIAN FAITH	WORD OF GOD
<p><b>Mystery of God</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Christians bless themselves in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.</li><li>• God is our loving Father and Creator (Gn 1:26-7).</li><li>• God is good (Ps 116:1).</li><li>• God knows us and loves us (Ps 139).</li><li>• God is my friend.</li></ul> <p><b>Mystery of the Church/Kingdom</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The way of life of the parish involves caring, sharing, and praying together (CCC, 2179; <i>Revised Core Syllabus for Religious Education [CSRE]</i>, 2a).</li><li>• The church is a special place where God's people gather to pray.</li><li>• Our family helps us become friends of Jesus.</li><li>• The priest/teacher helps us to become friends of Jesus (<i>Lumen Gentium [LG]</i>, 10).</li></ul>	<p><b>Sacred Scripture</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• John 13:34-35</li><li>• Matthew 18:20</li><li>• Philippians 1:3-4</li><li>• Matthew 19:14</li><li>• Genesis 1:31</li></ul>
LITURGY AND PRAYER	CHRISTIAN MORALITY
<p><b>Prayer</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• God calls us to prayer and we respond (<i>Gaudium et Spes</i> 18; CCC, 2567).</li><li>• God always hears our prayers.</li><li>• The church is God's house, where his family comes together (CCC, 1180; <i>LG</i>, 6; 1 Tm 3:15).</li><li>• God's family gathers in the parish church to pray and celebrate (CCC, 1069-71, 2179).</li><li>• The church is a holy place where people go to pray and talk to God (CCC, 1181).</li></ul> <p><b>Formal Prayers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sign of the Cross</li><li>• Glory be to the Father ...</li></ul>	<p><b>Human Dignity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• God loves each one of us (Jer 31:3; 1 Jn 4:10-11; <i>CSRE</i>, 3a).</li><li>• I am unique/special because God created me (CCC, 1004; Gn 1:26-7; Ps 137:14).</li><li>• I am called to love God and to love others (Mt 22:36-40).</li><li>• Every person is special in the eyes of God (CCC, 225, 356-61, 369, 1604, 1700-1, 1944-6, 2319, 2334; <i>CSRE</i>, 3a).</li></ul>



## Monday: Life to the Full in Our Community of Friends

In the safe and productive school environment, each member of the school community may realise afresh, as Pope Francis wrote, that: 'Christ is alive! He is our hope, and in a wonderful way he brings youth to our world, and everything he touches becomes young, new, full of life. The very first words, then, that I would like to say to every young Christian are these: Christ is alive and he wants you to be alive!' (*Christus Vivit*, 1).

### Background for Teacher

Children's experience of community begins in the home and school, as does their experience of God. The values of the gospel nourished in the home and school, along with the examples given by Jesus of kindness, love, forgiveness and acceptance, challenge them to be their best selves. Followers of Jesus are called into community to be connected with one another through love. The gospel calls us into a community where all can grow in mental, physical and spiritual wellness so that each of us has the readiness and openness to grow towards greater wholeness every day of life.

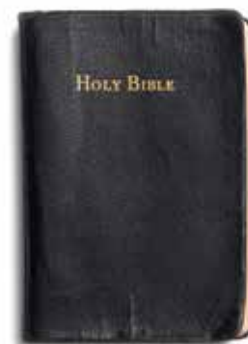
The nurturing of relationships with ourselves, with those whom we encounter daily and with God forms the foundation for supporting personal growth at all levels.



### Connecting with *Grow in Love*

*Grow in Love: Junior Infants/Primary 1:* Theme 1: 'My Family'

*Grow in Love: Senior Infants/Primary 2:* Theme 2: 'We Belong'



### Connecting with Scripture

'A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.' (Jn 13:34-35)



## Consider

Our class is a community of friends where we learn, play and pray together. God wants us to care for one another because we are each precious to God.

## Explore

- What does it mean to be a caring friend?
- How do we care for one another in our class?
- Can you name a time when someone showed care for you?
- What difference did it make to you when care was shown to you?
- God wants us to be good friends. How can we be more caring friends here in our class?

## Prayer

Sit together in a circle as friends. Place a light in the centre representing Jesus, who connects us together as his friends. Make the Sign of the Cross.

**Teacher:** We are friends together when we care for one another.

**Response:** Thank you, God, for my friends.

**Teacher:** Each person will say their name in turn and we will then say 'Thank you, God' for each person by name.

Each person in the classroom will take a turn to say their name: 'My name is \_\_\_\_\_.'

After each says their name all will respond with: 'Thank you, God, for \_\_\_\_\_.'

**Song:** 'Grow in Love' (*Grow in Love: Junior Infants/Primary 1 Teacher's Manual*, p. 150)

Conclude with the Sign of the Cross.



