6.4 Confirmation: Celebrating the Gift of the Holy Spirit

This unit revisits the Pentecost experience in the Scriptures. It also explores the sacrament of Confirmation: the symbols and rituals, the liturgical structure and theology. It is not designed as a preparation for Confirmation. However, it could be used as such, with some modifications.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Values & Attitudes**  *Students will demonstrate that they are:* | **Knowledge & Understandings**  *Students will demonstrate that they can:* | **Skills**  *Students will demonstrate that they can:* |
| 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 |
| C3.2 able to value Word, symbols and ritual in the celebration of Catholic belief and traditions | explain how Word, symbol and ritual are used in sacramental and non-sacramental celebrations | prepare celebrations using appropriate Word, symbol and ritual |

Syllabus Outcomes  
Liturgical Year/Church – Stage 3

Classroom Outcomes

*Students will be able to:*

* identify some images in Scripture that reveal God as Holy Spirit
* describe the relationship between the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation
* outline the main structure of the sacrament of Confirmation
* identify the main beliefs expressed in the Nicene Creed
* explain how the saints have lived the gifts of the Holy Spirit

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Scripture | Doctrine |
| John 14:15-17 *Another Advocate*  Acts 2:1-13 *The Pentecost Story*  Romans 6:3-4 *Baptism: We die with Christ and rise with Christ*  Ephesians 1:13-14 *The Seal of the Holy Spirit*  Isaiah 11:1-2 *The Gifts of the Holy Spirit* Exodus 14 *Moses leads Israel through the Red Sea*1 Samuel 16:1-13 *David is anointed King* | * Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist are Sacraments of Initiation * Through the Sacraments of Initiation the Christian is received into full membership of the Church * In the sacrament of Confirmation the anointing with oil is the central action * The anointing with Chrism is the sacramental sign of the seal of the Holy Spirit * Symbols and rituals signify and express the gifts of the Holy Spirit celebrated in the sacrament of Confirmation |

Spiritual Reflection for Teachers

The Holy Spirit: giver of life, inspiration to live life to the full, our hearts’ desire.

Symbols like fire, wind, a dove or symbolic actions like anointing with oil or laying on of hands, are useful but limiting. Any way we talk about God is inadequate. St Augustine writes about our inner restlessness. “Our hearts are restless until they rest in You (God)”. The Bible refers to creation groaning, and our spirit longing for God. The whole of creation groans with the presence of the Holy Spirit. Our hearts leap. These images may suggest our inability to use words to adequately describe the Holy Spirit. We are left with a sense of …

When are you aware, beyond words, of the presence of the Holy Spirit?

What makes your heart leap with desire/joy/anticipation?

What energises you and gives you life?

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.**

**736** By this power of the Spirit, God's children can bear much fruit. He who has grafted us onto the true vine will make us bear ‘the fruit of the Spirit: … love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.’ ‘We live by the Spirit’; the more we renounce ourselves, the more we "walk by the Spirit."

*Through the Holy Spirit we are restored to paradise, led back to the Kingdom of heaven, and adopted as children, given confidence to call God ‘Father’ and to share in Christ's grace, called children of light and given a share in eternal glory.*

**1300** The essential rite of the sacrament follows. In the Latin rite, "the sacrament of Confirmation is conferred through the anointing with chrism on the forehead, which is done by the laying on of the hand, and through the words: *'Accipe signaculum doni Spiritus Sancti*' [Be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit.]." In the Eastern Churches of Byzantine rite, after a prayer of epiclesis, the more significant parts of the body are anointed with myron: forehead, eyes, nose, ears, lips, chest, back, hands, and feet. Each anointing is accompanied by the formula  (*Signaculum doni Spiritus Sancti*): "the seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit."

**1242** In the liturgy of the Eastern Churches, the post-baptismal anointing is the sacrament of Chrismation (Confirmation). In the Roman liturgy the post-baptismal anointing announces a second anointing with sacred chrism to be conferred later by the bishop - Confirmation, which will as it were "confirm" and complete the baptismal anointing.

**1293** In treating the rite of Confirmation, it is fitting to consider the sign of anointing and what it signifies and imprints: a spiritual seal.

Anointing, in Biblical and other ancient symbolism, is rich in meaning: oil is a sign of abundance and joy; it cleanses (anointing before and after a bath) and limbers (the anointing of athletes and wrestlers); oil is a sign of healing, since it is soothing to bruises and wounds; and it makes radiant with beauty, health, and strength.

Scripture: Background Information

**John 14:15-17 Another Advocate**

The setting of these verses is the Last Supper discourse – the last words of Jesus as recorded in John’s gospel. The other gospels do not have anything like these long parting speeches of Jesus. The promise of Jesus to ask the Father for another Advocate (the Greek word *paracleitos*) means also helper, comforter, encourager is presumed fulfilled. For this comforter will be with them and us, forever. Thus we have much help on our side. This is the meaning of Confirmation- a confirming of the grace of Baptism with extra reassurance.

