



Catholic Schools Week 2024

Catholic Schools: Communities of Service

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21–27 JANUARY 2024

FIFTH AND SIXTH CLASS/P7





Christian Faith	Word of God
<p>Mystery of God</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• God is love.• God is present to our inmost being: 'In him we live and move and have our being' (Acts 17:28; CCC, 300). <p>Mystery of Jesus Christ</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jesus related to others, especially the poor and outcasts, with justice and compassion.• Jesus sent the Twelve out to preach the Kingdom of God and to heal (CCC, 551). <p>Mystery of the Church/Kingdom</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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 (<i>Lumen Gentium</i> [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.• Every person is called by Jesus to a specific vocation (CCC, 3, 542-3).• Single persons follow Christ in their daily lives by putting their lives at the service of others in work and prayer.• 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).• All Christians are called to witness to their faith in Christ in word and deed (<i>Dialogue and Proclamation</i>, 59, 82; <i>Evangelii Nuntiandi</i>, 5).	<p>Sacred Scripture</p> <p>Jesus' Public Life (CCC, 422-24; 430-55; 535-40; 543-56)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk 10:27-37).• Healing of the man born paralysed (Mt 9:1-8).• Feeding the five thousand (Mk 6:34-44; Lk 9:12-17). <p>Holy Orders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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, 1548-51).• 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; <i>Presbyterorum Ordinis</i>, 2).



Liturgy and Prayer

Sacraments

- 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, 1548–51).

Christian Morality

Human Dignity

- Every Christian is called to develop their own gifts and carry out their own responsibilities and so become holy (*LG*, 39–41; *Ad Gentes*, 2)

Human Freedom and Responsibility

- God calls us and we are free to respond (vocation).

God's Graceful Presence and Assistance

- 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).
- 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, 1931–3).



Monday: Service in our Community of Friends

‘This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.’
(Jn 15:12)

Consider

The word service means helping others. We are all called to help others. We are called to extend the hand of friendship to the people that we meet. Jesus is our friend and he also teaches us how to be a good friend to others. Through his ministry on earth Jesus modelled for us what it means to be a true friend to the people in our lives and in our communities. Jesus put the needs of others first in a true act of selfless love. He taught us to trust in God’s love for us and mirror that love by treating others with respect and kindness.

Explore

Our theme for today is service of our community of friends. Reflect for a moment with the whole class on the meaning of friendship. Discuss friendship using the following questions:

- Do you think friendship is important? Why?
- What makes someone a good friend?
- Do friends always have to like the same things and agree on everything?
- Could you be friends with someone totally different from yourself?
- Friends help each other. What are the ways that you help your friend or your friend helps you?

Let us now consider what it means to serve. What does the word ‘serve’ mean? The dictionary tells us that there are many meanings for the word ‘serve’: it can mean to offer food, to help, to spend time, to work and to be obedient. Today we will focus on serving as helping others.

- Who do you serve in your life?
- What do you do to serve others?





Discuss

- Is it easier for you to be kind and serve those you know (like family and friends) or total strangers? Why?
- Do you think it's a part of our human nature to want to do things for others?
- What does it mean to have a selfless attitude?
- Tell me about someone in your life who serves other people with a selfless attitude. What motivates them to act that way?
- How would the world change if people cared more about others than about themselves?
- Think of one way you can serve other people by using your gifts and talents.
- How can you encourage and lead those around you to live less selfishly and care more about others?
- How do loving God and loving others go together? Can you do one without the other?
- Is it easy to serve others when they are nice to us or reward us for serving them?
- What about serving others who are not appreciative or don't care about your time or effort. Is it easy to serve others in that situation?

In a world where people snap pictures of good deeds to 'inspire' others on social media, God is asking us to serve others just because we love and serve him.

Jesus didn't serve others just to look good. He didn't serve people because he was looking for the perfect Instagram/BeReal/Snapchat pic to post. Brainstorm ways in which we can serve others.

Activity 1: Serving others

Draw a social media post showing yourself helping someone.



Activity 2

There are many passages in the bible that tell us how Jesus served others. Divide the class into groups. Assign a Bible passage to each group. Give the class time to find and read their passage. Once each group has had a chance to find their passage invite each group to retell the story to the rest of the class.

