6.5 Mary: Faithful Disciple

This unit looks at Mary as a faithful disciple and model for the Church. Students will explore women of faith and courage, and Mary as a woman of great faith and courage. Students will then review Catholic Marian devotion in art and music.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Values & Attitudes**  *Students will demonstrate that they are:* | **Knowledge & Understandings**  *Students will demonstrate that they can:* | **Skills**  *Students will demonstrate that they can:* |
| C3.1 able to value the beliefs and traditions which are founded on Scripture and expressed in the story of the Catholic Church | summarise the traditions and beliefs important to the life of the Catholic Church | research traditions and beliefs of the Catholic Church |
| L3.1 willing to accept their call to respond to God in their lives | identify challenges to respond to the presence of God | examine ways in which the liturgical year nourishes and challenges them to respond to the presence of God |

Syllabus Outcomes  
Church/Liturgical Year – Stage 3

Classroom Outcomes

*Students will be able to:*

* identify women who are models of faith and courage and describe how they live their faith in God
* describe some of the key Church teachings and beliefs about Mary
* demonstrate an understanding of devotions to Mary and identify some feast days and titles for Mary

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Scripture | Doctrine |
| Luke 1:46-55 *Magnificat*  Luke 2:22-40 *Jesus is Presented in the Temple*  **Related Scripture**  Events in the life of Mary listed in Unit Content 2 including Galatians 4:4  The Book of Ruth  The Book of Esther  *Note: It is necessary to do ‘Related’ Scripture; however the Scripture is selected.* | * The Church honours Mary as a woman of faith * The Church celebrates Mary as model for all believers * Mary, the first disciple, leads us to Jesus * Mary is the Mother of God * Mary was a woman of faith and courage, who trusted God |

Spiritual Reflection for Teachers

Mary is shown to be a person who was willing to take time out, be still and silent, ponder things, be quiet, and listen. She was then able to respond to those around her and her God with generosity, even when it seemed strange and challenging.

When I hear Mary’s words ‘I am the handmaid of the Lord, let what you have said be done to me’, I don’t hear a meek and passive lady wrapped up in cotton wool. Instead I hear a passionate young woman full of zest for life crying out, ‘Yes! Let’s go! Let’s get started …whatever the cost. If you’re willing, so am I’.

* Mary’s ‘Yes’ made all God’s plans possible.
* Like Mary’s, our continuing ‘Yes’ will be the beginning of all and everything that will happen during the rest of our lives.
* Mary’s ‘Yes’ opened up a new vision for the world.
* Mary’s ‘Yes’ put her entirely in God’s hands.
* Mary’s ‘Yes’ made her the bearer of God to the world.
* What about your ‘Yes’?

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.**

**489** Throughout the Old Covenant the mission of many holy women *prepared* for that of Mary. At the very beginning there was Eve; despite her disobedience, she receives the promise of a posterity that will be victorious over the evil one, as well as the promise that she will be the mother of all the living. By virtue of this promise, Sarah conceives a son in spite of her old age. Against all human expectation God chooses those who were considered powerless and weak to show forth his faithfulness to his promises: Hannah, the mother of Samuel; Deborah; Ruth; Judith and Esther; and many other women. Mary "stands out among the poor and humble of the Lord, who confidently hope for and receive salvation from him. After a long period of waiting the times are fulfilled in her, the exalted Daughter of Sion, and the new plan of salvation is established."

**967** By her complete adherence to the Father's will, to his Son's redemptive work, and to every prompting of the Holy Spirit, the Virgin Mary is the Church's model of faith and charity. Thus she is a "preeminent and wholly unique member of the Church"; indeed, she is the "exemplary realization" (*typus*) of the Church.

**971** "*All generations will call me blessed*": "The Church's devotion to the Blessed Virgin is intrinsic to Christian worship". The Church rightly honors "the Blessed Virgin with special devotion. From the most ancient times the Blessed Virgin has been honored with the title of 'Mother of God,' to whose protection the faithful fly in all their dangers and needs. ... This very special devotion ... differs essentially from the adoration which is given to the incarnate Word and equally to the Father and the Holy Spirit, and greatly fosters this adoration." The liturgical feasts dedicated to the Mother of God and Marian prayer, such as the rosary, an "epitome of the whole Gospel," express this devotion to the Virgin Mary.