**Acts of the Apostles 2:1-13 The Pentecost Story**

The feast of Pentecost is a Jewish festival called *Shavuot* or the Feast of Weeks as it is five weeks after Passover. It was probably originally a feast to celebrate summer and an early summer harvest (in the northern hemisphere). The Acts of the Apostles was written decades after the events it describes here. So the author, who was not a witness, is relying on what has been passed down. Thus the writer grapples with words to describe what happened. “They heard what sounded like a powerful wind from heaven” (2:2)“and something appeared to them that seemed like tongues of fire” (2:3). The author suggests that it was not exactly a wind nor flames of fire. Thus we must be careful that students do not think of the Holy Spirit as a powerful wind or tongues of fire. These of course are symbols or metaphors for a reality and mystery we cannot fully describe. Furthermore the Greek word ‘*pneuma’* that is used here for Spirit also means wind and breath as does the Hebrew ‘*ruach’* which is used in Genesis 1 – “And God’s spirit hovered over the waters” (Gen. 2:1). Another noteworthy feature of this event is the emphasis on speaking and hearing. Not only were the apostles gifted with languages but so were those who listened gifted to hear them speak in their own tongue. An important possibility of the coming of the Spirit then seems to be excellent communication where speaking and listening are accurate and in harmony. The courage to speak and listen “clearly” would seem to be part of the gift of Pentecost.

**Romans 6:3-4 Baptism: We die with Christ and rise with Christ**

Paul’s letter to the Christians in Rome is philosophical and mystical, and indeed difficult to easily comprehend. These few verses carry the profound theme that we as ordinary human beings share in the effects of the Christ-event through Baptism. It is as if we die with Jesus and are raised to new life with him as a result of being baptised. This metaphor may sound simple but the implications are great. We at the present time, simply because we are Baptised, are given the rewards of Jesus’ life and death. Confirmation, of course, reinforces the effects of the Christ-event in us through the Holy Spirit.

**Ephesians 1:13-14 The Seal of the Holy Spirit**

These few verses of the first chapter that we are considering here are at the end of a long blessing. The operative words are the verbs ‘you have heard’ … ‘you have believed’ … ‘you have been stamped or sealed’ and as a result given freedom. The process is a logical sequence to adult Baptism, a practice of the early Church. For us today it not only reflects Baptism but Confirmation as well. Freedom is certainly God’s gift to us in Baptism and Confirmation.

**Exodus 14 Moses leads Israel through the Red Sea**

The Book of Exodus is the second book of the Bible and the second book of the Torah (Law) or Pentateuch (5 books). The Torah or Pentateuch is made up of five books – Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. It was composed over a long period of time from oral, tribal stories as well as other sources, both written and oral. By the time these texts were finally edited in the sixth century, hundreds of years had passed since the events they relate.

As the title of Exodus suggests the Book recounts the story of the Israelites’ escape or exit from slavery in Egypt to freedom and eventually their homeland in Canaan. The Exodus theme permeates the rest of the Bible. The ideas of freedom, coming home, being chosen by God and covenant are all linked to the Exodus. The background to the Exodus story is told in the first fourteen chapters. It is an epic narrative in which God and Moses are the major characters and certainly the heroes. It is written, largely, to show the greatness of God and how God loves the people.

**1 Samuel 16:1-13 David is Anointed**

The story of King David’s anointing is quite surprising. God chooses David to be king when he is only a boy - the youngest in his family. King Saul, the current king has been rejected. God sends Samuel, the last of the judges, to Jesse who is David’s father, to anoint one of his sons as king. All of Jesse’s sons are brought in except David who is considered not old enough to be king. Jesse has fine looking sons but God does not choose any of them. Instead God chooses the one no one expected. He chose David, as king – because “God does not see as people see; people look at appearances but God looks at the heart” (v7).

The Church’s Teaching and Lived Tradition

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

**Nicene Creed and Apostles’ Creed, p75-76**

**Renewal of Baptismal Promises, p103-104**

**The Apostles’ Creed**

The early Christians were changed by their faith in Jesus Christ, the risen Lord. The coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost strengthened this faith. All the followers of Jesus began to share their faith with others. It soon became evident that a summary was needed to express their united beliefs. This became known as the Apostles’ Creed because it contained the faith teachings of the apostles. The Christian community continues to profess this creed today.

The Council of Nicea (AD 325) issued the **Nicene Creed**. It is longer than the Apostles’ Creed. The Creed established the united belief of all the Christian communities. However, the section on the Holy Spirit was added at the Council of Constantinople in AD 381 to affirm the divinity of the Holy Spirit.

Our **Baptismal Promises** express the beliefs we proclaim in this creed. During the Rite of Baptism the person being baptised recites the baptismal promises. If the candidate is a baby, the parents and godparents renew their own baptismal promises as part of their responsibility.

The baptismal promises are also recited and renewed at the Easter Vigil and Masses of Easter Sunday each year, so all members of the community renew what they believe in their faith.

(Name), be sealed with the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Peace be with you.

And also with you.

