6.6 The Bible: Our Sacred Story

This unit explores the Bible as our Sacred Scriptures. Students review the great story of our tradition: its significant people and events. The unit also briefly introduces the students to the formation of the Bible.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Values & Attitudes**  *Students will demonstrate that they are:* | **Knowledge & Understandings**  *Students will demonstrate that they can:* | **Skills**  *Students will demonstrate that they can:* |
| C3.2 able to value Word, symbol and ritual in the celebrations of Catholic beliefs and traditions | explain how Word, symbol and ritual are used in sacramental and non-sacramental celebrations in the Christian community | prepare celebrations using appropriate Word, symbol and ritual |
| C3.1 able to value beliefs and traditions which are founded on Scripture and expressed in the story of the Catholic Church | summarise the traditions, beliefs and history which are important to the life of the Catholic Church | research traditions, beliefs and history of the Catholic Church |

Syllabus Outcomes  
Church – Stage 3

Classroom Outcomes

*Students will be able to:*

* describe why the Bible, the Sacred Scriptures, are important in the Christian community
* explain the significance of some of the people and events in the Old and New Testaments
* demonstrate an understanding of the concept of covenant from the Scriptures

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Scripture | Doctrine |
| Mark 4:1-9; 13-20 The Parable of the Sower  Luke 1:1-4 The Introduction  **Related Scripture**  Selected Old Testament passages  Book of Psalms (Poetry)  Selected New Testament/Gospel passages  *Note: It is necessary to do ‘Related’ Scripture; however the Scripture is selected.* | * The Bible is the inspired Word of God. * God speaks to us through the Word. * The Gospel is the living Word of God for us today. * The Gospel is the Good News of Jesus Christ. * Jesus invites us to respond to his message. * We are free to respond to the message of Jesus. |

Spiritual Reflection for Teachers

In times past, when enemies invaded a town, the first people to be killed were the storytellers, those who knew the history of the people. If their story could be wiped out, the people could be moulded more easily into new ways.

At family gatherings, we hear of how our forebears came to Australia, of their personalities and their struggles and victories. We have a sense of belonging and we learn our family values.

Our story as Christians is found in the Bible. We need to know and understand our story. If you don’t know your story, your history, you don’t know who you are, what you stand for and where you are heading. The great biblical scholar, St. Jerome said: “To be ignorant of Scripture is to be ignorant of Jesus Christ.”

Our Christian story communicates the importance of relationship and belonging. A central message in the Bible is the covenant – God’s relationship with people. God initiates this relationship. We respond to the invitation.

How does the Bible, our Sacred Scriptures, nurture your relationship with God?

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.**

**104** In Sacred Scripture, the Church constantly finds her nourishment and her strength, for she welcomes it not as a human word, "but as what it really is, the word of God.” “In the sacred books, the Father who is in heaven comes lovingly to meet his children, and talks with them."

**109** In Sacred Scripture, God speaks to man in a human way. To interpret Scripture correctly, the reader must be attentive to what the human authors truly wanted to affirm, and to what God wanted to reveal to us by their words.

**110** In order to discover the sacred authors' intention, the reader must take into account the conditions of their time and culture, the literary genres in use at that time, and the modes of feeling, speaking and narrating then current. "For the fact is that truth is differently presented and expressed in the various types of historical writing, in prophetical and poetical texts, and in other forms of literary expression."

**129** Christians therefore read the Old Testament in the light of Christ crucified and risen. Such typological reading discloses the inexhaustible content of the Old Testament; but it must not make us forget that the Old Testament retains its own intrinsic value as Revelation reaffirmed by our Lord himself. Besides, the New Testament has to be read in the light of the Old. Early Christian catechesis made constant use of the Old Testament. As an old saying put it, the New Testament lies hidden in the Old and the Old Testament is unveiled in the New.

**141** "The Church has always venerated the divine Scriptures as she venerated the Body of the Lord" (DV 21): both nourish and govern the whole Christian life. "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" (Ps 119:105; cf Is 50:4).

**2653** The Church "forcefully and specially exhorts all the Christian faithful to learn 'the surpassing knowledge of Jesus Christ' (Phil 3:8) by frequent reading of the divine Scriptures. Let them remember, however, that prayer should accompany the reading of Sacred Scripture, so that a dialogue takes place between God and man. For 'we speak to him when we pray; we listen to him when we read the divine oracles’."

Scripture: Background Information

**Mark 4:2-9, 13-20 Parable of the Sower**

This familiar parable follows the pattern of good storytelling - it has repetition and so is easy to remember. It is concise and has contrasting conditions throughout and at the end with “thirty, sixty and even hundredfold” (verse 9) has good production rates. The parable is about how the word of God is received. It is mainly about the seeds and even more the soil, than it is about the sower. The seeds could be seen as us, in which the word of God is sown. The soil represents the different ways people respond to the word and why. The soil might also be seen as the different communities that facilitate or hinder the growth of the word. The sower can represent God. God is a lavish sower but a “freedom” sower. The sower does not try to control the seeds or the soil. The fate of the seeds is different in the different environments presented - the path, the rocky ground, amongst the thorns and the good soil. The good soil “produced crop – thirty, sixty, even an hundred fold”. And even thirty percent is a good yield in good soil. We do not all have to yield a hundred fold. This is a very comforting thought.

The explanation of the parable (Vs14-20) is a detailed interpretation focussing on obstacles to belief. It is generally considered to be developed by the early church to explain the difficulties that threatened their communities and led to some followers giving up their Christian commitment.

It is worth remembering here C.H. Dodd’s definition of a parable, “a metaphor or simile drawn from nature or common life, arresting the hearer by its vividness or strangeness, and leaving the mind in sufficient doubt about its precise application to tease it into active thought.”[[1]](#footnote-1)

**The Four Gospels Mark, Matthew, Luke and John**

The four Gospels were written within the first 100 years of the early Church’s history. All the Gospels were written by different people, at different times, for different audiences. They were written for various reasons and to answer needs in their particular communities. So they present differing aspects of Jesus and his message according to their purpose and the requirements of their groups. The Gospels are anonymous texts. That means there is no indication in the text itself who wrote it. Tradition attributes the names to the respective Gospels.

**The Gospel of Mark**

In the opinion of many scholars, Mark was the first author to collect the stories about Jesus into a single narrative. Matthew and Luke used Mark’s Gospel as one of their sources. The Gospel of Mark was probably written in Rome for a persecuted and suffering community. Hence the portrait of Jesus in Mark is one of suffering and misunderstanding. The community hearing the Gospel are suffering, misunderstood and even dying for their beliefs, so Mark’s Jesus suffers, is misunderstood and dies alone. Even his own family members think he is out of his mind (3:20-21). The Gospel ends abruptly with the women running away from the empty tomb afraid (16:8). The Gospel has some further verses added to the last chapter (16:9-21) but the style of these verses is so different from the rest of the Gospel that it is suggested (e.g. St Jerome) that they were a later addition.