**973** By pronouncing her "fiat" at the Annunciation and giving her consent to the Incarnation Mary was already collaborating with the whole work her Son was to accomplish. She is mother wherever he is Savior and head of the Mystical Body.

**2619** That is why the Canticle of Mary, the *Magnificat* (Latin) or *Megalynei* (Byzantine) is the song both of the Mother of God and of the Church; the song of the Daughter of Zion and of the new People of God; the song of thanksgiving for the fullness of graces poured out in the economy of salvation and the song of the "poor" whose hope is met by the fulfillment of the promises made to our ancestors, "to Abraham and to his posterity for ever."

Scripture: Background Information

**Luke 1:46-56 Mary’s prayer – the Magnificat – My Soul Glorifies the Lord**

The context of Mary’s prayer is the visitation - Mary visiting her elderly cousin Elizabeth who, like herself, is also pregnant: two women sharing women’s business. The prayer of Mary is very similar to Hannah’s prayer in the First Book of Samuel (1 Sam 2:1-10). Hannah after years of waiting had finally conceived and given birth to a son. Her joy is like Mary’s joy here; rejoicing in the goodness of God to the poor, the lowly, the little ones. The Magnificat is full of other Old Testament references from the prophet Habbakuk, the Psalms and the Book of Job. It is a prayer in keeping with the Old Testament and the themes of the Gospel of abundance for all, especially the poor.

**Luke 2:22-40 Jesus is Presented in the Temple**

These verses from Luke’s version of the infancy narrative, which are different from Mathew’s version, depict Mary as mother and observer of Jesus. She and Joseph, as good Jews, do what the law requires of them by offering sacrifice for her purification after childbirth and having Jesus circumcised. During these events the elderly Simeon and Anna meet the parents and Jesus in the Temple. The picture we are given of Mary in these verses is of a wondering, not fully understanding mother. She too, Simeon suggests, will have to decide and choose to believe in Jesus and his message. It will not be easy for her as it is not always easy for us. Luke is the only New Testament writer to record any of these events.

**Galatians 4:4 Jesus is Born of a Woman**

This short one line in Paul’s letter to the Christians in Galatia gives us clues about how the early community regarded Mary. It is important to remember that the New Testament was not all written at the same time but in various stages. Paul’s letters are the earliest New Testament texts we have. This one line is the only reference to Mary in Paul’s writings. It is very brief and does not even name her. The letter was written about 54 AD. This suggests that the veneration of Mary by the early Church came later.

The Church’s Teaching and Lived Tradition

**In Tradition: *To Know, Worship and Love*, Year 6, p135 – The Church Honours Mary …**

This has a brief explanation of the feast days honouring Mary.

**Marian Apparitions**

Below are brief details of Marian apparitions. This can be referred to if students ask questions about apparitions, or if the information is useful to your study of Mary, however, it is not the focus of the unit. Marian apparitions are covered in Year 9.

Mary is reported to have appeared on Earth to specific people at a variety of times. These appearances of Mary are not required parts of our faith but we should know about them and the messages Mary delivered.

In 1531, Mary appeared to Blessed Juan Diego, an Indian in Mexico. When Juan Diego went to tell the bishop, as Mary had instructed, an image of Mary miraculously appeared on his cloak. This can still be seen in the great church of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mexico.

In 1830, Mary appeared to St Catherine Laboure, requesting that a medal be struck according to the image Mary gave her. This medal is commonly known as the Miraculous Medal. At the time of the appearance, it is said that Mary told Catherine: “All who wear this medal will obtain great graces. For all who wear it with trust, the graces will be abundant.”

In 1858, Mary appeared to a 14 year-old girl, St Bernadette Soubirous, in a grotto near Lourdes in France. When Bernadette asked who she was, Mary told her that she was the Immaculate Conception. She asked that people pray for the conversion of sinners and seek healing in the grotto.

In 1917, Our Lady visited three children, Lucia, Blessed Jacinta and Blessed Francesco in Fatima, Portugal. Mary asked that people must say the rosary and make sacrifices for sinners and for world peace.[[1]](#footnote-1)

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.**

* Use traditional Marian prayers with students:

The Angelus The Rosary The Hail Mary

Hail Holy Queen The Memorare The Magnificat

Litany of Our Lady

These may be prayed in the traditional manner for morning and afternoon prayer. In addition find creative ways of using these in prayer. For example, create a movement or reflection for each mystery of the rosary. Use art in prayer, meditation, journaling.

