



THIS IS
— our faith —

RERC

This Is Our Faith Planning exemplars

S6

Suggested Theme:

Loving Service brings me closer to God: Parish Conference

Dates

Core Learning

Signs of God

I have reflected on my own experience of how service is integral to the Christian faith.

Reign of God I

By exploring scripture and Church Teaching I have understood the need to be of service to others.

I have been given the opportunity to explore an aspect of this teaching in more depth through reflection and study of one Papal Encyclical: e.g., *Caritas in Veritate*; *Deus Caritas Est*

By serving others in my school and wider community I have contributed to the common good and I can evaluate what impact this service has had on my own and others' lives.

I can express how service brings me closer to Christ.

I have reflected on Church teaching and I can describe how my understanding of my value as a person, my awareness of the needs of others and my willingness to contribute to the service of the common good has developed throughout my time in school.

Reign of God III

I have identified and participated in opportunities to become involved in Christian witness, focussing on service to others, which puts into action my learning on Church Teaching.

I have reflected upon the impact that this witness has had on the faith life of myself and others.

I have reflected upon and can explain the ways in which this witness is my response to my Christian vocation to grow in holiness both now and in the future.

E's & O's

Signs of God (ii)

I can describe how the Holy Spirit unites the Church to the life and mission of Christ and how the gift of communion can bear fruit in the world through the Church. **(not the focus for assessment)**

S6 Reign of God (I)

I have reflected on Church Teaching and I can describe how this has affected my understanding of my value as a person, my awareness of the needs of others and my willingness to contribute to the service of the common good.

S6 Reign of God (II)

I have acted upon this learning and I can describe how these experiences help me to respond to Jesus call to grow in holiness expressed in the Beatitudes.

Learning Intentions

I am learning:

1. to reflect on Church Teaching on the need to be of service to others
2. how this teaching affects my understanding of how we can contribute to the service of the common good.
3. to act upon this learning
4. to describe how service helps me to respond to Jesus' call to grow in holiness.

Success Criteria

1. I have reflected upon Church Teaching about 'service to others'
2. I can share my understanding of ways in which we contribute to the service of the common good
3. I have put into action some of these ways
4. I can describe how this service is my response to Jesus' call to grow in holiness

Prayers

YOUCAT Prayer book

Unit Plan

BACKGROUND TO UNIT

This is based on a Parish Conference run at St. Margaret's Academy, Livingston, in March 2014. It was a very successful morning, enjoyed both by students and parish groups. There was some trepidation from all as to the relevance to our students and how they would respond to it. However, feedback from the students was very positive.

Having run the parish conference we have decided that it would be more relevant for our students to have to conference at the beginning of S6. This will allow students an opportunity to see the wide variety of parish work they can become involved with, especially if involved with Caritas.

It was also decided that our S6 students needed some preparation in advance of the conference and so a series of lessons would be produced and delivered in advance of the conference.

Prior Learning Note

It is helpful to recall that pupils have been exploring the role of their parish, priest and the associations within the local community since level 1. In primary 3 pupils will be finding out about the pastoral work

carried out within their parish by the priest and other groups. They will also be introduced to the needs of others and our call to serve the common good at this early stage (P3 RERC 1-08a, P3&P4 1-24a, P5 2-08a, 2-21b, 2-24a, P6 2-10a). This learning was deepened in third level through the exploration of the Sacrament of Holy Orders (S2 3-08a) and the continuation of learning about the Reign of God.

It is therefore useful to ensure that when engaged in this learning that pupils are suitably challenged and encouraged to go beyond a superficial investigation of parish agencies and consider the reason for these acts of charity and the impact this service can have on others.

This unit is in two parts:

1. Unit of work during core RE where pupils prepare for the parish conference.
2. Planning & Running a Parish Conference for S6 students. (Caritas students could be involved in the planning and running.)

Classroom Learning:

The learning Intentions are shared with the class.