(Rite of Confirmation)[[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 Resource Sheet 1 to set the prayer place for Ordinary Time on the Monday after Pentecost Sunday. Please note that in normal circumstances you will be working on the Pentecost unit during the Season of Ordinary Time which starts straight after the **Feast of Pentecost**. Hence we refer to Pentecost in this script.
* Use p14 ‘Morning Prayer to the Holy Spirit’, *Praying With Children*, Barbara Ann Bretherton.
* Pray using KWL Year 6, p77 and the song ‘Come Now Holy Spirit’.
* Renewal of Baptismal Promises, KWL, p103-104.
* Pray the Creed, KWL Year 6, p75-76.
* Celebrate a prayer service where students profess their faith and bless each other with oil ‘*Name*, may the Holy Spirit be with you’.
* Liturgy: Students prepare and celebrate a liturgy using symbols of oil and water. Give thanks for the Gifts of the Spirit. Ask for the gifts in the lives of the students.
* Celebrate a Rite of Blessing and Sprinkling Holy Water (*The Roman Missal* English Translation according to the third Typical Edition, 2011, Appendix 11). If not in the school, this could be obtained from the Parish Priest.
* Pray the ‘The Peace Prayer’ (KWL, Year 6, p108) regularly during Unit Content 4.

Assessment

**Interim Assessment Statement 2014**

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

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

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

**Religious Education Curriculum and Assessment**

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

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

Resources

## To Know Worship and Love – Year 6, Chapters 7, 8 and 11, (2003), James Goold House Publications, Melbourne, Victoria

**Books**

Bretherton *B, (*2002), *Praying With Children*, Social Science Press, Wentworth Falls NSW

International Commission on English in the Liturgy, (1990), *The Rites of the Catholic Church, Vol 2,* Pueblo Publishing Company, NY

National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Sacramentary,* Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minn 1974. (This could be obtained from the Parish Priest.)

WoodsL (ed), (1999), *A Dictionary For Catholics*, HarperCollins, Victoria

WoodsL (ed), (1993), *The Bible: God’s Word*, HarperCollins, Victoria

**Videos/CD**

Kearney P,‘Come Now Holy Spirit’, *Make Me A Song,* Crossover Music, Mittagong, NSW

Raue M, (1997), ‘The Face of God, *The Face of God: Music, songs and stories from a world of mission*, Catholic Mission National Office, Chatswood NSW

DVD on Confirmation

Key to Symbol

✪ denotes higher order activity

Unit Content 1

Symbols and rituals help us express and celebrate events and times in our lives.

*Students will learn:*

* about the symbols and rituals we use in everyday life
* to explore the symbols and rituals used in everyday life

Unit Content: Background Information

Symbols speak to our imagination, our senses, our emotions, in fact to the whole person. Life is full of symbols and rituals. We use them for a wide range of experiences from the ordinary to the special events in our lives. In greeting each other we shake hands, kiss, hug. We may have particular ways of doing things. The things we have, the things around us may be symbols with rich meaning to us. Symbols and rituals are all around us, often they are taken for granted.

Symbols have unlimited meaning and can carry different interpretations simultaneously. Some symbols reach the imagination of a community that has a shared understanding and shared meaning. They have a broader meaning than signs, which are usually fairly definite.

This unit content prepares students to explore the sacramental symbols and rituals in Confirmation. While it is an important section it should be a short section. The topic of symbols and rituals is also covered in the unit ‘We Celebrate the Sacraments’ (5.7). This unit content may be only 2 lessons.

Suggested Teaching/Learning Strategies

* Use Resource Sheet 1 to set the prayer place for Ordinary Time on the Monday after Pentecost Sunday. Please note that in normal circumstances you will be working on the Pentecost unit during the Season of Ordinary Time which starts straight after the **Feast of Pentecost**. Hence we refer to Pentecost in this script.
* Students look up the meanings of words: signs, symbol, ritual. (Use an English dictionary and a religious dictionary). Develop a class definition.
* Discuss what each word means. In groups, students list symbols and rituals. Share.
* Make a list of common symbols and rituals and what they mean. (retrieval chart). Create a class display of common symbols and rituals (photos, items…).
* Students share an item that has symbolic meaning for them. Why is it meaningful? Put these around the sacred space.
* Students write about and share rituals in their families. (All families have rituals: birthdays, meals, evening routines… It is how they do things to express their relationships.)

Unit Content 2

Images of wind and fire helped the people of the early Christian community express their experience of the presence of God

*Students will learn:*

* about the biblical images used to express the presence of God
* to explore the Pentecost event and the significance of the symbols of wind and fire

Unit Content: Background Information

In the Bible there are many symbols of the presence of God. Fire and wind are but two. In exploring these two symbols, and the symbol of water, spend some time relating them to the Australian experience, particularly fire and water (bush fires, back burning, regeneration of the Australian bush after the destruction of fire, flood and drought and the need for water). These elements are life-giving on one hand, and can be destructive on the other. Allow children the time to explore these elements. They are what make the symbols so rich.

God is beyond our limited symbols, however, symbols help us understand something of the mystery of God.

Suggested Teaching/Learning Strategies

* Ask students what symbols remind them of the presence of God. Have a brief discussion around their ideas.

**Explore the symbols of wind and fire:**

* Read KWL Year 6, p78-79 or another Aboriginal story that has symbols of wind, fire and water.
* ✪ - Students (in groups of two or three) take one image: fire or wind, and list:

- other terms for these images.

- positive and negative aspects of these images, e.g. bushfire is destructive. Fire cooks our food… This could be done in columns as a PMI chart.

* Ask students what they know of Pentecost. Identify on the calendar when Pentecost Sunday is celebrated.
* Tell the story of Acts 2:1-13 ‘The Pentecost Event’ See Resource Sheet 2 for script and suggested concrete materials.
* Engage students in wondering about the story using the wondering statements below and/or wondering statements of your own.

I wonder how those who received the Holy spirit felt.