**The Gospel of Matthew**

The Gospel of Matthew was possibly written in Syria. It is a very Jewish Gospel and gives us insights into the painful moving from Judaism to being a follower of Jesus. For Matthew’s community there is the problem of self-identity – who are we? Where do we belong? The Gospel sets Jesus in a very Jewish context, modelled on Moses the great leader and lawgiver of the Hebrew Bible. It is often a Gospel of conflict as Jewish Christians discuss among themselves what it means to follow Jesus, the Jew, and remain Jewish. Is this possible in their changing world? The dilemma was real. This dilemma is seen in the Scripture’s criticism of groups like the Pharisees who were trying to uphold the religious tradition of the time. The old religion and the new are combined in this Gospel where no one is lost and there is no unforgiveness.

**The Gospel of Luke**

Many scholars suggest that Luke was a Gentile – a person who is not Jewish. Luke’s community would seem to be mainly Gentile and the Gospel was written in Greek. The Gospel is inclusive of foreigners and some say women. Women are certainly more obviously represented in this Gospel. It is also the Gospel of Jubilee. God’s promises and gifts are revealed and available to the unexpected. There is abundance for all but perhaps especially for those who do not generally receive it – like the elderly, shepherds, lepers, Samaritans, foreigners and women. The Acts of the Apostles is considered to have been written by the same author and is thus like a second volume of the Gospel.

**The Gospel of John**

The Fourth Gospel is very different from the other three. It is often referred to as the mystical or spiritual Gospel. Like the others it arises from the thoughts and needs of its community. It was probably written later than the other three Gospels. In the Gospel of John, Jesus is presented as reflecting on himself and his mission. Jesus also speaks in long discourses as distinct from the shorter pithy sayings of the synoptics. The fourth Gospel follows a different time frame. Jesus’ public life is slightly longer. The pattern of John is different. Jesus is in and out of Jerusalem and Galilee in the Fourth Gospel, whereas in the other three the adult Jesus only visits Jerusalem once. Such distinctions may seem unimportant but they do point to the fact that all the Gospels present Jesus according to the reflections and understanding of the communities for which they were written.

**Luke 1:1-4 Prologue**

The prologue to the Gospel of Luke is important because it can reveal something about the process of writing scripture and the Gospels in particular. Luke begins the prologue by stating that there have been many other written accounts of the happenings relating to Jesus and the early church. These accounts, we are told, were handed down from eyewitnesses. Luke attempts to write an “ordered account” for Theophilus so that he “may learn how well founded the teaching is that you have received”. Who is Theophilus? We do not really know. The name means friend of God. It was a common Greek name. Thus after reading and consideration we can see that the prologue gives us valuable insights into how and why a Gospel is written.

The Church’s Teaching and Lived Tradition

**In Tradition: *To Know, Worship and Love* Year 6, p95**

The stories of the Old and New Testaments are re-told and celebrated again and again in the Christian community. This is to remind us of God’s love and of our responsibility to love and care for each other. One important place where this happens is during the celebration of Mass in the Liturgy of the Word. Here the inspired books of the Old and New Testaments are proclaimed among the people and explained in the homily.

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.**

The emphasis here is to use a variety of Scripture passages in prayer, demonstrating reverence for the Bible as our Sacred Scripture. Use gestures, rituals and symbols practised in the Catholic community to show this reverence. It is important that students learn to pray using the Scriptures and also spend time listening to what Scripture says to them. Prayer celebrations may include:

1. Morning prayer each day (10-15 minutes)
2. Liturgy of the Word, with different responses to Scripture (once or twice a week/about 20-30 minutes).

The following prayer ideas are not in the Teaching and Learning strategies. They can be used any time throughout the unit and can be repeated.

* + Early in this unit celebrate together the Liturgy of the Word. Set up the sacred space with a focus on the open Bible. Include a procession of the Word. Teacher proclaims the Word. Scripture: Mark 4:1-20. Sing a song about remaining open to God or use response: “Open our eyes to your Word, Lord.”
  + Students prepare and lead Morning Prayer using Scripture.
  + Students prepare and lead prayer using “Children’s Daily Prayer Under the Southern Cross” each day or 2-3 times a week. Students can prepare the prayer in pairs.
  + Respond in prayer to Scripture passages. Read a selected passage and students respond using prayer journals, mandalas, prayers of intercession, create a chant based on the text, contemplation, meditation, songs adapted from Scripture ...
  + Use Scripture to lead students through meditation.

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 10, (2003), James Goold House Publications, Melbourne, Victoria**

*The Catholic Lectionary*

Bowker J, (1998), *The Complete Bible Handbook, An Illustrated Companion*, Dorling Kindersley

Carswell M (2001) *Teaching Scripture The Gospel of Mark,* Harper Collins, Victoria, Australia*,*

Kelly L, White A, Hari, Singer C (The Junior Bible series), Matthew James Publishing Ltd

*Jesus Calls* (1998)

*The Childhood of Jesus* (1998)

*Jesus the Healer*

*Creation*

*The Family of Abraham* (1998)

*Moses* (1999)

McMahan Jeep E and Smith M, *Children’s Daily Prayer Under the Southern Cross*, Liturgy Training Publications and DesBooks, Australia

O’Toole M, (1992), *Jesus: The Word of God*, Dove Collins, Australia

Perego G, (1999), *Interdisciplinary Atlas of the Bible*, St Pauls, Sydney

Ryan M, (1998), *A Synoptic Gospel*, Social Science Press, Australia.

Ryan M, (1998), *The Old Testament*, Social Science Press, Australia

Ryan M, (2000), *Religion Quick Prints*, Social Science Press: Australia

Ryan M, (2002), *Teaching the Bible: A Manual of Teaching Activities, Commentary and Blackline Masters*, Social Science Press: Australia

Singer C and Hari A, (1993), *Experience Jesus Today: Understanding the Gospel,* Editions du Signe

Singer C and Hari A, (1997), *Alive in the Spirit Today,* Matthew James, Chelmsford

Singer C and Hari A, (1995), *Discover the Old Testament Today,* Sign, Charlestown, Md

White D, O’Brien K, Todd S (2003) *Into the Deep - Rich Teaching Strategies for the Religious Education Classroom,* KD Publications, Marayong. NSW

Woods L, (1993), *The Bible: God’s Word*, Collin-Dove, Melbourne

Woods L, (1999), *A Dictionary For Catholics*, HarperCollins, Victoria

Woods L, (2000), *The Catholic Bible Story Workbook*, Fireside Bible Publishers, USA

(This can be useful to gain summary accounts of different events in the Bible. It also has crosswords and other activities students could do for homework or as consolidation/review.)