Pupils are directed towards the words "SERVICE", "COMMON GOOD", "ACTION", "RESPONSE (to Jesus call)" and asked to consider what these mean to them at the moment. In groups the class write definitions for these words and these are displayed throughout the unit. These words will form the basis of the key terms for the unit.

Recall of learning: Common Good (Optional)

Using Christian Witness 2 PowerPoint, Students are asked to discuss what is meant by the term Common Good. This can be done in groups or as part of a class discussion. Students are then asked to find out what the Church's understanding of Common Good is by using the YOUCAT.

Students are asked what they consider their contribution to the common good has been so far in school, home, parish and wider society. (this can be done as a discussion or on post it notes)

In pairs pupils are given a selection of newspaper and media articles from the Catholic press and they identify clergy, charities and lay people who are contributing to the common good. They feedback their findings to the class. The class discuss and agree whether or not this is an example of serving the common good.

Church Teaching- Need to be of service to others

The teacher introduces pupils to the Papal Encyclical "The Light of Faith" and reminds pupils what an encyclical is.

(Latin Encyclicus- "in a circle". A circular letter from the Pope addressed to the whole world, setting out some important teaching. Usually known by the first two words of its Latin text- Definition from "A simple glossary of Catholic Terms", CTS publication)

Using the resource from the SCES website '10 things Pope Francis wants you to know: excerpts from 'Lumen Fidei'', pupils begin to explore the Papal Encyclical.

Students are taken through all of the slides and they discuss what each one means to them. They then go back through the slides one by one, stopping to decide how each of the aspect of teaching relates to their key terms for the unit. Pupils must put forward their reason for allocating each slide to a category and the class must agree. This can take some time and can be a lively discussion as some slides, for example no.1 "*Faith, hope and charity are the driving force of the Christian life. #2*" could possibly be describing all 4 key terms. (The important thing is not the categories that the slides end up in, but that pupils begin to see the interconnectedness of all of the words)

At the end of the discussion pupils are asked to summarise the main points from the Pope's Encyclical AND their initial reflections on the key terms. (The teacher may have to help prompt reflection by asking things such as: "Why was it difficult to place the slides in only one category?")

Deeper learning on Church teaching:

Students should be given the opportunity to explore the Church's teaching on service to others in more depth through reflection and study of one Papal Encyclical: e.g., *Caritas in Veritate; Deus Caritas Est*. (Summaries of documents can be found online.)

Pupils are asked to work in pairs or groups and read the document, discuss and agree on what the key teaching points are **about the service to others** and to create their own summary power point (like the one used to introduce Lumen Fidei). Time permitting these are then shared with the rest of the class.

It is important that pupils are given a focus for their summary. In S6 this should be Church Teaching about the need to be of service to others. The encyclicals chosen are rich in teaching and can be complex. Pupils are not being asked to give a comprehensive summary, but to share what the Church teaches about this topic.

Scripture & Church Teaching:

Christian Witness 1 PowerPoint. Students will be given the opportunity to study scriptural passages showing the early Christians putting Jesus' teaching into action.

Students are given copies of an article from La Stampa (<http://vaticaninsider.lastampa.it/en/the-vatican/detail/articolo/francesco-francisco-francis-udienza-audience-audiencia-35633/>) and the Gospel passages from Matthew 5:1-12 The Beatitudes and Matthew 25: 31-46 The Final Judgement. (Students should already be familiar with these from BGE phase TIOF.)

Pupils are asked to first read through the newspaper article and share their thoughts.

Had they thought of the Beatitudes as being connected to the Final Judgement?

The class is either split into 8 groups and each group is allocated one Beatitude OR pupils are asked to annotate their own print out of the Scripture passage. However this task is done pupils are asked to answer the question:

How is your/are the Beatitudes the pathway to happiness?

Some of the 8 Beatitudes are fairly straightforward and understandable. We would probably know that in the long run we will be happy if we are merciful to others for example. Others are more complicated and hard to understand. How can I find happiness in mourning?

