6.1 The Reign of God: Breaking Down the Barriers

This unit explores how Jesus broke down barriers that prevented right relationships. It looks at concepts such as personal and social sin, and how our behaviour and relationships can advance or hinder the reign of God. Students will explore issues of prejudice, discrimination, rejection and acceptance, exclusion and inclusion.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Values & Attitudes***Students will demonstrate that they are:* | **Knowledge & Understandings***Students will demonstrate that they can:* | **Skills***Students will demonstrate that they can:* |
| S3.1 aware of their responsibility to live according to the values of Jesus | explain the consequences of living according to the values of Jesus | analyse their own actions according to the values of Jesus |
| O3.2 able to accept responsibility as Christians to reach out in justice to others | identify ways in which people of God reach out, or fail to reach out to others | evaluate ways in which they can reach out in justice to build unity |

Syllabus Outcomes
Self/Others – Stage 3

Classroom Outcomes

*Students will be able to:*

* explain ways that Jesus related to people and helped them to relate to one another
* analyse different ways by which individuals continue the mission of Jesus
* name those who were marginalised in Jesus’ time and those marginalised today
* explain how the Christian community responds to the marginalised

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Scripture | Doctrine |
| Micah 6:8 *Act Justly*Matthew 5:1-12 *The Beatitudes* Luke 7:1-10 *Jesus Heals a Centurion’s Servant* Luke 10:25-37 *Who is My Neighbour?* | * All people are created in the image and likeness of God
* All people have the potential to reflect the goodness and love of God
* Sin is a deliberate turning away from God
* The Church calls us, as Christians, to work towards unity with all people
* Christians continue to bring about the reign of God
 |

Spiritual Reflection for Teachers

Sir William Deane’s guiding principle as Governor General was his belief that ‘the ultimate test of our worth as a truly democratic nation is how we treat the most disadvantaged and vulnerable of our citizens’. His guiding objective was ‘that we Australians, indigenous and non-indigenous and regardless of our racial or cultural or other backgrounds, will go into the second century of our nation and the third millennium of the Christian era united as a people…walking together, talking together, working together, and achieving together – and with mutual respect and tolerance’.

T Stephens: Sir William Deane

Can we really say with joy and honesty “Australians ALL, let us rejoice?” What are some of the barriers I can work towards breaking down? What are the attitudes I hold that build barriers? What are the attitudes I hold that break down or prevent barriers?

Catechism of the Catholic Church

**Excerpts from the Catechism of the Catholic Church are included below as information for teachers. They present the Church’s teachings contained in this unit.**

**1935** The equality of men rests essentially on their dignity as persons and the rights that flow from it:

Every form of social or cultural discrimination in fundamental personal rights on the grounds of sex, race, colour, social conditions, language, or religion must be curbed and eradicated as incompatible with God's design.

**2304** Respect for and development of human life require peace. Peace is not merely the absence of war, and it is not limited to maintaining a balance of powers between adversaries. Peace cannot be attained on earth without safeguarding the goods of persons, free communication among men, respect for the dignity of persons and peoples, and the assiduous practice of fraternity. Peace is "the tranquillity of order." Peace is the work of justice and the effect of charity.

**2305** Earthly peace is the image and fruit of the peace of Christ, the messianic "Prince of Peace." By the blood of his Cross, "in his own person he killed the hostility," he reconciled men with God and made his Church the sacrament of the unity of the human race and of its union with God. "He is our peace." He has declared: "Blessed are the peacemakers."

Scripture: Background Information

**Micah 6: Act Justly**

Here God responds to a series of questions regarding bringing gifts into God’s presence. The response is presented as requirements set by God. These requirements are often regarded as a summary of the tradition of the prophets: do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God. They show an interrelatedness between how we treat others, our work for justice and our relationship with God.

**Matthew 5:1–12 The Beatitudes**

The Beatitudes are a collection of the teachings of Jesus that deal with the attitudes, behaviours and responsibilities of those who are disciples of Jesus Christ. Jesus is telling us that the way to true happiness is to live according to the life of the kingdom. When people experience the mercy of God they will be merciful to others.

The Beatitudes apply Jesus’ law of love, and can teach us about who and what we are called to become. Throughout his ministry Jesus showed us clearly that every person has an innate dignity and worth.

Jesus came as the fulfilment of the law and he leaves us with the law as a reminder of the way in which we should live. The love of God and the love of one’s enemies are a constant theme in the teachings of Jesus. Jesus lived by the teachings of the Beatitudes and we are called by our actions to do the same.[[1]](#footnote-1)

**Luke 7:1-10 Jesus Cures a Centurion’s Servant**

This is a remarkable scene, which puts before us what really matters to God and therefore enjoys his favour. It can speak to us and our experiences in our multicultural society. A Roman centurion sends Jewish elders to ask Jesus to heal his servant. The Romans are the occupying military force of Palestine therefore not generally popular with the locals. But this Roman is popular - in fact he built a synagogue for them. Thus he is a generous and inclusive man himself, who, it seems, also cares about his servants. Jesus responds to such positive genuineness by going to heal the servant. And what does he find? He finds not only a generous and kindly foreigner but also a man of great faith. Jesus praises his faith as better than his own followers. The servant is healed without Jesus being there – so great was the centurion’s faith in the power of God at work in Jesus. This Roman centurion is contrasted with those who should have believed but did not.

**Luke 10:25-37 Who is My Neighbour?**

“What must I do to inherit eternal life?” The answer to this question comes in the form of the Shema, the ancient Jewish prayer in Deuteronomy 6, along with a line from the Book of Leviticus 19 about loving your neighbour as yourself.