**Teacher References**

Charpentier E, (1982), *How to Read the New Testament*, SCM Press, England

Charpentier E, (1982), *How to Read the Old Testament*, SCM Press, England

Goosen G and Tomlinson M, (1994), *Studying the Gospels: An Introduction*, EJ Dwyer, Australia

Key to Symbol

✪ denotes higher order activity

Unit Content 1

We reverence and celebrate the Bible as the living Word of God.

*Students will learn:*

* about the Catholic Church’s understanding of the Bible as the inspired revelation of God
* to explore ways the Catholic community reverences the Bible

Unit Content: Background Information

The Bible is our Sacred Scripture. It is the ‘Word of God’. This unit begins with exploring the place of the Bible in our life and the life of the community. One of the early strategies is a liturgy of the Word. This is to highlight the importance of praying with Scripture. Two important ways we use Scripture in our tradition are:

1. Liturgy of the Word, in the celebration of Eucharist and in all sacraments.
2. The Divine Office or Liturgy of the Hours. This form of prayer focuses on Scripture, particularly the psalms. Traditionally, priests and religious pray the Office, particularly those in monastic life. *Children’s Daily Prayer Under the Southern Cross* is modelled on the structure of the Divine Office

We also use Scripture in other liturgies. It is important to regularly use Scripture in prayer with the students. This will demonstrate:

a) the importance of praying with the Scriptures,

b) reverence for Sacred Scripture,

c) being open to the Word of God in our life.

Students need to be familiar with the following concepts:

**Sacred Scripture**: The Bible is not just another book. It is our holy text, the Word of God. It is the truth. So we reverence it and treat the book of the Bible with respect.

**Inspiration**: We believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God. The Holy Spirit inspired the writers of the Bible and its formation. It is the definitive truth given to us by God. In a sense the Holy Spirit also inspires the reader to hear the meaning of the text. The Holy Spirit is active in the writer and the reader. For this reason we can always come to the Scriptures with new ears, even if the passage is heard several times. The Bible, the inspired Word of God, is a dialogue between God and humanity. We come to it each time with our experience, to hear the Word afresh, and be open to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

**Revelation**: Refers to God’s self-communication (the self-giving of God). God is revealed in many ways, through creation, history, Tradition, human experience… Sacred Scripture together with Sacred Tradition are the definitive expressions of God’s revelation brought to fullness in Jesus Christ.

In this Unit Content it is important to emphasise the reverence for Sacred Scriptures. We can do this by the way we pray with Scripture and also in the way we present the sacred space in the classroom. The Bible should have a primary place on the sacred space and should be open. This symbolises the importance of the Bible in our lives and our openness to the Word of God: Jesus. Lead the students to realise that the Bible is not just another book; it is not just another ‘holy book’. It is the inspired Word of God – our Sacred Scriptures.

When exploring ways the Catholic community reverences the Bible it is worth looking at the way Judaism reverences its Sacred Scriptures. The Bible comes from a rich Judaic tradition and the books of the Old Testament are common to Judaism and Christianity. The Catholic Liturgy of the Word has its roots in the synagogue Sabbath liturgy.

How do we develop and maintain a reverence for the Bible as we use it in our classrooms? While this Unit Content is important it should be relatively brief. Prayer strategies are ideally continuing throughout the whole unit. Emphasis should be placed on Unit Contents 2, 3 and 4.

suggested teaching/learning strategies

* Celebrate a class Liturgy of the Word. Set up the prayer place with a focus on the open Bible. Include a procession of the Word. Teacher proclaims the Word - Scripture: Mark 4:1-9. Sing a song about remaining open to God or use response: “Open our eyes/ears to your Word, Lord”
* Tell the story of The Parable of the Sower Part 1 (Mk 4:1-9) using suggested story script (Resource Sheet 1a) and 2 D materials on RE Online.
* Engage students in wondering. Suggested wondering statements are:
* I wonder why the seeds on the path were eaten by the birds.
* I wonder why the seeds that fell on rocky ground were scorched so quickly.
* I wonder why the seeds that fell in thorn bushes didn’t produce any grain.
* I wonder why the seeds in the good soil grew and produced plenty.
* I wonder what the seeds could be.
* I wonder how we get good soil for planting seeds.
* I wonder why Jesus told this parable.
* Students respond to the parable through:
* movement and drama. (See Creative Arts package.) Mime the seeds growing and being choked by thorns etc. or
* art work. Students choose a part of the story to represent.
* Tell the story - The Parable of the Sower Part 2 (Mk 4:1-9; 13-20) using 2 D materials on RE Online and suggested story script. See Resource Sheet 1b, pp2&3. This script includes vs 13-20 which are the focus of the wondering.
* Engage students in some of the following or your own wondering statements:
* I wonder what it might mean ‘to sow the word’.
* I wonder why those ‘on the path’ can so easily have the word taken from them.
* I wonder why those on rocky ground initially receive the word with joy but when trouble comes they fall away.
* I wonder what sort of trouble might cause those on rocky ground to let the word fall away from them.
* I wonder what sort of things might choke the word in people, so that it produces nothing.
* I wonder why those on the good soil hear the word and accept it and bear fruit.
* I wonder what those on the good soil might have produced.
* I wonder what the good soil might really be.
* I wonder who the sower of the word could really be.
* Take some time to read Mark 4:13-20

In groups of four, talk about what you think Jesus was trying to tell his listeners (and us!) in this parable. You will need a reporter. You will need to share the role of recorder, to take notes as each member of the group speaks. Each person must be given the opportunity to speak.

In your group prepare a ‘Scriptural Think Pad’ (*Into the Deep* by White D, O’Brien K and Todd S, 2003) pp82-84) to illustrate your group’s work.

Share with other groups – what did you learn from others?

