

Initiation – Baptism, the Eucharist and Confirmation

In this unit students explore the relationship between the sacraments of Initiation. Students examine the symbols and rituals which are used in these celebrations. Students are invited to reflect upon and monitor their learning in relation to the sacraments of Initiation.

DOCTRINAL FOCUS

In planning to teach this unit the following references from the Catechism of the Catholic Church and the Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church are recommended:

#1218 Since the beginning of the world, water, so humble and wonderful a creature, has been the source of life and fruitfulness. Sacred Scripture sees it as 'overshadowed' by the Spirit of God:

At the very dawn of creation
your Spirit breathed on the waters,
making them the wellspring of all holiness.

(See *Compendium #251 How is Christian initiation brought about?* and *#237 From where do sacramental signs come?*)

#695 The symbolism of anointing with oil signifies the Holy Spirit, to the point of becoming a synonym for the Holy Spirit. In Christian initiation, anointing is the sacramental sign of Confirmation, called 'chrismation' in the Churches of the East. Its full force can be grasped only in relation to the primary anointing accomplished by the Holy Spirit, that of Jesus. Christ (in Hebrew 'messiah') means the one 'anointed' by God's Spirit.

(See *Compendium #267 What is the essential Rite of Confirmation?*)

#1334 In the Old Covenant bread and wine were offered in sacrifice among the first fruits of the earth as a sign of grateful acknowledgment to the Creator. But they also received a new significance in the context of the Exodus: the unleavened bread that Israel eats every year at Passover commemorates the haste of the departure that liberated them from Egypt; the remembrance of the manna in the desert will always recall to Israel that it lives by the bread of the Word of God; their daily bread is the fruit of the promised land, the pledge of God's faithfulness to his promises. The 'cup of blessing' at the end of the Jewish Passover meal adds to the festive joy of wine an eschatological dimension: the messianic expectation of the rebuilding of Jerusalem. When Jesus instituted the Eucharist he gave a new and definitive meaning to the blessing of the bread and the cup.

(See *Compendium #237 From where do sacramental signs come?* and *#276 Where does the Eucharist fit in the divine plan of salvation?*)

SPIRITUAL REFLECTION FOR TEACHERS

If water springing up from the earth symbolises life, the water of the sea is a symbol of death and so can represent the mystery of the Cross. By this symbolism Baptism signifies communion with Christ's death (CCC 1220). Water also has special significance in the Australian landscape and psyche. It is associated with flood, drought, pools and beaches, wetlands and rainforests, baths and showers. How does

the Australian experience of water help you to make meaning of the symbol of water in Baptism?

Anointing in biblical and other ancient symbolism is rich in meaning: oil is a sign of abundance and joy; it cleanses (anointing before and after a bath) and limbers (the anointing of athletes and wrestlers); oil is a sign of healing, since it is soothing to bruises and wounds; and it makes radiant with beauty, health, and strength (CCC 1293). What connections do you make between these understandings of oil and the sacrament of Confirmation?

Individual bunches of grapes and heads of wheat are crushed and re-formed into one single loaf of bread and bottle of wine which feeds, nourishes and gives spirit. How does this imagery help you to make meaning of the signs of bread and wine in the Eucharist? What does it mean for you to live a eucharistic life – to live a life that is blessed, broken and shared?

LINKS WITH STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES

Many students are members of a variety of groups in the community. Initiation is an important process involving ritual and symbol that enables people to become full members of groups, including the Church. Most students would have been baptised and made their First Communion. *How have these sacraments of Initiation shaped the way students live?*

Students are developing an understanding of a local, global and Church community as a place which they can contribute to, learn from and enjoy. *How do students perceive their role in the Church community?*

EXPLANATION OF SCRIPTURE

Baptism: Mk 1: 7–11

John Baptises Jesus Christ in the Jordan

Jesus Christ accepted baptism in water at John's hand and became the model for Christian Baptism. Water, that simple essential element without which we cannot live, became a sign of God's grace, without which we also cannot live. As Jesus Christ was baptised, the Father's voice was heard identifying and rejoicing in 'the beloved Son'. Because our baptism incorporates us into the Church, the body of Christ, we share in his identity and are counted as beloved sons and daughters of Christ.