How well do we love ourselves? The meaning here suggests we should love ourselves as much as God loves us. But who is my neighbour that I must love as I love myself? The parable Jesus tells to answer this question is complex while appearing simple. This is the case with most parables. The parable depicts a despised foreigner helping a battered and robbed Jew. The Samaritan / foreigner is generous above the call of duty by covering all the expenses that the wounded man incurs. The innkeeper is also trusting, by accepting the promises of the Samaritan to repay him. The parable functions on two levels. Firstly, it sets before us the importance of loving those we consider unlovable and secondly, it presents the outcast Samaritan as the one who lives the law well and generously. Indeed this outcast is truly one of God’s people!

The Church’s Teaching and Lived Tradition

**In Tradition: *To Know, Worship and Love* Year 6, p9 – Eucharistic Prayer II**

In the Eucharist we are called to communion – into a unity. The Sacraments of Initiation enable us to enter and live fully the life of our faith community. They strengthen us to live the Good News and draw us more deeply into the life of the Church. Each celebration of the Eucharist commissions us to just action: to love and serve the Lord (and one another).[[2]](#footnote-2)

**Gaudium et Spes**

The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the people of this age, especially those who are afflicted in any way, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the followers of Christ (Gaudium et Spes, #1).

**Justice in the World**

Action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appear to us as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the gospel, or, in other words, of the Church’s mission for the redemption of the human race and its liberation from every oppressive situation. (Synod of Bishops 1971, Justice in the World, #6)

Celebration: Prayer and Liturgy

**Celebration is a key part of Religious Education. The following suggestions provide opportunities throughout the unit for celebration in prayer and liturgy. Most of these suggestions are included as ‘teaching/learning’ activities in Unit Content sections.**

* Set-up or change (depending on when you teach this unit) the classroom prayer place - see suggested story script ‘Our Prayer Place for Ordinary Time’ - Resource Sheet 1
* Use KWL Year 6, p18, ‘Our prayer’ for class prayer.
* In prayer read Micah 6:8. Use this as a repetitive chant in prayer periodically.
* Sing the song ‘Act Justly’ in prayer
* Present Matthew 5:1-12 The Beatitudes (KWL Year 6, p16) using a slow reflective reading of the passage. A video clip presentation has been prepared and can be accessed as follows:

Click this link [http://itunes.apple.com/itunes-u/religious-education-resources/id458273277](http://itunes.apple.com/WebObjects/MZStore.woa/wa/viewPodcast?id=458273277) and then click to view and download in iTunes.

* Lead the children in a meditation. Reflectively read Matthew 5:1-12 The Beatitudes. Set the scene. Jesus preaching on a hillside in Palestine… Ask the students to close their eyes, Change the scripture as you read it. “Blessed are you when you are…”
* Celebrate a ritual for the celebration of Reconciliation. If there is opportunity, organise and celebrate the sacrament of Penance. Include an examination of conscience focusing on discrimination and excluding others.
* Use KWL Year 6, p12 ‘Our Heritage’ in prayer. Two voices, one voice to read “Jesus…” lines and the other voice to read “He….” Sing a song to conclude.
* Celebrate ‘A Circle of Justice and Peace’ (see Resource Sheet 3). In the prayer celebration use Nelson Mandela’s Inaugural Address, if possible.

Assessment

**Interim Assessment Statement 2014**

The identification of Teaching/Learning strategies as ‘suggested assessment’ has been removed from the 3-6 RE curriculum. The type of assessment activity and the way evidence of learning is gathered will vary, depending on such factors as; the outcomes being assessed, the evidence being gathered, the teaching and learning activity, context and students’ learning needs (NSW Board of Studies, <http://syllabus.bos.nsw.edu.au/support-materials/k-6-assessment-strategies/>) .

Assessment in Religious Education is based on the same principles as in other key learning areas. Please refer to the CEO Sydney site supporting the implementation of the Australian Curriculum in the context of the NSW BOS Syllabus. At this site <https://sites.google.com/a/syd.catholic.edu.au/professional-learning-modules/home> professional learning modules are provided to support teachers as they engage with the NSW BOS Syllabuses for the Australian Curriculum.

**Module 4, Assessment and Planning** explores the principles of effective assessment ***for***, ***as*** and ***of*** learning and considers a range of strategies and methods for assessing student learning. Activities focus on moving beyond assessment as an index of learning, towards assessment that motivates, enhances learning and achieves deeper understanding to meet the diverse learning needs of all as students. Participants are encouraged to reflect on assessment as a driver for improvement in teaching and learning.

**Religious Education Curriculum and Assessment**

In Year 3-6 Religious Education Curriculum, both Syllabus Outcomes and Classroom Outcomes are key reference points for decisions about students’ progress and achievement. Classroom outcomes are more specific to the unit content. Unit Content statement and *Students will learn* statements in each unit should also be taken into account in planning and developing learning and assessment opportunities. Outcomes and Unit Content Statements are derived from Syllabus objectives.

Effective Religious Education involves teaching the Catholic faith (Scripture, doctrine, traditions, prayer and sacraments) and nurturing the faith of the child. There is no attempt to assess the child’s faith. Assessment is concerned with skills, knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith taught in the curriculum and supported in the religious life of the school.

Resources

***To Know Worship and Love* – Year 6, Chapters 1 and 2, (2003), James Goold House Publications, Melbourne, Victoria**

**Agencies and Websites**

The following agencies have useful resources: guest-speakers, websites, videos and kits. Some kits are published yearly for particular seasons and events.

Action For World Development: [www.awd.org.au](http://www.awd.org.au)

Amnesty International: [www.amnesty.org.au](http://www.amnesty.org.au)

Australian Catholic Social Justice Council: [www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au](http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au)

Caritas Australia and Project Compassion kits: [www.caritas.org.au](http://www.caritas.org.au)

Catholic Commission for Justice, Ecology and Peace: <http://www.catholic.org.au/statements/justice.htm>

Catholic Mission: [www.catholicmission.org.au](http://www.catholicmission.org.au) An example of a Kit is “Personal Project”

National Council of Churches in Australia (Force Ten). Road to Refuge Kit. Simply Sharing Kit 2002. Ph. 1800025101

OzSpirit is an email magazine with links and ideas for teachers. Topics include spirituality, social justice and church teachings. To subscribe to this useful email go to the caritas website and follow the links.