Pupils must think carefully about what Jesus is saying and try to express in their own words how each of the Beatitudes is a path to happiness. (The teacher may want to help pupils focus their thoughts by asking them to consider where the path is ultimately leading – our return to God)

If the work is completed in groups, the learning is shared through whole class feedback.

The teacher reminds the pupils of the words of the Pope from the article:

“I read the Beatitudes, I reflect on how my Christian life should be and then I examine my conscience based on chapter 25. Did I do this? Did I do that? It will do us good. These are simple but concrete things.”

The pupils now reflect personally on Christ’s teaching in the Beatitudes. Pupils are asked to write a heading:

“The Beatitudes are how my Christian life should be”

And to write their own personal reflection on whether or not they live this Christian life at the moment and what they can do to change this if they are not. Pupils may want to choose one Beatitude to focus on or write about several.

(For example: I do try to work for peace in my family and amongst my friends. I hate it when people argue and fight and I know that when everyone is getting on then everyone is happier- I hadn't thought about this as a path way to God though. One thing I haven't ever tried is to think about what God wants for me. I always just do what I want or what I am told. I think that actually thinking about what God wants might be the first step then I will see if that makes me happier than just pleasing myself)

The pupils now think about the Final Judgement. This can be done through an examination of conscience using the Scripture passage, key questions and images either in the school oratory or in the class room. Alternatively the pupils can use their own copies of the passage and highlight in one colour which they already do and which they do not. In pairs the class then list the things contained in the passage (HUNGRY, THIRSTY, STRANGER, NAKED, SICK, PRISON) and think about what they could mean in an everyday context for them. E.g. do they need to visit a prison to fulfil this aspect of teaching – who else could be seen as imprisoned in today’s world?

The class complete a large display on the Final Judgement using all of their ideas of how to put into action Jesus teaching from Matthew 25.

The teacher then poses the question- **why are these important?**

Through a class discussion pupils return to the key terms for the unit (“SERVICE”, “COMMON GOOD”, “ACTION”, “RESPONSE (to Jesus call)”) and asked to say how each of the 6 points from the Final Judgement demonstrate these 4 words. They then re-read Mat 25:40 and discuss the significance of what Jesus is

teaching us in these lines. Finally the class conclude by agreeing why this passage is important for Christian living- How does this service bring us closer to Christ?

(Teacher note for highlighting during pupil responses: Because he tells us that it is Him that I serve with every one of these actions AND by putting these into action I can gain eternal life and be with Him for ever)

Personal reflection – the pupils answer: **How would you fair if you were asked the Final Judgement questions today?** in their jotter

The class are reintroduced to the term “Corporal works of mercy” ad they discuss the final one which is not present in Matthew 25. They add the term “bury the dead” to their display and are asked to keep the term “Corporal works of mercy” in mind for the next part of the unit.

The teacher reads aloud Mat 25: 41-46 as a conclusion to this section.

Time permitting pupils can also explore what Scripture teaches us about how the early Christians responded to Christ’s teaching (slide 3)

Research Topic (optional)

Now students are asked to research how contemporary Christian’s have responded to Jesus’ teaching in the Beatitudes and the Final Judgement and provide a short talk on them for the class. The key thing for pupils to focus on is how their chosen person/charity sees their witness as a response to Jesus teaching – not just a biography of their life and actions. (A number of names for possible research have been provided - these are just suggestions. Students may wish to talk about someone from their local community.)

Parish Conference

Students prepare for the conference by reflecting back on scriptural passages & Church teaching on the Christian Life (The Beatitudes and the Final Judgement). They return to their display of the Final Judgement and their learning about “Corporal works of mercy”. Using all of the ideas that they came up with for the ways we put the Corporal acts into practice, they discuss **who** does this in a parish setting.

Parish Life:(optional preparatory exercise)

Some work on what a parish/diocese is may need to be done

Christian Witness PowerPoint 3

Students are asked first of all ‘What is a parish?’ and ‘who makes up a parish?’ Students may be directed to identify their own parish and possible look at the parish website.

Students will discuss the role of a parish priest; produce a mind map on the duties of a priest.

