



Catholic Schools: Called to Serve

Love • Kindness • Joy • Truth • Justice



Catholic Schools Week 2015
Seachtain na Scoileanna Caitliceacha 2015

Resources for the Primary School
Community: Home, School & Parish

Catholic Schools: Called to Serve
25–31 January 2015

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Christian Meditation for Children	INSIDE BACK COVER
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Resources

A number of additional resources are available for download from www.catholicschools.ie:

- The Entire Resource *as Gaeilge*
- Home Page in Polish
- Reflection for Catholic Schools Week 2015 for Staff and Members of Board of Management/Governors
- Planning Meeting for Catholic Schools Week 2015
- Celebrating Catholic Schools Week 2015 in the Diocese
- Service to Celebrate the Ministry of Teachers
- Catholic Schools Week 2015 in the Parish
- Opening Prayer Service for Catholic Schools Week 2015
- Closing Prayer Service for Catholic Schools Week 2015
- Prayer Service for Grandparents' Day 2015.

Poster

Included in this resource book is an A2-sized poster, which can be added to each day of Catholic Schools Week. The poster can be placed in the school sacred space. We suggest that each day some of the classwork be added to the poster. It might be possible for a different class to take responsibility for choosing the best or most appropriate page each day.

Invitation to All Schools

As part of Catholic Schools Week 2015, [iCatholic.ie](http://icatholic.ie) will host a Live Stream Programme for all primary schools on Tuesday, 27 January at 11:55 a.m. The programme will last for thirty minutes.

Please log onto www.icatholic.ie/live to participate in this event with your class.



Catholic Schools Week 2015 at Home

Dear Parents and Families,

All this week, our school will be celebrating Catholic Schools Week. This annual celebration of Catholic education gives us all the opportunity to be more aware of the unique contribution that our Catholic schools make to Irish life. Our theme this year is **Catholic Schools: Called to Serve**. During this week we invite you to take time to reflect on the service that Catholic schools give to children, parents, families and communities. We also ask you to consider how best you can offer support to the service that your child's Catholic school provides in so many different ways. These are some ideas for you to try:



Monday **We are Called to Serve with Love**

Pray the Morning Prayer with your child today:

Father in heaven, you love me,
You're with me night and day.
I want to love you always
In all I do and say.
I'll try to please you, Father,
Bless me through the day. Amen.



Tuesday **We are Called to Serve with Kindness**

Help your child do an **Act of Random Kindness** today.



Wednesday **We are Called to Serve with Joy**

Today is Grandparents' Day. Take time to make a card for a grandparent/s with your child today. Thank them for all the joy they bring to your lives. There is a card-making activity suitable for all classes on page 21.



Thursday **We are Called to Serve with Truth**

Bring your child to visit the church today. Bless each other with holy water, light a candle and say a prayer of thanksgiving for the teachers in your child's school.



Friday **We are Called to Serve with Justice**

Think of something to do today that will make God's world a better place. Pick up some litter, switch off lights that are not needed, go for a walk with your child and notice the beauty of God's world.



Thoughts for Each Day

Catholic Schools Week: Called to Serve

These reflections can be read out loud every day in each classroom or over an intercom system to link the whole school community. The spoken reflection might be followed by a short period of meditation in each individual classroom. A guide to leading Christian meditation is available on the inside back cover of this resource.

Monday: Today is the first day of Catholic Schools Week 2015. The theme for the week this year is **Catholic Schools: Called to Serve**. God sent his only son Jesus to show us how much he loved us. Jesus taught us by his words and by his actions how we can serve God with love. We serve God by loving each other, our families and friends. But God also wants us to love those who are difficult to love, those who are mean or unkind to us, the people we don't like, the people we don't agree with, the people who we think aren't cool. This is the real test of how we serve God with love. God of love, help us to love our neighbour as we know you love us no matter what. Together we pray the prayer that Jesus taught us:

Our Father ...

Tuesday: Today we are asked to serve God with kindness. While Jesus was here on earth he showed great kindness to all, especially those people to whom no one else showed kindness. It can be easy for us to be kind to people we like or people who show kindness to us, but we are asked to serve God by showing kindness to everyone, especially those who are left out or have never experienced kindness. God of kindness, may we try to be kind in all we do and to all we meet today and always. Together we pray the prayer that Jesus taught us:

Our Father ...

Wednesday: Today is Grandparents' Day and we are asked to think about how we can serve the Lord with joy. Our grandparents bring such joy to our lives and we know that we can bring great joy to their lives too. We can serve God by being joyful in all we do and by sharing that joy with others. Our grandparents are great teachers in how to serve God as they pass on their faith to us. God of joy, help us to find real joy in all we do this day and always. Together we pray the prayer that Jesus taught us:

Our Father ...

Thursday: Today we think about how we can serve the Lord with truth. Jesus came to share with us the most important truth of all – the Good News that God loves us. The truth is that God will always love us no matter what; his love is never-ending. His love is always with us and even if we turn away from him he will always be waiting for us to return. God of truth, help us to share your truth with everyone we meet; help us to be the Good News in the way that we act, the way we speak and the way we love. Together we pray the prayer that Jesus taught us:

Our Father ...

Friday: As Catholic Schools Week comes to a close, we are asked in particular to think about how we can serve God with justice. When we act justly and treat others justly we are doing what Jesus wants us to do. We are trying to make the world a fairer, better place. God of justice, may we always stand up for justice in our schools, in our families, in our community, and most importantly for the people all over the world who live in places where there is no justice. Together we pray the prayer that Jesus taught us:

Our Father ...

Monday:

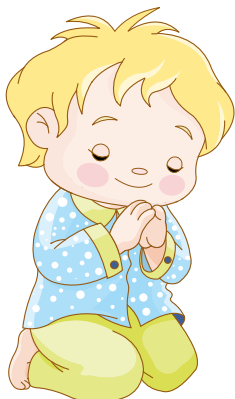
We are Called to Serve with Love

For the Teacher: We begin this Catholic Schools Week by exploring how we are called to serve with love as followers of Christ. Everything we do as Christians is rooted in love and in the knowledge that we are always loved by God and always called by God to live our lives out of that love for self, for others and for God.

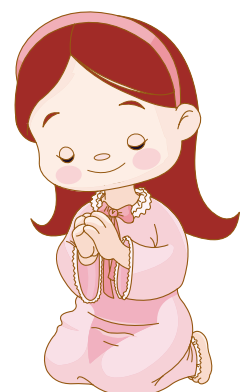
Junior and Senior Infants/Primary 1 and 2: Ask the children to name all the people who love them. Then ask them to name all the people that they love. Ask them to imagine if we could draw a heart big enough to hold all that love, how big would it be? Would it fit on the whiteboard? Would we be able to draw it with chalk on the playground? Could we draw it with paint on the football pitch? It would have to be a very big heart to have all that love in it. Now tell the children that there is someone else who loves them even more than all the love in that heart that we've just talked about. That someone is God. We just can't imagine how much God loves us. There isn't a heart big enough that we could draw to show us the love that God has for us in his heart because God is Love. Ask the children to think of a word to describe how knowing God loves them so much makes them feel. Ask them to think of ways that they can share God's love with others. One of the ways we can share God's love with someone special is to do the activity on page 6. Ask the children to decide who they would like to give the page to when they have finished it. Conclude the lesson by lighting your class candle and asking the children to say thank you to God for all the people who love them, for the people that they love and to God for loving them so much.

First and Second Class/Primary 3 and 4: Write the words 'Love one another' on the board. Tell the children that this is the number one rule for people who want to follow Jesus. He told his friends that they must love one another as he loved them. He also said that if they wanted people to know that they were his friends they had to show love for one another. When we do this we are sharing God's love with one another. Talk to the children about how they share God's love. Sometimes this is hard to do. Sometimes we get angry or cross. Sometimes we have to make a choice to share love rather than waste love. We must always try to be people who share God's love, not waste God's love. The activity on page 7 will help the children think of times when they choose to share God's love rather than waste it.