Confirmation: Acts 8: 14–17

Confirmation in Samaria

Most of the accounts of baptism in the New Testament associate the gift of the Holy Spirit with baptism, and in the early Church the two sacraments were closely related, as they are in the Eastern tradition. However, as this account shows, there was also some separation in time between baptism in water and the laying on of hands, which we associate with the sacrament of Confirmation and the gift of the Holy Spirit. The apostles went to the newly baptised believers in Samaria to lay hands on them and they received the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

The Eucharist: 1 Cor 11: 26

Paul's Account of the Eucharist

Paul handed on to the Christians in Corinth the tradition of the Eucharist that he himself had received from the apostles. He related how Jesus Christ took bread, identifying it with his own body which was to be broken the next day on the cross, and broke it amongst his disciples. He told how Jesus Christ also took a cup of wine, which he identified with his blood to be poured out on the cross, establishing a new covenant, a new relationship forever between God and human beings. Every time we

celebrate the Eucharist we accept with praise and thanksgiving this new and everlasting relationship with God. We participate in it in words by our Amen (Yes, so be it), by eating his body and drinking his blood as Jesus Christ commanded us, and by the way we live our lives in imitation of him.

POSSIBILITIES FOR PRAYER AND WORSHIP

- Have the students prepare, in groups, a prayer reflection on each of the symbols used in the sacrament of Baptism: oil/chrisem; water; white garment; light. Direct them to create a central focus for the symbol, to choose a passage from Scripture and to use the related prayers from the rite. They may wish to sing a hymn/antiphon or incorporate ritual gesture as part of the celebration, e.g. blessing with water. Celebrate these prayer reflections at intervals throughout the unit.
- Pray together the responsory prayer in *KWL*, 2nd edn, Year 4, Chapter 10, p. 82. Sing together a hymn or antiphon, e.g. 'Springs of Water' (Marty Haugen, *All Are Welcome*, GIA Publications).
- Celebrate the renewal of baptismal promises.
- Choose one of the scripture readings in this unit for *Lectio Divina* (sacred reading):
 - Read the passage slowly.
 - Invite the students to choose from it a word or short phrase.
 - Allow one or two minutes of silence for them to meditate on the word or phrase (this can be done with the breathing, i.e. repeat the word/phrase silently on every second or third 'out' breath).
 - Conclude by re-reading the passage together.
- Create a prayer focus using bread and 'wine' (grape juice), wheat and grapes. Proclaim 1 Cor 11: 23–27. Respond with Eucharistic Acclamation No. 3.
- Prepare a class litany on the 'Bread of Life'. Have the students write a response, e.g. *Jesus Christ, you are the Bread of Life!* In pairs, compose phrases related to the Eucharist. Use the same response after each phrase. Pray the whole litany as a class prayer.
- Invite the parish priest or pastoral associate to help the students prepare a class Mass (a Votive Mass of the Holy Eucharist might be very appropriate). Involve all the students in the preparation, as well as taking part in particular roles within the celebration.
- Encourage the students to keep a prayer journal and to record prayers, thoughts and inspirations throughout the unit.

Related Chapters – *KWL*, 2nd edn, Year 4: Chapter 10, New Life in Christ; Chapter 11, Do This in Memory of Me.

Faith concepts: initiation, ritual, symbol, real presence, community, sign, nourishment.

Seeking understanding:

What are the sacraments of Initiation?

What symbols, signs and rituals are part of these celebrations?

Understandings:

Initiation is the process of becoming a full member of a community.

Through Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist Christians are initiated into the Catholic Church.

In Baptism Christians are welcomed into a new life in the Church.

In Confirmation they are strengthened to be a sign of Jesus Christ's Holy Spirit in the world today.

Through the Eucharist Christians are nourished to live as Jesus Christ did and are united as one people.

Bread is a staple food that keeps people alive and wine is a festive drink that helps people celebrate together.

Scripture Text: 1 Cor 11: 23–27 The Lord's Supper

Unit specific learning:

Students will learn about	Students will learn to	Students will undertake to
<i>Knowledge and Understanding</i>	<i>Reasoning & Responding</i>	<i>Personal & Communal Engagement</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The way in which the Church celebrates initiation through Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist.• The significance of Scripture, symbols, images, signs and actions associated with each sacrament of Initiation.• The main elements of a scripture text: characters, events, key words, actions and symbols, and how these relate to the	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Formulate an opinion on the importance of Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist in light of their new learning.• Use a journal to express reflections, thinking, perceptions, feelings, beliefs and opinions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plan and celebrate a class liturgy.