* The Parable of the Sower. See *Teaching Scripture, The Gospel of Mark* by Margaret Carswell.
  + - * 1. Discuss the images of farming, planting, seeds. What do plants need to grow healthy and strong?
        2. Display a pile of rocks and a pile of soil near the sacred space. Read the parable of the Sower. Share initial responses and interpretations.
        3. Draw diagrams or pictures to show where the seeds fell. Under each drawing write an interpretation. What happened to the seeds? What is Mark trying to communicate?
        4. Draw analogies between thorns, rocks and so on with modern day barriers we face when trying to respond to the Word of God.
        5. Discuss: How does the Holy Spirit act in us when we read the Bible? How can you make the Bible more prominent in your life as a Christian? After discussion, students write a journal response.
* Pose the Question: What does the Bible mean to me? Students write a personal response. Share if students are comfortable.
* Read and discuss ‘In Tradition’, KWL, Year 6, p95. Ask students to recall the responses in the Liturgy of the Word (This is the Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God…). Students brainstorm and list how we use the Bible as Catholics.
* Using a biblical or Catholic dictionary find the definition for the following words: revelation, inspiration and inspired, sacred, reverence. Discuss the concepts and relate them back to the Bible.
* Read ‘Living the Gospel’ in KWL, Year 6, pp96-97. What happens? Why does the teacher make the choice to deal with the problem this way? How is God acting in this story? The Holy Spirit is acting (inspiration) in Sacred Scripture, in the teacher deciding to use the Scriptures and the boys accepting the message and acting accordingly. Relate this story to the Parable of the Sower.
* What do we mean when we say the Bible is our Sacred Scripture and is inspired by God? It is important to point out that God is working in both the writer and the reader. The Bible speaks to us as we read it – it is a dialogue. In pairs, students identify the symbols, gestures and rituals Christians use to reverence the Word of God in liturgies and prayer. List any other ways Christians show reverence for the Bible, e.g. the place of the lectern in the church, Gospel procession, open Bible on the class sacred space, genuflecting, bowing, incense, light…
* Visit a synagogue. Look at the layout and the place of the lectern. Compare this with the church. And/or invite a rabbi to speak to students about the place of the Sacred Scripture in Judaism.
* Invite the parish priest to talk to the students about the lectern and place of the sacred Scriptures in the Catholic tradition. Other guest speakers may include rabbi, a person who is involved in proclaiming Scripture at Mass, a person who uses Scripture in their own personal prayer and life.
* Teacher models the use of Scripture in a short prayer with the class. Model a strong reverence for the Bible as the Word of God. What gestures do we use to show reverence for the Bible? In pairs or threes, students prepare and lead Morning Prayer using Scripture.

Unit Content 2

The Bible is a collection of books based on the oral tradition.

*Students will learn:*

* about the formation of the Bible including the core events, the oral tradition and the written forms
* about the Bible as a library of books, grouped together as Old and New Testaments
* to use Scripture referencing, e.g. Luke 1:1-4

Unit Content: Background Information

See Resource Sheet 2 for a general and simplified description of the formation of the books of the Bible.

Students need to be aware that the Bible is not a single book and was not written in the form we have it today. The formation of the Bible is complex. There are many stages to the process, each inspired by the Holy Spirit. It begins with the experiences of a group of people and their relationship with God. Eyewitnesses communicate the experiences, events and accounts and finally these were written down and form the books of the Bible we have today. (See Resource Sheet 2)

When studying the formation of the Bible it is hoped that students appreciate the rich history and development of the Bible. It is our inspired text, which we need to explore and grow to understand. Israel reflected on their experience and came to know that God was with them. The Bible expresses their beliefs in God. It communicates their understanding of God’s relationship with Israel, all people, and all of creation. The Bible comes from various cultures and times within the Hebrew tradition. The historical origin and literary style need to be considered. The Scriptures are the Word of God given human expression. The Word of God is expressed in human language and in a variety of literary forms. The literary form, intent of the writer, and the historical and cultural context of the passages are all important in analysing and understanding the passages. Content in this unit will prepare students for studies of the Bible in Years 7-8.

Our Christian Bible is made up of the Old and New Testaments. They complement each other. Both Testaments form our Sacred Scriptures. The words ‘old’ and ‘new’ can be problematic. In fact the name Old Testament does not indicate that the New Testament surpasses it. We can think of ‘old’ as meaning ancient and venerable, not dead and superseded.

The Bible is a collection of books. The Catholic (and Orthodox) canon has 27 books in the New Testament and 46 books in the Old Testament. Protestant churches and Judaism differ with the inclusion of Old Testament books. They have fewer. Hence it is important to check the Bible that students are using. If it is not a Catholic edition it may have the extra books the Catholic Church has included in a separate section. These books are called deuterocanonical books, e.g. the books of Tobit, Esther…)

**Deuterocanonical**: Books of the Bible that are part of the Catholic canon but excluded in the Protestant and Jewish canon. These books may also be called apocryphal texts in Bibles edited by Protestant communities.

The books of the Bible can be classified into categories.

* 1. The Old Testament: The Law (Pentateuch), Prophets, History and Wisdom writings.
  2. New Testament: Gospels, Letters, History, Wisdom writings.

Note: The historical books are not primarily concerned with history in the same way that history books are written. The primary concern is God’s work in history not the historical details.

Students need to also know the correct names of books, the divisions of books into chapters and verses, and how to find passages. Books have names that can be abbreviated (e.g. Luke – Lk, Genesis – Gen). Hence Lk 1:1-4 refers to the book of Luke (a Gospel) chapter 1 verses 1 to 4. Students need to be able to find references and record the reference for texts. This Unit Content is important but should be brief. The story ‘‘The Bible: Our Sacred Story’ will provide a good background outline.

Suggested teaching/learning strategies

* How do we communicate? Briefly explore with students ways we communicate, how and why we communicate, and the place of story in our lives. Students share family and community stories. In English, study the use of oral story-telling and written stories that tell us truths about life but are fiction. Explore examples of family, national, cultural and religious stories.)
* Tell the story ‘The Bible: Our Sacred Story’, using Resource Sheet 3 and suggested Bible Book materials.
* Engage students in wondering. Some suggested wondering statements are
* I wonder which books you already know about.
* I wonder which books you want to find out about.
* I wonder which parable is your favourite and where we might find it in the Bible.
* I wonder if you have a favourite Bible character and where we would find this character in the Bible.
* The people of God had many struggles and hardships in their relationship with God. I wonder what difficulties we struggle with and how they might keep us from Jesus.
* Make available ‘The Bible: Our Sacred Story’ materials for students’ use either individually or in small groups. Provide opportunities for them to explore how many books there are and the different classification of books: prophetic, wisdom, historical, Pentateuch (Law), Gospels, letters etc.
* Give each student a bookmark which is their own list of the books of the Bible (template on RE Online, Primary Curriculum and Resources, 6.6 Bible Bookmarks).
* Give each student a ‘little book’ from the ‘bookshelf’. Invite them to join with other students who have books from the same section (colour). Each student reads what is particular about their book and shares with group. Groups prepare a brief summary of what their books are about in general e.g. prophets, Wisdom etc*.*
* Encourage students to use the ‘little books’ to find out information about each book. Students could choose a book, read out the little explanation and then ask the class where this book might belong in the Bible e.g. Old / New Testament\, and which section - Prophets, Wisdom, History, Law etc.
* Read and explore KWL, Year 6, p91-93. Discuss: What does the Bible mean to the Catholic community? Judaism? Assist the students to identify that the Bible is the Sacred Scriptures for Christians, and the Old Testament is the Sacred Scriptures for Jews (particularly the Pentateuch)
* Look at the table of contents in the Bible. How many books are there? How many books are in the OT/NT? Question the students about the Bible to bring out an awareness of different books, distinction of Old Testament and New Testament, length of books (for example, go to the Gospel of Mark. How many chapters are there in Mark? To which Testament does the Gospel of Mark belong?) Name the first 5 books of the Bible. Name the four Gospels etc.
* ✪ Students may like to go into some detail and research further details about the books of the Bible and when they were written.
* Read Luke 1:1-4 to the students. Who is the “work” addressed to? What does Luke set out to do? For whom? Have others written accounts? What is meant by “the things that have taken place among us”? Did the writer experience the Jesus event he wrote about? What does this tell us about how the Gospel of Luke was written?
* Ask students to look through the Bible and notice the numbers. What do they notice? Explain biblical referencing to students, e.g. Lk 1:1-4. Lk = Luke, 1 = chapter, 1-4 = verses. Give students some references and ask them to find them in the Bible. For example, ask students to look up references to answer questions or fill in the blank in Bible verses. Why don’t we use page numbers in the Bible?