Revise/teach/pray the Morning Prayer:



Father in heaven, you love me,
You're with me night and day.
I want to love you always
In all I do and say.
I'll try to please you, Father,
Bless me through the day. Amen.





Third and Fourth Class/Primary 5 and 6:

Go and Announce the Gospel of the Lord

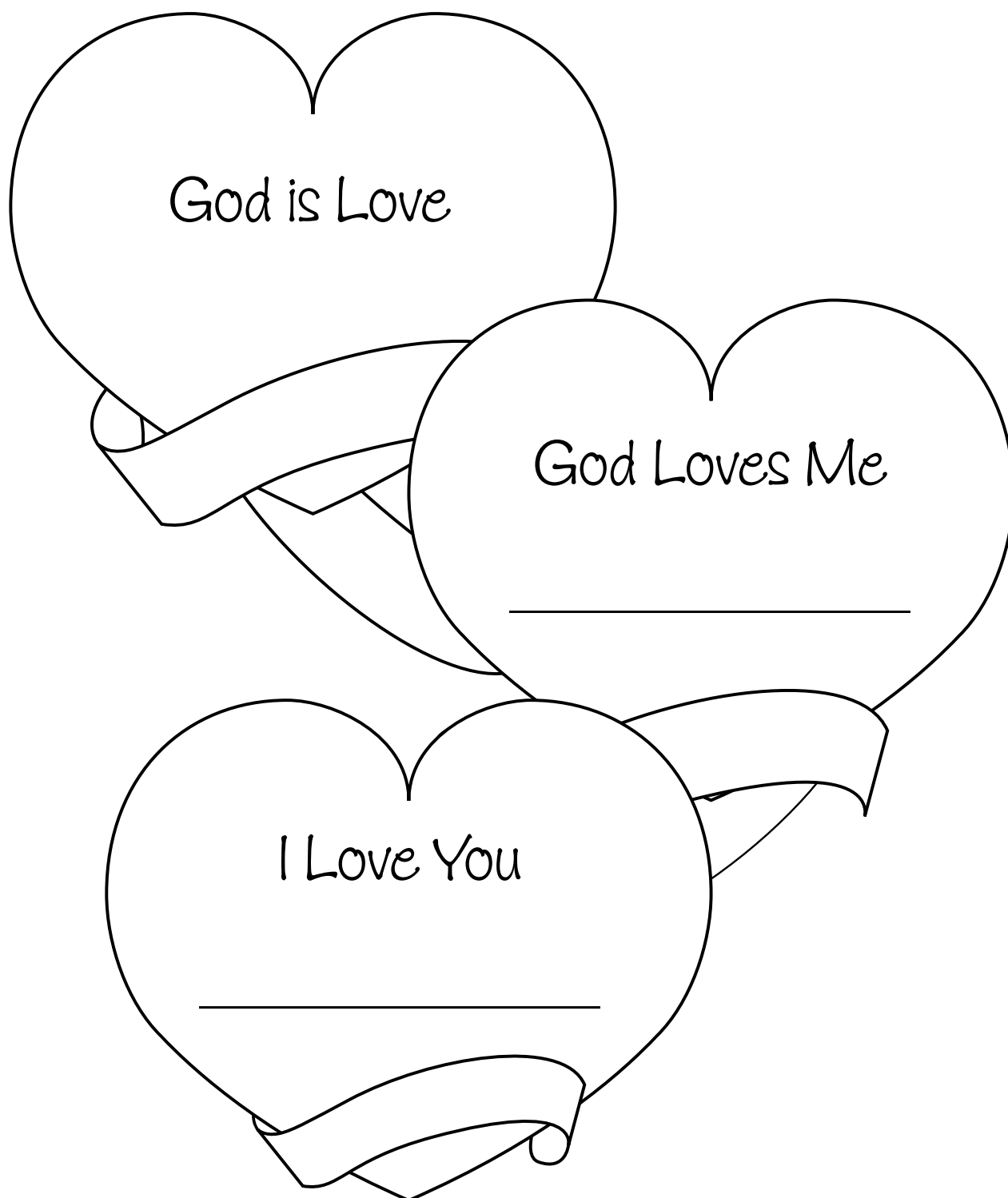
Play a game of Hangman with the children to reveal the most important message of the Gospel: **'Love One Another.'** At the end of Mass we all stand up – we are getting ready to go and do something for God. The priest blesses us and this is to give us strength and courage for our job. Then the priest gives us our job. He tells us to **'Go and Announce the Gospel of the Lord'**. This is our job, our mission for the week. We are all sent from Mass to announce the Gospel. But what does this mean? It means that we are being sent to bring God's love to everyone, to share the Good News of the Gospel, that we are loved by God and that we in turn must love one another. We don't always have to use words to announce the Gospel; we can do it through our actions and through our deeds. Ask the children to choose one of the ideas on page 8 to help them to carry out their mission to announce the Gospel of the Lord this week. Then think of one other way that they can carry out their mission as a class and as individuals.

Fifth and Sixth Class/Primary 7: Pope Francis has declared a Year of Consecrated Life that began in October 2014 and will end in November 2015. Men and women who spend their lives in religious orders and congregations are said to live consecrated lives. Tomorrow the children will hear about one of these, a woman named Angela Merici, who was the foundress of the Ursuline Order. The activity on page 9 has a word search containing the names of many holy men and women. These men and women served God with love. They gave up their lives for love of God and did their best to share God's love with everyone they met. Your class might like to find out more about some of the people mentioned. In today's world there are not so many people choosing to live consecrated lives, but people are still serving God with love by the way they live their lives.



We are Called to Serve with Love: Junior and Senior Infants/Primary 1 and 2

Fill in and colour in the hearts below





We are Called to Serve with Love: First and Second Class/Primary 3 and 4

Jesus said 'Love One Another'