<p>understanding and practices of Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The relationship between Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist 		
---	--	--

PHASES OF STUDENT INQUIRY

Additional Reading for Teachers	Orientation to Inquiry <i>What do students already know, think or feel in relation to the topic? What are students' questions about the topic? What experiences and reflections can we offer students to become engaged with the topic?</i>	Assessment: for learning, as learning, of learning
<p>Sacraments of Initiation Initiation means to be introduced or welcomed. It is the reception and welcoming of a person into a community. Christian initiation is accomplished by means of the sacraments which establish the foundations of Christian life. The faithful, born anew by Baptism, are strengthened by Confirmation and are then nourished by the Eucharist.</p> <p>Baptism: The word baptism means to 'immerse'. In the early Church all new Christians were baptised by being immersed in water. At the present time some people and infants are baptised in this way. Others have water poured over their heads while the priest pronounces the words of baptism.</p> <p>From the day of Pentecost the Church has administered Baptism to anyone who</p>	<p>Initiation- being welcomed and introduced</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If students are all baptised Catholics or Christians, begin with a 'Placemat Activity': Students place a photo of their baptism in the centre of a placemat graphic organiser and illustrate and write their responses to the following questions over the rest of the placemat: Who attended your Baptism? Why were these people there? Why were you baptised? What other groups do you belong to? Alternatively, if students belong to different religious traditions, ask them to talk about their experiences of belonging to groups. They discuss information about what the group does, how one becomes a member, if there is a process of initiation and what 	<p>Assessment for Learning This discussion will provide information on students' understanding and experiences of initiation.</p>

professes faith in Jesus Christ. Ordinarily it is a priest, a bishop or a deacon who baptises, but in the case of an emergency any person can baptise. In Baptism we are welcomed into the Church and share the life of Christ through grace. Baptism forgives all sin and enables us to walk in Jesus Christ's way.

Confirmation is a strengthening and deepening of the grace of baptism. In the early Church it was part of the Rites of Initiation, which were completed by the reception of the Eucharist, but as time went on the sacraments of Initiation in the West were separated. In the Catholic Church Confirmation is usually celebrated when a person is old enough to respond consciously and participate in the rite. This sacrament invites the candidate into a stronger and more explicit participation in the church by the rite of laying on of hands and sealing with chrism. A bishop or authorised priest administers the sacrament. In Orthodox Churches and in the Eastern Rites of the Catholic Church, Confirmation is administered by the priest immediately after Baptism. It is not a sacrament that is repeated.

The **Eucharist** completes initiation into the Church. As the 'repeatable sacrament of initiation' it is the 'source and the summit of the Christian life'. All the other sacraments are oriented toward the Eucharist for in it we receive Christ himself whose real presence

this involves, and any significant symbols, gestures or words that characterise the group. This could be as simple as getting a particular uniform, buying particular shoes or equipment. Discuss the age or stage of life at which people are able to join groups and the reasons that motivate people to join.

- When they first started school, how were students initiated into the school? What do they remember about their first days of school ... particular people, feelings, experiences? Does it matter what age we begin school?

Record this data on a chart.

Stories of Initiation

- Personal stories: If students have undertaken a formal initiation rite, e.g. Baptism or a rite from another religious tradition, ask them to share in small groups their photos, memories, objects from that rite.
- Read other's stories or novels that describe initiation e.g. *New Bjorn* by Kathryn England is targeted at 8–12 year olds.
- HOME TASK: Ask a family member or friend who has been initiated into a faith tradition to share photos, certificates, videos, significant objects and memories.

<p>heals, restores and forgives us. A bishop or priest celebrates the liturgy of the Eucharist at the Mass. A bishop, priest or deacon, or an authorised lay person, administers the sacrament of the Eucharist.</p>	<p>Mystery Box: Tuning into the signs and symbols of initiation</p> <p>Select a set of symbols, signs and objects related to Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation e.g. unleavened bread, wine, Bible, stole, oil of chrism, water, white robe, flame, baptismal candle, photo of a baptismal font. Place one item in a box and ask students to guess what is in the box by asking a question to which there is only a yes or no answer (<i>Is it ... ? Does it ? Can it ... ?</i>). Give students a limit of 20 questions per item. Once they have guessed one item, repeat with the other items.</p> <p>Once all items have been guessed, display them and ask students what these items have in common. Brainstorm possibilities with students.</p>	<p>Assessment for Learning</p> <p>The questions students ask and the following brainstorm will provide some information about the knowledge and understanding of the sacraments of Initiation that students bring to the unit as well as their skills of reasoning and deduction. At this stage, refrain from correcting students' ideas and perceptions during the brainstorm. In the Development section some of these thoughts and perceptions will be challenged and developed.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Journal <p>In their journals students finish these sentences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – People get baptised because ... – The Eucharist is about ... – People are confirmed in the Catholic Church because ... <p>If some students cannot finish the sentences, allow them to remain blank. Students may be able to finish these as the unit progresses.</p>	<p>Assessment as Learning</p> <p>Throughout the unit students will use a journal to record and monitor their learning. If students choose to share their responses refrain from correcting these. Instead, students can come back to these ideas and values throughout the unit to reflect on ways their thinking, perceptions and values might have been affirmed or challenged by new learning.</p>