Unit Content 3

In the Old Testament we encounter the story of God, of God’s chosen people and of their relationship with God.

*Students will learn:*

* about covenant relationship in the Old Testament
* about the major events and people in the story of God’s relationship with Israel
* to identify some books, people and events in the Old Testament

Unit Content: Background Information

Unit Contents 1-2 provide students with the tools for using and reading the Bible: biblical background and formation, concepts of inspiration and revelation, etc.

Unit Contents 3 and 4 focus more on our sacred story. Our sacred story begins in Genesis and moves through the ‘history’ of Israel to the life, death and Resurrection of Jesus, and the early Church. This is our salvation history. Hence it is important that students know the people and stories that make up this sacred story. In Unit Content 3 and 4 students explore the story. Give them time to become familiar with stories and characters through teaching activities and through prayer experiences. Use a variety of resources such as books that retell the biblical stories and explain them, biblical atlases, videos and the web.

Students could be invited to read the books of Jonah, Esther, Ruth, Tobit and other short books; or watch movies at home that tell biblical stories.

As information about books, stories and people is gathered, build up a display on the wall – ‘Our Sacred Story’. It is hoped that students will grow to appreciate the treasures to be found in the Bible, hence, allowing the story to live in them. They, too, are part of this sacred story.

Covenant is an agreement that creates a relationship between two parties. In the Bible the covenant is the relationship between God and the people of Israel. “I will be your God, and you will be my people.” All the covenants are expressions of this one covenant God makes with humanity, through the people of Israel. Noah and the flood reveals the covenant God makes with all creation, God then makes a covenant with Abraham and a ‘chosen people’ is created. Then we have the covenant of the Exodus story. The Exodus story, the journey from Egypt to The Promised Land, is the central event in the Old Testament. God remains faithful to that relationship. Prophets are repeatedly sent to remind Israel of the covenant God has made with them. The prophets call them back to faithfulness to this relationship with God.

Jesus fulfils and continues this ongoing covenant relationship with God. It is a relationship of love and compassion that God initiates with God’s people. Give students time to explore and understand the concept of the covenant between God and the people of Israel. Every passage in the Bible must be interpreted through this relationship. It is also our covenant relationship.

Suggested Teaching/Learning Strategies

**Introduce the story of the Bible**: The Old Testament and New Testament:

1. Give students strips of paper. Ask them to write down stories of the Bible they remember (titles, people, events). Begin with the Old Testament and then go to the New Testament. As a class, (led by the teacher) sequence the events/people in some chronological order.
2. Using a biblical time line and/or pictures/DVDs, outline key events in the story of Israel from the creation of the world through to the creation of Israel with the call of Abraham, the Exodus story, the time of Kings and self-rule, and the prophets through to the ‘Jesus’ story. Do this very briefly so that students become familiar with the general story.

**THE COVENANT**

* Explore the concept of ‘covenant relationship’ with students - see Background Information for this Unit Content). Discuss their experience of agreements and promises. God and Israel entered an agreement. In groups, ask students to find out what the agreement was. Each group can take a reference to explore: Gen 9:8-17; Gen 12:1-3; Ex 20:1-17; Jer 31:31-34.

Who does God make the covenant with? What is God’s role/responsibility? What is the other party’s role/responsibility? Why is the covenant made? What are the symbols of the covenant?

**EXPLORING THE OLD TESTAMENT**

Collect resources that present the stories of the Old Testament (picture books, role-plays etc) and information about people and events in the Bible. Give students time to explore key events in the history of Israel through a variety of events and characters. In Resource Sheet 4 there are lists of accounts and characters students could explore.

Spend some time exploring the stories of the Old Testament. This could include whole class, individual and group work.

Students share their work with the rest of the class to gain a whole picture of the salvation history of Israel. The purpose of this section is to give students an overview of the Bible: salvation history. Work could be displayed to create a collage of events and people of the Old Testament.

* Students explore one of each: an event in the Bible (Part A), a person in the Bible (Part B) and a psalm (Part C). Make sure the class has a sufficient variety and overview of the Old Testament.
* Allow students to respond to the Scripture passages through various activities: paint a picture, create a collage, dramatise, write in a journal as the character, create a picture book, a slide presentation, design a comic strip, etc.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Part A: Bible Account**  *Students can read the accounts from books, watch DVDs and read the scripture passages. (Students could be invited to watch movies at home, with their family, e.g. The Ten Commandments, Joseph.)*  Choose an account:   1. Where does the account take place? 2. Who are the key characters? 3. What is happening? 4. When does the event take place? (date or place in Bible) 5. What do we learn from the passage about God? People? The world? | **Part B: Significant People**  *In exploring significant people, students need to explore the stories with which they are linked. For this purpose students need only develop a brief profile of the person and their role in the Bible.*  Choose a person and give a brief profile of the person:   1. Who is the person? 2. What is their role in the Bible? 3. What message do they present about God? People? 4. When did the person live? 5. What other information can you find? 6. How does the person try to keep the covenant? (What can they teach us about building a relationship with God?) |
| **Part C: The Book of Psalms**  Choose a Psalm.   1. What is the psalm about? 2. How does the psalm make you feel? 3. What does the psalm tell us about God? People? Creation? 4. Does the psalm tell us about Israel’s history, creation or one person’s experience? | |

Unit Content 4

In the New Testament we learn of Jesus Christ and the early Christian community.

*Students will learn:*

* about the profile and characteristics of the four Gospels
* about the major events and characters in the New Testament
* to identify some books, people and events of the New Testament

Unit Content: Background Information

The Old Testament and the New Testament are two parts of the one story. They form our ‘salvation history’. Now that they have explored the Old Testament, students begin to explore the New Testament. The focus of this Unit Content is the Gospels.

