

A Community of Faith – Called to Serve!

In *A Community of Faith – Called to Serve!* students explore the concept of vocation through an exploration of Spirit-filled people in the Church. They learn that as members of the Church Catholics are called to use their gifts in building up the Church and serving the broader community. They investigate the ways in which God calls people to live and serve as Christians today. The students actively participate in a liturgy celebrating vocation.

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:

#490 To become the mother of the Saviour, Mary 'was enriched by God with gifts appropriate to such a role'. The angel Gabriel at the moment of the annunciation salutes her as 'full of grace'. In fact, in order for Mary to be able to give the free assent of her faith to the announcement of her vocation, it was necessary that she be wholly borne by God's grace.

(See *Compendium #97 How does Mary cooperate in the divine plan of salvation?*)

#798 The Holy Spirit is 'the principle of every vital and truly saving action in each part of the Body (of Christ)'. He works in many ways to build up the whole Body in charity: by God's Word 'which is able to build you up'; by baptism, through which he forms Christ's Body; by the sacraments, which give growth and healing to Christ's members; by 'the grace of the apostles, which holds first place among his gifts'; by the virtues, which make us act according to what is good; finally, by the many special graces (called 'charisms'), by which he makes the faithful 'fit and ready to undertake various tasks and offices for the renewal and building up of the Church'.

(See *Compendium #160 What are charisms?*)

#2013 'All Christians in any state or walk of life are called to the fullness of Christian life and to the perfection of charity'. All are called to holiness: 'Be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect'. In order to reach this perfection the faithful should use the strength dealt out to them by Christ's gift, so that ... doing the will of the Father in everything, they may wholeheartedly devote themselves to the glory of God and to the service of their neighbour. Thus the holiness of the people of God will grow in fruitful abundance, as is clearly shown in the history of the Church through the lives of so many saints.

(See *Compendium #428 Are all called to Christian holiness?*)

SPIRITUAL REFLECTION FOR TEACHERS

Mary was the first disciple. She heard the Word, received the Word, carried the Word, birthed the Word and followed the Word. Her response to God's call was the human one of fear: 'How will this be done?' She then responded 'fiat' – 'thy will be done'. She walked in trust knowing that the Holy Spirit was with her.

Mary's journey of discipleship was one of quiet pondering and then action.

Through baptism we are invited into a life of discipleship. It is an invitation to prayer and service. Do you say 'yes' to your call to be a disciple? Do you take time to reflect on how you can best witness as a disciple in your daily life? Do you confront those fears that hold you back from serving the needs of others?

A disciple is the one who hears the message and takes it to the world. Do you admire any person who seems to live seriously this call to discipleship? How do you live out your call to be 'the salt of the earth, the light of the world'? Are you involved in an organisation in the Church that promotes justice locally or globally?

The prophet Micah states simply how to live the life of a disciple – '*What does the Lord require of you, but to do justice, to love kindness and walk humbly with your God*' (Mic 6: 8). Do you make a daily commitment to be just, kind and humble?

LINKS WITH STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES

Students may need guidance in recognising their gifts and the gifts of others. *Once identified, how can the diversity of gifts be used? What real opportunities do students have to express their gifts in the service of others?*

The lives of the saints demonstrate practical ways of expressing their gifts within a Christian context. *How can students' understanding of discipleship be informed by models of service provided by saints?*

Students are developing an understanding that the Church is broader than the local parish community. *How can students become informed and participate in the Universal Church?*

EXPLANATION OF SCRIPTURE

Mt 5: 1–12 The Beatitudes

Lk 6: 20–26 The Beatitudes

The Beatitudes are often considered to summarise the core of Christian teaching. They are the 'new law' inaugurating the new Reign of God that Jesus Christ came to establish. The values of the Kingdom are not the values of world, and they are an antidote to the glib assumptions of the worldly-wise. Scholars see the Beatitudes given in Matthew and Luke as originating from a single source in Jesus Christ's teaching, but each evangelist offers a different perspective on them.