I wonder how they knew that they were filled with the Holy Spirit.

I wonder why the early Christians used fire to describe what the coming of the Holy Spirit was like.

I wonder why the early Christians used wind to describe the coming of the Holy Spirit.

I wonder how the apostles were able to speak in different languages.

I wonder what the people did after hearing the disciples speak.

I wonder why some of the people sneered and said the apostles were drunk.

* Students examine the words used to symbolise the Holy Spirit. Explain similes and ask students to write some. God is like….
* For extension: explore the Pentecost event further.
* ✪ Read Acts 2:14-42. List what Peter, and the disciples, believed about Jesus.

Unit Content 3

The symbols of Baptism and Confirmation help the Church community to express and celebrate initiation into the Christian community.

*Students will learn:*

* about the symbols of Baptism and Confirmation
* to explore these symbols in the light of sacred Scripture and the Tradition of the Church
* about the connection between Baptism and Confirmation

Unit Content: Background Information

Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist are the Sacraments of Christian initiation. In the early Church adults were baptised, confirmed and received the Eucharist within one ceremony. This still occurs in the RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults). In some expressions of the Catholic faith (for example Maronite, Melkite traditions) the sacraments of Confirmation and Baptism are part of the one ceremony. Some students may have already been confirmed at their Baptism as infants. The symbols are basically the same.

The story presented in this unit content, of Moses leading Israel through the Red Sea*,* is an overview of half of the book of Exodus but has been shortened to focus on the key event, which is the passing through the Red Sea, from slavery in Egypt to freedom. The story of the Exodus is foundational to an understanding of the symbol of water in Baptism and to the Eucharist as the new ‘passover’. As the Israelites moved through the sea into freedom, so through the waters of Baptism, we enter into the freedom of Christ Jesus.

Anointing with oil is an ancient symbol. In the Old Testament kings were anointed when they were chosen by God to lead with justice and integrity. People were called as prophets and anointed to carry out God’s work. Priests too were anointed. The ritual of anointing with oil symbolises strengthening for the mission of the Church. The words ‘Christ’ and ‘Messiah’ mean ‘anointed one’. We are anointed to be Christ for each other, and Christ in the world. Saint Teresa of Avila captures the concept well in her reflection:

*You are Christ’s hands. Christ has no body now on earth but yours, no hands but yours, no feet but yours. Yours are the eyes through which He is to look out on the world with compassion; yours are the feet with which He is to go about doing good; yours are the hands with which He is to bless people now.*

Suggested Teaching/Learning Strategies

* Read KWL Year 6, p101-102. Discuss what students know about Baptism and Confirmation. Explain to the students that in the early Church Baptism and Confirmation were combined. This is still the practice in some expressions of the Catholic Church, e.g. Maronite Catholic Church.

**Explore the symbol of water:**

* Visit the church, maybe with the priest, and look at the baptismal font. Talk about its position and use. Ask the priest to explain how baptism is celebrated in this parish.
* Explore how Baptism is celebrated in other traditions. (For example Maronite, Melkite, and Orthodox churches.)
* Students share their experience of Baptism. Ask their parents about their Baptism. What happened? Who were the godparents? Church? (This may be oral or a written assignment including photos)
* ✪ - Construct a PMI on Water. Positive – life giving uses, Negative – destructive elements etc. Help students see that as with fire and wind, water can be life giving or destructive. Link to the Australian landscape.
* Tell the story, *The God of Freedom (*Ex 14). See Resource Sheet 3 for suggested script and materials and / or borrow Big Book *Moses* from K-2 and share story of *God of Freedom* in this book.
* Engage students in wondering about the story using some of the wondering statements below and/or wondering statements of your own.

I wonder what it would be like to be a slave.

I wonder how the people of Israel felt when they were trapped between the powerful Egyptian army and the Red Sea.

I wonder if you’ve ever felt trapped.

I wonder how the people felt when they were free at last.

I wonder why the Israelites felt close to God after their delivery out of Egypt.

I wonder how they will live now that they are free.

I wonder how important water is in this story.

I wonder what water symbolizes today in the Church.

* Give students the opportunity to choose a means of further exploring the story e.g. through drama, art work, journaling, song…
* Students in groups or by themselves represent the story in a triptych. A triptych is a three-piece artwork. Each piece of art depicts a section of the story. The three pieces work together to tell the story (e.g. Arriving at the Red Sea, Crossing the Red Sea, Safe on the Other Side.)
* Help the students connect the Crossing of the Red Sea with Baptism (Romans 6:3-4). Explain that In the early Church the person being baptised was fully immersed in the water. The ritual reminded the community of the Exodus event - from slavery and oppression to freedom and new life.
* Celebrate a rite of blessing using the baptismal font. (A short reading, recite the Nicene Creed, sprinkle students with water and bless them or use prayer ‘Come, Holy Spirit’, KWL Year 6, p188). Sing the song ‘The Face of God’ by Mark Raue or another suitable hymn.

**Explore the symbol of oil:**

* Tell the story of *God Chooses David* (I Samuel 16:1-13). See Resource Sheet 4 for script and suggested materials and / or use Kindergarten Big Book, *King David* and share the story, ‘God Chooses David’.
* Engage students in wondering about the story using the wondering statements below and/or wondering statements of your own.

I wonder which part of this story you like the best.