* Prepare and celebrate a class liturgy of thanksgiving. Invite significant women from the community who are models of faith and discipleship. Students might invite the women in their lives about whom they wrote. In the liturgy remember women of the bible and significant women of history. Give thanks to God for the women in our lives and their guidance. End the liturgy by blessing the women present.
* Using the Magnificat, lead the students in a meditation, remembering the promises God fulfils. Think about modern examples of God raising the lowly ….
* Responding to both Scripture passages, students write a prayer of thanks for Jesus. Share these in prayer.
* Pray the Litany of Our Lady.
* Create a class book of prayers to Mary.[[2]](#footnote-2)

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, Chapter 14, (2003), James Goold House Publications, Melbourne, Victoria**

**Books and Kits**

*Alive In the Spirit Today*, (1997), Matthew James Publishing, Chelmsford, (particularly pages 144, 150, 178)

Costello G, (1999), *Praying with the Saints*, Twenty-third Publications: Mystic (particularly pages 6, 9, 15, 54, 63)

Hari A and Singer C, (1995), *Discover the Old Testament Today*, Sign, Charlestown, Md (particularly pages 248 and 250-51)

*Looking Beyond… Looking Towards…: A Prayer Resource For School Communities*, (1997), CEO, Sydney, NSW (This resource has some images of Indian women and reflections to go with each image. Reflections can be modified for Yr 6).

Moore S, (2003), ‘Strong Women’, *Inform,* No 83

Nolen B, (1999), *Prayer Strategies: A Teacher’s Manual*, Harper Collins, Victoria

O’Toole M, (1996), *Mary of Nazareth,* Dove HarperCollins, North Blackburn, Victoria

Ryan M, (2001), *Teaching the Bible: A Manual of Teaching Activities, Commentary and Blackline Masters*. Social Science Press, NSW (Chapter 15 - Women in the Bible)

Stead B, (1997), *A Time of Jubilee: Using Luke’s Gospel With Children*, Desbooks, Thornbury, Victoria

Threlfo W, (2001), *Walking With Mary: A Resource for Primary School Teachers*, Marist Resources, NSW

**Websites**

Echoing the Word <http://www.echoingtheword.com/index.html> Vol 2 No 2 focuses on Mary of Nazareth. Also a search of titles of Mary will lead to other articles. Site contains useful teacher reading, activities, websites and so forth.

##### Music

Mangan M, (1995), *My Spirit Sings: Songs of Mary*, Litmus Publications, Albany Creek, Qld

Kearney P*,* (1984), *Turn It All Around*, ‘The Magnificat’, Dove Communications, Melbourne, Vic

*As One Voice.* Vol 1, (1999), ‘The Magnificat’ and ‘Wherever You Go’, Willow Connection, Thornleigh, NSW

Key to Symbol

✪ denotes higher order activity

Unit Content 1

There are many women we respect and admire.

*Students will learn:*

* to identify women they respect and admire
* about women in the Scriptures who demonstrate faith in God
* about women who show faith and courage

Unit Content: Background Information

In beginning this unit on Mary it is appropriate to pause and review the situation of women in the past and today. Women, and children, are usually the first to suffer in times of crisis and violence. In many places they do not enjoy basic human rights and the media often presents a distorted image of women in order to sell products and ideas. Most of the world’s work is done by women and their work conditions are generally poorer than that of men. In the Catholic Church women have been and still are great contributors at many levels. For example: education, health care, mothers, welfare, missionary work and proclaiming the Good News in many ways.

While exploring images and stereotypes of women it is important to present women from a broad cross section around the world. It is also necessary to define qualities listed. For example how do people understand gentleness and how does gentleness link with strength of character? Present women who are active in their situations. Mary, the mother of Jesus was certainly gentle but she also had strength. She actively responded to her situation. Mary was a faithful Jewish woman of first century Palestine. As such she was part of a long tradition of people who kept the covenant relationship with God. She knew that tradition and made it her own. Explore women of the Old Testament who lived the covenant relationship with God and were remembered by the people of Israel for their faith and trust in God. Esther and Ruth are mentioned in the teaching/learning activities. Other women include Hannah, Deborah, Judith, Sarah, Rachel… Also worth noting are the women of the New Testament who continued that tradition of faith and trust in God: Lydia, Priscilla, Mary Magdala, Martha…

These women are models of discipleship, showing us how to live lives of faith and trust in God. Female models of faith are evident throughout history. In exploring some of these women of faith and strength always bring students back to the qualities these women demonstrated and the challenges to which they responded. Finally, and most importantly, allow students the time to look at women in their lives. Who are the female models of faith in their families and communities? Who do students respect and admire, and why? Focus the attention of students on discipleship and faith.