Racism No Way: [www.racismnoway.com.au](http://www.racismnoway.com.au) A great resource for teachers and students. It has teacher information, lessons and ideas for teaching and a good glossary. It also has games and quizzes for students.

**Books**

Catholic Education Office, Bathurst, (1998), *Breathing Life into the RE Classroom: Creative Teaching Strategies for Religious Education*, Bathurst NSW

Curriculum Corporation, *Discovering Democracy Primary Kit*. (This kit has some great ideas and information that can be used to review issues of Aboriginal rights, racism, sexism… It is a good way of linking this unit to HSIE.)

Gilligan B, (2000), *Searching for Justice*,HarperCollins, Victoria

Social Justice Bishops Council, *Social Justice Calendar*. (The calendar has significant dates, websites, prayers, reflections and information concerning social justice issues.)

Stead B M, (1994), *A Time of Jubilee: Using Luke’s Gospel with Children*, Desbooks, Victoria

White, D, White S, O’Brien K, (2006)  *Deep Thinking An Essential for Learning, Marayong, NSW*

Woods L, (1990), *A Dictionary for Catholics*, HarperCollins, Victoria

## Videos and Music

Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference, (1997), *FACES: the Mission of the Australian Church*, Catholic Mission, Sydney NSW

Mangan M, ‘Act Justly’, *Sing Jubilee* (CD and book)

Haas David, ‘We Are Called’*, Gather Australia, 1995* GIA Publications

Haugen Marty, ‘Who Will Speak’, *Gather Australia, 1995* GIA Publications

Key to Symbol

✪ denotes higher order activity

Unit Content 1

Jesus’ mission was to reveal the Reign of God to his followers. He lived in a way that helped his dream become real.

*Students will learn:*

* about the beatitudes as a way of life
* about the Reign of God
* to reflect on ways Christians live the beatitudes and promote the Reign of God

Unit Content: Background Information

The Reign of God is a theme throughout the Scriptures. It is closely related to the covenant. The prophets of the Old Testament, in calling Israel back to the covenant relationship with God, promote and reveal the Reign of God. In continuing and fulfilling the work of the prophets Jesus brings about the Reign of God. His life, death and resurrection ushered in the Reign of God.

Through Jesus’ saving action the Reign of God is established as here and now, and it will reach its fullness at the end of time. The Reign of God is eschatological. **Eschatological** refers to the end time, the fullness of time, heaven. The ‘kingdom’ parables, the prophets, and the beatitudes give us an idea of what this Reign of God should look like now, and what it will be in the fullness of time. The Reign of God is something we are working towards now as we continue the mission of Jesus. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, Jesus reached out to others. Jesus’ mission was a response to his relationship with his Father. Enlivened by the Holy Spirit the Church community continues Jesus’ mission.

The work for justice and peace is very much the building of God’s reign or God’s Kingdom. We pray in the Our Father “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done”. It is the Holy Spirit that acts within us to build the Reign of God. This occurs within the context of community. Justice has its foundations in the ministry of Jesus and the work of the Holy Spirit. Jesus’ dream was to create the Reign of God on earth. It is a mission, a journey, we continue as Christians. We have the same hopes and dreams in the fullness of the Reign of God. The Holy Spirit inspires and empowers us to live according to God’s will – as individuals and as a community of believers.

The following activities help explore this notion of the reign of God and what it might look like. Jesus, the saints and Christian heroes give us a lived example of ways to participate in this dream for the fulfilment of Jesus’ mission to establish the Reign of God. It is important to continuously note that it is not our work but the work of the Holy Spirit through us. We participate with the Holy Spirit who builds the Reign of God – making all things new.

Note: Resource Sheet 1 provides a guide for setting the Prayer Place for ordinary Time.

Suggested Teaching/Learning Strategies

* Read Micah 6:8. Students look at the 3 concepts -

act justly

love tenderly

walk humbly with your God,

and then develop a list of behaviour and attitudes that relate to each of these concepts. This could be done in groups using a strategy for connected thinking.

✪ - Respond to the three concepts by doing one of the following: a) Create an artwork or symbol for each. b) Find images and pictures to communicate these ideas and put them together as a PowerPoint presentation or slide presentation or display.

* + - * Present Matthew 5:1-12 The Beatitudes (KWL Year 6, p16) using a slow reflective reading of the passage. A video clip presentation has been prepared and can be accessed as follows:
* Click the link below

[http://itunes.apple.com/itunes-u/religious-education-resources/id458273277](http://itunes.apple.com/WebObjects/MZStore.woa/wa/viewPodcast?id=458273277)

* Click to view in iTunes (Subscribe for updates if you like)
* Click on the word ‘FREE’ next to ‘The Beatitudes’ under the heading ‘Price’ to download it to your iTunes account. (Subscribe for updates if you like)
* Once downloaded it will now be stored in your ‘iTunes U’ Library in iTunes

The presentation has some introductory remarks inviting students to sit comfortably etc.

It then presents slowly the words of the beatitudes accompanied by music and images.

After this, it presents each beatitude again with a wondering question. The video clip should be paused to allow time for shared wondering. Wondering for all the beatitudes would probably be best done over two or more sessions.

* Direct students to read ‘Blessed Are You!’ in KWL Year 6, p15-16. Use a strategy for processing this information e.g. ‘Say Something’ (*Deep Thinking* p108)
* Divide the class into groups and give each group, one beatitude. In the groups, students explore that beatitude:
* Find a saint or famous person who demonstrates this beatitude. Direct students to KWL Year 6, p18-19 for some possible choices

- Scribe in a short written passage what the beatitude may look like in today’s world (actions and attitudes).