## Tuesday: Life to the Full in Our Faith Community

'[The parish] is the normal environment where we learned to hear the Gospel, to know the Lord Jesus, to serve with gratuitousness, to pray in community, to share projects and initiatives, to feel part of God's holy people.' (Pope Francis, 29 October 2022)



### Background for Teacher

We pray on our own to God, at home and in school. Home and school are connected to the parish community where we are called together as friends of Jesus. When we gather in the church we celebrate being together, we say sorry for what we may have done wrong, we give praise to God, we hear God speak to us through the scriptures and we share in sacrifice as Jesus makes himself present through the offering of bread and wine on the altar. We open our hearts to welcome God so that we can bring God's hope and love out into our homes, our schools and all the other places where we are each week. We each have a part to play to make a difference in our parish faith community.

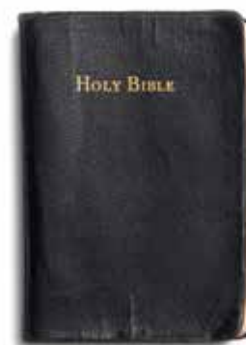
Our spiritual well-being is nourished at the heart of the parish gatherings and celebrations.



### Connecting with *Grow in Love*

*Grow in Love: Junior Infants/Primary 1:* Theme 7: 'The Church'

*Grow in Love: Senior Infants/Primary 2:* Theme 8: 'The Church'



### Connecting with Scripture

'For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.' (Mt 18:20)



## Consider

We are part of our parish community. God calls us to be together because we are part of God's family.

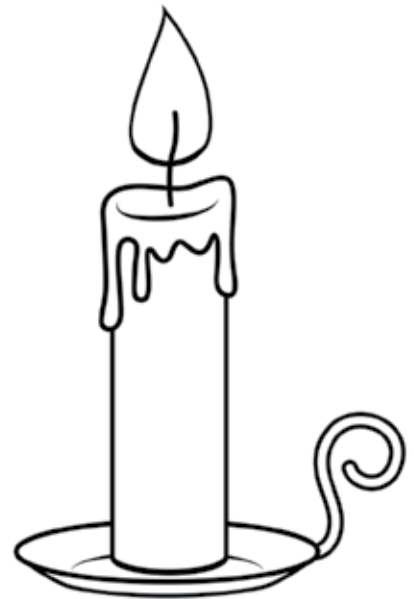
## Explore:

- Who are the people that you see in the church? (Perhaps the priest, readers, ministers of the Eucharist, choir, altar servers, sacristan, catechist, cleaners, secretary, etc.)
- What do you see people doing in the church? (Praying, talking, singing, listening, cleaning, etc.)
- The parish church is a special place where God's friends gather together. How do you think God feels when we are all together praying and singing in the church?

## Activity

Draw a picture of yourself and colour the candle on the card. Bring the card to the church so that the people who pray there each day will pray for you this week. (Children's names should not be on the card.)

*Please pray for me*







## Wednesday: Life to the Full in Our Families

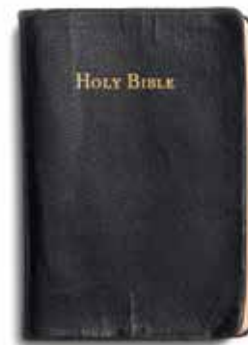
'I invite you to continue your journey by listening to the Father who calls you: become missionaries in the ways of the world! Do not walk alone! You, young families, be guided by those who know the way, you who are further along, be companions on the journey for others.' (Pope Francis, World Meeting of Families, 25 June 2022)



### Background for Teacher

Family is the basic cell of all community groups – school, parish, etc. Children learn their first values in the home from what are priorities for their parents and grandparents.

On this particular day we give attention to grandparents and the role they play in the lives of families and children. Grandparents support parents in their role and are important in the lives of each child. Each generation has an important gift to pass onto the next generation, including the gift of faith in God.



### Connecting with Scripture

'I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy.' (Phil 1:3-4)



### Connecting with *Grow in Love*

*Grow in Love: Junior Infants/Primary 1:* Theme 1: 'My Family'

*Grow in Love: Senior Infants/Primary 2:* Theme 2: 'We Belong'

### Consider

God shows love and care for us through our family. Grandparents love and care for parents and children.



Teachers should use their discretion in relation to these activities if pupils have recently lost grandparents or are not in contact with grandparents. All classes can engage with the following activities at different levels.