Suggested Teaching/Learning Strategies

* Explore with students how women are presented in the media. What images of women are presented? How does this influence the way we relate to women? This task can be linked to Health and Personal Development – exploring stereotypes, roles, and images of women. What is the situation of women in our world today?
* Present students with a variety of photos showing women. Use resources such as *Looking Beyond… Looking Towards…: A Prayer Resource For School Communities*, websites, books and posters. Explore healthy qualities of women through images. What role do women have in the community and in society?
* Research women who are admired and respected. Choose a woman from the four categories: the Old Testament, the New Testament, saints, modern women. The research could be done in groups or as a whole class. Follow a sequence of Old Testament, New Testament, saints and modern woman. The women listed are suggested and the list is not exhaustive.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *The Old Testament* | Esther and Ruth. | | Students could read the books of Ruth or Esther, as they are short. Alternatively, they can become familiar with the woman through storybooks, resource material and videos. | |
| *The New Testament* | Phoebe,  Lydia  and Priscilla | Rm 16:1-2  Acts 16:11-15, 38-40  Acts 18:1-3, 18-26;  Rm 16:3-4; 2Tim 4:19 | | There are brief references to these women who seemed to be important in the early Church and its growth. |
| *Female Saints* | St Catherine of Siena and St Clare of Assisi | | | |
| *Modern Women* | Mum Shirl, women missionaries, Dorothy Day, Jessie Street, Faith Bandler, Aung Sun Suu Kyi, Mother Teresa … | | | |

* + - * Create a character profile or biography for each woman.
* List the qualities of each woman. Also make a collective list of admirable and respectable qualities of women.
* For each woman consider the following questions:

- Who was this woman?

- What did she do to make her admired, respected and remembered?

- What role did she play in the history of Israel or the Church? (What role did she play in society?)

- How did she demonstrate faithfulness to God and the covenant relationship?

- How did she demonstrate courage, strength, trust…?

* ✪ - Creatively present each woman using posters, PowerPoint, digital books, pamphlets …
* While looking at Ruth’s story listen to a version of “Wherever You Go” based on the Book of Ruth. What does this song tell us about Ruth? About faithfulness and trust? About God?
* Individually students present a woman they know, admire and respect. Students can choose their mother, a female relative, sibling, grandmother, family-friend… Who is the woman? Give biographical details. What qualities does this woman have? Why do you respect and admire this woman?
* Prepare and celebrate a class liturgy of thanksgiving. Invite significant women from the community. Students might invite the women in their lives whom they wrote about. In the liturgy remember women of the bible and significant women of history. Thank God for the women in our lives and their guidance. End the liturgy by blessing the women present.
* ✪ - “Women can be great models of Christian faith and discipleship.” Write an exposition. Give reasons and support your opinion.

Unit Content 2

Through the Scriptures we come to know Mary as a model for all people.

*Students will learn:*

* about Mary’s role in salvation
* to identify qualities that Mary models for the Church

Unit Content: Background Information

Having reviewed women in the Bible and in history who are models of faith and discipleship, students now focus on Mary. Mary, the Mother of God, is the most faithful among the faithful and as such she holds a special place in the Church. Mary’s faith and trust in God and her complete willingness to participate in the plan of God make her the model for the Church. See the extracts from the Catechism in this unit.

Marian theology is rich and broad. In this Unit Content the focus is on Mary in Scripture. What do the Scriptures tell us about Mary? Luke’s gospel tells us most about Mary, particularly in the infancy narrative. Mary is presented as faithful and willing to do as God asks. She trusts God, ponders the experience of life, prays, is immersed in her tradition, is gracious and gives thanks, shows love, justice and strength. Mary is a woman who is willing to accept a challenge in living her faith.