Circle the words that help you to share God's love

Share

Smile

Frown

Turn my back

Shake hands

Forgive

Shout

Throw a tantrum

Listen

Finish each sentence with one of the above

I **waste** God's love when I _____

I **waste** God's love when I _____

I **waste** God's love when I _____

I **waste** God's love when I _____

I **share** God's love when I _____

I **share** God's love when I _____

I **share** God's love when I _____

I **share** God's love when I _____

I **share** God's love when I _____

Help me God to _____ your love and not to

_____ it ever. Amen.

We are Called to Serve with Love: Third and Fourth Class/Primary 5 and 6



Go and Announce the
Gospel of the Lord

Write the one you choose to accept in the box at the
bottom of the page

Eat all
my lunch

Be helpful

Say a prayer for
the children who
have little to eat

Share
something

Say thank
you

Say please

Say sorry when
I'm wrong

Try not to
complain

Pick up
litter

Include
others in the
playground

Smile when I'm
feeling mad

Put my toys
away without
being asked

Help with
the dishes

Call/text/email
someone I know
who would love to
hear from me

Make a card
for someone

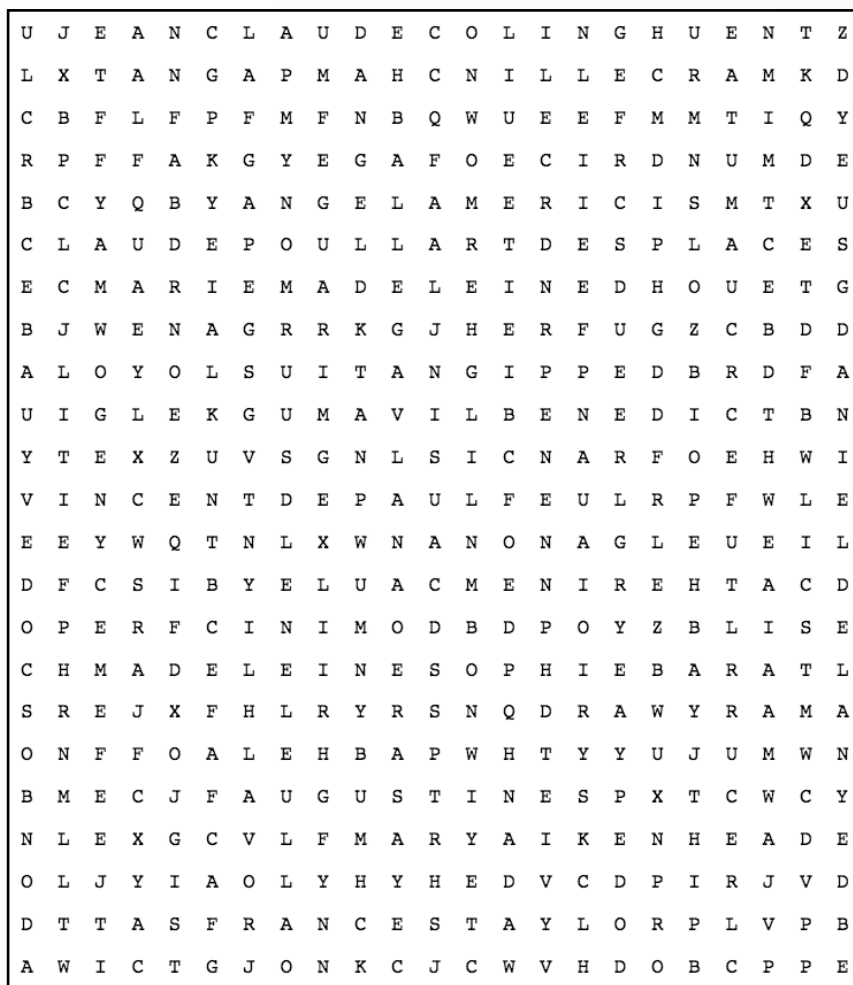
Feed the
birds

My mission is to



We are Called to Serve with Love: Fifth and Sixth Class/Primary 7

All of the men and women in this word search have one thing in common. They founded congregations of sisters, brothers and priests, many of whom serve God with love by teaching children. See if you can find out the names of these teaching orders or congregations. They all have schools in Ireland today.



Word Search

Angela Merici
Catherine McAuley
Nano Nagle
Edmund Rice
Mary Aikenhead
Daniel Delany
Mary Ward

Ignatius Loyola
Don Bosco
Benedict
Augustine
Dominic
Marie Madeleine d'Houet
Francis

Claude Poullart des Places
Jean Claude Colin
Marcellin Champagnat
Frances Taylor
Madeleine Sophie Barat
Vincent de Paul

Tuesday:

We are Called to Serve with Kindness

For the Teacher: All of us who follow Jesus have been called to love one another as God loves us. One expression of being a loving person is to act in caring ways, that is, to be a kind person. Jaime Corpus Reyes, an artist involved in the Waves of Kindness Initiative has said: ‘Kindness is Pure Love expressed, experienced, realised.’ We can take some quiet time to guide the children in reflecting on three things:

1. When have they experienced kindness? What were the actions/words that were kind?
2. Can they recall times when they were kind to others? What did they do/say?
3. They can think about, and plan, how to be kind in all the areas of their own lives. It can all start with their face, for, as William Arthur Ward said, ‘A warm smile is the universal language of kindness.’

BEING KIND – WHAT CAN YOU DO?

To find definitions of kindness and suggestions for kind acts you can look at www.randomactsofkindness.org and www.brainyquote.com. There are also poster-style images of kindness quotes online that could be used for display/screen backgrounds, etc.

Junior and Senior Infants/Primary 1 and 2:

Jesus tells us to love one another and that means we are to be kind to other people. Get the children to think of kind things to say and do. Notice the children being kind and let them know it has been seen. Tell a story that highlights kind actions/intentions/words, e.g. *The Smartest Giant* by Julia Donaldson, *The Three Little Wolves and The Big Bad Pig* by Eugene Trivizas, and *The Old Bear Stories* by Jane Hissey.

Teach the children the following poem:

Be kind in what you say,
Be kind in what you do,
Being kind every day
Lets God’s love shine through you.

Make a display in the classroom/school sacred space using the activity on page 12.

First and Second Class/Primary 3 and 4:

Jesus tells us that when we love, God is there because God is Love. Jesus asks us to follow him and live a life of love, caring for others, helping others, being kind. We can think of how we can be kind to others by **Giving A Hand** in a cheerful, friendly way. Each child can trace the outline of their hand and cut it out. On this they write/draw three ways they could **Give A Hand** at home and/or in school. These can be displayed in a simple tree form – literally a ‘palm’ tree. They can also make a second one where they write/draw an act of kindness they will do for someone and then they can give it to that person.

The cartoonist Scott Adams said: ‘Remember there’s no such thing as a small act of kindness. Every act creates a ripple with no logical end.’ This ripple effect could be demonstrated by reading the book *Because a Little Bug Went Ka-choo!* by Rosetta Stone, in the Dr Seuss range. The children could then reimagine/rewrite the story with acts of kindness and their consequences.

The activity on page 13 highlights the importance of speaking kind words. We can also say we are sorry when we are unkind and then begin again to be kind.

Third and Fourth Class/Primary 5 and 6:

Discuss with the children whether we have to like people in order to be kind to them. Can we be kind to people we have not met? Can we be kind even if we are not fond of someone? Can we be kind to someone who is not acting in a kind way themselves? Where can we get the strength/help/support to be kind when it is difficult? What does Jesus say? What example does he give us?

Use the story of Zacchaeus (*Alive-O* 5 children’s book, page 29) to explore how Jesus acted towards someone who others disliked and whose actions were not very kind. Jesus was kind to Zacchaeus even though he had no friends and was thought to be a mean, unpleasant person. How was Jesus kind? How did Zacchaeus feel? What was the effect on Zacchaeus? On the other people? Jesus being kind had a great effect. Similarly the parable of the mustard seed, in



Alive-O 6, page 7, reminds us that something very small can grow into something very big. A small 'mustard seed' act of kindness can grow into a strong caring tree.

Reflect on the message in the words of the songs in *Alive-O 5*, page 57, 'Whatsoever You Do' and page 59, 'Go Now In Peace'; and in *Alive-O 6*, page 54, 'We Are The Body Of Christ' and page 56, 'Come Holy Spirit'.

The activity on page 14 will help the children become familiar with some of the stories in the Bible in which Jesus shows us how to be kind towards others. When they have unscrambled the titles they can then use the references provided to look up the stories in the Bible and write the correct reference beside each story.

Fifth and Sixth Class/Primary 7: Aristotle defined kindness as 'helpfulness towards someone in need, not in return for anything, nor for the advantage of the helper, but for that of the person helped'. There are many people, followers of Jesus, who live their lives this way, trying to show God's love. In so doing they are workers in and for God's kingdom. They see that others have needs and they do their best to meet them. They make kindness their attitude and their way of life. We often see this as the Holy Spirit at work in the world through God's people. Some of these people are recognised as saints. Angela Merici was one of these people. She founded the Ursuline Order. The Church celebrates her Feast Day today,

27 January. Using the activity on page 15, compile a fact file on Angela Merici. You can also find out more about her on this website: www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=21. Angela Merici invited people to:

Do something

Get moving

Be confident

Risk new things

Stick with it

Get on your knees

THEN BE READY FOR BIG SURPRISES

You might like to discuss this with your class.