Prepare some questions for their priest. Invite the parish priest in to speak to pupils about his role in the parish.

Follow up by adding to the mind map what they have learned. Did anything surprise them about the duties of a priest? Etc.

Students are asked to make a list of the jobs that need done around the parish and groups that meet

Students may identify the priest for many of the jobs; can he manage these along with all his other responsibilities?

The teacher then introduces pupils to the format of the conference.

In small groups, pupils will rotate round representatives from various parish groups, organisations and charities including some local parish priests. They will have an allocated time with each group.

In that time they have to find out about;

- what aspect of Church teaching is the group putting into practice;
- how their work “serves the common good”;
- how this work bring them closer to Christ;
- what impact the service has on others;
- how young people can become involved.

Pupils are encouraged to not simply ask “what do you do?” as they may end up with a list of actions that could have easily been found from a website or information leaflet. They are invited to ask about why these people give up their time to do this work, especially in a society where helping others is sometimes seen as being useless. The teacher may ask each group to write their questions in advance and share them, so as to ensure a variety of questions as they rotate round. It may be helpful to allocate each pupil group a theme for their question (i.e. one group asks about Church Teaching, another about how it brings them closer to Christ)

The Parish Conference booklet can be used to record their questions on the first page and use the blank to take notes during the conference.

Following the parish conference students work in groups/classes to add to the display for this unit. Pupils add information and images about the work of the groups and how they contribute to the life of the parish and put into practice Church teaching. (These could even be displayed in local parishes.)

Personal Response to Christ

In the final part of the unit, pupils are encouraged to think about how they can put into action Christ’s teaching by becoming more involved in the life of their parish. Pupils return to their personal reflection about the Final Judgement in their jotter (**How would you fair if you were asked the Final Judgement questions today?**) and are asked to add to this work by writing about what aspects of parish life they feel they could commit to in order to put into action Jesus call to holiness.

Notes for preparing the Parish Conference

The Parish Conference is run like speed dating.

Planning

Caritas students set up a meeting with the school chaplain to discuss and plan the conference. *Our HT & DHT were very involved in the planning of our parish conference.*

The following needs to be agreed:

Date

Time/Place

Number of S6 students involved. *We have a very large S6 group, so split into 2 half over a morning.*

A parish link person to coordinate all the groups. *This was taken on by one of the priests.*

List of parish groups to be invited. *Passkeepers, Baptismal Catechesis / Preparation, Bereavement, Children's Liturgy, CIC / RCIA, Holy Family of Broxburn Lay Associates, Legion of Mary, Charismatic Prayer Group, SPRED, SVDP, Youth Group, One World Group, Fairtrade, Eucharistic Ministers, Readers, Flowers, Sacristy, Cleaning, Altar Servers(some of our S6 students are still altar servers and they ran this group)*

Plan of Conference; opening /closing hymns and prayers, welcome, guest speaker, thank you, etc

Caritas students produce a letter inviting the parish groups.

Parish Group name cards for each table, numbered

Information booklet made for students to use on day

Name tags for parish group representatives & students

Arrange students into groups of 4/5

Tea/Coffee arranged *We arranged for our S6 students to have break with the parish groups.*

Write thank you letters & evaluations for parish groups.

Produce evaluations for students.

Parish Conference

Parish groups are set up at tables, students are arranged into groups of 4/5 (depends on number of pupils/number of parish groups). Students move round the groups at 5min intervals.

Caritas students' role on the day: set up room, meet & greet guests, serve tea/coffee before conference, help set up groups, control the stopwatch & buzzer, help guest to clear up, tidy up.

By the end of the conference a number of our Caritas students had made arrangements to join some of the groups.

Structure:

Opening hymn

Opening prayer –Head boy/girl or Caritas student

Welcome – HT/Caritas student

Speed dating – students are given 5 mins at each group, a buzzer (*we used altar bells*) will sound to signal time to move on. Students are given a booklet to make notes.