Mary’s ‘Yes’ to God shows great faith. Her ‘yes’ or ‘fiat’ is a response to God who enters into a covenant relationship with us, personally and communally. Mary responds out of a deep trust that God is faithful to the covenant relationship. God has promised great things and God will deliver. Her belief in God and the covenant makes it possible for her to sing God’s praises in the Magnificat. The Magnificat is a traditional canticle, that is, a hymn taken the Bible and usually excluding the Psalms. The Magnificat proclaims faith in a God of justice and love, a God that fulfils promises and is faithful to God’s people. “Mary is deeply imbued with the spirit of the “poor of Yahweh” who, in the prayer of the Psalms, awaited from God their salvation, placing all their trust in him. Mary truly proclaims the coming of the “Messiah of the poor” (*Redemptoris Mater*, 37). Mary’s ‘fiat’ leads to the incarnation of the Word and the salvation of the world.

Mary is the model for the Church. Explore with students how we live our ‘yes’ to God. Mary did not say ‘yes’ in ignorance. She quickly realised the challenges and may have struggled with her ‘yes’. But she lived the will of God faithfully and fully. We attempt to do the same individually, as a community and as a whole Church.

Suggested Teaching/Learning Strategies

* Introduce Mary. Class brainstorm what is known about Mary. Categorise information into: Scripture and biography, devotional and feast days, Tradition post Scripture. Add to this as the unit progresses and students learn more about Mary.
* Make a list of Mary’s qualities known by students. Add to this list as the unit progresses.
* Read KWL, Year 6, p131-133,136. Add to the above collection of information about Mary.
* Tell the story of Anna and Simeon (Jesus is Presented in the Temple), Luke 2:22-40 using 3D materials. See Resource Sheet 1.
* Engage students in wondering. Acknowledge and value all responses. Suggested wondering statements are:

I wonder how Anna and Simeon knew that Jesus was the Messiah that the people of God had long awaited.

I wonder how they felt when they saw the baby Jesus.

I wonder how they felt when they saw that the Messiah was a baby born of poor parents and not a great king or a mighty soldier.

I wonder what Mary and Joseph were thinking when they listened to what Simeon and Anna said.

I wonder what Mary and Joseph talked about on the way back to Nazareth.

* Reread Luke 2:22-40, Jesus is presented in the Temple

✪ - Imagine you are Anna or Simeon. Write an account of this meeting from either one’s perspective.

What does this passage tell us about Mary, about God?

* Conduct a Scripture search for stories about Mary. The following references to Mary, the mother of Jesus, appear in the New Testament. In pairs, students read the passage and answer the following questions:

- What happens in the account?

What role does Mary play in the account?

What can we learn about Mary from this passage?

Students share their findings with the class.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| The Annunciation (Luke 1:26-38) | The Visitation Luke (1:39-45) |
| Birth of Jesus (Luke 2:1-7) | Birth of Jesus Matthew (1:18-25) |
| Flight to Egypt (Matthew 2:13-21) | Mary and Joseph lose Jesus (Luke 2:41-52) |
| Wedding of Cana (John 2:1-12) | Mary and the crucifixion (John 19:25-27) |
| Mary among Christians (Acts 1:13-14) | Mary is Jesus’ mother (Galatians 4:4) |

(KWL, Teaching Companion, 4b, p181-182)

* Read Luke 1:46-55, The Magnificat.

Who proclaims this canticle? Situate the Magnificat within the story of The Visitation. Also use the Magnificat to link Mary to the Old Testament tradition. This is a song Hannah proclaims when she is told she will have a baby. Refer to 1 Sam 2:1-10.

* Engage students in wondering.
  + I wonder why Mary says that all generations will call her blessed.
  + I wonder why we say that Mary is humble.
  + I wonder what it really means to be humble.
  + I wonder what qualities in a person God favours in this canticle.
  + I wonder what we learn about God in this canticle.
* Explore promise (if not explored while studying Luke 2:22-40). What promises does God make? How are they fulfilled? Lead students to appreciate that Mary praises God for fulfilling the promise to Abraham and all the people of the Old Testament. God keeps God’s covenant with God’s people.
* Students create a piece of artwork as a response to learnings from / about the Magnificat. This could be a mural, a banner, or individual paintings.
* Using the Magnificat, lead the students in a meditation, remembering the promises God fulfils.
* Responding to both Scripture passages, students write a prayer of thanks for Jesus. Share these in prayer.
* Lead a discussion about Mary as a model of discipleship. How is Mary a model for the Church? Students complete the sentences:

- Mary is a model disciple for me as a believer because….

- Mary demonstrates faith and trust by[[3]](#footnote-3)…..

