



Catholic Schools Week 2026

Catholic Schools: Normal Lives, Called to Holiness

18–24 January 2026

Junior and Senior Infants/P1 and P2



Strand Units – Level 1

LITURGY AND PRAYER	CHRISTIAN MORALITY
Prayer • When people pray, they talk and listen to God and get to know and love God better. (<i>General Directory for Catechesis</i>, 139; <i>Catechism of the Catholic Church</i> [CCC], 2653). • God wants to talk to us (<i>Gaudium et Spes</i>, 18; CCC, 2567). • God always hears our prayers.	Human Dignity • God loves each one of us (Jer 31:3; 1 Jn 4:10-11; <i>Revised Core Syllabus for Religious Education</i> [CSRE], 3a). • I am called to love God and to love others (Mt 22:36-40). • 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, 2443-6).
WORD OF GOD	CHRISTIAN FAITH
The Bible • 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.	Mystery of Jesus Christ • 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).



Monday: Called to Holiness through Prayer

Consider

Holiness means trying to live as God wants us to: achieving our dreams, realising our talents as children of God and living life to the full. Prayer is the lifeblood of holiness, being present to God's presence in our lives. For young children, as for all people, prayer can mean talking to God but also listening to God. Jesus taught us how to pray and the following activity will help introduce children to prayer as an expression of Christian faith.



Explore

1. Gather the children in a circle.
2. Light a candle to signify that this is a time for prayer. Say to the children: 'When we pray, we are talking and listening to God. Prayer helps us to be close to Jesus and to become holy, which means loving God and others.'
3. Ask these simple, reflective questions:
 - 'Who do you talk to every day?'
 - 'Do you think we can talk to God too?'
 - 'How do you feel when someone listens to you?'
4. Share a short Bible verse in simple words: 'Jesus said, "Let the children come to me"' (Mk 10:14).
5. Explain: 'Jesus loves when children pray. He wants us to be close to him.'
6. Show a picture of Jesus with children.
7. Discuss: 'When we pray, we are like the children in the picture — sitting close to Jesus.'



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Activity

- Give each child a copy of the activity sheet below with the outline of two praying hands.
- Ask them to draw or colour something they want to thank God for inside the hands.
- Gather the pictures and place them near the prayer candle.
- End the activity by saying a short prayer together: 'Thank you, Jesus, for loving us. Help us to be holy by praying and showing love. Amen.'



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Tuesday: Called to Holiness through Love and Friendship

Consider

To be a friend is to support, care for and show mercy to one another. Jesus taught us how to live this way in how he lived his own life. Jesus calls his disciples (his friends) to follow him in love and friendship.



Explore

1. Gather the children in a circle with a cross or holy picture in the centre.
2. Say: 'God calls us to be holy. That means to love God and to love one another. One way we show this is through love and friendship.'
3. Ask the students:
 - 'Who are your friends?'
 - 'How do we show our friends that we care about them?'
4. Affirm the children's answers and explain that Jesus shows us how to be a good friend.
5. Read the short, simple story from the Bible of Jesus and his friends (see text to the right), highlighting that Jesus loved his friends and they followed him.
6. Show a picture of Jesus with his friends.
7. Explain: 'Jesus teaches us to love one another, to share and to be kind. When we do this, we are being holy.'
8. Quick think-pair-share: 'What is one kind thing you could do for a friend today?'

Jesus and His Friends

One day, Jesus was walking by the sea. He saw two brothers, Peter and Andrew. They were fishing with their nets. Jesus said to them, 'Come, follow me.' At once, they left their nets and went with Jesus. Then Jesus saw two more brothers, James and John. He called them too. They also left their boat and followed him. Jesus loved his friends, and they stayed close to him. They learned from him how to love God and one another.

(Adapted from Matthew 4:18-22.)