Matthew presents Jesus Christ as the new Moses ascending a mountain to present to his listeners the new Law. In contrast, Luke has Jesus Christ come down from the mountain to a plain, where everyone is on the same level, to announce that the poor are not under a punishment from God (as was commonly assumed), but blessed; and the rich are not blessed by God (as was commonly assumed), but chastised. Matthew presents nine sayings affirming the poor in spirit, the merciful, the peacemakers, the pure of heart, the seekers for justice; while Luke focuses on the materially poor, the hungry, the weeping and those who are on the margins for the sake of Christ; and he follows up with four 'woes' directed against the rich and satisfied and well-spoken of. We can't help but be reminded of the verses of the *Magnificat*: 'He has put down the mighty from their thrones and exalted the lowly; filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty' (Lk 1: 53–54).

Matthew's Beatitudes are a guide to living in the spirit of Jesus Christ, while Luke's Beatitudes (and woes) emphasise Luke's point that we are all equal in the sight of God.

POSSIBILITIES FOR PRAYER AND WORSHIP

- Students prepare a PowerPoint reflection on *The Beatitudes* (Mt 5: 1–12). Choose appropriate music and images to accompany the reflection. Suggestion: the images could be of saints who have lived out *The Beatitudes*, or contemporary people and situations that reflect the spirit of *The Beatitudes*.
- Invite students to reflect on how they are called to serve within the community of the Church. Their responses are written on paper branches, leaves and grapes. Prepare a class reflection around the theme of the vine and the branches. During class prayer, the students read what they have written and add it to a mural of an illustrated 'vine'. Read Jn 15: 4–5. Sing a related hymn such as 'I Am the Vine' (Br Michael Herry, *Sing Spirit, Sing Life*, Marist Brothers Music).
- Invite those parishioners who perform various ministries in parish life to visit your class and talk about how they are called to 'serve'. Sit in a circle with them and celebrate a prayer of blessing and thanksgiving with them. The students prepare and lead this prayer.
- Praying with an icon: Find a large icon of Mary (from the Eastern Catholic or Orthodox traditions [a statue may be used]). Decorate the prayer space to accommodate it. Allow time for the students to gaze at the icon, particularly the eyes. Pray the 'Litany of Our Lady', *KWL*, 2nd edn, Year 6, Chapter 14, p. 135. Invite students to add to the litany their own titles for Mary.

Related Chapters – *KWL*, 2nd edn, Year 6: Chapter 2, Blessed Are You!; Chapter 7, One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic; Chapter 14, Mary, the Faithful Disciple.

Faith concepts: vocation, discipleship, Church.

Seeking understanding:

How do we use our gifts as a Christian in today's world?

Understandings:

Each day the baptised person is called to share God's life and love and to spread God's justice and goodness. All members of the Church are invited to use their gifts and talents and to become their 'best self' in building up the Church and serving the community.

Within a Church community there is a variety of gifts and ministries.

Some people share God's love and life through marriage, some through single life and others through religious life and priesthood.

Scripture Text: Jn 15: 1–15 I Am the Vine and You Are the Branches!

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 difference between a Christian vocation and a career.• Ways that each person helps build the Church and serve the broader community.• The God-given gifts, talents and aspirations they possess which they are invited to develop and use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Express feelings and ideas about choices for future vocations.• Reflect on how they can be an active member of the faith community using their gifts for the benefit of themselves and others.• Plan a liturgy that celebrates each person's gifts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participate actively in a Mass.

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
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-Unit Evaluation Use an organiser of choice to record what the students already know about vocation, discipleship, talents and Church. 	Assessment for Learning The pre-unit evaluation will demonstrate what understandings and experiences students bring to these religious concepts. It will indicate previously gained knowledge as well as gaps or limits in understanding.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Immersion Into An Image Of The Church Students make an image of vines and branches using images from the internet or <i>KWL</i>, 2nd edn, Year 6, Chapter 7, p. 66: trunks, branches, leaves and grapes. Read Jn 15: 1–15 very slowly while the presentation is viewed. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Art Piece Make an art piece of a vine that has a large trunk. Each student makes a branch that has his or her name prominently on it and attaches it to the trunk. 	