* ✪ - Design a character profile for Mary using the information from the Scripture search. What are the characteristics for discipleship that are evident in this character profile?[[4]](#footnote-4)
* How was Mary a model of faith and discipleship? In responding to the question use your knowledge of Mary in the Scriptures to support your answer.
* Design a personal character profile that shows the characteristics for discipleship that you are developing at present.[[5]](#footnote-5)

Unit Content 3

The Church honours Mary through devotions and celebrations of feast days.

*Students will learn:*

* about the representation of Mary in art and music
* to review beliefs presented about Mary in art and music
* about different devotions, feast days and titles of Mary

Unit Content: Background Information

Our understanding of Mary is not limited to Scripture. In this section students review what Tradition adds to this understanding of Mary.

The main feast days of Mary are the Immaculate Conception; Mary, Mother of God; the Annunciation; Our Lady Help of Christians; the Assumption.

Some Marian devotions include prayers such as the Rosary, the Magnificat and the Angelus.

In addition to prayers and devotions to Mary there is also artwork and music inspired by devotion to Mary. These often reveal the Church’s understanding of Mary. Music and art are influenced by beliefs, culture and the historical period they are from. In reviewing music and images/artwork expose students to a variety from different cultures and times. It is appropriate to evaluate these in light of Church beliefs and teachings.

Suggested Teaching/Learning Strategies

***Marian Prayers, Music and Devotions***

* Students make two class lists: 1) Titles for Mary. 2) Prayers and devotions to Mary. Research some of these titles and prayers. Use these prayers for morning and afternoon prayer.
* Read KWL, Year 6, p134-135. List the feast days of Mary. Discuss the titles used. Review the Litany of Our Lady in the ‘Our Prayer’ section and add new titles to the list above.
* Pray the Litany of Our Lady.
* Use KWL, Year 6, p137-138 to review students’ understanding of the Rosary. What are the mysteries of the Rosary? Students choose one mystery. Write about this mystery from Mary’s point of view – what might she have been thinking or feeling?[[6]](#footnote-6)

What can we learn about Mary from this mystery? What does the Rosary teach us about Mary? God? See *Walking With Mary* for ideas and activities for the Rosary.

* While exploring the prayers and devotions ask students to think about qualities of discipleship presented.
* Create a class book of prayers to Mary.[[7]](#footnote-7)
* Research and present one Marian feast day or prayer. Give some basic facts about the feast day or prayer. What beliefs about Mary does it present?
* Students listen to and discuss songs and music that focus on Mary. What does the song tell us about Mary? What does it tell us about the author’s beliefs and attitudes towards Mary? What qualities of discipleship does the song present? Students select their favourite song and respond to it using a visual arts form.
* Students listen to one or more recorded versions of the ‘Magnificat’ and compare them with the text set out in Luke. Explain to students that the Magnificat is also a prayer of the Church. [[8]](#footnote-8)
* Write a version of the Magnificat. Use the main points selected in the comparison activity as a guide for this writing. The version you write can be poetry, song or rap. Record your version, present it to class or school assembly. Use as a prayer during class prayer times.[[9]](#footnote-9)

***Images of Mary***

* Students share the images of Mary with which they are familiar. What does the image tell us about Mary?
* Visit the church and look at images of Mary.
* Show students some images from different cultures and different historical periods? How have culture and historical periods influenced images of Mary?
* Explore images of Mary. Students search for other images of Mary in books and on the internet. Develop a class collection of images. Put these up for display. Research the origin of some of the images.
* ✪ - Analyse the images in terms of artwork and Marian doctrine. Consider the following questions: What does the image tell us about Mary? How do they present Mary? What title of Mary may go with the image? Do they present an accurate understanding of Mary? Is the image based on Tradition or Scripture knowledge about Mary?
* Students choose their favourite image of Mary.

- Explain why the image is your favourite?

- What does the image say to you about Mary?

- What qualities are presented?

Is the image based on our biblical or traditional understandings of Mary?

✪ - How effectively does the image communicate Church beliefs about Mary?

* Develop a class mural, recording the teachings of the Catholic Church regarding Mary.
* List the Church’s beliefs and teachings about Mary. Use feast days, prayers, Scripture and images to help you recall the Church’s teachings and beliefs.