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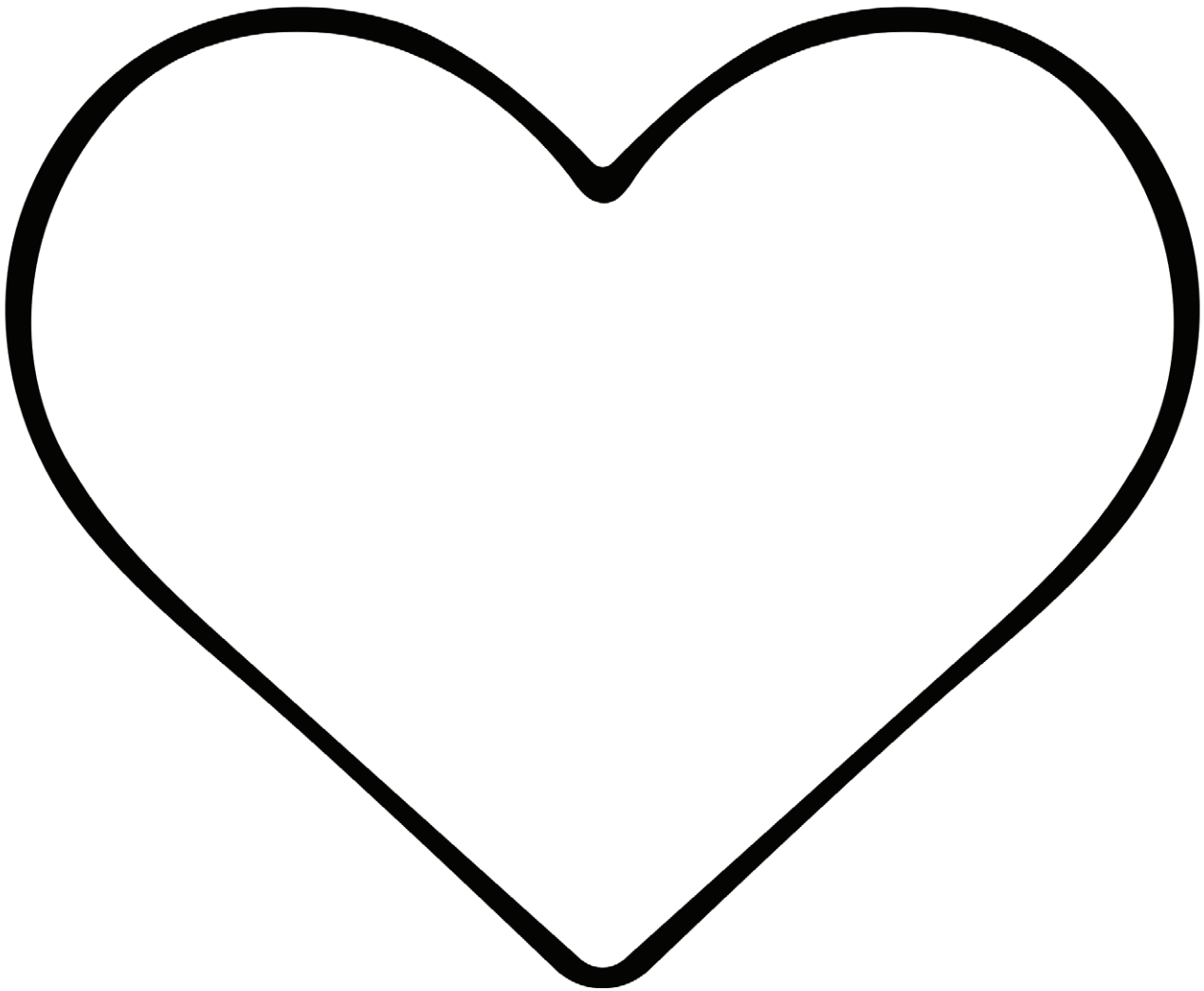
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Activity

1. Give each child a copy of the activity sheet below with the heart outline.
2. Ask them to draw or colour inside the heart a time they were a good friend.
3. Cut out and collect the hearts and place them on the sacred space.
4. End with a short prayer together: 'Thank you, Jesus, for my friends. Help me to love others as you love me. Amen.'



We are called to Holiness through Love and Friendship





Wednesday: Called to Holiness in Family Life (Grandparents' Day)

Consider

God shows love and care for us through our family. Grandparents love and care for parents. Family is the basic cell of all community groups – school, parish, etc. Children learn their first values in the home from seeing 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 important gifts to pass onto the next generation, including the gift of faith in God.