Jesus heals the paralysed man

- Matthew 9:1-8
- Mark 2:1-12

Jesus feeds the five thousand

- Mark 6:34-44
- Luke 9:12-17

Jesus heals the deaf man

- Mark 7:32-37

Jesus heals the blind man

- Mark 8:22-26

Jesus heals the woman who was bent over

- Luke 13:10-13

Prayer

God, we ask that you help us understand how to be a true friend to one another and to you. We are all called to treat everyone we meet with love, respect and kindness. Let our lives be known for serving you through serving others. Help us to always remember your commandment to love one another.

Amen.

Invite the class to write and decorate the above prayer on an A4 sheet. This prayer can be included in the morning prayers for the week.



Tuesday: Service in our School Community

'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.'
(Mt 22:39)

Consider

Catholic schools are caring communities where we view each child as precious, gifted and loved. Catholic schools welcome everyone. In our schools we seek to encourage everyone to love others as Jesus taught us to and treat all those that we meet with kindness and compassion. We call to mind that Jesus taught us that we must love our neighbour. God wants us to love people by caring for them. We pray for them, we do things for them, and we treat them with kindness, as Jesus would do.

Explore

Jesus told us to 'love your neighbour as yourself'. But what does he mean when he says neighbour? One of those listening to Jesus asked him this very question. Jesus told the story of the Good Samaritan to explain what he meant. In this story we hear about a Jewish man who was attacked and robbed as he travelled along. A priest and a Levite (Jewish man) passed by, but neither stopped to help. Then a Samaritan came along. At this time Jews and Samaritans did not get along. Let us listen to the story:

There once was a Jewish man walking along a road. He was coming from Jerusalem and was heading to Jericho, which was a full day or two of walking.

The road was rocky, and there were small hills all around. The man was humming to himself and enjoying the nice day when suddenly a group of men jumped out from behind a hill. They took all his belongings and tore off most of his clothes. They didn't want him to follow them, so they beat him up very badly and left him lying and bleeding on the side of the road.

A few minutes later, a priest was walking down the same path and noticed the man lying on the side of the road. Do you know what he did? You'd think he would run over and help the man. Instead he crossed the road and walked on the other side and acted like he didn't see the man.



About an hour or so later, another man, a Levite, was walking down the road. Levites were people who assisted priests with their work. He would probably help the man. But do you know what he did? He slowed down and walked a little closer to the man, but then kept walking without helping him at all.

Just a few minutes later, another man came walking. He was a Samaritan. One thing you should know about Samaritans is that Jews didn't like them. Jews usually didn't treat Samaritans very well, so they never got along. The man who was dying on the road was a Jew. So what do you think the Samaritan did? You would think he would walk by and maybe even laugh at the man.

But as soon as he saw the man, he went over to him and felt compassion for him. He put bandages on his sores and poured oil and wine (which were quite expensive) on the sores to prevent them from getting worse. Then he lifted the man on his own donkey and took him to a hotel to take care of him.

The next day the Samaritan took out enough money so the man could stay at the hotel until he was well enough to leave. He paid the staff at the front desk and asked them to take care of the man. If he wasn't better after about two months, the Samaritan would come back and pay for any extra cost.

Invite your students to act out the parable of the Good Samaritan.

Discuss

Which of the three men in the parable of the Good Samaritan do you think was a neighbour to the man who was left beaten on the side of the road? Why?

Let us think about who is our neighbour in our world today. Invite the class to share their ideas. Can you think of some real-life examples of people who might need our help (e.g. refugees, the homeless, a sick family member or friend)?

How can we apply the example of the Good Samaritan in these situations? In the discussion, focus on how the parable teaches us to serve those in our lives at school and at home who have suffered or are suffering in some way. Remind the class that serving someone means showing love and giving them help. Discuss ways we can serve those we meet who are in need.

Prayer

Dear God, help us to be a kind neighbour and friend. Give us the courage to help others even when it is difficult. Thank you for showing us how we should live so that we can love and serve all those we meet who are in need.

Amen.



Activity 1: A hug from me to you

When we feel scared or lonely, a hug from someone that cares for us can make us feel better. We are going to make a handmade hug that you can make and give to someone that you want to feel welcome or cared for. You can even send it through the post to anyone that you know that might need a hug.