Additional Reading for Teachers	Development <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>	Assessment: for learning, as learning, of learning
<p>A vocation is a calling to a particular way of life. A Christian considers this calling to come from God, and devotes time and effort to discerning the kind of life to which they are being called.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocation: Fertile or FAT Questions What is a vocation? Students come up with a working definition of vocation using a dictionary and thesaurus as a starting point. 	<p>Assessment of Learning Throughout the unit the students will continue to reflect on and refine their definition of vocation.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thinking About My Gifts and Talents: Me Shield Use the Shield organiser (see Wilson, J, <i>Focus on Inquiry</i>, p. 25) to ask the following questions: What am I good at? What am I proud of? What's interesting about me? What am I passionate about? 	
<p>A gift or a talent is an innate quality that describes something one is naturally good at, or it describes positive aspects of one's personality.</p> <p>Gifts are often understood as aspects of personality: for example, someone may have the gift of putting others at ease, a warm or</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using My Gifts and Talents: Fertile or FAT Questions We all have personal gifts. How should you use them? Students explore this question through their choice of one of the following modes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Think – Pair – Share – journal reflection 	<p>Assessment for Learning Students' processing of this question will give the teacher information about how students understand what gifts are, and how these can be used and lived. Any misunderstandings can be challenged in subsequent tasks.</p>

<p>friendly disposition.</p> <p>Talents are often understood as particular skills or abilities: for example, someone may be talented at music or mathematics or tennis.</p> <p>Exploring and developing God-given gifts and talents is one way of deciding what a particular vocation ought to be.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - illustration - small group discussion facilitated by the teacher. <p>Share, compare and further explore these responses with the whole grade:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What appear to be the common ideas or suggestions in the grade about how we should use our gifts? - Which ideas or suggestions puzzle you? - Which ideas challenge you? - Which ideas do you strongly agree with? - Which ideas do you strongly disagree with? - Why? 	
<p>The variety of gifts and their purpose</p> <p>St Paul writes to the community at Corinth about the variety of gifts. He makes the point that each different gift is the gift of the Holy Spirit and each is given to be used not selfishly but for the common good (1 Cor 12: 4–5).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognising the Gifts of Others Revisit the vine art and add personal gifts to the vine in the shape of leaves. Students are then invited to name a specific gift in a classmate and why they appreciate it. These leaves in a contrasting colour are then added to the vine. Ideally this could be done as a prayer service. • How Others Use Their Gifts and Talents Invite guest speakers who are role models of service in our church 	

The **work of the Holy Spirit** did not end in New Testament times. The Holy Spirit continues to pour out a variety of gifts on the Church today. Both locally and internationally, people use and develop their particular gifts, great or small, to serve others.

community to talk about their vocation. Include a cross section of married, single, religious and ordained people. Students develop questions prior to the guest's arrival.

Ask students to revise and refine their definition of vocation after the guest speaker's session.

- **Who Makes a Difference?**

Look at Christian role models like St Vincent de Paul, Maximilian Kolbe, Weary Dunlop, Simpson, Moira Kelly, Rosie's Soup Van, Sacred Heart Mission St Kilda, Mini Vinnies (St Vincent de Paul for primary students) or Young Vinnies. Information on these people and groups is available online.

Examine the vocation of these people who build the Church today or have contributed to it in the past through the gifts of their words and actions.

- Why do/did they do what they do/did?
- Why are they good role models of people who take their vocation seriously?

Ask students to revise and refine again their definition of vocation after the jigsaw activity.

The **Beatitudes** are often considered to summarise the core of Christian teaching.

- **Who Makes A Difference? The Beatitudes**

<p>They are the 'new law' inaugurating the new Reign of God that Jesus Christ came to establish. In Matthew's account of the Beatitudes Jesus is presented as the new Moses ascending a mountain to present to his listeners the new Law. Matthew presents nine sayings affirming the poor in spirit, the merciful, the peacemakers, the pure of heart, the seekers for justice.</p>	<p>Read <i>KWL</i>, 2nd edn, Year 6, Chapter 2, pp. 15–17. Explore with students how the Beatitudes might look in their personal world by considering the prayer in <i>KWL</i>, 2nd edn, Year 6, Chapter 2, p. 18 and 'Living the Word', p. 20.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual arts display Ask each student to identify one aspect of the Beatitudes they would like to explore, e.g. either peacemakers or seekers of justice or the merciful, etc. <p>Individually or in pairs students choose from the following forms to portray visually either a well-known person from the present or past or someone in their own personal world who lives out this Beatitude. They could draw on the lives they explored in the previous task. They consider the qualities, values and actions of the person that distinguish them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – display of digital photos – painting or pastel picture – a 3D display of artefacts or objects associated with the person. 	
<p>Most people are called to married life: to love and serve God through a lifelong loving commitment to another person and to the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross Classification Chart After hearing the guest speakers and researching other role models 	<p>Assessment as Learning Throughout the unit the students will continue to reflect and refine their definition of vocation</p>