- Paint a scene or symbol to demonstrate this beatitude.

Put the students work together to create a whole display exploring the Beatitudes. (If needed, add some ideas to the ‘ideal world’ chart.)

* + ✪ - Optional Challenge: Students spend some time reflecting and writing about experiences when they have demonstrated each of these beatitudes. This may be done as a project and/or for a homework activity.
* Students brainstorm their idea of a perfect world. What is a perfect world in light of our Catholic beliefs: faith, tradition and Scripture? Create a class list, or concept map, of criteria for the perfect world. Add to this as you progress through the unit.

Unit Content 2

We often make judgments about people based on external factors.

*Students will learn:*

* to identify types of discrimination; e.g. racism, sexism
* about the concept of sin, social and personal, in relation to justice

Unit Content: Background Information

In this section students begin to name judgements that lead to discrimination and exclusion on the local, national and global levels. Teachers will need to help students explore their personal experiences of exclusion and acceptance. In exploring situations of discrimination students need to realise that their own behaviour can lead to marginalisation. Students are often marginalised on the playground for various reasons (fashion, ability…). Lead the students to evaluate their own judgements and behaviour towards one another.

One of the central principles of Catholic social teaching is human dignity. Each person is made in the image and likeness of God and is therefore sacred. (See 5.1 for an explanation of Catholic Social Teaching.) Making judgements that are discriminatory, exclude people or keep them marginalised disrespects human dignity.

Discrimination can take the form of hate, exclusion and avoidance, or patronising behaviour. For example, we do not “hate” people with disabilities, however, our discomfort or ignorance can lead to patronising behaviour and attitudes that leave them feeling marginalised. Ignorance, lack of experience and lack of dialogue can lead to discrimination, which in turn can lead to a disregard for the dignity of the person. The experience of discrimination denies people their full potential. It diminishes the potential of those marginalised and those who do the marginalising.

In this respect discrimination can be seen as sinful. It can occur on the personal level or a social level. Some attitudes of discrimination can be held by society in general and so the judgement is supported by society. When the social structures support this discrimination then it can be seen as social sin. The most obvious example of this was the apartheid laws of South Africa. Australia’s experience of ‘the stolen generation’ could also be an example of social sin.

This unit explores the concept of sin: personal and social, in association with injustice. Discrimination that leads to injustice is sinful. It is the denial of the relationships God calls us to. Connected to this concept are the types of sin (venial, mortal) which are covered in other units.

Suggested Teaching/Learning Strategies

* Students define: judgment, discrimination, prejudice, barrier, rejection, acceptance, exclusion, inclusion, stereotyping.
* Use the field process (also known as think, pair, four, share) to explore ways we discriminate and types of discrimination. (See *Breathing Life into the RE Classroom,* p52 for an explanation of this process.) Students have time to think about the issue, then share their findings with a partner, then share with a group of four.
* As groups share their findings, create a concept map for the class to see. Ask students to share initial reactions, comments, and opinions.
* Engage in wondering:

I wonder what group or groups of people are discriminated against in society (not individual names).

I wonder what group or groups of people are discriminated against in our school or local community (not individual names).

I wonder if there are people I discriminate against (silent wondering).

* Challenge students to reflect on their own behaviour at school and in their neighbourhood. What criteria do they use to marginalise each other?
* In pairs, design a concept map on forms of discrimination named. (For example: racism, sexism, prejudice against other religions, people with disabilities, homeless or unemployed etc.)
* Explore times when students were isolated/excluded and accepted/included. Students could talk about experiences or write about them. Include background, feelings, reactions etc.
* Media Watch. Students find examples of discrimination (and acceptance and inclusion) in the news. Create a media watch board. Draw students’ attention to:

- Who is being discriminated against?

- Who is doing the discriminating? Why?

- How obvious is the discrimination?

- ✪ - Do you agree with the judgment/issue? Why/why not?

Keep coming back to the Media Watch board. Talk about what is happening in the news. Ask the students to look for patterns in the issues arising.

* Explore the media’s role in discrimination. The media influences our attitudes and perceptions. Does it always give us an accurate picture? How does the media encourage discrimination? How does the media discourage discrimination? Focus on one issue here: sexism or racism or perceptions of other cultures, religions. Commercials may be useful or the way news is reported. Do not spend too much time on this.
	+ - What is sin? Students would have some ideas. Come up with a clear definition that extends the students from ‘doing the wrong thing’. Refer to a Catholic dictionary (see ‘Resources’).
		- Look at the terms ‘personal sin’ and ‘social sin’. Ask for discussion: What do these terms mean? After discussion each student writes a definition in his or her own words. Find some examples of personal and social sin.
		- Why is injustice (or prejudice/discrimination) sinful? Individuals make a response. Share responses with class.
		- Celebrate a ritual for the celebration of Reconciliation. (If there is opportunity, organize to celebrate the sacrament of Penance.) Include an examination of conscience based on discrimination and excluding others.

Unit Content 3

Through Jesus’ actions and teachings we learn about understanding and accepting others and looking beyond externals to the true worth of the person.

*Students will learn:*

* to reflect on Scripture texts that tell about Jesus as inclusive and respectful of all
* about the marginalised/outcasts of Jesus’ time and our time

Unit Content: Background Information

Outcasts were a reality in Jesus’ time. Jewish and social practices created groups of people who were marginalised by society, and disempowered: their roles in society were minimal or non-existent. Women were marginalised because they had no role in the public forum. Gentiles were avoided because they were not Jews. The Romans were the occupiers, the oppressors. Lepers were physically and socially cast out due to their contagious disease. They were removed from the towns and cities. Samaritans and Jews disliked each other. The Jews claimed the Samaritans intermarried with the Assyrians. The Samaritans denied this. The Samaritans were excluded from Jewish religious practices and communities.