	As a class invite students to share their responses and use these to develop a class statement about each of these sacraments. Students continue to add to their journals throughout the unit.									
Additional Reading for Teachers	<p style="text-align: center;">Development</p> <p><i>What experiences and religious texts will provide new learning for students? What skills will students need in order to work with these resources? What strategies and tools will enable students to think and reflect on these experiences and texts? How will students process their thinking and learning?</i></p>	Assessment: for learning, as learning, of learning								
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiation: Scripture Retrieval Chart <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: center;">Characters in the Story</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Main Events of the Story</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Key Actions, Words and Symbols</th> <th style="text-align: center;">What Does This Story Remind You Of?</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="height: 40px;"></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>In small groups students complete the retrieval chart above for one of the following scripture passages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Mk 1: 7–11 – Acts 8: 14–17 – 1 Cor 11: 23–27 <p>Share as a class what the students discovered about these scripture passages.</p>	Characters in the Story	Main Events of the Story	Key Actions, Words and Symbols	What Does This Story Remind You Of?					
Characters in the Story	Main Events of the Story	Key Actions, Words and Symbols	What Does This Story Remind You Of?							
<p>Rite of Baptism</p> <p>The sacrament of Baptism is usually</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shared Experiences <p>Allow students to experience aspects</p>									

conferred during a communal celebration. If the one being baptised is a child it is the role of the parents and godparents to present the child for Baptism. The celebrant will ask the parents and godparents to profess their faith and to respond to the baptismal promises on behalf of the child. The symbols of Baptism are water, a lighted candle, oil and a white garment. The priest pours water over the child's head in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Rite of Confirmation

Ordinarily the main celebrant at Confirmation is the bishop. Those to be confirmed choose a sponsor who will present them to the bishop to receive the sacrament. Candidates are asked to renew their baptismal promises. The sacrament is conferred through the laying on of hands, the anointing of the forehead with chrism and the words, 'Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit'.

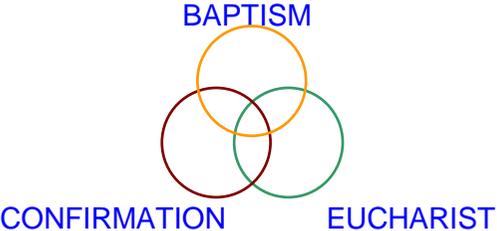
The Eucharist

The priest leads the celebration of the Eucharist. During the Eucharistic Prayer, acting in the person of Christ, he takes bread and wine and gives thanks and praise to God. He invokes the Holy Spirit and pronounces the words of consecration over the bread and wine as Jesus Christ did at the last supper: 'This is my Body'; 'This is my Blood'; 'Do this in memory of me'. The Blessed Sacrament is then broken and the people come in procession to the altar for communion.

of each of the sacraments of Initiation through the following experiences:

- Baptism: Roleplay a Baptism, using a doll and the words and symbols from the Rite of Baptism. Highlight that people are baptised either as a child or as an adult in the Roman Catholic Rite. Highlight the roles involved in this rite.
- Confirmation: Invite some students from Year 6 to role play the actions and words associated with the Laying on of Hands and the Anointing with Chrism. Ask them to highlight the roles people take in the rite; the age at which people may be confirmed in the Roman Catholic Rite; why they are being/were confirmed.
- The Eucharist: Students attend a Parish Mass and invite the priest to highlight for the students the Eucharistic Prayer, particularly the Institution Narrative.

Read and discuss the information on the sacraments of Initiation (*KWL*, 2nd edn, Chapters 10 and 11, pp. 78–79, 86–88).