Explore

Discuss the role of grandparents in loving and caring for their grandchildren.

- 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?

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)



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Activity

Using an A4 sheet or coloured card, draw a picture of your grandparent(s) so that you may give it to them when you see them next.



Thursday: Called to Holiness through Courage and Service

Consider

We can be holy in different ways. We have learned about how prayer helps us to be holier. We are also called to become more holy through our actions. Jesus showed us in his life how to be brave and how to serve others, using our gifts and talents to help others.



Explore

1. Place a lit candle or cross at the front of the room to help the children see that this is a special time in our day to talk about Jesus.
2. Say: 'God calls us to be holy. That means we try to live like Jesus. We can do this by helping others (service) and by being brave (courage).'
3. Ask these simple, reflective questions:
 - 'When have you helped someone at home or in school?'
 - 'When have you been brave, even if you felt a little afraid?'
4. Affirm their answers and connect them together: 'When we serve and are brave, we are showing God's love.'
5. Read the short, simple gospel story of Jesus washing the disciples' feet (see text below) that highlights service and courage
6. Explain to the children: 'Jesus knelt down and washed the feet of his friends. This was a job for a servant, but Jesus showed that serving others is holy.'
7. Emphasise: 'Jesus was not afraid to serve. He showed his friends that holiness means helping others with love.'
8. Ask the children:
 - How did Jesus serve his friends?'
 - 'Can you think of a way you could serve someone today?'



Jesus Washes His Friends' Feet

One evening, Jesus and his friends sat down for supper.

Before they ate, Jesus did something very special.

He got up from the table.

He poured water into a bowl.

Then he knelt down in front of his friends.

One by one, Jesus washed their feet.

He dried them gently with a towel.

His friends were surprised!

Usually, a servant would wash feet – not the teacher!

But Jesus said:

‘I am your Lord and Teacher.

‘I have washed your feet to show you how to love and serve.

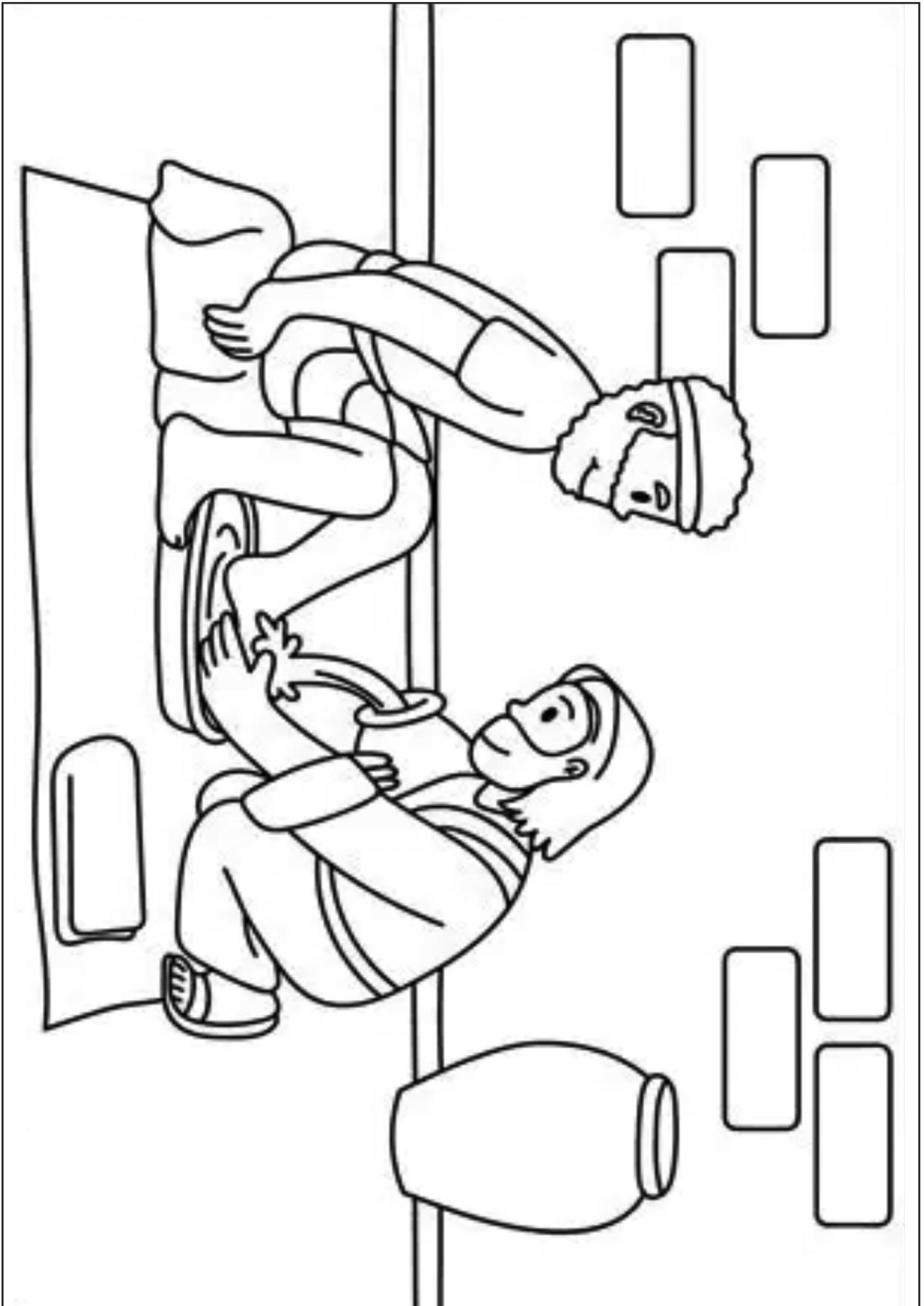
‘Now you must do the same for one another.’