Jesus disregarded these social norms that excluded people. Through his actions and teachings he promoted inclusion and acceptance of all people as equals. In this respect he can be seen as “breaking down barriers” to relationships. The reign of God is about relationships. All are equal and have dignity. God invites all to fellowship. The reign of God is one of inclusiveness. Justice is not individual. If there is justice, there is justice for all. The Catholic understanding is that justice springs from our relationship with God. Our relationship with God transforms us. The Spirit of God enlivens us to transform the world. This whole dynamic happens within community. We are not only individuals – we are persons within community.

This section explores Jesus’ acceptance and inclusiveness. The next section explores the Christian response to discrimination and exclusion. However, activities in the two sections can be combined together to create a ‘dialogue’ between Jesus’ time and our time, Jesus’ actions and teachings and our response here and now. The Spirit was at work in Jesus and continues to work in the Church today. In fact, all who participate in promoting justice participate with the Holy Spirit in building the Reign of God.

Suggested Teaching/Learning Strategies

* As background information for the Scripture stories that are to be told, outline the different groups that will be encountered in the Scripture to be explored. Who were the different groups and which groups had power and which were marginalised (outcasts)? Samaritans, Jews, Levites, Priests, Romans, Roman Centurion. See Scripture: Background Information for the Scripture in this unit.
* Who are the marginalised / outcasts of our world, nation, local community? Use KWL Year 6, p12 in prayer. Two voices, one voice to read “Jesus…” lines and the other voice to read “He….”. Sing a song to conclude.
* Tell the story, ‘Jesus Heals a Centurion’s Servant’ (Lk 7:1-10). See Resource Sheet 2 for suggested script and materials.
* Engage students in wondering. The following suggestions are offered as a guide.

I wonder if there’s something you find puzzling or amazing in this story.

I wonder why the centurion (who was a Roman) sent Jewish elders to Jesus to speak for him.

I wonder why the Jewish elders spoke so well about the Roman centurion.

I wonder why the centurion loved the Jewish people.

I wonder what Jesus meant when he said, “I tell you, not even amongst the Jews have I found faith like this!”

I wonder whether you’ve ever heard words similar to those spoken by the Roman centurion:

*“Lord do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof. Only say the word and let my servant be healed.”*

* Use this context to revise with students the response we use in the Communion Rite of the Mass, which comes from this Gospel account (Lk 7:7) and also Mt 8:8 – “Lord I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.”
* Facilitate the students’ further exploration of this Scripture passage using art or drama (see Barbara Stead in ‘Resources’ section or *Breathing Life into the RE Classroom*.
* Tell the story - ‘The Parable of the Good Samaritan’ (Lk 10:25-37). See Resource Sheet 3 for suggested script and resources.
* Engage students in wondering. The following suggestions are offered as a guide.

I wonder why the Samaritan helped the injured man.

I wonder if you have ever felt like anyone in the story.

I wonder if you know a ‘Good Samaritan’ in your life.

I wonder who our neighbours really are.

I wonder why Jesus uses the Samaritan in his parable to help injured man.

I wonder how we can be like ‘The Good Samaritan’.

* Give students a blank map of Israel in Jesus’ time. Students mark in Jerusalem and Jericho. Also mark in where Samaria and Galilee are.
* Ask the students: What is a “good Samaritan”? Students find a modern day “good Samaritan” story, News, Legends, national icons…
* ✪List the characters in the story. Who are they? What would the listeners of Jesus have expected of the characters? What does each character actually do?
* ✪Explore the characters using the Hot Seat method. What excuse might the Priest and Levite give? What might the Samaritan be feeling/thinking? How did the injured man react to a Samaritan helping him? Write a journal entry as each of the characters explaining the events through their eyes.
* Use scripture parable in drama. See *Breathing Life into the RE Classroom* in ‘Resources’ for a variety of drama activities.
* Photo-language. Students choose a photo or two that symbolises to them Jesus’ treatment of outcasts. Share and explain. Write a response: “Jesus accepted others by… I can accept others by…”
* What do these two passages from Luke’s Gospel teach us about Jesus Christ? Acceptance? Present information in writing, concept map.

Unit Content 4

As Christians we have a responsibility to work towards unity through a better understanding and appreciation of people.

*Students will learn:*

* about ways we can include and exclude others
* about the importance of acceptance and inclusiveness of all people
* to critically reflect on judgements we make as a community and as individuals

Unit Content: Background Information

In this section teachers may want to choose one or two issues to explore in depth: racism, discrimination according to race, colour, ethnic grouping or religion, sexism, Aboriginal Reconciliation, refugees, how we treat people with disabilities or illnesses, the elderly, unemployed... In making a choice be mindful of the importance of National Reconciliation at this time.

Choose issues that affect your student community or are a current issue in the media. The main point of the unit is to encourage the students to reflect on situations in light of Church teachings and Scripture. It would be useful to recall the work students covered in 5.1 and review the principles of Catholic Social Teachings. Inspired by Sacred Scripture and our Church tradition and doctrine, how do we respond to groups that are being marginalised? This is our lived response to our faith; it is doing justice. The most important lesson for students covering this unit of work is to realise that the Church does have a role to play in promoting justice and peace. The Church responds based on its doctrine and values, inspired by the Holy Spirit.

The Christian response to any difference is to seek understanding and acceptance. Teachers will need to keep informed of statements the Church is making in regards to the justice issues being covered. They can do this using the list of resources above, particularly websites that focus on Catholic social teachings.

Suggested Teaching/Learning Strategies

It is not expected that all activities or themes below be covered. Make a choice that teaches the Christian response to discrimination in order to build the Reign of God. Some activities can be adapted to other themes. While doing the activities and exploring issues, always bring the students’ attention back to Scripture and Church teachings. Student should be able to evaluate the given issue in light of our faith and Church teachings.