Consider compiling a Good News Paper that can be displayed and added to beyond Catholic Schools Week. Think of the people who are working to meet the needs of others in our school, in our community, in the news. Choose someone to research and write about their work. Cut out articles/photos/initiatives that depict acts of kindness/work for justice and peace/people making a positive difference, including showing kindness towards God's creations.

Sometimes putting this type of kindness in action requires toughness and strength. As Christians we know that we are not on our own – we can call on the Holy Spirit to help us. Invite the children to write a prayer to the Holy Spirit.

Discuss some of the following with your class:

- How difficult it is to be someone who acts out of kindness, especially when your friends don't support you?
- How can you help others in need? Is there something you could do in your class/school that meets a need in your area? What about further afield?
- **LIVING KIND – WHAT CAN YOU DO?**



We are Called to Serve with Kindness: Junior and Senior Infants/Primary 1 and 2

Write your name in the centre and write or draw some of the kind things you say and do in the rays of the sun



We are Called to Serve with Kindness: First and Second Class/Primary 3 and 4

Put Kind Words In My Mouth



What can I say to be kind when I speak?

We are Called to Serve with Kindness: Third and Fourth Class/Primary 5 and 6

Unscramble the words below to find Bible stories that help us learn that Jesus wants us to be kind. Match the story to the place where you will find it in the Bible by looking up the references in the box at the bottom of the page and putting the correct reference beside each story.

collector the Zacchaeus tax

BIBLE REFERENCE

at the the well woman

BIBLE REFERENCE

Good The Samaritan

BIBLE REFERENCE

Prodigal The Son

BIBLE REFERENCE

Daughter Jairus'

BIBLE REFERENCE

Lepers Ten The

BIBLE REFERENCE

Sheep The Lost

BIBLE REFERENCE

the Bartimaeus man blind

BIBLE REFERENCE

Luke 19:1-10

Luke 15:3-7

Luke 15:11-32

Luke 17:11-19

John 4:1-42

Luke 10:25-37

Matthew 9:18-26

Mark 10:46-52

**We are Called to Serve with Kindness: Fifth and Sixth Class/Primary 7**

Angela Merici served God with great kindness

Use the word bank to complete the fact file below

Mother women happy January school twenty-four priest help
Desenzano Del Garda died life nuns town Ursula God's neighbour
parents 1474 taught prayed girls Italy married write pupils school God

Angela Merici was born in the year ____ in a small town in ____ called _____. Her _____ died when she was young. She was very upset when her only sister died suddenly and there was no time to send for a _____. She _____ for her sister and one day she had a vision that her sister was safe in _____' care. She decided to spend her _____ doing God's work. All around her she saw poor girls with no education. Angela lived in a time when only girls from rich families went to _____. Angela _____ herself to read and _____. She decided to set up a school for _____ in her own home. Soon she had lots of _____. Other women who wanted to help and to do God's work came to _____ her. Soon she was asked to set up another _____ in a nearby _____. Angela was very _____ to do this.

On 25 November 1535, St Angela Merici chose twelve _____ and started a group called the Company of St _____. She wanted the women who joined her to be consecrated to _____ and dedicated to the service of their _____, not to get _____ and to stay living in their own homes. This was very different to other groups of women or _____ who gave their lives to God at this time. They lived together in special places called convents and they very rarely left their homes.

On 18 March 1537, Angela was elected _____ and Mistress of the order of St Ursula. When she _____ on 27 January 1540, there were _____ - _____ branches of the Company of St Ursula serving the Church. Angela was made a saint in 1807. Her Feast Day is celebrated on 27 _____. Today there are Ursuline sisters still teaching children all over the world.

Wednesday:

We are Called to Serve with Joy

For the Teacher: Today is Grandparents' Day and many schools will be celebrating the way in which grandparents bring so much joy to their grandchildren, their families and to the communities to which they belong. There is a prayer service on www.catholicbishops.ie/catholicschoolsweek to help schools celebrate in a prayerful way with the grandparents who will come to visit the school today. On page 21 there is a Grandparents' Day card-making activity for all classes.

Junior and Senior Infants/Primary 1 and 2:
Ask the children what the word 'joy' means. Joy can mean being happy. Chat with the class about times when we are happy or full of joy, both at home and in school. Remind them that when we are full of joy, Jesus is full of joy. Jesus wants us to be happy and joyful. Colour the picture on page 17 and write the sentence: 'I Have Joy in Jesus.' Place the pictures in/around your sacred space to remind us all that Jesus wants us to be full of joy. Sing the song, **'I've Got the Joy in My Heart'**.*

I've Got the Joy in My Heart

I've got the joy, joy, joy, joy down in my heart
Down in my heart!
Where?
Down in my heart!
I've got the joy, joy, joy, joy down in my heart
Where?
Down in my heart to stay.

And I'm so happy
So very happy
I've got the love of Jesus in my heart
And I'm so happy
So very happy
I've got the love of Jesus in my heart.

First and Second Class/Primary 3 and 4:

In John's Gospel, Jesus says: 'These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full' (Jn 15:11). Chat with the class about being joyful. Jesus wants us to be full of joy. When we are joyful and give joy to others Jesus is truly joyful – we know we can find joy in Jesus Christ. Encourage the pupils to think of and talk about a time at home or in school when they are full of joy and a time when they bring joy to the lives of others. Being joyful and bringing joy to others brings us closer to Jesus and gives him joy. Complete the activity on page 18 following the class discussion. (*The song 'I've Got the Joy in My Heart' could also be done with First and Second Classes*).

Third and Fourth Class/Primary 5 and 6:

Discuss with the class things in our lives that make us happy or give us joy. We look for joy in many different places – we can look for it by having lots of toys and things like phones, iPods, etc. But while we can find some joy in things and possessions we can only find real joy with others and with Jesus.
Read or recall the story of the Prodigal Son.**
Discuss the story and then read the more modern version of the story. Ask the class where both sons went looking for joy and ask the pupils to finish the modern story using the activity on page 19. Remind the children that while we may find joy in other places for a short time, real joy is found with our family, friends and especially with Jesus Christ.

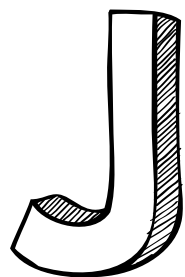
Fifth and Sixth Class/Primary 7: Pope Francis, as the leader of the Catholic Church, has a very good message for us. He tells us where we can find real joy. He shows us by his example how to serve the Lord with joy and be joyful in turn. Read about Pope Francis with the class, complete the activities on page 20 and discuss where Pope Francis tells us we can find real joy.

*Listen at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=q7krc4vHJxI

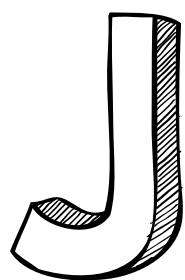
**Watch it online at www.watchbiblemovies.com/free-childrens-bible-movies/26-kids-new-testament/62-the-prodigal-son-animated-movie.html – this is a mix of the stories of Jesus but contains the story of the Prodigal Son.



We are Called to Serve with Joy: Junior and Senior Infants/Primary 1 and 2



is for Jesus



is for Joy



I Have Joy in Jesus

We are Called to Serve with Joy: First and Second Class/Primary 3 and 4

Jesus asks us to be full of joy!

It can be hard to be full of joy all the time, but when we are joyful and give others joy we make Jesus happy.

When we are full of joy, Jesus is full of joy

Write or Draw

I am full of joy when ...

I give joy to others when ...



This gives Jesus joy!



