



YEAR LEVEL	1 & 2
TITLE	We Grow in God's Love
STRAND	CHRISTIAN MORALITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE
SUGGESTED DURATION	4-6 weeks
ENDURING QUESTIONS	What does it mean to be Christian? How do I choose to share God's love with all?

Unit Focus

In this unit students will explore friendship, and the Christian way of relating to others. They will be asked to identify their gifts and to explore ways of sharing them with others. Students will look at how their gifts contribute to their relationships with others in different contexts.

Achievement Standards

By the end of **Year Two**:

Students identify ways that Christians love and care for others as God asks. They express ways in which they share their God-given gifts with others.

Unit Outcomes

By the end of this unit students should be able to:

1. Identify the gifts God has given them, and how they can share them with others.
2. Show understanding that they will form many relationships in various situations and how their gifts build and enhance their relationships.

Key Understandings for Students

- We are created in God's image.
- Each of us is uniquely gifted and talented.
- Jesus loves each of us in a special and unique way.
- God created us to grow in love of God, self and others.
- We can experience God's love in the love we receive from our parents, families and others.
- When we share our talents we build community.
- As we grow we are able to develop our talents and gifts.

Student Context

Children come to school from a wide range of cultural, religious and social backgrounds. Differences in child-rearing practices, and the variety of child-care and pre-school provisions that families use provide different kinds of learning experiences.

The children's concepts of 'family' may differ greatly from family to family. Each child must feel that their concept of 'family' is as acceptable as any other.

It is recommended that this unit be completed at the beginning of the school year to set an atmosphere of welcoming and belonging. It will also provide an opportunity to explore issues of respect, cooperation, codes of conduct etc.

Children may be in a class with many children they are familiar with or perhaps only a few. Personalities in the class may be beginning to emerge. The teacher must be aware of differing personalities and the varying needs of the children in the class.

Children like to do things in groups but may still find this challenging.

Theological Background for Teachers

- Each of us is unique and has received the gift of life from God. We have been created in the image and likeness of God, and are creative, gifted and talented. We have been graced with intellect, with creativity and with the freedom to use and express these gifts and talents. By using our gifts, talents and creativity, we enhance our own growth and contribute to the community. It is also our responsibility to respect and encourage the giftedness of others.
- God did not create us in isolation. Called by God to become unique and gifted individuals, we are blessed with people who help us to discern our unique identities. We are oriented to relationships with other people, so that we can share our unique giftedness, thereby revealing God's love and goodness.
- God knows us fully and loves us unconditionally.
- Even though we are individuals with our own views and thoughts, it is reassuring to know that there are others who share the same ideas that we do. Whether it is in a sports team or family it is important to feel that we belong.
- Belonging can have an added meaning for Christians. As members of the family of the Church we belong to a faith community, a community of God's people. This family is nurtured through prayer, Eucharist and all the other activities that make up the Church.
- In this unit children look at the class as a family that is made up of many individuals who work and play together and try to make each other happy.

Scripture

Isaiah 43:1

I have called you by your name; now you belong to me.

Major Assessment Task

Students will show through words and drawings how they can use their gifts to positively contribute to the various communities to which they belong (e.g. Home, Classroom, Sporting team, etc.)

Their work will be displayed as a class mural. It may look like this:

***In our Communities
we are growing in God's love
by...***

Suggested Teaching & Learning Experiences

Focusing Activity:

Read a story about giftedness as means of exploring the many gifts people have and how they use these gifts in relationship with others. Discuss the gifts in the story and how the characters share their gifts to help others. Complete the Retrieval Chart in **Appendix 1**

- Make a list of all the gifts that are in the story and write each one on a card. Place the cards in a large box and wrap it as a beautiful present and place it in the middle of the classroom. Explain that the gifts are not at all valuable or useful whilst they are still wrapped up in the box. Our personal gifts are like that. Unless we “unwrap” them by knowing what they are and how we can share them, we cannot use them to help others.
- Open the present and give a card to small groups of students. Ask them to write or draw a comic strip or sequence of how this gift can be unwrapped and shared.
- Using a template of a body shape, ask each child to name any special gifts that they possess. The student writes the gifts above their shape. (**Appendix 2**) Display each Shape Poster.

N.B. Students will continue to add their responses to this shape throughout the Unit.

- Each of us has gifts that God has given us when we are born. Just like our parents, God loves us and knows us well. In the Bible we are told that God calls each of us God's child. Why does God give us special gifts? Why do you think we might all have different gifts?
- Using photos taken in class, make a Bumper Sticker with text from Isaiah. (**Appendix 3**)
- Ask the children to write their names on a strip of coloured paper. Join the strips together to make a chain. Explain to the children that we all belong to our class family and God wants us to share our gifts with each other. Students create a Y chart image of what using gifts in the classroom is like.
- Ask students to think about their family at home using **Appendix 4** as a guide, students list their family members and name one gift they see in each person and explain how this is shared in their family. Students take home a card for their family to write one gift that their family sees in them and how they see it being shared. Each student can then paste them onto their shape poster.
- Students write prayers of Thanksgiving for the gifts they have been given by God that show they are growing in God's love.

Prayer Ritual

Students gather together with their shape posters.

Dear God,

We thank you for the special gifts that you have given us (students read out one gift from their shape poster)

Help us to share these special gifts with others.

Play '*These Hands*' - Andrew Chinn

We make this prayer in your name Jesus

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit Amen

Appendices

Appendix 1: Retrieval Chart

Appendix 2: Gifts Template

Appendix 3: Bumper Sticker

Appendix 4: Family Gifts