* Read KWL Year 6, p5-6. Use strategies which help students summarise the information on these two pages into a few concise statements or complete a dictogloss.

**Sexism**

* Use the Discovering Democracy Kit to explore the changing role of women, and how women have struggled for equality in our society.
* Read and discuss the poem ‘Women’s Creed’, *Searching for Justice,* p84.
* Media study: Explore the message the media presents in regard to men and women, masculinity and femininity. Select television and magazine advertisements or excerpts of popular TV shows. What images are they presenting about males and females? What are the stereotypes for males and females?
* What happens when people do not fit the popular stereotype of a female or male? Brainstorm the stereotypes and then the names used for people who do not fit them. Create a class wall discussion to explore the opinions of students. Students write up their opinions on post-it notes or paper. Comment on each other’s opinion. This could be done on a discussion board using the computer: intranet. See *Breathing Life into the Classroom*.

**Racism**

* Explore famous people who have fought racism. For example, Martin Luther King.
* Read Martin Luther King’s famous speech: “I have a dream…” compare this with the beatitudes and Jesus dream for the world.
* Use the ‘Racism No Way’ website [www.racismnoway.com.au](http://www.racismnoway.com.au) for information, topics, teaching strategies and games.
* Describe your image of a typical Australian. Students do this by one of the following:
a) writing, b) illustration, c) collecting images. Students share their work and discuss what is an Australian? Invite students to comment on the variety of images. Are the images stereotypical? Are the images realistic? Do the images cover the variety of people in our community today?
* Media study: Are all Australians represented on TV? How does the media represent people from Australia’s different ethnic minority groups? Conduct a survey to find out how often Australians from ethnic groups are portrayed? Are the circumstances positive or negative? What affect does this have on viewers?
* Watch the Video *Faces.* The whole video can be used but the story of Lyn and Eddie are most relevant to racism. Students fill in a matrix as they watch the video. Lyn – refugees and immigrants. Eddie – Aboriginal Reconciliation.

How have these people acted like Jesus? Continued the mission of the Church?

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Discrimination issue | Beliefs expressed | Action Taken |
| Lyn |  |  |  |
| Eddie |  |  |  |

**Aboriginal Issues**

* Explore famous people who worked for Aboriginal issues. For example, Mum Shirl, Charles Perkins, William Deane.·
* Use the ‘Discovering Democracy’ kit to explore discrimination of aboriginal communities,, particularly the Australian ‘Freedom Ride’.
* Watch the video and look at the information about the Freedom Rides in NSW.
* Investigate when aboriginal people got the right to vote and citizenship.
* Invite a guest speaker from Catholic Aboriginal Services to speak to students about the effects of discrimination in indigenous communities.

**Refugees**

* Read children’s literature with refugee themes. For example, *Onion Tears* by Diana Kidd.
* Invite a guest speaker to speak to the class about the plight of refugees. Contact such groups as Caritas, Catholic Refugees Services, Amnesty International. What is the refugee experience in Australia?
* What are refugees and where do they come from?
* How do the media present refugees? Discuss images of refugees in the media, terms such as ‘asylum seekers’, ‘illegal refugees’. Note: ‘illegal refugees’ is not a correct term yet it is a media term. A person is either a refugee or not.

**People with an illness or disability, e.g. blind, paraplegic, cancers, HIV**

There are many kits and agencies that can be used to explore disabilities and illnesses within Health/PD.

* + Students research L’Arche communities: What are L’Arche communities? Where are they in Australia? How do they continue the mission of Jesus?
	+ How do we discriminate against people with disabilities? In what ways do they experience discrimination or marginalisation? Note that we may not deliberately discriminate against people with disabilities but our excess pity and discomfort may marginalise them.
	+ Invite guest speakers to talk to the class about children with disabilities. How do they feel discriminated against or marginalised?

**Conclusion**

* + As Christians called to continue the mission of Jesus how could we respond to…(the issue you have explored)? In pairs create a concept map of ideas and reasons.
	+ Write an acrostic poem, or use another style of poetry, with the theme of acceptance, inclusiveness, unity… to demonstrate an understanding of a Christian response to discrimination.
	+ ✪ - Explore the dynamic in the narrative of Jesus healing the lepers: exclusion, hope, healing, inclusion. Students write a modern day narrative to demonstrate their understanding of today’s marginalised and how God would like us to respond to others with acceptance and understanding.
	+ ✪ - Write a modern day parable of ‘The Good Samaritan’.
	+ Half Class Debate. See *Breathing Life into the RE Classroom*, p45.

Suggested Topics:

* + - We have no responsibility towards refugees. We cannot accept them into our country.
		- The sexes are different. Women have a role to play and men have their role. These roles should not be blurred.
		- Multiculturalism is good in theory but it is too difficult to try to bring communities of different religions together.
		- It is nice that we have homes for the elderly and sick and disabled. It keeps them safe.
	+ Celebrate ‘A Circle of Justice and Peace’. See Resource Sheet 4. In the prayer celebration, use Nelson Mandela’s Inaugural Address, if possible.