I wonder how prophets know about God’s ways.

I wonder how Jesse’s sons felt when Samuel said that God did not choose them.

I wonder how David felt when he was chosen to be king.

I wonder why God chose David to be king.

I wonder why Samuel poured oil on David’s head.

I wonder if you know some of the purposes of using oil.

I wonder if you know any times when the Church uses oil.

* Give students the opportunity to choose a means of further exploring the story e.g. through drama, art work, journaling, reading Big Book, using materials to re-tell story…
* What was David anointed to do? Why was David the last brother to be presented to Samuel? (He was the youngest. Traditionally the eldest son is anointed to a leadership position.) What is God saying to us in choosing the youngest?
* Discuss the significance of oil with students (strengthens and protects, used in ancient times for healing and strength).
* ✪ - Review the symbols covered. Students design a symbol that expresses the presence of God in their life.
* Read KWL Year 6, p103 (Rom 6:3-4 and Eph 1:13-14). Discuss these two Scripture passages and connect them to the Easter unit (new life with Jesus).
* Create a matrix in the classroom.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Symbol / Ritual** | **Scriptural basis** | **Meaning** | **Use in Baptism / Confirmation** |
|  |  |  |  |

Symbols would include: Oil of Chrism, oil, light, fire, water, laying on of hands, white garment, the colour red.

Add to the matrix as symbols and rituals are covered.

Choose one symbol or ritual. Link this symbol or ritual to at least one Scripture passage. How is it used in Confirmation? What does it mean?

Unit Content 4

**The rituals in the celebration of Confirmation strengthen our commitment as baptised Christians**

*Students will learn:*

* about the rituals in the sacrament of Confirmation
* to explore these rituals in the light of sacred Scripture and the Tradition of the Church
* about the structure of the Rite of Confirmation
* to explore the creed and baptismal promises as the core belief statements of our faith

Unit Content: Background Information

Usually the Sacrament of Confirmation is administered within the celebration of the Eucharist. This highlights their relationship as sacraments of initiation. The candidates and the community, renew their baptismal promises, linking the sacrament to Baptism. Hence within the ceremony, the three sacraments of initiation, Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist, are connected.

The Mass is celebrated with the ordinary structure. After the Liturgy of the Word, the Rite of Confirmation begins.

Presentation of the Candidates

Homily

Renewal of Baptismal Promises

The Laying on of Hands

The Anointing with Chrism

General Intercessions

Liturgy of the Eucharist follows.

It is worth exploring the prayers and rituals within the liturgy with the students. They can be found in “The Rites” Volume 2 (see Resources).

**Laying on of Hands**: The laying on of hands is a rich ritual going back to the early Church, and the history of Israel. It symbolises the calling of the Holy Spirit. Outside the seven sacraments the laying on of hands can be used with a blessing. All baptised people can bless.

**Anointing**: As with the laying on of hands, anointing is a rich symbol and finds it roots in the biblical tradition. It is a symbol of the Holy Spirit and represents abundance, joy, cleansing, healing, beauty, health and strength. The word ‘Christ’ means ‘anointed one.’ As Christians we are anointed and share in the mission of Jesus, the Christ. We are Christ in our world. Using this ritual symbol with students can be a useful strategy for teaching.

Suggested Teaching/Learning Strategies

* View a DVD on the sacrament of Confirmation. Students take notes. Add to the class retrieval chart on symbols and rituals.
* On a large sheet of paper write the structure of the Confirmation rite with the students. Students should have some ideas due to DVD and structure of the Eucharist. The teacher will need to fill in gaps.
* Give students a copy of the Rite of Confirmation (within Mass). In pairs students highlight words, acts and symbols related to the Holy Spirit and Scripture. Discuss these and why/how they are used.

**Renewal of Baptismal Promises**

* Read the renewal of baptismal promises (within the Confirmation rite or in KWL Year 6, p103-104)
* Creeds are statements about the Trinity. Read the Apostles’ Creed and the Nicene Creed. KWL Year 6, p75-76. Allow students time to reflect on the creeds and then ask questions and clarifications.

In groups students compare the two creeds. Each group takes one section of the creeds: statements about Father, Son, Holy Spirit, Church.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Similar | Different | Interesting Points |
|  |  |  |

✪ After comparing the Creeds, compare them with the baptismal promises.

* Discuss the line of the creed: ‘We believe in one, holy catholic and apostolic church’. Define catholic (catholic means universal) and apostolic. Read KWL Year 6, p63-65. Lead students to realise that all Christian churches use this creedal statement. Students complete Resource Sheet 5 individually.
* What are our core beliefs as Catholics? Students write a response to this question.
* Write your own creed as a young Christian. ‘I believe…..’

**Laying on of Hands and Anointing With Chrism.**

* Look at this section of the Confirmation rite and discuss what happens. What is the significance of the ‘laying on of hands’ in Confirmation?
* Celebrate a prayer service where students profess their faith and bless each other with oil. (‘*Name*, the Holy Spirit be with you’ or ‘The Holy Spirit is at work in you. Grow in the fullness of life.’)
* ✪ - 1) Students sequence the Rite of Confirmation. 2) In each section list symbols and rituals used. 3) Connect a selection of symbols to Scripture passages. (This is a 3-part task. Students do 1, 2 or 3 parts.)
* ✪ - Research information about the Nicene and Apostle’s Creeds. Ask students to explain why there are differences. Are the differences significant changes?