**Resource Sheet 1**

**ANNA AND SIMEON**

**Luke 2:22-40**

**YOU WILL NEED**

* 3D figures Mary, Joseph, Anna, Simeon and baby Jesus
* Cream underlay, road, blocks to make Temple
* Bible

*Children are seated in a semi-circle ready to listen to the story. When the children are settled, go to the shelf and carry the materials as you would the Bible. Place these beside you.*

*Begin by introducing the Bible as the source for the story.*

**This story comes from the Bible - our sacred Scriptures. It is in the Gospel of Luke in the New Testament.**

*Lay out the cream or green felt. Roll out the road. Build the Temple three-quarters of the way down the road.*

**Long before Jesus was born, the people of Israel waited and hoped for a Messiah. Some thought the Messiah would be a great king, like King David. Others thought he would be a leader like Moses, or a prophet or perhaps a mighty soldier who would save the people of Israel from the Roman occupation.**

*From the edge furthest from you, move Mary, Joseph and Jesus up the road towards the Temple in Jerusalem.*

**Forty days after his birth in Bethlehem, Mary and Joseph, in obedience to the Jewish law, brought Jesus up to Jerusalem. Because he was their first born son they took him to the Temple to present him to God. Being poor people, they offered a pair of turtle-doves to God.**

*Put Simeon in front of you.*

**This is Simeon. He was an elderly man, a devout and faithful Jew, who trusted in God.**

*Hold one hand over Simeon’s head.*

**The Holy Spirit had revealed to Simeon that he would not die until he had seen the Messiah.**

*Place Simeon in the Temple.*

**On this day, God’s spirit guided Simeon to the Temple.**

*Move Joseph, Mary and Jesus into the Temple*

**When Mary and Joseph brought Jesus into the Temple, Simeon saw the baby. He immediately recognised Jesus as the long-awaited Messiah.**

*Hold Jesus in front of Simeon.*

**Simeon took the child into his arms. He joyously praised and thanked God for allowing him to see Jesus, the Messiah, who would save all people, Jews as well as Gentiles.**

*Turn Mary and Joseph to Simeon and Jesus*

**Mary and Joseph were amazed. Simeon blessed them.**

**Then speaking solemnly, he told Mary not everyone would accept her beloved son. Many people would oppose Jesus to the point of death.**

**Simeon warned Mary that she would experience great pain and deep sorrow; and that her heart would be pierced with sadness.**

*Place Jesus with Mary and Joseph*

*Hold Anna in front of you.*

**Just at this moment Anna came along. She was an elderly widow who served God night and day, praying and worshipping in the Temple.**

*Place Anna with the group. Turn Mary and Joseph towards her.*

**Anna looked at the baby and immediately knew that he was the long-awaited Messiah. Anna was filled with joy. She praised and thanked God for this child who would save all people. Mary and Joseph were amazed.**

*Move Mary, Jesus and Joseph away from the Temple, back along the road to Nazareth.*

**When they had finished in the Temple, Mary, Jesus and Joseph returned to the little village of Nazareth in Galilee.**

*Hold Jesus in your hand.*

**The baby Jesus grew up in Nazareth with his mother and father. He grew strong and was filled with wisdom.**

*Place your hand over Jesus.*

**The grace and blessing of God were upon him at all times.**

*Place your hand behind Mary and Joseph.*

**Mary and Joseph continued to live faithful lives, trusting in God, as they raised their son and watched him grow.**

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

**I wonder how Anna and Simeon knew that Jesus was the long awaited Messiah.**

**I wonder how they felt when they saw the baby Jesus.**

**I wonder how they felt when they saw that the Messiah was a baby born of poor parents and not a great king or a mighty soldier.**

**I wonder what Mary and Joseph were thinking when Simeon and Anna spoke about Jesus.**

**I wonder what Mary and Joseph talked about on the way back to Nazareth.**

**I wonder how parents today present their children to God.**

*Carefully pack story materials into storage box and put away. Ensure that children are watching so they know how to pack the materials away and where to find them.*

1. KWL, Teaching Companion, 4b, p179 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. KWL, Teaching Companion, 4b, p182 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. KWL, Teaching Companion, 4b, p181 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. KWL, Teaching Companion, 4b, p182 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. KWL, Teaching Companion, 4b, p182 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. KWL, Teaching Companion, 4b, p181 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. KWL, Teaching Companion, 4b, p182 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. KWL, Teaching Companion, 4b, p182 [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-9)