**Resource Sheet 1**

**6.1 Our Prayer Place for Ordinary Time**

**YOU WILL NEED:**

\* small table

\* Liturgical calendar

\* ***green*** fabric, liturgical calendar (see links at end of script), Bible, bookstand, candle (green candle or white with a green ribbon), cross and blocks, placed in a box or basket

*Invite children to sit reverently in a circle in the part of the classroom where you intend to set up a prayer place.
This is a liturgical story, so students can be invited to participate by placing the symbols and objects on the prayer place.*

*Begin by saying* **We are going to make a special prayer place. It is a place where we can be quiet with God. We can listen to God and talk with God. We’ll use some symbols and objects to help us be with God at this time in the Church’s year.**

*Place table is in the prayer place. Hold the green fabric.***In this season of the Church’s year we place green fabric on the table. Green is seen everywhere. It symbolizes life, growth and hope and is used by the Church during the season of Ordinary Time.***Cover the table with a green fabric.*

*Place Liturgical calendar on the wall behind the prayer place or on the floor. Point to the first season of Ordinary Time.*

**The first part of Ordinary Time begins after the season of Christmas and lasts until the beginning of Lent. Ordinary Time doesn’t mean average. It means the time outside the major seasons of Lent, Easter, Advent and Christmas. It gives us a long breathing space to examine and ‘order’ our lives.**

*Hold the Bible up for all children to see. Be conscious of handling the Bible in a reverent manner.*

**This is our class Bible. At this time in the Church’s year we remember and tell the stories about what Jesus said and did during his life on earth. We’ll continue to do this until the beginning of the next season, Lent.**

*Place the Bible on the bookstand.*

*Take out the candle.*

**The candle reminds us that Jesus is always with us. We’ll light the candle each time we pray or when we’re listening to the stories from the Bible. The light of the candle reminds us that Jesus is the light of the world.**

*Place the candle on the prayer place.*

*Hold the cross.*

**This is our class cross. The cross is a symbol of Jesus and of our Christian faith and hope.**

*Place the cross on the prayer place.*

*Hold the blocks.*

**During the next few weeks, with Jesus as our guide, we’re going to explore together issues of prejudice, discrimination, rejection and exclusion which can block our relationships with others.***Place blocks in a straight line on the prayer place.*

**Other symbols appropriate to Unit 6.1 can also be added here.**

**This is our prayer place for Ordinary Time.**

*Point to the symbols and objects as you name them again:*

**It has green fabric, a liturgical calendar, a Bible, a candle, a cross and some blocks.**

*You could finish this story with an appropriate prayer, for example from To Know Worship and Love or the opening prayer for the Mass of the day.*

**Links to liturgical calendars:**

http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/season.cfm?y=2003&m=10

<http://www.cyberfaith.com/calendar_index.html>

<http://smvparish.org/liturgy/liturgical_calendar.gif>

<http://sesnaperville.org/sesmain/wp-content/uploads/2009/07/liturgical.gif>

<http://www.marypages.com/LiturgicalCalendar.htm> or

<http://www.getreligion.org/2008/08/pericopal-politics/>

**Resource Sheet 2**

**Jesus Heals A Centurion’s Servant**

Unit 6.1 Luke 7: 1-10

**You will need:**

* Green felt underlay (50cm x 90cm), brown felt road (16cm x 90cm)
* 3D figures: Jesus, centurion, servant, 2 Jewish elders, 2 friends of the centurion.

*Children are seated in a semi-circle ready to listen to the story. When the children are ready carry the materials carefully from the story shelf to the story area and place beside you.*

*Place class Bible, open at Luke, in front of you with your hand on it.*

**This story comes from the Gospel according to Luke, which is in the New Testament section of the Bible.**

*Reverently place Bible beside you on a book stand or special piece of fabric.*

*Unfold the underlay horizontally in front of you. Unroll the road on top of the underlay.*

*Move Jesus from your left along to a third of the length of the road.*

**One day Jesus came to the town of Ca-per’na-um.**

*Hold the centurion.***A centurion, that is a Roman soldier, lived in the town.***Place centurion on green underlay to your right.*

*Hold slave.***The centurion had a slave whom he valued highly**. **His slave was very ill and close to death.**

*Lie slave in front of the centurion.***Now, the centurion heard that Jesus had come to his town.**

*Place the Jewish elders on the centurion’s left.* **The centurion sent some Jewish elders to Jesus asking him to come and heal his slave.**

*Move Jewish elders to face Jesus on the road.* **The Jewish elders begged Jesus saying, “We know this centurion and his soldiers have occupied our land, but he is a man worthy of your help. He loves our people, and it is he who built our synagogue for us.”**

*Move Jesus and the Jewish elders along the road towards the centurion’s house.* **So Jesus went with them.***Place the centurion’s friends beside him.*

*Move the centurion’s friends to stand in front of Jesus as you say,*  **When they were not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to Jesus to say to him, “Lord do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof. Only say the word and let my servant be healed.”**

**When Jesus heard this he was amazed!**

*Turn Jesus to face the elders, friends and students.* **Turning to the crowd, Jesus said, “I tell you, not even amongst the Jews have I found faith like this!”**

*Return elders and friends to the centurion’s house.* **The Jewish elders and the friends returned to the centurion’s house.**

*Raise the slave to stand beside the centurion.* **There they saw the slave, now healed and in good health.**

*Pause for a while before wondering with the students.*

**I wonder if there’s something you find puzzling or amazing in this story.**

**I wonder why the centurion (who was a Roman) sent Jewish elders to Jesus to speak for him.**

**I wonder why the Jewish elders spoke so well about the Roman centurion.**

**I wonder why the centurion loved the Jewish people.**

**I wonder what Jesus meant when he said, “I tell you, not even amongst the Jews have I found faith like this!”**

**I wonder whether you’ve ever heard words similar to those spoken by the Roman centurion:**

***“Lord do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof. Only say the word and let my servant be healed.”***

*Carefully pack story materials into storage box and put away.*

**Resource Sheet 3**

#### Who is My Neighbour - The Good Samaritan

(Luke 10:29-37)

**YOU WILL NEED:**

* Light yellow or cream felt background (the area between Jericho at Jerusalem was desert)
* Brown felt road and rocks
* 2D characters: Good Samaritan, 2 robbers, priest, Levite, man, donkey
(see RE Online for 2D masters)
* Jericho
* Jerusalem