Unit Content 5

**As members of the Christian community we explore the gifts of the Holy Spirit that help us live as followers of Jesus.**

*Students will learn:*

* about the gifts of the Holy Spirit
* to identify the gifts of the Holy Spirit in themselves, those they know and the saints

Unit Content: Background Information

In Year 5 the students explored the Fruit of the Holy Spirit. While we focus here on the Gifts of the Holy Spirit it is of benefit to include the fruits of the Spirit when thinking of significant people who we believe are inspired and strengthened by the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit strengthens us through Confirmation, to take an active part in the mission of the Church. It is important for students to reflect on how they, their family and friends already live this mission. They do have the Holy Spirit with them to strengthen them and support them. By looking at the saints and significant role models of our century, students will be able to clarify what the Gifts of the Holy Spirit (and fruit of the Spirit) look like in action. By our Baptism, and Confirmation, we are called to be prophets for this world. The Holy Spirit gives us what we need for this mission.

Primarily the Holy Spirit calls us and gives us the grace of conversion. Conversion is an ongoing response to the call to a deeper life and relationship with God. This is both a personal call and has its context in the community of believers. It is this life in God that strengthens us to participate in the mission of Jesus.

Suggested Teaching/Learning Strategies

* Read and discuss Isaiah 11:1-2. List the Gifts of the Holy Spirit mentioned in the passage. Read KWL Year 6, p106-107. Discuss the meaning of the gifts. Display the names of the gifts of the Holy Spirit in the classroom. Also display the fruit of the Holy Spirit. (Students studied these in the Year 5 Pentecost unit. Don’t focus on them here but have them visible for students)

Students identify the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit they recognise in themselves. Write a journal of events and situations when they have demonstrated these gifts and fruits.

* Students write a character profile on a person whom they know that demonstrates one or more gifts of the Spirit (and fruit). Share these. Create a display of people who demonstrate these gifts (e.g. a matrix or a concept chart etc…).
* Read a book or watch a DVD on St Francis of Assisi.

or

Using a short text on the life of St Francis, students complete a dictagloss. Discuss briefly the life of St Francis.

* Read KWL, Year 6, p108 ‘The Peace Prayer’. Explore the meaning of the words of the prayer through examining the use of opposites.
* Suggested activities around the prayer.
* Pray the prayer regularly during this part of the unit.
* Illustrate the different parts.
* Write a prayer of peace modelled on Francis’ Peace Prayer.
* What does the prayer tell us about Francis’ relationship with God? What ‘Gifts of the Holy Spirit’ does Francis demonstrate?. What fruit does he demonstrate?
* Individually, students investigate and research a saint or significant hero. Students may use Resource Sheet 6. Who was this person? When and where did they live? How did they follow Jesus? What Gifts (and Fruits) of the Holy Spirit did they demonstrate? Students give an oral presentation and present their work in a creative way. Create a wall display with significant people displayed under the gifts they exemplify.

Options: The teacher may want to list saints and heroes for the students to choose from or allow them to find their own. Direct the students to explore a variety of saints/heroes so that all Gifts and Fruits are covered. Some saints/heroes may demonstrate a variety of Gifts, ask students to identify the key ones.

* Write a prayer asking for the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Include thanks for the gifts you already possess and petitions for one or two you feel you need to develop.
* Liturgy: Students prepare and celebrate a liturgy using symbols of oil and water. Give thanks for the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. Ask for the gifts in the lives of the students. Water can be used to sprinkle students while saying the creed or baptismal promises. Students can be anointed with oil as a dismissal rite at the end.
* Write an exposition: By using the Gifts of the Holy Spirit we live our mission to be ‘anointed ones’ in our world.

**Resource Sheet 1**

**6.4 Our Prayer Place for Ordinary Time**

**(for use directly after Pentecost Sunday, or at the beginning of the Pentecost unit)**

Please note that in normal circumstances the Pentecost unit will be worked on during the Season of Ordinary Time which starts straight after the Feast of Pentecost. Hence we refer to Pentecost in this script.

**YOU WILL NEED:**

\*a small table

\*a box or basket, containing a *green*cloth, Bible, bookstand, candle/s, red ribbon and phrase ‘*Gifts of the Holy Spirit’ (perhaps written on a flame, dove or small gift box)*

*Invite children to sit reverently in a circle in the part of the classroom where you intend to set up a prayer place. Begin by saying…*

**Last Sunday the Church celebrated the Feast of Pentecost, the last day of the Easter Season. Today we begin a new season and it’s called Ordinary Time. This is the second section of Ordinary Time in the Church’s Year.**

**Ordinary Time doesn’t mean average. It means the time outside the seasons of Lent, Easter, Advent and Christmas.**

**As Ordinary Time begins we’re going to change our prayer place, the place where we can be quiet with God, where we’ll listen and pray to God.**

**Because it’s Ordinary Time we’ll have some different objects and symbols to those we had during the Easter season.**

*You could invite some students to remove the Easter season materials.*

*Hold the* ***green*** *cloth.*

**At this time of the Church’s year we place a *green* cloth on the table. Green is seen everywhere. It symbolizes life, growth and hope and is used in Ordinary Time.**