The aim of some of the activities is to show the link between the Old Testament and the New Testament. Jesus, the apostles and the early Church would have been very familiar with the Old Testament. They referred to these as Scripture. There was no final Old Testament Canon at this stage, only writings and individual books. Particular members of the early Church wrote the Gospels. They were inspired by the Holy Spirit and influenced by the experience of their communities. Hence each Gospel has its own characteristics and style.

In exploring the Magnificat, students compare it to Hannah’s song of praise. Hannah’s song of praise may have been a hymn that either Mary or Luke knew. The image of the Good Shepherd is taken from the Old Testament also, showing the intimate connection between the Old Testament and Jesus and the early Church. In the same way we can use Sacred Scripture to express our own experiences and make meaning of life.

Suggested Teaching/Learning Strategies

* Review the time-line of our sacred story from Unit Content 3.
* With the assistance of the teacher, students gather information about the formation of the NT, particularly the Gospels, e.g. teacher reads information and students take notes (Dictogloss). Students are given research material and attempt to find information in groups. Student use the little ‘books of the Bible’ set to find out more about the Gospels and the other New Testament books.

Create a class matrix:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Gospel | Author | When written | Audience | Other |
| Matthew |  |  |  |  |
| Mark |  |  |  |  |
| Luke |  |  |  |  |
| John |  |  |  |  |

* Create a list of questions in the style of ‘Trivial Pursuit’ – Place these on cards and make them available for students to use at appropriate times, e.g. when they have finished their work, ‘free’ choice time etc. For example: Name 3 apostles. Who are the 12 apostles? Who wrote the most Letters in the NT?
* Read and compare the following pairs of Scripture passages. Lead the students to understand the relationship between the Old and New Testaments.
  1. Lk 1:46-56 and 1 Sam 2:1-10. What is similar and different about them? Who is speaking? Why do they sing this song?
  2. Ezek 34:11-16 and Jn 10:11-16. What image is presented? Who fits this image? What qualities does God have in light of these passages? Why are there similarities between the OT and NT?

**EXPLORING THE NEW TESTAMENT**

Explore the New Testament using the same organisation and strategies as for ‘Exploring the Old Testament’ in Unit Content 3. See below.

* Give students the opportunity to review and share favourite Scripture events with which they are familiar.
* Students explore one of each: a parable in the Gospels (Part A), a person in the New Testament (Part B). Make sure the class has a sufficient variety.
* Allow students to respond to the Scripture passages studied through various activities: paint a picture, create a collage, dramatise, write a journal as the character, create a picture book, a slide presentation, design a comic strip, etc.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Part A: Bible Accounts – Parables**  Students choose a parable from the Gospels. (It could be their favourite parable) Answer the following questions:   1. From which Gospel is the parable? 2. What is the biblical reference? 3. Give a brief recount of the parable. 4. What does the parable tell us about God? Jesus? People? 5. Why do you think Jesus told this parable? | Some Suggested Parables  Lk 12:16-21 The Rich Fool  Lk 15:11-32 The Prodigal Son  Lk 10:9-16 Tenants in the Vineyard  Matt 18: 23-34 The Unforgiving Servant  Matt 20:1-16 Workers of the Vineyard  Matt 22:1-10 The Wedding Feast  Mk 4:26-29 Growing Seed |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Part B: Significant People**  Choose one character from the NT and find out 3-5 pieces of information about the person. For example:   1. Who is the person? 2. Where are they mentioned in the NT? 3. What role do they play in the story of Jesus and the early Church? | **Some Suggested People** – *These are less known characters. Children may also choose the more familiar characters in the NT e.g. the apostles. The references will help identify who the person is and their significance in the early Church.*  Elizabeth – Lk 1:39-58  John the Baptist – Lk 3:1-20  Mary of Magdalene – Matt 27:55-57; 28:1-3; Mk 16:8-10  Barnabas – Acts 4:36-37; 9:26-30; 13:42-43  Stephen – Acts 6:1-15; 7:55-8:3  Timothy – Acts 16:1-10; 17:13-15; 1 Cor 4:16-18;  1 Tim 1:1-2; 2 Tim 1:1-2  Paul – Acts 9:1-19  Lydia – Acts 16:11-15, 39-40  Priscilla – Acts 18:1-3, 17-19, 25-27; Rom 16:2-4;  1 Cor 16:18-20 |

**CONCLUSION OF THE UNIT**

* What have you learnt about the Bible in this unit? What has been a highlight? What other information would you like to know about the Bible? Students respond in writing.
* Review the work on the Parable of the Sower and ways we can reverence and live the Sacred Scriptures in our lives, as a community and as individuals.

**Resource Sheet 1a**

**The Parable of the Sower - Part 1**

(Mark 4:2-9)

Part 1 focuses on the parable and does not include the later explanation of the parable (Mark 4:13-20). It is suggested that the story is told again later with the later explanation included (see Part 2).

**YOU WILL NEED:**

* 2D masters on RE Online:
* sower
* 3 birds
* thorn bush
* trees
* felt road (beige)
* 3 rocks
* thin strip of brown felt: 2cm x 15cm (for good soil)

*Spread the felt road as you say*

**One day a large crowd gathered round Jesus and he began to teach them in parables. As he was teaching he said to them:**

*Place the sower on one side of the road.*

**“Listen! A sower went out to sow,**

*Make the action of scattering with your hand.*

**As he sowed, some of the seed fell on the path**

*Place the birds on the other side of the road.*

**and the birds came and ate it up**.

*Place the rocks further down the road to the side.*

**Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it didn’t have much soil, and it sprang up quickly.**

**But when the sun rose it was scorched; and since it had no root, it withered away.**

*Place the thorn bush further down the road to the side.*

**Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain.**

*Place the thin strip of brown felt down and the trees on top of it.*

**Other seed fell into good soil and grew up and produced thirty and sixty and a hundredfold.”**

**And he said, “Let anyone with ears to hear, listen!”**

*Engage with these or your own ‘I wonder’ statements:*

**Wondering**

* I wonder why the seeds on the path were eaten by the birds.
* I wonder why the seeds that fell on rocky ground were scorched so quickly.
* I wonder why the seeds that fell in thorn bushes didn’t produce any grain.
* I wonder why the seeds in the good soil grew and produced plenty.
* I wonder what the seeds could be.
* I wonder how we get good soil for planting seeds.
* I wonder why Jesus told this parable.

**Resource Sheet 1b**

**The Parable of the Sower - Part 2**

(Mark 4:2-9, 13-20)

Part 2 repeats the parable (Mark 4: 2-9) but continues on to include Mark 4:13-20 with wondering focusing on Mark 4:13-20.