We are Called to Serve with Joy: Third and Fourth Class/Primary 5 and 6

Do you know the story of the Prodigal Son? Luke 15:11-32

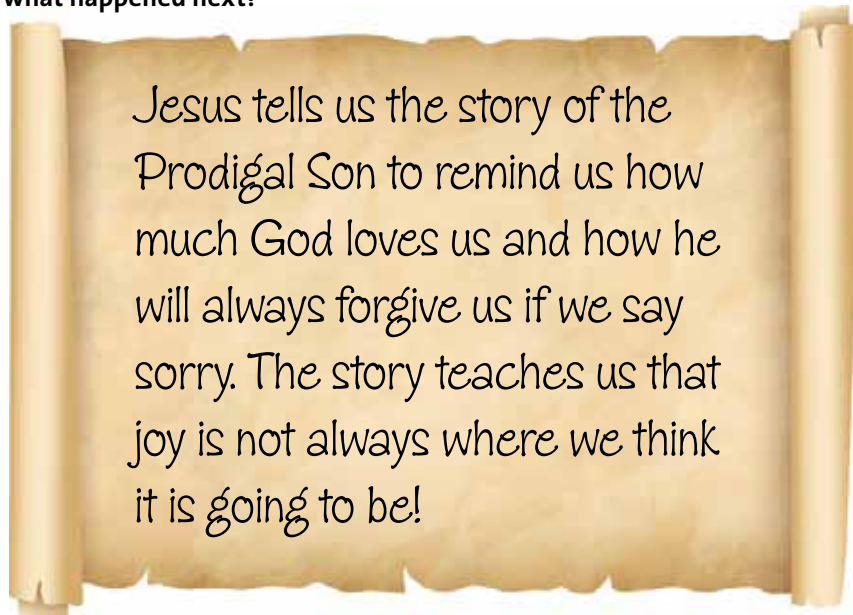
Read it! Recall it! Discuss it!

A Modern Prodigal Son

There was once a little boy who went to the fair with his family. At first he was very excited, but as the day wore on he became more and more unhappy with the way his parents were 'controlling' how the family spent their money at the fair. In anger, he asked if he could have all the money they planned to spend on him that day. He wanted to hold it and decide when and how to spend it.

Once his parents had given him the money, the boy ran off to spend it as he wished. He gorged himself on mini-donuts and went on lots of rides. Just as his money ran out, he started to feel ill. Suddenly he felt very alone and scared. The fair wasn't fun at all with no family around and no more money to spend. Finally, a gruff fair worker offered him a job cleaning up the rubbish. At this point, the boy decided that spending the remainder of the day with his parents, even though he would have no more treats or rides, would be far better than working at the fair. He searched and searched until he found his mother and father. They were overjoyed to see him.

Can you guess what happened next?



Unscramble the message below to find out where joy can be found!

eW nca dfni lrea oyj ni esuJs rhistC

We are Called to Serve with Joy: Fifth and Sixth Class/Primary 7

Pope Francis reminds us of the joy of the Gospel!

Who is Pope Francis?

Pope Francis is the 266th pope. The white smoke that signalled a new pope had been elected plumed on 13 March 2013, at the end of the second day of the [papal conclave](#).

People were very surprised that a man called Jorge Mario Bergoglio had been elected pope, and many did not know who he was. But his humbleness, openness, and his straightforward, no-nonsense manner soon allowed him into the hearts of the faithful and the world.

Has there been a Pope Francis before?

This is the first time that a pope has chosen the name Francis. He picked the name Francis in honour of [St Francis of Assisi](#), who is the founder of the worldwide Franciscan order, champion of the poor and patron saint of animals and the environment, to name but two. Pope Francis has great concern for the poor and has asked the people of the Church and the world to help those struggling in poverty.

Where is he from?

Pope Francis was born on 17 December 1936 in Buenos Aires, the capital city of Argentina, South America. He is the son of Italian parents. He joined [The Society of Jesus](#) (the Jesuits) as a novice and was ordained a priest in 1969. He became [archbishop](#) of Buenos Aires in 1998 and a [cardinal](#) in 2001.

Is it true he is a pope of many firsts?

Pope Francis has brought in a new style to the papacy. He does not care much for the frills and fanciness that go along with being pope. One break with the norm is that he has chosen to live in the Vatican Guesthouse instead of the Papal Residence. The pope lives simply; he even drives around in a thirty-year-old vehicle, although he could – as past popes have done – own expensive cars.

He is:

- The first pope born outside of Europe since Pope Gregory III (731–741)
- The first pope from the Americas
- The first Jesuit pope
- The first pope since Pope Lando (913–914) to choose a name that has not already been used.

Where does Pope Francis say we can find joy?

After becoming pope, Francis wrote a book called *Evangelii Gaudium* (Latin for 'The Joy of the Gospel'). This book explains what Pope Francis would like to do as pope, but most importantly it reminds us that we can find joy or happiness when we read the stories of Jesus in the Gospel. These stories tell us about how much he loves us and how he can fill our hearts with joy and love if we allow him in.

What is Pope Francis' motto?

He has chosen the motto, 'By having mercy, by choosing him.'

What does Pope Francis' papal crest look like?



Activities:

1. In groups or in pairs, research the words written in [blue](#).
2. Find out more about Pope Francis and share what you have learned with your class.
3. Research the mottos and crests of other popes and create a timeline of the most recent ten popes.
4. Write a prayer for Pope Francis or the poor in our world.

Remember:

Pope Francis reminds us we can find real joy in the Gospel!



Create a Grandparents' Day Card!

What you need:

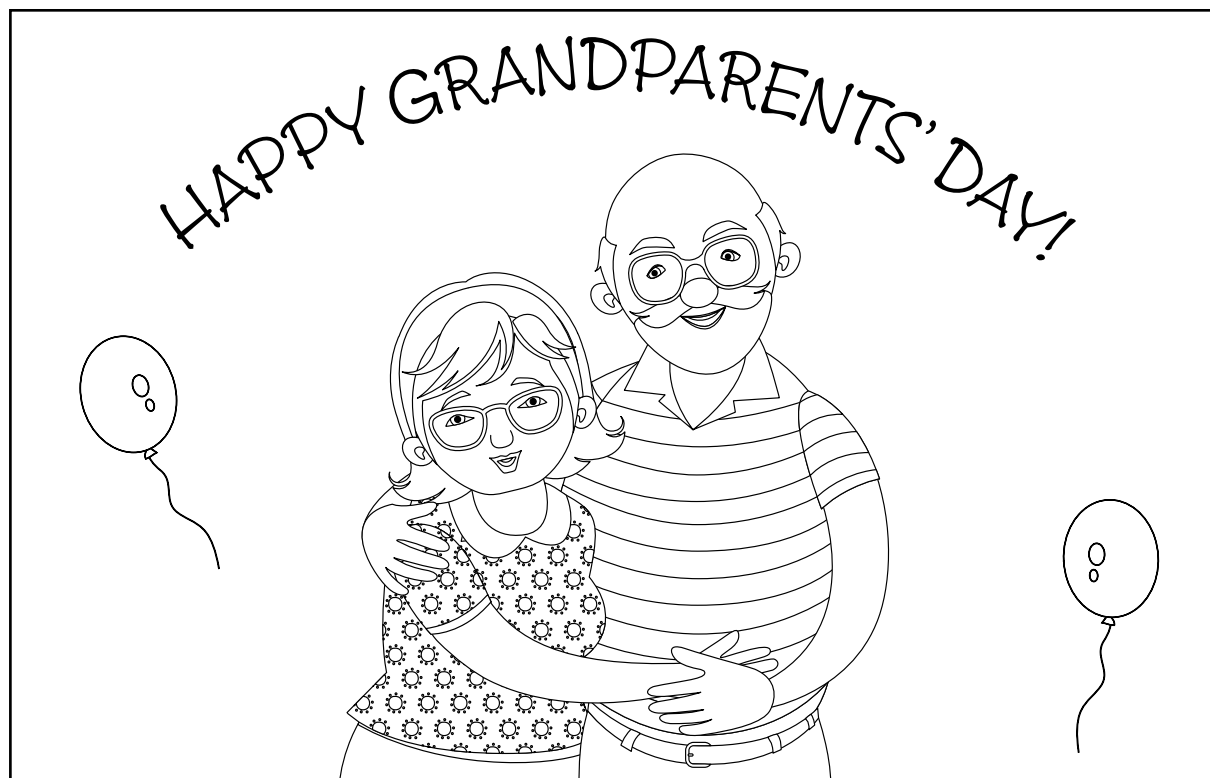
- A piece of A4 card
- A scissors
- Coloured pencils/crayons/markers.