<p>The symbols used in the sacraments of Initiation are:</p> <p><i>Baptism:</i> priest, font, water, lectionary, candle, oil of catechumens, godparents, chrism, people, white garment, candidate, baptismal promises, Sign of the Cross, stole, alb.</p> <p><i>Confirmation:</i> bishop, sponsor, lectionary, candidate, people, laying on of hands, chrism, baptismal promises, mitre, staff, chasuble, Sign of the Cross.</p> <p><i>The Eucharist:</i> bishop/priest, people, lectionary, Sign of the Cross, bread, wine, altar, chasuble, communicant, alb, stole, chalice, paten, corporal, ciborium.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sorting Students sort a variety of images of the symbols, gestures, roles, vestments and vessels and key words used during the sacraments of Initiation. These images should be sorted under the following categories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Baptism – The Eucharist – Confirmation <p>On completion students share their work.</p> 	<p>Assessment of Learning Students demonstrate their knowledge of the key components of the sacraments of Initiation.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tri-Venn Diagram As a class create a three circle Venn diagram to identify the similarities and differences between the three sacraments of Initiation. 	<p>Assessment for Learning This task will indicate students' understanding of the relationship between the three sacraments of Initiation.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Project In small groups students visually represent one of the sacraments of Initiation. This may take the format of a 3D display, PowerPoint presentation, poster, Kids Pix presentation or brochure. To guide students create a rubric clearly outlining the criteria for assessment. This could include: 	<p>Assessment of Learning The projects will enable students to demonstrate how they understand the significance of symbol, sign and gesture in initiation rites and the biblical background to these rites. It will also provide information about how students perceive the value of celebrating the sacrament.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Content: symbols, signs and actions from the rite and why these are used – Use of related Scripture – Reflection on what this sacrament means to me or to those who participate in it <p>Students who belong to another religious or faith tradition could visually represent the rites of initiation of that tradition (if they have such rites). The same rubric could be also be used by these students.</p>	
<p>When we gather to celebrate the Eucharist, Jesus Christ is present among us in different ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in the people who have gathered as a community of believers; • in the reading of the Sacred Scriptures, where we hear God’s Word and relate it to our own lives; • in the priest who acts in the person of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Eucharist Discussion Brainstorm the ways we are nourished by our families. This list would show that we are not only fed and clothed by our families, but we also gain strength and a sense of wholeness from their love and support. Ask students to identify the times in 	

<p>Jesus Christ;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • above all in the sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ, the consecrated bread and wine which have been changed into the body and blood, soul and divinity of Christ. 	<p>the Mass that nourish and bind together the community. Ask students: Why are the bread and wine important signs in the Mass?</p> <p>Elicit from the students how Christ is present in the four elements of the liturgy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Priest – The Word – The People – His Body and Blood. <p>Create class sentence strips which detail this.</p>	
<p>Additional Reading for Teachers</p>	<p>SYNTHESIS</p> <p><i>How will students demonstrate their understandings, beliefs, values, skills and feelings in relation to the topic? How will students take action based on their learning? What strategies and tools will enable students to discern their action, to plan and implement action and to evaluate their action?</i></p>	<p>Assessment: for learning, as learning, of learning</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual Presentation Students present their visual projects to a group within the school community. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Journal Students add new understanding to the statements contained in their journals. Have students also respond to the fertile question: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Why are Baptism, the Eucharist and Confirmation important? 	<p>Assessment as Learning The journal will enable students to reflect upon and monitor their learning in relation to the sacraments of Initiation.</p>

- **Liturgy**

Students plan and celebrate a class liturgy which celebrates initiation into the Church community. Use symbols and Scripture which have been used throughout the unit.

RESOURCES

To Know, Worship and Love, 2nd Edition

Year 4: Chapter 10, New Life in Christ; Chapter 11, Do This in Memory of Me.

Student resources

England, K 2002, *New Bjorn*, Lothian Books, South Melbourne.

Websites

The RESource website has a sacraments section that includes an introduction to the sacraments and provides resources on the sacraments of Initiation.

<http://www.resource.melb.catholic.edu.au/>

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION STANDARDS

This unit may be used to assess some of the Level 3 standards.

Students interpret key actions, signs and symbols of liturgy and sacrament by providing a meaningful explanation of their significance.
Students collaboratively plan liturgy using appropriate symbols, words and actions, following a given liturgical form.