**YOU WILL NEED:**

* 2D masters on RE Online:
* sower
* 3 birds
* thorn bush
* trees
* felt road (beige)
* 3 rocks
* thin strip of brown felt: 2cm x 15cm (for good soil)

*Spread the felt road as you say*

**One day a large crowd gathered round Jesus and he began to teach them in parables. As he was teaching he said to them:**

*Place the sower on one side of the road.*

**“Listen! A sower went out to sow,**

*Make the action of scattering with your hand.*

**As he sowed, some of the seed fell on the path**

*Place the birds on the other side of the road.*

**and the birds came and ate it up**.

*Place the rocks further down the road to the side.*

**Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it didn’t have much soil, and it sprang up quickly.**

**But when the sun rose it was scorched; and since it had no root, it withered away.**

*Place the thorn bush further down the road to the side.*

**Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain.**

*Place the thin strip of brown felt down and the trees on top of it.*

**Other seed fell into good soil and grew up and produced thirty and sixty and a hundredfold.”**

**And he said, “Let anyone with ears to hear, listen!”**

*Pause for a moment or two, still looking at the story. Then continue:*

**Later when the crowd had gone and Jesus was alone with his disciples, he said to them, “Do you understand this parable?” Then he continued:**

*Point to the sower as you say,*

**“The sower sows the word.**

*Move the sower back to where the path and birds are and point to the area where the (imaginary) seeds were planted.*

**These are the ones on the path where the word is sown: they hear the word, but immediately it is taken away from them.**

*Move the sower along to the rocky ground. Indicate with your hand the rocky ground.*

**And these are the ones that are sown on rocky ground: when they hear the word, they firstly receive it with joy. But they haven’t strong roots and when trouble arises, they immediately fall away.**

*Move the sower along to the thorns. Indicate with your hand the thorn bushes.*

**Others are those sown among the thorns: these are the ones who hear the word, but the cares of the world and the desire for other things choke the word and it produces nothing.**

*Move the sower along to the good soil. Indicate with your hand the good soil.*

**And these are the ones sown on the good soil; they hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirty, sixty and one hundredfold.”**

*Pause for a moment.*

*Engage with these or your own ‘I wonder’ statements. This may be done over a number of sessions.*

* I wonder what it might mean ‘to sow the word’.
* I wonder why those ‘on the path’ can so easily have the word taken from them.
* I wonder why those on rocky ground initially receive the word with joy but when trouble comes they fall away.
* I wonder what sort of trouble might cause those on rocky ground to let the word fall away from them.
* I wonder what sort of things might choke the word in people, so that it produces nothing.
* I wonder why those on the good soil hear the word and accept it and bear fruit.
* I wonder what those on the good soil might have produced.
* I wonder what the good soil might really be.
* I wonder who the sower of the word could really be.

**Resource Sheet 2**



Formation of the Bible

This whole process is inspired by the Holy Spirit and takes shape under the leadership of significant individuals, such as, the apostles, Paul, evangelists etc.

The process from stage 1-5 occurs for each book in the Bible. Sometimes the process takes a few generations while for other books the process takes a decade or two. It is not a neat process and stages merge into each other.

**1. The Experience**

The community struggles to make meaning of their experiences.

*What were the experiences people struggled with?* e.g: Jesus’ Resurrection, Lost in the Desert, King David rules Israel, Israel is invaded.

*The community struggles to express a truth or reality,* e.g. Who created the world? Who is Jesus? What is the meaning of the Resurrection?

**5. The Canon is formed**

Different communities use these ‘books’. They are sacred.

Religious leaders decide which books are sacred and inspired by God.

These books come together and form the Bible: a Canon of sacred books.

**2. Oral Tradition**

Inspired by the Holy Spirit and led by individual leaders, the community develops and shares stories, songs, poems, rituals, liturgies and rules.

These help communicate the culture, identity, history, and beliefs about God, people, and the world.

These become the tradition of the community.

**4. Written Tradition: Collecting and Editing**

A ‘book’ is formed.

Individual writings are collected and grouped together. They are adapted and edited. Eventually collections of writing become a book, eg Book of Genesis.

Ordered accounts may be edited and adapted, eg Gospel of Luke

**3. Writing the Tradition**

Individual stories, songs, rules… from the oral tradition are written down.

The community continues the oral tradition, while aspects of it are written. There are two types of writing:

a) individual stories, songs…

b) writer intends to write an ordered and “complete” account, eg Gospel of Luke.

**Resource Sheet 3**

**6.6 The Bible: Our Sacred Story**

You Will Need:

* A set of books of the bible in bookshelf
* Seasonal coloured cloth or felt
* A Catholic Bible

*NB: Depending on the experience of the students, you may choose to layer your storytelling and introduce the different groups of books in one storytelling session and return in the next lesson to this script. You may also choose to differentiate this script for identified individuals and groups of students in the class.*

*Students are seated in a semi-circle ready to listen to the story. When the children are settled, collect the materials and carry them respectfully to the storytelling place. Place the materials beside you.*

*You may choose to tell the story on a table or on the floor – wherever you are most comfortable and where all members of the group can see clearly.*

*When the group is ready, lay out a piece of seasonal coloured cloth or felt to define the storytelling area.*

**INTRODUCTION**

*Begin by saying...*

**In each of our lives we hear many stories that help us to know who we are. There are family stories, class stories, community stories and national stories.**

*Hold the Bible in front of you and say…*

**This book is the Holy Bible. It tells the sacred story of God’s relationship with all creation and with us. We say that the Bible is a library of books – but it doesn’t look like a library.**

*Place the Bible (closed) in front of you on the seasonal cloth.*

*Move the Bible Bookshelf with all the books in it to the front facing the students.*

**I have some materials here to help us understand the library of books that make up the Holy Bible.**

**A long, long time ago the People of God shared many stories of their experience and understanding of God. Later these stories were written down by hand. When the printing press was invented, the stories were gathered together into books. These books were eventually put into one large book called the Bible.**

*Place your hand on the Bible and say...*

**Today we are going to hear more about our sacred stories.**

***THE OLD TESTAMENT (HEBREW SCRIPTURES)***

*Open the Bible to show the Old Testament.*

**In the Bible, this section is called the Old Testament. It is a collection of books with many different types of writings. It tells about God’s love for the people and the people’s struggle to know and love God and each other.**

*Trace your finger along the books of the Old Testament in the first two shelves of the bookshelf.*

**On our bookshelf, this section contains the books of the Old Testament. These stories were told many, many years before Jesus was born.**

*Indicate the first set of 5 books (green) which are the Pentateuch, on the top shelf in the bookshelf. These are the books of Law. Point to the books as you name the group.*

**The first five books of the Bible are called the Pentateuch. We often call these books ‘The Law’. The Pentateuch records the stories of Creation, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Joseph and Moses. It also tells the Exodus story - the journey from Egypt to the Promised Land and the giving of God’s law of love. It teaches about God’s covenant with God’s people, and with us.**

*Point to the next set of books on the top shelf (orange). These are the books of History. Touch the top of these books as you name some of them and then say...*