Jesus showed his friends that being holy means helping, loving and serving others.

(Adapted from John 13:1–15)

Activity

Give each child a copy of the activity sheet below showing Jesus washing the feet of the disciples to colour.





Friday: Called to Holiness through Joy and Mission

Consider

We share the Good News about Jesus with Joy. Just like the story in the Gospel of the women at the tomb who told the disciples that Jesus is alive. We too can spread the Good News Joyfully.



Explore

1. Place a candle or cross in the centre to show this is a special time to learn about Jesus.
2. Say: 'God calls us to be holy. One way we can do this is by living with joy and sharing the Good News of Jesus with others.'
3. Ask these simple, reflective questions:
 - 'What makes you feel happy or joyful?'
 - 'How do you share joy with your friends and family?'
4. Explain: 'When we smile, share and tell others about Jesus, we are bringing joy. That is our mission – to spread God's love.'
5. Read the short, simple gospel story of the women at the empty tomb (see text below).
6. After reading the story, ask:
 - 'Why were the women so joyful?'
 - 'Who did they tell the Good News to?'
 - 'Who can we share Jesus' love with today?'



The Women at the Empty Tomb

Early one morning, Mary Magdalene and her friend went to Jesus' tomb.
They were very sad, because Jesus had died.
Suddenly, the ground shook!
An angel came from heaven and rolled the big stone away.
The angel was shining bright, like lightning.
The guards were so frightened that they ran away.
The angel said to the women:
'Do not be afraid. Jesus is not here. He is alive!'
The women were filled with joy!
They ran quickly to tell Jesus' friends the Good News.
On the way, Jesus met them.
He said: 'Do not be afraid. Go and tell my friends to meet me.'
The women were so happy.
They had seen Jesus alive!
They hurried to share the Good News.

(Adapted from Matthew 28:1-10.)

Activity

Rhyme with Actions: 'Joyful Messengers'

Action: 🙌 Spread your hands wide

Jesus loves me, this I know,

Action: 😊 Point to your smile

I can share his joy and show.

Action: 🚶 March on the spot

I will go and tell his name,

Action: ❤️ Hands on heart

Loving others just the same.

Action: 🙌 Lift hands high

Called to holiness, we say,

Action: 🙌 Clap hands joyfully

We bring God's Good News each day!