**Thank You
Grandparents for
the Joy of Jesus!**

I'm blessed to know that
I am loved
by someone wise and true.
Someone who loves me as I am.
That someone, of course is you.

Happy Grandparents' Day!

Colour and cut out this picture, and stick it on the front of your card:



Thursday:

We are Called to Serve with Truth

For the Teacher: We continue our theme for Catholic Schools Week by exploring how we are called to serve with truth or, to put it another way, to truly serve God. We can only truly serve him when we do so with our whole hearts, our whole minds and our whole strength. We can only do this when we spend time with him, when we come to know and love him with all our heart, our mind and our strength. Today we are going to explore ways that we can spend time with God so that we can truly serve him as children of God.

Junior and Senior Infants/Primary 1 and 2: Invite the children to think about how they get someone's attention. Do they go up and say 'Hello', do they grab their sleeve and say 'Hi, I want to talk to you', do they jump up and down and start shouting? Is it different if the person is an adult, a bigger child or someone like themselves? Now ask them how they get God's attention. Do they shout, do they jump up and down, do they whisper? How do they think they could get God's attention? Tell them that they always have God's attention. God is always looking out for them, listening for them, waiting for them to talk to him. It's a bit like when they were very small and mammy or daddy was always watching out for them. Even when they were asleep in another room, mammy and daddy had a monitor in their room, listening in case they woke up and wanted their attention. God is like that. God wants us to talk to him, to spend time with him, to tell him what we are thankful for and what we are worried about. The activity on page 24 invites the children to colour a candle and write their names on it. They could then cut out the candles and use them during the following prayertime. One of the ways God knows that we are ready to talk to him is when we light our candle. **(Light the class candle now.)** Another way he knows is when we bless ourselves. Take time to bless yourselves very slowly. Now God knows we're ready to talk to him. Let the children be silent for a moment, thinking in their hearts about what they want to

talk to God about. Then invite them to bring their cut-out candle and place it on the table with the class candle. They can pray out loud saying 'Hello God, this is _____, I want to say I love you'. Finish the prayer by making the Sign of the Cross again.

First and Second Class/Primary 3 and 4: Ask the children to think of someone they know very well, someone at home, mammy or daddy, a brother or sister, nana or grandad, an aunt or uncle, a cousin, someone at school, the person who sits beside them, the friend they have had since they were in Junior Infants, or maybe someone in their neighbourhood. Think of their name and now say it out loud. Think of all the things you know about that person: how old they are, the colour of their hair, their favourite TV programme, their favourite food, the name of their pet, where they live, their favourite colour. Ask the children how they come to know all these things. They spend time with the person, they listen to them, they notice things about them because they care about them, they ask questions because they want to know more about them. This is what we do when someone is our friend. We know that Jesus is our friend too. We need to spend time with him if we want to get to know him better. One of the ways we can get to know more about Jesus is by listening to some of the stories that he told or some of the stories about him. Ask the children if they know where they can read these stories. They're all in a very special book called the Bible. Show the children the class Bible. Ask them if they can remember any stories they have heard from the Bible: the story of the little boy who gave Jesus his bread and his fish so that everyone could be fed; the story of how Jesus told everyone that children are the greatest; the story of how Jesus was born; the story of how he got lost and then found. These are only some of the stories that the children should know. Choose a favourite story to read to the children. Light the class candle and read the story slowly. When you are finished, thank God for

the stories that help us to know more about Jesus and the way he wants us to truly serve God. Help the children to complete the activity on page 25.

Third and Fourth Class/Primary 5 and 6: If we want get to know someone we have to spend time with them. This helps us to find out more about them. Sometimes we go and visit their house, we see where they live, we meet the rest of their family, we listen to stories about them, we share food with them, and when it's time to go home we often promise that we will come back again soon. Getting to know God is a bit like getting to know a friend. If we are going to truly serve God with all our heart, mind and strength we have to spend time with him. We need to visit his house, meet other members of his family, listen to stories about him, sing songs, talk together, share food together, and promise to come back again when it's time to go home. Ask the children when we can do this with God. We can do it when we visit the church, God's house. We can do it when we go to Mass and meet other members of God's family. Think about what happens at Mass and how it is like going to visit a friend. Use the activity on page 26 to help the children see the connections between visiting a friend and spending time in God's house. Consider taking the children to visit the local church and helping them see some of the things that have been talked about.

Fifth and Sixth Class/Primary 7: The activity on page 27 will help the children explore how Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to help the disciples carry on his work. This can be further developed with the children in the context of their preparation for Confirmation and the gifts of the Holy Spirit that will help them to truly serve the Lord with all their hearts, minds and strength.