*Children are seated in a semi-circle ready to listen to the story. When the children are settled, get the materials and carry them respectfully to the storytelling place as you would the Bible.*

*Place these in front of you. Place your hand on top of the bible and say:*

**This story comes from the Gospel according to Luke, which is in the New Testament section of the Bible. Jesus often told stories which we call parables.**

*Move the Bible to the side. Put your hand on top of the box and say:*

**Parables were stories told by Jesus. Jesus used parables to teach people. We need to listen to the parable with our heads and our hearts.**

*Engage with the material from the box:*

*Place the felt background in the middle of the story space.*

*Place the road on top of the background.*

*Place the rocks on both sides of the road with robbers under the rocks. Place Jericho at the far end of the road away from you. Place Jerusalem at the end closest to you.*

*Pick up the Bible and read the following:*

**One day a lawyer, who wanted to challenge Jesus, asked him, “Teacher, what must I do to gain everlasting life?” Jesus said to him “What do you read in the Law? The lawyer answered “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength and with all your mind and your neighbour as yourself.” Jesus said “You have given the right answer. Do this and you will live” Then the lawyer asked Jesus “And who is my neighbour?**

**To answer him, Jesus told this parable.**

*Place the bible to the side of you and begin to tell the parable using the 2D material.*

*Place man on the road near Jerusalem. Move him down the road a little way as you say:*

**Once a man was going down a lonely road from Jerusalem to Jericho,**

*Bring robbers out and place on top of the man.*

**when he was attacked by robbers.**

*Move man to side of road. Remove robbers*

**They took all he had, beat him and then left him half dead on the side of the road.**

*Move priest down middle of road from Jerusalem. When he comes to the wounded man, move priest to the other side of the road, and then down to Jericho.*

**Now by chance a priest was going down that road, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.**

*Move Levite down middle of the road from Jerusalem. When he comes to the wounded man, move Levite to the other side of the road, and then down to Jericho*

**Next, a Levite, a man who helped in the Temple came to the place and saw him, and he also passed by on the other side.**

*Move Samaritan and his donkey down middle of road from Jerusalem. When he comes to the man, move Samaritan over next to him.*

**But, then, a Samaritan came down the road. Jews and Samaritans disliked each other. He was moved with pity when he saw the wounded man.**

**He knelt down, bandaged his wounds and poured oil and wine on them.**

*Place wounded man on donkey and move the Samaritan and wounded man almost to Jericho,*

**Then the Samaritan lifted the wounded man onto his donkey and took him to an inn and took care of him.**

*Place 2 coins near the injured traveller.*

**The next day, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper and said, “Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.”**

*Sit back, keep looking down and say:*

**When Jesus had finished telling this story he asked, “Which of these three men was a true neighbour to the wounded man?”**

*Replace the Samaritan with the priest and ask*

**The priest, who served in the Temple?**

*Replace the Priest with the Levite.*

**The Levite, who helped in the Temple?**

*Replace the Levite with the Samaritan.*

**The Samaritan?**

**The Lawyer replied, “The one who looked after the wounded man was a true neighbour.” Jesus ended the story by saying, “Go, and do the same yourself.”**

*Pause quietly for a moment and then begin to wonder together.*

**I wonder why the Samaritan helped the injured man.**

**I wonder if you have ever felt like anyone in the story.**

**I wonder if you know a ‘Good Samaritan’ in your life.**

**I wonder who our neighbours really are.**

**I wonder why Jesus uses the Samaritan in his parable to help injured man.**

**I wonder how we can be like ‘The Good Samaritan’.**

*Carefully pack story materials into storage box and put away.*

**Resource Sheet 4**

**A Circle of Justice and Peace**

**YOU WILL NEED**

* One ‘Christ’ candle and four smaller candles
* Bible. Four selected passages with a ‘justice’ theme, including the two passages from this unit
* A large gathering space

*Gather together in a circle. Mark the four points of the compass, each with a smaller candle.*

*Light the large ‘Christ’ candle and sing an appropriate hymn e.g. ‘We are Called’, (Gather Australia, 514).*

*Begin by facing the ‘North’. Light the first candle from the ‘Christ’ candle.*

**Leader**: God of love, may we know the way most pleasing to you.

*Reader:* **Micah 6:8** (*reader standing beside the candle at that point). Pause briefly, in silence.*

**Leader**: Our nation has not always treated our Aboriginal sisters and brothers justly.

**Response**: May your justice and peace work through us.

*Facing the ‘East’, light the second candle from the ‘Christ’ candle.*

**Leader**: God of mercy, may we show the forgiveness to others that Jesus shows.

*Reader:* **Matthew 5:8-10**

**Leader**: We live in a world where people do not always live in peace and acceptance towards each other.

**Response**: May your justice and peace work through us.

*Facing the ‘South’, light the third candle from the ‘Christ’ candle.*

**Leader**: God of compassion, may we see the needs of others as a challenge to respond.

*Reader:* **Isaiah 56:6–8**

**Leader**: In our own land, there are many people relying on our love and compassion.

**Response**: May your justice and peace work through us.

*Facing the ‘West’, light the fourth candle from the ‘Christ’ candle.*

**Leader**: God of the Promise, you give us Jesus to show us the way.

*Reader:* **Galatian 3:27–28**

**Leader**: We are your people, Jesus sends us out to spread the good news to all through the

 sorts of lives we live.

**Response**: May your justice and peace work through us.

Leader *walks around the inside of the circle, signing a cross on the hands of each person with oil:*

 *\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (person’s name)* Listen to what God asks of you.

**Response**: Amen!

*Sing an appropriate song or hymn e.g. ‘Who Will Speak’, (Gather Australia, 509) to end the prayer.*

(Adapted from: KWL Teaching Companion, 4b, p54)

1. KWL, Teaching Companion, 4b, p58 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. KWL, Teaching Companion, 4b, p46 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)