You will need:

- Thin card (coloured or plain)
- Coloured pencil or pens
- Scissors
- String
- A stapler, Sellotape or PVA glue
- Envelope and postage

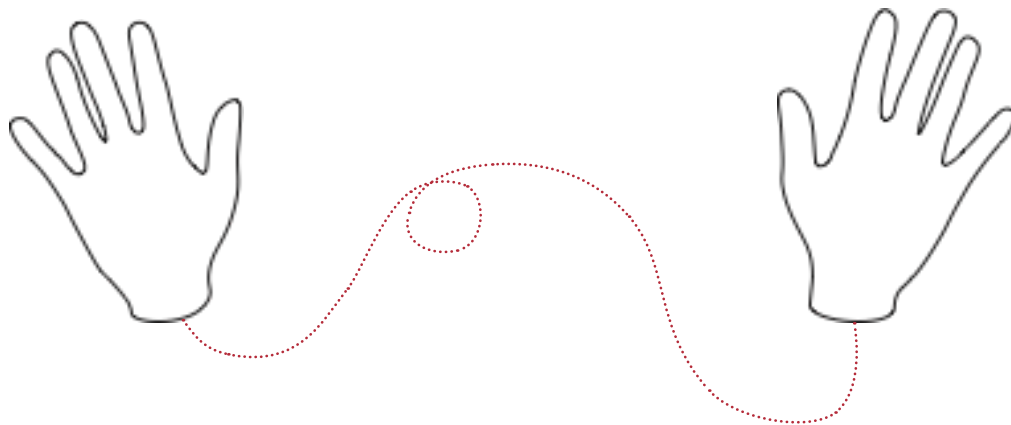
Step 1: Take your piece of card and draw around each of your hands.

Step 2: Decorate each hand using coloured pens and pencils. If you like, you can write some words such as: 'A hug from me to you.'

Step 3: Carefully cut around each outline.

Step 4: Now you need to cut a piece of string that is about the length of your arm span. (Your arm span is the length from the tips of your fingers on one hand to the tips of your fingers on the other hand when you stretch your arms out on each side.) You might need to somebody to help you with this bit.

Step 5: Attach a hand to each end of the string with a staple, tape or glue.



Now you can decide who needs your hug.





Wednesday: Service in our Family Community

Consider

We are learning this week about how our Catholic school is a community of service that models the love Jesus revealed to us in his life and teachings. We each belong to a special community: our families. Our grandparents are very important members of this family community. Today, our Catholic school community celebrates the contribution of our grandparents to the richness of our lives. We recognise and appreciate the role they play in handing on the Catholic faith to their grandchildren and in supporting the community of faith at home and in the parish. They bring joy to the lives of their grandchildren and help show us what serving one another can look like.

Explore

Our grandparents are a special gift in our lives. They watch over us as we grow and are often some of the most important teachers in our lives. They have seen and experienced many changes in our world, both good and bad.

Ask the children what kinds of things their grandparents have taught them. Prompts such as care, generosity, faith, love and prayer can help children to name the unique experiences and lessons they have learned from their grandparents.

Discuss the ways that grandparents show their love for us and also the ways that we can show love and care for our grandparents.





Activities

(Note: 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. Choose an activity to suit your class.)

Portrait of Granny and/or Granddad and me:

Encourage the children to draw and colour a portrait of them and their grandparent or grandparents, focusing on a happy time they shared.

Thank you card:

Encourage the children to make a thank you card for their grandparents with a focus on the positive influence grandparents have had on their lives. Cards can be given to the grandparents or posted to them if they live far away.

A special memory:

Encourage the children to think of a time when their grandparents shared something special with them. Invite them to write the memory down so that they can share it with their grandparents.

Prayer:

Write a prayer of thanksgiving for your grandparents.

Project:

In linking with the SESE history curriculum, encourage the children to research their grandparent's life by surveying their grandparent where possible. If they cannot talk to their grandparent for whatever reason, they can interview their parents or relatives and find out details about their grandparent's life. They can locate pictures of their grandparent, be it as a child, at their wedding or a photo of them with their grandchild. The children can then create a poster celebrating the unique contribution their grandparent has made to their life and to their family life.