## Explore

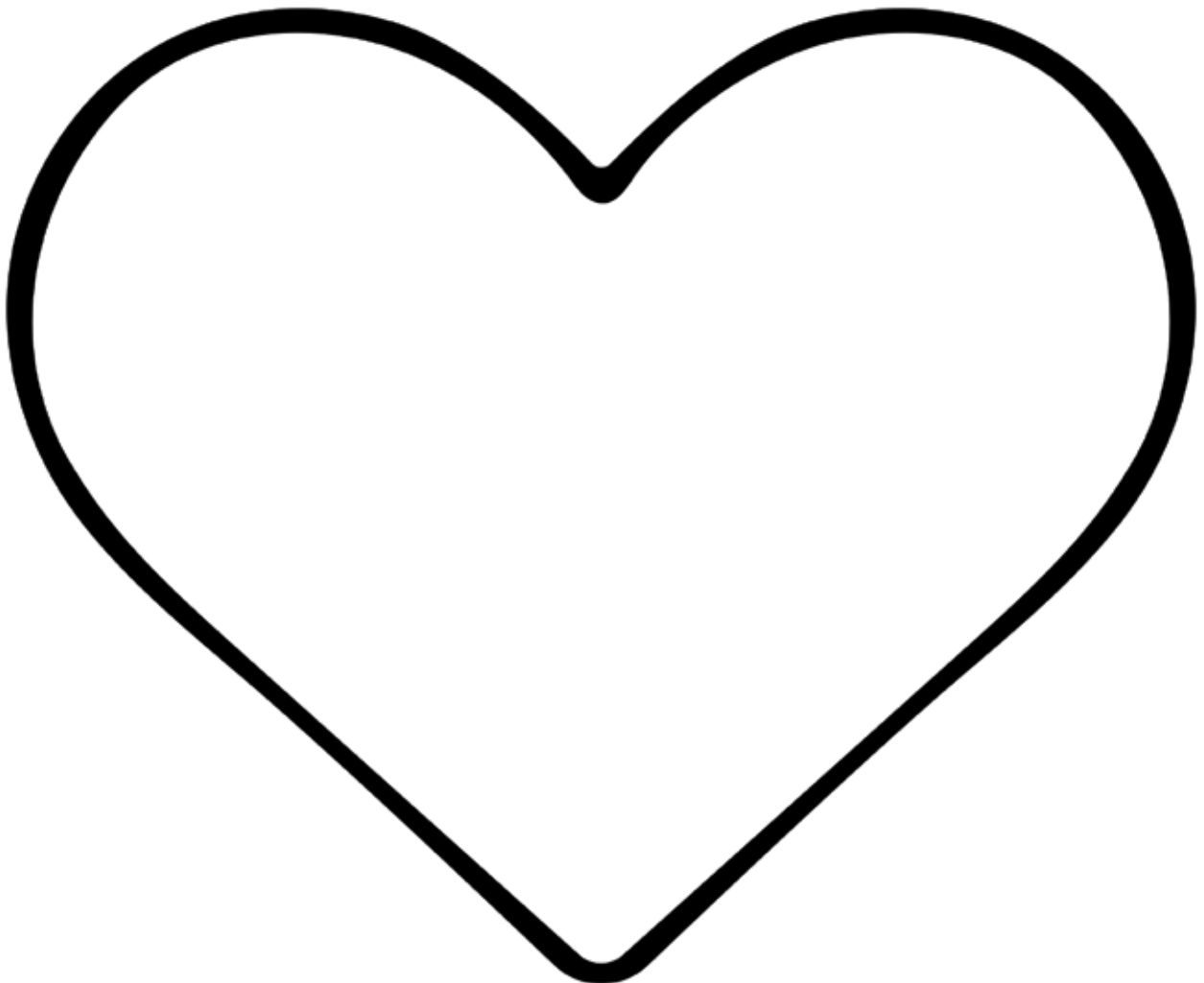
Discuss the role of grandparents in loving and caring for the children.

- How do your grandparents show love and care for you?
- What is most important to your grandparents?
- How could you show love and care for your grandparents?

## Activity

Draw a picture of your grandparent(s) in the heart below so that you may give it to them when you see them next.

*I love you! Thank God for you!*







## Thursday: Life to the Full, for and with Others

[Catholic religious education] 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. (*The Catholic Preschool and Primary Religious Education Curriculum for Ireland*, Veritas, 2015)



### Background for Teacher

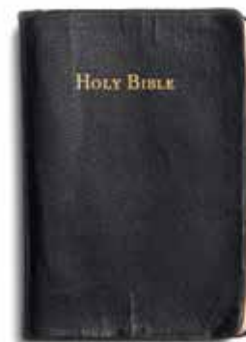
Social justice, inclusion and diversity are at the core of gospel values. Jesus crossed all the boundaries of this time when he touched those with contagious skin diseases, spoke with those who had broken the law forgiving those who were sorry, spoke with those from Samaria who were scorned by the Pharisees and leaders and challenged those leaders who were not treating people fairly. As followers of Jesus, we are called to stand with courage against prejudice, to speak for those who have no power, to make place for those in need and to treat all in our company with due respect. Our schools have always been places of a diversity of needs and cultures and are even more so now – we are called to respond with the open heart of Jesus so that differences are understood as gifts that add to our culture and lives.