We are Called to Serve with Truth: Junior and Senior Infants/Primary 1 and 2

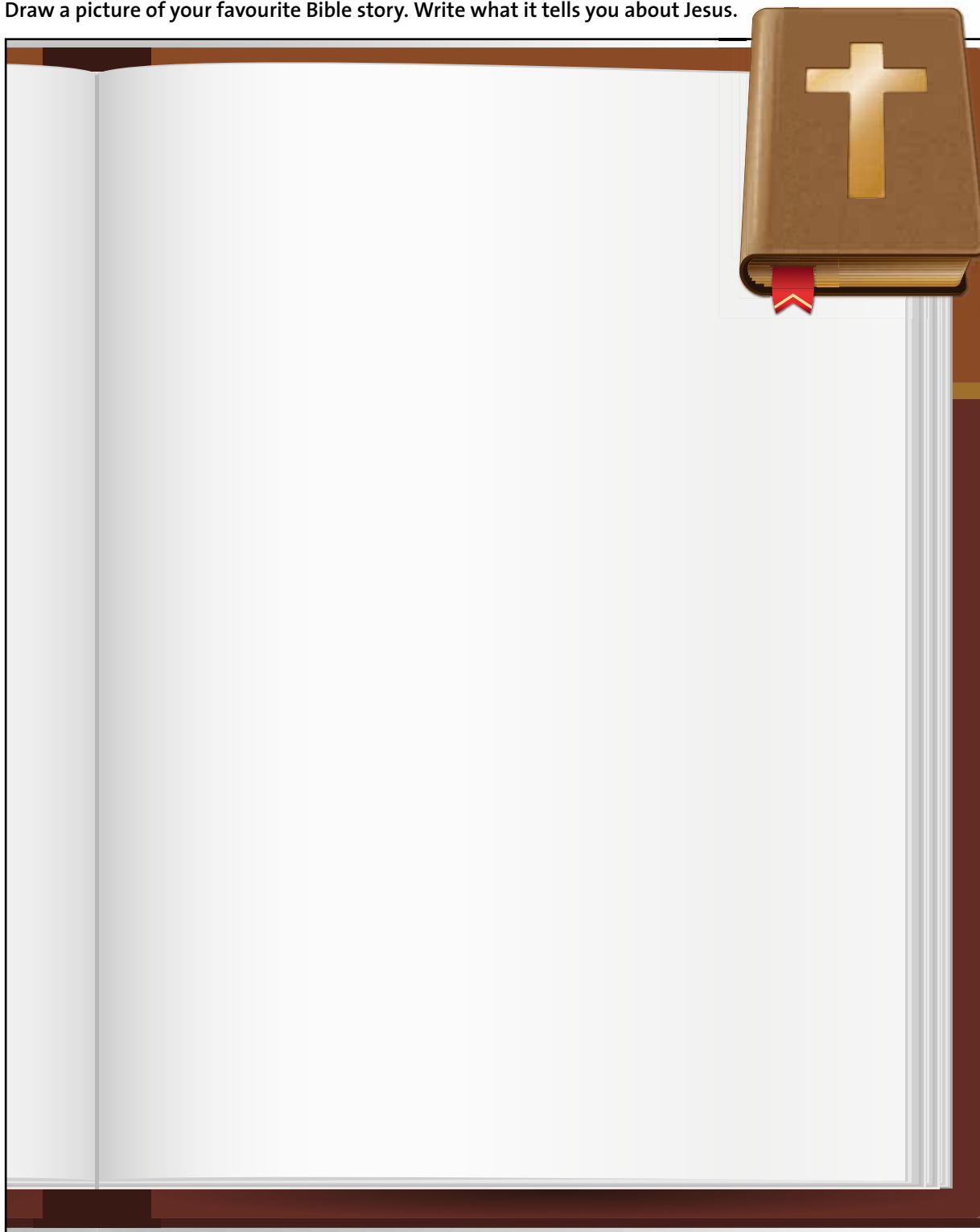




We are Called to Serve with Truth: First and Second Class/Primary 3 and 4

The Bible helps me to learn more about Jesus

Draw a picture of your favourite Bible story. Write what it tells you about Jesus.



We are Called to Serve with Truth: Third and Fourth Class/Primary 5 and 6

Spending Time in God's House

Match the words with their meaning

Altar	Family of God
Servers	Tells us a story that helps us to know more about God
Minister of the Word	Help us to sing
Holy Water	The table that we gather around to share food together
Congregation	Helps us understand more about God
Prayers	The book that contains the stories about how God wants us to live
Choir	Reminds us to bless ourselves
Priest	Help the priest and us
Lectionary	Help us to talk to God



We are Called to Serve with Truth: Fifth and Sixth Class/Primary 7

Read the promise that Jesus made to the disciples before he ascended into heaven:

'If you love me, keep my commands. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever, the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.' (Jn 14:15-17)

Answer the questions:

What do you think is the most important command that Jesus gave his friends?

Find out what the word 'advocate' means.

Who do you think is the 'advocate' that Jesus is talking about?

Why do you think that the disciples needed an advocate?

Did Jesus keep his promise?

Read the Acts of the Apostles, chapter 2, verses 1 to 4 to find out what happened when the advocate came. Write the story of Pentecost in your own words.

Friday:

We are Called to Serve with Justice

For the Teacher: There can be no peace in our world without justice. We see this on a daily basis around the world. When we hear about war-torn countries throughout the world, we know that it is unjust and unfair that innocent people are suffering. This week in our schools we accept the invitation to serve our home, school and community in whatever way we can for the good of all humankind. We remember today that sense of justice, which we are all asked to reflect on as Christians in our daily lives.

Junior and Senior Infants/Primary 1 and 2: Jesus said 'love one another as I have loved you'. When we love others, we treat them fairly or, in other words, justly. We act fairly or justly when we show love for others. The activity on page 29 will help the children to focus on the things they can do for others, which will show that they can act fairly or justly as they show love for one another. Discuss the different examples on the page. Encourage the children to talk about what is happening and why it shows acting fairly or not being fair. Give them time to complete the activity as suggested. Senior Infants might complete the sentence at the bottom of the page. Finish the activity by lighting your class candle and inviting the children to say thank you to God for the times when they have been treated fairly, and then ask God to help us to always treat others fairly.

First and Second Class/Primary 3 and 4: Jesus showed us how to act justly. He did this by the way he spoke to people and the way he treated people. He also showed justice to or treated fairly those who were not always just themselves. One such story is that of Zacchaeus, the tax collector who was very unjust in his dealings with others and who was not very popular with those in his community. Tell the story of Zacchaeus to the class. You can find it in Luke 19:1-10 or use the version at www.dltk-bible.com/cv/zacchaeus.htm. Completing the activity on page 30 will help consolidate the children's learning.

Third and Fourth Class/Primary 5 and 6: Pope Paul VI once said that 'If you want peace,

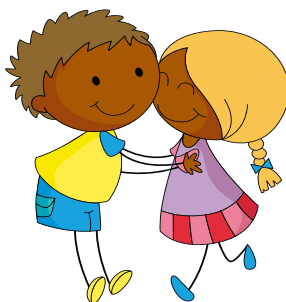
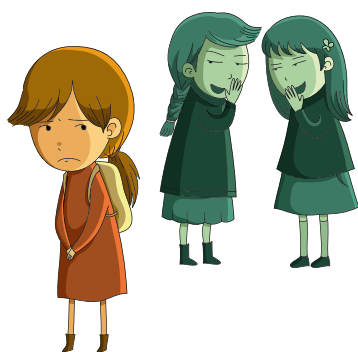
work for justice'. In the Sermon on the Mount or the Beatitudes (Mt 5:1-12), Jesus tells us 'Blessed are the peacemakers, they shall be called the children of God'. Peace and justice are inextricably entwined. There can be no peace without justice and peace is something that we are all seeking in our world today. If we serve God with justice then we will be helping to make our world a peaceful place. Jesus calls us to be at peace with ourselves and with those around us. Talk to the children about how they can make their world a more peaceful place by treating others justly. Get them to think of ways that they could make their classroom, playground and school more peaceful if they acted more fairly towards others. Tell them that Blessed Teresa of Calcutta once said that 'peace begins with a smile'. Does this make sense to them? Use words like smiling, forgiving, listening, thinking, sharing, accepting, apologising, admitting, respecting and considering to guide the discussion. The activity on page 31 invites the children to design a Peace Board to help them concretise this discussion. This could be done individually, in pairs, in groups or as a class. The most creative design could be displayed in the classroom or in the school corridor. You may want to develop this theme by talking about people who help to make peace in our world. Conclude this lesson with a prayer for peace and remember in your prayer the members of our Defence Forces keeping the peace in the Lebanon, Syria and other parts of the world.

Fifth and Sixth Class/Primary 7: This week we have been exploring the different ways in which we are called to serve as followers of Christ. We have looked at many different aspects of service. Service with love, with kindness, with joy, with truth and finally we come to justice. The word justice may need explanation. Brainstorm with the children what it means to them. Look for other words that they can use instead of justice. What does it mean to act justly? On page 32 you will find a number of examples of people/organisations who work very hard, sometimes risking their lives for justice in the world. Divide the children into groups and allow each group to choose one of the people/organisations and find out more about what they do to make our world a more just place.