Thursday: Service in our Local Community

‘The earth is the Lord’s and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it.’
(Ps 24:1)

Consider

The earth is a gift from God. It is a home we get to share with all of creation. With this great gift comes great responsibility. Caring for the earth starts at home and in our locality. Through caring for our immediate surroundings we are serving our local community.

Explore

We are all responsible for taking care of the earth. The choices we make can have positive or negative effects on our local environment. Some schools are involved in Green Schools initiatives. This lesson can focus on some of the activities that are ongoing in the school as part of this initiative.

Serving our local community means caring for the environment in which we live. As a class, discuss your locality and invite the students to provide answers/suggestions for the following questions:

- What are five things you like about where you live?
- Name some natural resources in your locality (e.g., lakes, rivers, seaside, parks, hedges).
- Are there any areas in your locality that need improvement (e.g. due to litter, heavy traffic, no green spaces, no wild flowers)?
- What can we do to improve our area (e.g. don't litter/do pick up litter, walk/cycle to school if you can, plant some wild flowers)?





Activity 1

In the circle, write three ways that you can serve your local community by caring for the environment.

Caring for God's Earth

1

2

3

**Thank you, God, for
our beautiful earth.**

Activity 2: Planting seeds

If there is no small area on the school grounds or no flowerbed or large flower pot available for sowing wild flowers, then each child should be given an opportunity to sow seeds such as cornflowers or nasturtiums in recycled yogurt pots.

Discuss with the class how they should care for their pots after they have sown their seeds (watering, sunlight, etc.).



Friday: Service in our Faith Community

**'Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also.
Whoever serves me, the Father will honour.'
(Jn 12:26)**

Consider

Each of us has been put on this earth to serve a specific purpose. Each of us has been given a job to do. We have been given specific tools, natural abilities and nagging desires to do something. We have been given gifts and talents to put to the service of the Church and one another. Learning what our gifts and talents are is one way of finding our true vocation and putting them to use for God.

Explore

Each of us has skills and talents that we can use to make the world a better place. Discuss with the class the different talents that they might have, e.g. being good at listening, maths, singing or art, or being kind, caring or helpful, etc. Invite the class to suggest ways that these talents can be used to make the world a better place.

There are lots of ways we can serve our faith community. Ask the class to think of all the ways people give service to or are involved with the parish community. List these on the board with the names of some of the people or groups involved. Examples might include musicians, the choir, parish committees, ministers of the Eucharist, readers, collectors, sacristans and Mass servers. Explain that each one of these people have a vocation and have been given various gifts and talents that they put to the service of our faith community.

Some people have a special calling from God to live their life in a faith community. Write the word 'Vocation' on the board. Discuss with the class what the word means. Explain to the class that God calls each of us to serve him in a particular way in life. That special call is our vocation. We all have a vocation in life. Some people who feel a calling to be a priest, nun, sister, brother or deacon have a vocation to that way of life for God.





Activity 1

In the Bible we read about the times when Jesus called the twelve apostles to be his followers. The calling of the disciples on the Sea of Galilee is a key episode in the life of Jesus in the New Testament. It appears in Matthew 4:18-22, Mark 1:16-20, Luke 5:1-11 and John 1:35-51.

If there is time, the class could be divided into groups to use their Bibles to find the passages listed above. Each group could retell the story they found to the rest of the class.

Activity 2

Invite the local parish priest, a nun or a brother to visit the school. This could take place during an assembly or it could just be a visit to an individual class. Prior to the visit spend some time gathering questions that the class might ask their visitor and provide the questions to the priest, sister or brother in advance. The following sample questions might be useful:

- When did you decide to become a priest/nun/brother?
- What did you have to do to become a priest/nun/brother?
- What do you like about what you do?
- What do you find difficult about what you do?
- What is your favourite time of year and why?

The class could create and decorate a card to thank their visitor for coming to speak to the class. The following can be used as a template for a prayer to be included on the card:



Dear God,

We thank you for the work that

does for our parish community.

You called _____

in a special way to do your work on earth.

Like the disciples, they chose to do your will.

We pray that _____

will have the courage and strength to

continue to fulfil their life of service.

Bless _____

and keep them safe.

Amen.