**These are the books of History. Stories in these books tell how and where the Jewish people settled in Israel after they had escaped from Egypt. Some of the stories are about war, adventure, struggle and hardship. The stories of young David and his battle with Goliath and of his being anointed King of Israel are in these books.**

**All the stories tell of God’s love, forgiveness and saving activity.**

*Point to the next set of books on the middle shelf (pink), as you say:*

**These are the books of Wisdom and Poetry.**

*Carefully take out the Book of Psalms and hold it up as you say:*

**The Book of Psalms was used long ago as a hymn and prayer book in the Temple. Jesus would have prayed these prayers when he visited the Temple. Today, we use the Psalms to respond to God in the Mass and in prayer.**

**The books of Wisdom in the Old Testament offer guidance on how to live a good and holy life.**

*Point to the next set of books on the middle shelf (pale blue), which are the books of the Prophets. Touch the top of them moving them out slightly (do this carefully to avoid them falling out).*

**These are the books of the Prophets. Prophets were chosen by God, to speak for God to the people. Sometimes they had to call people back, reminding them to live God’s law of love. At other times they brought messages of great hope and comfort.**

**The Prophets remind us, too, to live according to God’s law.** *Read out the names of some of the prophets.*

*Point to the books of the Old Testament that are on the first two shelves.*

**These are the books of the Old Testament. They tell about God’s love for the people and the people’s struggle to know and love God and each other.**

*Hold the bible open where the Old Testament**finishes**and the New Testament commences, indicating the two parts.*

**The Old Testament and the New Testament are two parts of the one story.**

**THE NEW TESTAMENT (CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURES)**

*Hold the Bible to show the New Testament.*

**The New Testament continues the story of God’ love.**

*Trace your finger along the books of the New Testament in the bookshelf - third shelf.*

**All the books in the New Testament are about God’s love through Jesus.**

*Point to the set of books at the beginning of the third shelf (purple), which are the books of the Gospels. Just touch the top of each book as you say...*

**These books are the four books of the Gospel. You would recognise the names – Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. The word *‘Gospel’* comes from an old word *‘Godspell’* and means ‘good news’. The Gospels present accounts of Jesus’ life and teachings, his death and resurrection.**

*Slide out the* ***The Acts of the Apostles*** *and hold up as you say...*

**This book is called the Acts of the Apostles. It tells the story of the how the early Church began.**

**Place it carefully back in the bookshelf.**

*Point to the next set of books(red) - the books of Letters. Run your hand along the books.*

**These books are the Letters. They were written by some of the followers of Jesus to various communities and people who believed in Christ.**

**They are presented in the Catholic Bible in order of length – from the longest letter to a Church first, and letters to individuals last. Through these letters we can learn about some of the problems that churches and people faced because of their faith. St Paul wrote many of these letters to communities to encourage them and remind them about how to live a faith-filled life in Christ.**

*Take out the Book of Revelation (turquoise) and hold it up as you say...*

**Finally we have the book of Revelation. This book was written during a time of persecution for Christians. It reminds readers about the triumph of Christ and the church and encourages them to continue to place their trust in God.**

*Point to all the books of the Bible in the shelves*

**These are the books of the Bible. From the beginning of the Old Testament to the end of the New Testament they tell the story of God’s love for the people and the people’s struggle to know and love God and each other.**

**Storytelling Layout Map**

Teacher

**Holy**

**Bible**

**Books of History**

**Books**

**of the Pentateuch**

**Books**

**of the Prophets**

**Books of**

**Wisdom**

**and**

**Poetry**

**Book**

**of**

**Revelation**

**Books**

**of**

**Letters**

**Acts**

**of the**

**Apostles**

**Books**

**of the**

**Gospels**

Children

**I wonder**

* I wonder which books you already know about and those you want to find out about.
* I wonder which parable is your favourite and where we might find it in the Bible.
* I wonder if you have a favourite Bible character and where we might find this character in the Bible.
* The people of God had many struggles and hardships in their relationship with God. I wonder what difficulties we struggle with and how they might keep us from Jesus.

**Resource Sheet 4**

Below are some suggested texts for **Unit Content 3.** They are a selection of texts representing some significant events in the Bible. Also useful are texts used in Units across K-6. Attempt to include a range of key events in the history of Israel, so that students develop a sense of the unfolding story of the Old Testament.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **TIME LINE** | **BRIEF DESCRIPTION** | **ACCOUNTS / EVENTS**  **(Part A)** | **SIGNIFICANT PEOPLE**  **(Part B)** |
| **PRE – HISTORY** | Those events in the Bible that cannot be dated. These include the events in Genesis from Creation up to the story of Abraham, not including Abraham | Noah and the Ark – Gen 6:9-9:1, 9:8-17 | Noah  Cain and Abel –  Gen 4:1-16 |
| **FORMATION OF ISRAEL AS A PEOPLE – THE PATRIARCHS** | This outlines the formation of Israel – the chosen people. It begins with the call of Abraham and outlines the growth of Israel – Isaac, Jacob and his 12 sons.  Who are the 12 sons of Israel? Who are the 12 tribes of Israel? | God calls Abram – Gen 12:1-10; 15:1-6; 17:1-8, 15-22  Joseph is sold into slavery – Gen 37 | Joseph - the dreams  Abraham and Sarah  Isaac and Rebecca  Jacob and Rachael |
| **ISRAEL IN SLAVERY (EGYPT)**  **THE EXODUS** | Israel is in Egypt, in slavery. God sends Moses to lead the people out of slavery.  The great Exodus event is the key event in the history of Israel – a central event in the Old Testament. | God calls Moses –  Ex 3:1-15  Moses and the Plagues of Egypt – Ex 7-12  The battle of Jericho – Joshua 5:13-6:27  The Ten Commandments - Deuteronomy 5:1-22 | Moses  Miriam  Joshua |
| **FORMATION OF ISRAEL AS A NATION – JUDGES AND KINGS** | Israel is back in the Promised Land. Here they become an independent nation with their own Judges and then Kings. It is a time of great prosperity. The Golden Age is the rule of King David. However the nation splits into 2: Israel and Judah | David and Goliath –  1 Sam 17:40-54 | Samson – Judges 13-16  Samuel  Judith  King David –  1 Sam 16:1-13  Solomon  Joshua  Hannah |
| **TIME OF EXILE AND THE PROPHETS** | The two states of Israel and Judah decline and are invaded. This begins the great exile. Israel never gains independence again. They are ruled by the Assyrians, Babylonians, Greeks, and finally Romans.  During this time prophets are called by God to remind the chosen people of their relationship with God – the Covenant. | Daniel and the Lions – Dan 6 | Elijah  Amos  Isaiah  Jonah  Jeremiah  Micah  Daniel  Ruth  Esther |

1. C. H. Dodd *The Parables of the Kingdom,* New York, 1961, p16 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)