*Invite some students to lay the cloth on the table*

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

**This is our Bible. At this time in the Church’s year we remember and tell the stories about what Jesus said and did during his life on earth. We’ll continue to do this for the long season of Ordinary Time until Advent begins.**

*Invite some students to place the bible and bookstand on the table.*

*Take out the candle and show to children.*

**When he was on earth, Jesus promised not to leave us alone.** **The light of this candle reminds us that Jesus is always with us. We’ll light the candle each time we pray to God or when we’re listening to the stories from the Bible.**

*Invite a student to place the candle on the prayer place.*

*Hold up a red ribbon.***During the next few weeks we’re going to recall the coming of the Holy Spirit on the first Pentecost. Last Sunday, we celebrated this event in the Feast of Pentecost. Fr. \_\_\_\_\_\_ wore red vestments at Mass. Red is the colour for Pentecost.**

*Hold the ‘’Gifts of the Holy Spirit‘ (perhaps written on a flame, dove or little gift box)*

**We’re also going to explore the Sacrament of Confirmation and the ‘Gifts of the Holy Spirit’.**

*Invite a student to add the phrase ‘’Gifts of the Holy Spirit’ to the red ribbon*

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

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

**It has a *green* cloth, a Bible, a candle, a red ribbon to represent the Feast of Pentecost and the Gifts of the Spirit.**

**Come Holy Spirit, Come!**

**Come, Spirit, live in us! Give us your new life!**(KWL Year 3 p65)

**Resource Sheet 2**

**The First Pentecost**

**Acts 2:1-13**

**You will need:**

Red underlay (50cm x 90cm)

Block to represent a ‘table’

3D figures: 4 disciples, 8 people from other countries, including some children.

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

*Hold the Bible in front of you:*

**This story comes from a book called ‘The Acts of the Apostles’ in the New Testament section of the Bible***Respectfully place bible beside you.*

*Spread underlay as you say*

**After his resurrection Jesus appeared to many of the disciples.**

*Place table in middle edge of the underlay closest to you; one disciple on each of the four sides of the table facing inwards.*

**He told them they must wait in Jerusalem until the Holy Spirit came upon them.**

**Now when the Jewish feast of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place…**

*Move your hands rapidly all around Peter and the apostles*

**when suddenly there came from the sky a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house in which they were.**

*Place the heel of your right hand into the palm of your left, flicker your upward facing fingers*

**Divided tongues that looked like fire appeared among them …**

*Make a flame with your thumb and forefinger. Touch each of the apostles as you say:*

**... and a tongue rested on each one of them. All of them were *filled* with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages as the Spirit gave them ability.**

*Place two people (from other countries) slightly inwards from the centre left of the underlay; another two from centre right; another two from far left corner; and another two from far right corner; with all these people facing inwards to form a semi-circle as you say:*

**Now at that time there were many good and holy Jews from every nation who had travelled to Jerusalem for the Jewish Feast of Pentecost.**

*Move the two apostles on the left side of the table out - one each to one of the groups on the left side of the underlay, as you say:*

**The apostles moved out to the crowd telling about the mighty deeds of God.**

*Move the two apostles on the right side of the table out - one each to one of the groups on the right side of the underlay, as you say:*   
**The people were bewildered because each one heard them speaking in their own language.**

*Hold out your hands, palms upwards***Amazed and astonished, they asked, “Are not these apostles from Galilee? How is it each one of us hears them in our own native language?”**

**But others sneered and said, “They are filled with new wine.”**

*Sit back, pause for a moment, then wonder about the story with the students.*

**I wonder how those who received the Holy Spirit felt.**

**I wonder how they knew that they were filled with the Holy Spirit.**

**I wonder why the early Christians used fire to describe what the coming of the Holy Spirit was like.**

**I wonder why the early Christians used wind to describe the coming of the Holy Spirit.**

**I wonder how the apostles were able to speak in different languages.**

**I wonder what the people did after hearing the disciples speak.**

**I wonder why some of the people sneered and said the apostles were drunk.**

**Resource Sheet 3**

**The God of Freedom**

(from Exodus 14-15)

**YOU WILL NEED:**

* Sand tray or bag of sand - desert
* Two strips of blue felt – Red Sea
* 8 peg figures - 7 people of Israel including Moses, and Pharaoh

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

*Place sand tray in middle of story circle.*

*Take three of the people out of the story box and place them in the sand to your right.*

**The people of Israel lived in Egypt for many years. Their numbers grew. Pharaoh, the King, made the Israelites his slaves. They lived as slaves for many years. Life as a slave was hard. They prayed to God to save them from slavery in Egypt.**

*Take rest of the people and place them in the sand with the others.*

**God heard the prayers of Israel and remembered the covenant made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.**

*Place Moses in front of the group.*

**God called Moses.**

*Place Pharaoh to your left facing the people. Then move Moses over to face Pharaoh.*

**God called him to go to Pharaoh and give him God’s message, “Let my people go.”**

*Turn**Pharaoh’s back to Moses*

**Pharaoh would not listen. Many terrible things happened to Pharaoh and his people. But still Pharaoh would not let the Israelites go.**

*Move Moses in front of the people of Israel.*

**One night Moses told the Israelites to eat a special meal of lamb and unleavened bread. They called this the great Passover meal. Moses told the people to dress in travel clothes and be ready to leave at a moment’s notice.**