<p>family which is born of their love.</p> <p>Some people are called to serve God and the community in single life. They decide they can best use their talents by not committing themselves to any particular person or organisation but by remaining free to follow the voice of God in their heart and conscience.</p> <p>Others are called to a religious life, living, working and praying with others in community and committing their lives in obedience to the community's rule and to their leaders. These are monks and nuns, sisters and brothers who pray and work in a great variety of settings and situations.</p>	<p>complete a Cross Classification Chart (see Murdoch, K <i>Classroom Connections</i> p. 105) using the following headings: Vocation, Marriage, Single, Priest, Religious.</p> <p>What choices have they made and why did they make their choices? Did anything influence their choices? How do they use their gifts and passions to build the Church today and serve God and the community?</p>	<p>according to the development of their thinking, understanding and perceptions.</p>
<p>A priest is a man who is an ordained minister of the Church. The priest leads the Church community in worship and sacraments and builds up the parish and church community with the bishop and other people of the diocese. A Catholic diocesan priest promises to live a life of celibacy. A priest in a religious order vows to live in poverty, chastity and obedience in a religious community. Some priests are chaplains in hospitals, prisons, universities and schools.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fertile or FAT Question What is the difference between a career and a vocation? Explore. Strategies to assist this exploration could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Venn diagram – role play or talk show – written description with examples. 	<p>Assessment of Learning Students' responses will demonstrate their understanding, thinking and perceptions of Christian vocation in light of new learning and reflection throughout the unit.</p>
<p>Additional Reading for Teachers</p>	<p>SYNTHESIS <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"> • Personal Beatitudes Write, illustrate or construct a plasticine model of your own personal Beatitudes for your daily living as a Christian. Students could use <i>KWL</i>, 2nd edn, Year 6, Chapter 2, p. 18 as a guide. 	Assessment of Learning The personal Beatitudes will demonstrate how students understand Matthew's version of the Beatitudes in their own lives.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liturgy Plan a eucharistic liturgy that celebrates vocation. As a reflection students place their personal Beatitudes as grapes on the vine. 	

RESOURCES

To Know, Worship and Love, 2nd Edition

Year 6: Chapter 2, Blessed Are You!; Chapter 7, One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic; Chapter 14, Mary, the Faithful Disciple.

Teacher Resources

Elliot, M 2000, *A-Z Learning Strategies: Compare and Contrast Strategy*, p. 23, Catholic Education Office, Brisbane.

Ryan, M 2001, *Teaching the Bible*, Social Science Press, Riverwood, New South Wales.

White, D. et al. 2003, *Into the Deep*, KD Publications, Marayong.

Wilson, J & Wing Jan, L 2004, *Self Assessment for Students: Proformas and Guidelines*, Eleanor Curtin Publishing, South Yarra.

Wilson, J & Wing Jan, L 2003, *Focus on Inquiry*, Curriculum Corporation, Carlton.

Websites

Catholic Vocations

<http://www.catholicozvocations.org.au/>

Sacred Heart Mission

<<http://www.sacredheartmission.org/>>

St Vincent de Paul

<<http://www.vinnies.org.au/index.cfm?state=vic>>

Rosies Oblate Youth Mission

<http://www.rosies.org.au/>

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION STANDARDS

This unit may be used to assess some of the Level 4 standards.

Students analyse and reflect on scripture texts and stories in Church Tradition to inform actions, attitudes and values. Students express the significance of ritual in the Catholic Tradition by planning and evaluating prayer, liturgical and sacramental experiences.