### Connecting with *Grow in Love*

*Grow in Love: Junior Infants/Primary 1:* Theme 2, 'Our World'

*Grow in Love: Senior Infants/Primary 2:* Theme 1, 'Our World'



### Connecting with Scripture

'Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them.' (Mt 19:14)



## Story

Once upon a time there was a school in Make-Believe Land called We're All the Same. In We're All the Same school all the walls, doors and floors were white. The principal, the secretary, all the teachers and all the SNA's were called Ms Beale. Every boy was called Evan and every girl Bevan. Everyone wore red clothes. Everyone was good at reading and playing football. There was no singing in the school as nobody was able to sing. The children never did art as there were no paints, markers, art paper, clay or colouring pencils! There were no pictures on the wall and no colours except white, black and grey.

## Discussion

- Would you like to be in that school?
- What would it be like if we never had singing or music in our class?
- Is every teacher in our school the same?
- What would happen if we all had the same name?
- Do you all look the same?

## Exercise

As everyone in our class is different, let us each say:

My name is \_\_\_\_\_.

I'm good at \_\_\_\_\_.

## Prayer

*Sign of Cross.*

**Response: Thank you, God.**

**Teacher:** For each pupil in our class.

**Teacher:** For bringing us together as friends.

**Teacher:** For making us all different.

**Teacher:** For everyone in our school.

**Teacher:** For those who have come from other countries.

## Song

'I'm Special' (*Grow in Love; Junior Infants/Primary 1*, p. 74)

'Created by God' (*Grow in Love: Senior Infants/Primary 2*, p. 80)



# Friday: Life to the Full for the Common Good of All

“To safeguard our common home and cultivate our common home, protecting it from the exploitation of its resources and adopting a more sober lifestyle marked by the use of renewable energy sources and respect for the natural and human environment.’ (‘7th Commitment’, *Global Compact on Education*, p. 16)



## Background for Teacher

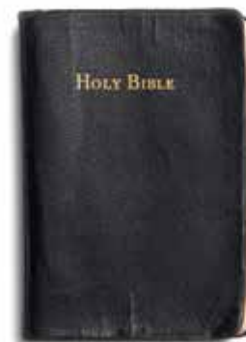
We have been given a beautiful world in which to live, where there is enough space and food for all if it is shared equally and cared for well. Every person has responsibility to keep the earth as a healthy place to live and as a gift to pass onto the next generation having made it an even better and more beautiful place. We have been given many gifts and talents by God so that we can share in co-creation and add something beautiful of our own time. Nurturing a sense of responsibility for care of the environment in young children shows respect for their integrity and makes them beacons of hope for the future.



## Connecting with *Grow in Love*

*Grow in Love: Junior Infants/Primary 1:* Theme 2, ‘Our World’

*Grow in Love: Senior Infants/Primary 2:* Theme 1, ‘Our World’



## Connecting with Scripture

‘God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.’ (Gn 1:31)



## Consider

How to increase plant diversity and pollen sources in the school environment.

## Story

The brothers Flippy and Floppy Rabbit lived in a burrow in a hill. The burrow was big enough for both rabbits to sleep, eat and stay warm. Flippy and Floppy loved to eat carrots, which they dug in a garden near the hill. Sometimes they ate the carrots while they were in the garden and then carried some back to the burrow to eat later. Flippy always put the carrots in a tidy pile at the back of the burrow. Floppy put his carrots inside the opening of the burrow; he put carrots in the bed where they slept and he put carrots outside the burrow. Floppy just left carrots everywhere! Sometimes there wasn't even room to get into the burrow because carrots were stacked here and there and the bed was uncomfortable when it was full of carrots. Flippy was not happy when this happened! He would beat the ground with his paws when cross and push Floppy with his nose. Floppy wasn't happy when they were fighting with one another!

## Discussion

- Would you like to live with Floppy Rabbit?
- Was Floppy a tidy rabbit?
- Were they happy rabbits?
- Which rabbit do you think you might be like?
- What can we learn from Flippy and Floppy?
- How do we care for our classroom and home?

## Activity

Find two things that you can do in your classroom today that will make it a tidier place.  
What can you do at home to help keep it tidy and clean?



*Match and sort as you tidy up.*