*Turn**Pharaoh back to look at the people*

**Finally Pharaoh agreed to let the people of Israel go.**

*Move Moses and the people one by one into the middle of the desert. Don’t rush this as the students can engage with the silence.*

**Moses gave the signal and all of Israel began the journey out of Egypt. They had to hurry. They wanted to leave Egypt before Pharaoh changed his mind.**

*Place the blue felt across the sand tray in front of the people.*

**Pharaoh did change his mind. He sent his mighty army to find the Israelites and bring them back.**

**Soon the people of Israel were trapped between the powerful army of Egypt and the Red Sea. Moses prayed to God.**

*Turn back each piece of felt, leaving a path through the water. Move the people through one at a time.*

**God is more powerful than any army. God separated the sea and made a path for the people of Israel to walk across the sea on dry ground. The Israelites went across the sea where they were safe and free.**

*Turn each piece of felt back to its original position.*

**Then God closed the path so that the army could not follow them.**

*Move the people into a circle with one person (Miriam) in the centre.*

**God had saved the people from slavery and had given them freedom. The whole of Israel praised God. Miriam led them in dance and song.**

*Engage with ‘I wonder’.*

**I wonder what it would be like to be a slave.**

**I wonder how the people of Israel felt when they were trapped between the powerful Egyptian army and the Red Sea.**

**I wonder if you’ve ever felt trapped.**

**I wonder how the people felt when they were free at last.**

**I wonder why the Israelites felt close to God after their delivery out of Egypt.**

**I wonder how they will live now that they are free.**

**I wonder how important water is in this story.**

**I wonder what water symbolizes today in the Church.**

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

**Resource Sheet 4**

**God Chooses David**

**(1 Samuel 16:1-13)**

**YOU WILL NEED:**

* a Bible
* 3D figures of Samuel, Jesse, seven of Jesse’s sons, eighth son David (make David distinct from his brothers)
* Brown or green felt for the ground

*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.*

*Place class Bible in front of you with your hand on it. Begin by introducing the Bible as the source for the story. For example:*

**This story comes from our special book, the Bible. The stories in this book are very important. We know this story will tell us something about God and God’s people.**

*Lay the Bible beside you. Lay out the green or brown felt. Place Samuel on the left side of the felt.*

**One day long ago, God called the prophet Samuel and told him to anoint a new king. God told Samuel to take some oil and go to Jesse’s house in Bethlehem.**

*Place Jesse on the right side of the felt. Move Samuel towards Jesse.*

**Samuel travelled to Bethlehem and went to Jesse’s house.**

*Place the sons on the felt one at a time in a group behind Jesse*

**Jesse had many sons.**

*Move the first son next to Jesse, so that both are facing Samuel.*

**Samuel saw Jesse’s eldest son. He was a tall, strong, handsome man. Samuel thought, “Surely God wants me to anoint this man.” But God said, “No, do not anoint this man. While you see what people look like, I see what is in the heart.”**

*Move the first son back. Move the second son next to Jesse.*

**Jesse presented his second eldest son to Samuel. “Surely God wants me to anoint this fine man,” Samuel thought. God told him “No, I have not chosen this man.”**

*Move the second son back next to first son. Move the third son next to Jesse.*

**Jesse then presented his third son. God told Samuel “No, I have not chosen this man”**

*Move third son away to stand with first and second sons. Move the rest of the sons next to Jesse.*

**Jesse presented seven of his sons. But God told Samuel not to anoint them. “I have not chosen them.”**

*Move these sons over with the other sons.*

**Samuel asked Jesse, “Are these all your sons?” Jesse responded, “There is still my youngest son. David is a shepherd tending the sheep.” Samuel announced, “Call David. We will not sit down to eat until he arrives.” Jesse sent for David, a young boy, small but fine looking.**

*Move David next to Jesse facing Samuel.*

**When David arrived, Samuel knew he was the one. He heard God say to him, “Come Samuel! Anoint David. He is the one I have chosen to be king of Israel.” Samuel took the oil and poured it on David’s head. God’s Spirit filled David and was with him from that day on.**

*Engage with ‘I wonder’*

**I wonder which part of this story you like the best.**

**I wonder how prophets know about God’s ways.**

**I wonder how Jesse’s sons felt when Samuel said that God did not choose them.**

**I wonder how David felt when he was chosen to be king.**

**I wonder why God chose David to be king.**

**I wonder why Samuel poured oil on David’s head.**

**I wonder if you know any times when the Church uses oil.**

**I wonder which part of this story is the most important.** *(Remember there are no wrong answers)*

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

**Resource Sheet 5**

**One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| For me, being ‘**one’** means … | For me, being ‘**holy’** means … |
| For me, being ‘**catholic’** means … | For me, being ‘**apostolic’** means … |

(Adapted from: KWL, Teaching Companion, 4b, p119)

**Resource Sheet 6**

is a Spirit-filled person

# Interesting facts about

1

2

3

4

5

Three reasons I believe is

# Spirit-filled

**1**

**2**

**3**

# Gifts of the Holy Spirit demonstrated:

**1**

**2**

## The Holy Spirit gives people the Gifts

## they need to continue Jesus’ mission.

(Adapted from KWL, Teaching Companion, 3b, p50)

1. KWL, Teaching Companion, 4b, p124 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)