Guest speaker : This could be the chaplain, RE advisor, parishioner, etc

Closing prayer – Head boy/girl or Caritas student

Closing hymn

Speakers: A variety of speakers from different areas to share their experience of serving; religious organisations, current/former students involved in Lourdes, current/former students involved in link projects abroad *we have a link project in Malawi*, former Caritas students, charities.

NEXT STEPS:

Pupils continue by looking at free will, conscience and reconciliation. They consider what barriers are sometimes in our way and stop us from putting this loving service for God and others into practice.

Useful Resources – Specialists & Generalists are welcome to add to this

SCES '10 things Pope Francis wants you to know :excerpts from 'Lumen Fidei'' Can be found on the SCES website.

http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20130629_enciclica-lumen-fidei.html

<http://vaticaninsider.lastampa.it/en/the-vatican/detail/articolo/francesco-francisco-francis-udienza-audience-audiencia-35633/>

Caritas Gathering Points – These could be used during this unit of work to enhance it.

YOUCAT

YOUCAT Study Guide

Suggestions- Specialists & Generalists are welcome to add to this

<http://vaticaninsider.lastampa.it/en/the-vatican/detail/articolo/francesco-francisco-francis-udienza-audience-audiencia-35633/>

Francis sets “homework”: Examine your conscience by reflecting on Gospel “protocol”

After the July break the Pope resumed the weekly General Audience in the Paul VI Hall, in the Vatican. His catechesis was on the Church and the Beatitudes: the Gospel prepares us for Judgement Day

IACOPO SCARAMUZZI

VATICAN CITY

At the Wednesday General Audience, Pope Francis set the over 6,000 faithful present some homework: Reread the Gospel every day; first chapter 5 of Matthew’s Gospel, which is about the “Beatitudes”, “the path God points us to in response to humans’ innate desire for happiness”; then chapter 25 (“I was hungry and you gave me something to eat...”), the “protocol” for checking how Christian our life is, in other words, “the questions we will be asked on Judgement Day.” Today’s General Audience was the first since the Pope’s summer break.

“Just as Moses forged a covenant with God in accordance with the law received on Mount Sinai, so Jesus delivers a new teaching to his disciples and the crowd, from a hill on the banks of the Sea of Galilee. He begins with the beatitudes,” the Pope said. “The Beatitudes are the path God points us towards, in response to humans’ innate desire for happiness and they complete the commands of the ancient alliance. We are used to learning the Ten Commandments but we are not used to repeating the Beatitudes! Let us try to remember them and etch them into our hearts. Let’s do this: I will pronounce each one of them and you will repeat after me, ok?” Francis started reciting the Beatitudes one by one (“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is

the Kingdom of Heaven" ...). Each time he waited for the more than 6,000 pilgrims to repeat after him. "Let me help you," he said, repeating one of the Beatitudes twice as it was especially long. ("Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me").

"Good!" he said when all the Beatitudes had been recited and repeated. "I 'm going to give you some homework: take the Gospel, a small volume that you can always carry with you in your pocket, your bag or read at home, find the Beatitudes in chapter 5 of Matthew's Gospel and read them! Will you do that? So that you don't forget them. It's the law given to us by Jesus. All the change Christ brought is contained in these words." "Besides the new law," Francis continued, "Jesus also gives us the protocol according to which we will eventually be judged. It is found in chapter 25 of Matthew's Gospel. We will not be awarded any titles, credits or privileges. The Lord will recognise us if we recognised his presence in those who are poor, hungry, destitute, marginalised, suffering and alone. This is one of the main criteria for judging our lives as Christians and Jesus invites us to check our behaviour against this criterion on a daily basis."

The Pope concluded by summing up the homework he set faithful: "What is the protocol the judge will examine us on? It is to be found in chapter 25 of Matthew's Gospel. Today's homework is to read the 5th chapter which contains the Beatitudes and also the 25th which sets out the protocol, the questions we will be asked on Judgement Day. I read the Beatitudes, I reflect on how my Christian life should be and then I examine my conscience based on chapter 25. Did I do this? Did I do that? It will do us good. These are simple but concrete things."