We are Called to Serve with Justice: Junior and Senior Infants/Primary 1 and 2

God wants us to be fair to one another

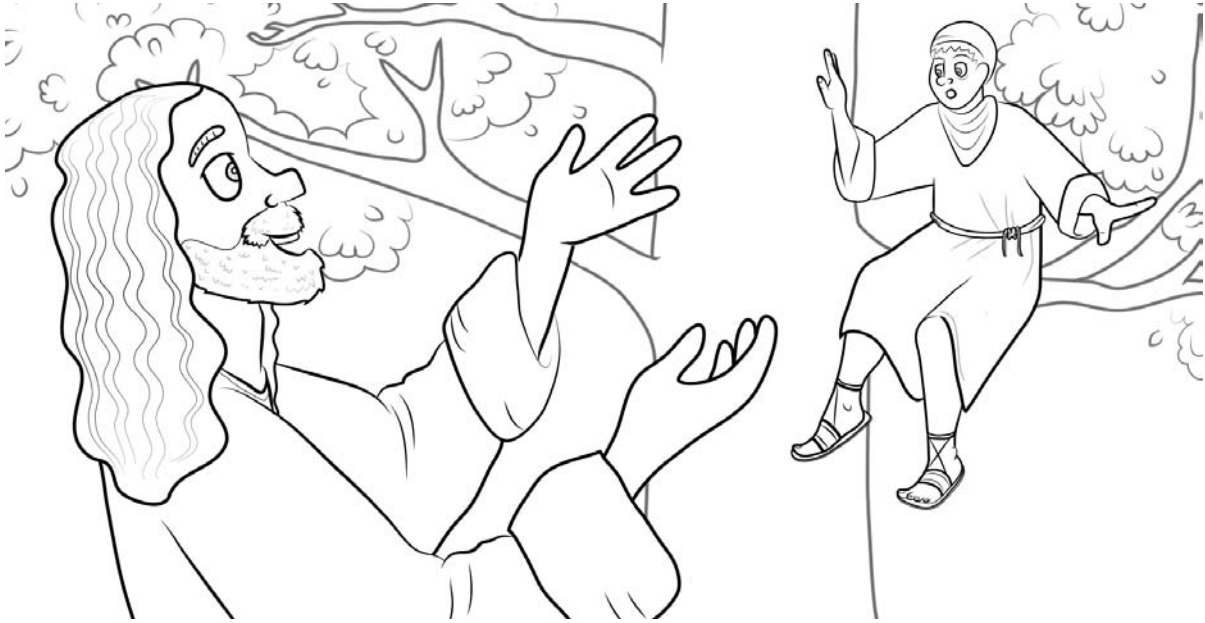
Draw a circle around the pictures that show children acting fairly. Put an x through the pictures where the children are not being fair.



I am fair when I

We are Called to Serve with Justice: First and Second Class/Primary 3 and 4

Jesus showed Zacchaeus how to treat others fairly



Put the sentences in the correct order to tell the story of Zacchaeus. Write them in your copybook.

He was unfair to everybody.

Then Zacchaeus was kind to everyone.

Jesus went to Zacchaeus' s house.

Nobody liked Zacchaeus.

Jesus was kind to Zacchaeus.



We are Called to Serve with Justice: Third and Fourth Class/Primary 5 and 6

'Peace Begins with a Smile'

Blessed Teresa of Calcutta

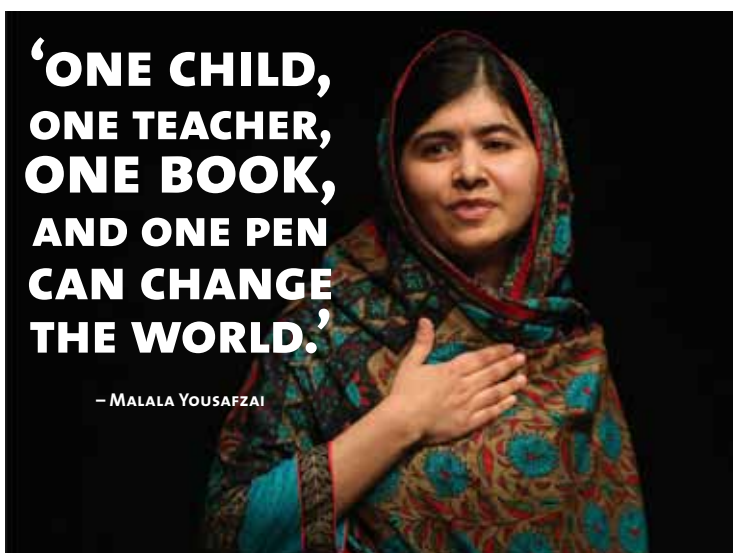
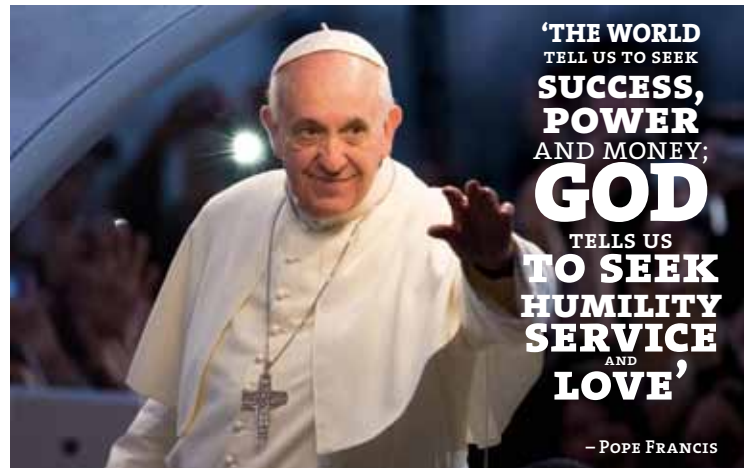
Design a Peace Board for your classroom. Fill your board with words, pictures, quotes and prayers that make you think of peace.



Peace
Begins with a smile

We are Called to Serve with Justice: Fifth and Sixth Class /Primary 7

In groups, find out more about one of the people/organisations below



Christian Meditation for Children

In recent years, Christian meditation has developed as a form of prayer that can be easily accessed and enjoyed by children. This can be carried out across a whole school setting or in individual classrooms. **Christian Meditation Ireland** has been piloting Christian meditation with children in recent years, and feedback indicates that this can be very successful in the classroom.

Please see www.christianmeditation.ie/index.php?q=meditation_and_children for more information.

Below is a sample of Christian meditation for children which has been used in an Irish primary classroom.

1. Select a time to carry out meditation within a class. For the purpose of Catholic Schools Week 2015, it is suggested that this time be a school selected time following the *Thought for Each Day*.
2. The duration of meditation is roughly one minute for each year of the child's age.
Note: At the beginning it may be difficult for the class to engage with meditation for the full period. The period in which the children meditate could be built up from two to three minutes when introducing meditation.
3. Begin by quietening the class down. Ask the children to sit with their backs straight and their feet flat on the floor. Ask the children to place their hands on their knees and to close their eyes.
4. Tell the children that this form of prayer gives us a chance to be close to God in quietness and stillness. We are going to do this by saying a mantra or sacred word, quietly at first and then in our heads during our meditation time. The mantra is **MA-RA-NA-THA (Come Lord)**.
5. Begin by asking the class to take three deep breaths and quietly recite the mantra with them a number of times. Then ask the children to continue reciting the mantra in their heads for the duration of the meditation.
6. Ensure that the class remain quiet for the duration of the meditation (whether they are still engaged or not).
7. When the time has ended, ask the class to slowly open their eyes. (You could possibly do some stretches with the class as well.)



This resource pack has been co-ordinated by Maeve Mahon in collaboration with Mary Finnegan, Michael Kilcrann and Hazel O'Connor, in consultation with the Steering Committee for Catholic Schools Week 2015.

The members of the Steering Committee are:

Mr Justin Brown, Mgr Jim Cassin, Dr Ger Condon, Fr Martin Delaney, Colette Dower, Brenda Drumm, Fr Michael Drumm, Bríd Dunne, Fr Paul Farren, Maura Hyland, Ferdia Kelly, Martin Long, Elaine Mahon, Maeve Mahon, Anna Maloney, Bernadette Martin, Tony McCann, Michael Redmond, Mr John Scally, Maria Spring, Sr Eithne Woulfe.

Catholic Schools: Called to Serve

Resources for the Primary School Community: Home, School & Parish

25–31 January 2015