



YEAR LEVEL	Years 5 & 6
TITLE	Living Our Mission
STRAND	CHRISTIAN MORALITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE
SUGGESTED DURATION	4-5 weeks
ENDURING QUESTIONS	<b>What does it mean to be Christian?</b> <b>How do I choose to show God's love to all?</b>

## Unit Focus

In this unit students will develop an understanding and appreciation of mission and the call to mission through Scripture, story and the study of contemporary lives. They will be introduced to people who, through words and actions, are committed to the mission of Jesus. The students will be invited to develop and implement ways to continue the mission of Jesus in the school and community.

## Achievement Standards

By the end of **Year 6**:

**Students identify Jesus' words and actions as a model for living a life of authentic service to others. They explain how Jesus taught us how to respond to God's commandment to love others.**

## Unit Outcomes

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

1. Articulate their understanding of the mission in their own context.
2. Identify ways in which they can continue the mission of Jesus.

## Key Understandings for Students

- I am part of the Church.
- Jesus calls the Church to be compassionate.
- We are called to live and share in the mission of Jesus.

## Student Context

Students in Years 5 and 6 have a strong sense of justice. During this time in their development, they need to be encouraged to identify how their actions can contribute towards making a difference to other people's lives. Their decisions are strongly influenced by their peers and their self-esteem is partly determined by mastery of tasks.

This unit enables students to see how their actions for justice are part of their response to the call to share in the mission of Jesus.

## Theological Background for Teachers

- Prior to Vatican II, Mission was understood to refer to the Church's work for the salvation of souls, which was carried out for the benefit of non-Christians abroad, mainly by priests, religious brothers, nuns, and specially-commissioned lay people, with the financial and spiritual support of the laity back home. The goal of the mission was to establish the church in these "mission fields." Mission, at this time, meant *foreign mission*, that is, mission in all the continents that were not considered already Christianised.
- The understanding of church and the understanding and practice of mission has changed since Vatican II. The contemporary Church's identity is rooted in the mission that Jesus received from his Father. Thus, the Church has as its mission the establishment of the reign of God.
- Jesus lived and preached the values of the reign of God. Many of his parables speak of the reign of God, and his miraculous deeds are signs that the reign of God had drawn near in his ministry. This new world order is said to be of God because its arrival signals the gracious, forgiving, and redeeming presence of Yahweh in the world, and is not the fruit of human efforts. This way of being is open to all people, and all are invited to transform their lives according to its values, but it is given especially or "preferentially" to those who are marginalized, that is, the poor, the afflicted, the oppressed, the captives (Luke 4: 18).
- The present day work of mission is a continuation of the establishment of the reign of God, and all the baptised are called to this task, even though some are more engaged in "missionary" activities than others.
- This understanding of mission prompts cooperation with all Christians, and with the followers of other religions as well, since they too are called to the reign of God, even though not all of them will join the Church.
- Mission is proclaimed through personal witness, dialogue and through projects of evangelisation, healing, teaching, development or liberation. The Holy Spirit through the whole community of believers inspires and directs the mission of the Church. Christian mission is no longer a one-way proclamation of a message of salvation to a world of pagans bereft of God's self-revelation and grace, but first of all a search for and recognition of the presence and activities of the Holy Spirit among the peoples to be evangelised.
- Mission is directed to the whole world, including the cosmos, with less distinction between believer and non-believers. This takes into account that many people are nominally Christian but have yet to grasp what the gospel means.
- Whilst the content threads of mission education are woven throughout the primary syllabus, this unit explicitly focuses on Jesus, the reign of God and the call to mission. The aim of the unit is to develop a contemporary understanding and appreciation of mission, which is to realize more fully the reign of God (see Appendix 1).

Phan, Peter. *Proclamation of the Reign of God as Mission of the Church: What For?*

*To Whom? By Whom? With Whom? And How?* <http://www.mcauley.acu.edu.au/theology/Issue2/issue2.htm>

	<b>Before Vatican II</b>	<b>Since Vatican II</b>
<b>What is mission for?</b>	The Church's work for the salvation of souls.	For the full realization of the Kingdom of God, which is already-but-not-yet, present-and-future, realized-and-eschatological.
<b>To whom?</b>	Carried out for the benefit of the pagans abroad.	To the whole world in all its dimensions and arenas, including the cosmos, to all peoples whatever their religious faith.
<b>By whom?</b>	Mainly by priests, religious brothers, nuns, and specially-commissioned lay people, mostly from Europe and America.	By God, first of all, because the Church's mission is nothing but a continuation of God's mission in Jesus; and secondly, by all, hierarchy and laity, even though some are more engaged in "missionary" activities than others.
<b>With whom?</b>	With the financial and spiritual support of the laity back home.	With all Christians, and not only with Catholics, without denominational confrontation and competition; and furthermore, with the followers of other religions as well, since they too are called to the reign of God, even though not all of them will join the Church.
<b>How?</b>	By planting the Church in these "mission fields".	By personal witness and dialogue.

## Scripture

### Matthew 25:34-40 - Judgement of the Nations

"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left.

Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world;

for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.'

Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?'

And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.'

Then he will say to those at his left hand, 'You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.'

Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?'

Then he will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.'

And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

## Major Assessment Task

Students create a poster that explains either the text from Luke or the text from Matthew. The poster should connect the gospel text to a contemporary context, e.g. The hungry today are those without food physically or spiritually (Matthew) or the oppressed are those who live in places where war is tearing the country apart (Luke).

or

Students investigate the work of one of the church agencies ( Vinnies, Caritas, etc). They create a poster that shows the services provided, who they give assistance or aid to, the founder if relevant. The student’s work should also indicate how this connects to the mission of Jesus.

## Suggested Teaching & Learning Experiences

### Focusing Activity

Read a Picture Story Book such as Refugees

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=foxH1uWJW\\_0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=foxH1uWJW_0)

Why do you think the author gave the title “*Refugees*” to this book? What is a refugee? What does it mean to be a refugee?

or Rose Blanche

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cQVgniMcuoE>

Explore the story with regard to decision –making. What decision was made? Would you have made this decision? Why/why not?

- **Class discussion:** What does the word ‘mission’ mean? As Christians, we have a mission. What is our Christian Mission? Where does our mission come from?

Students identify the key elements of a mission (e.g. purpose, planning, carrying out the plan, reflecting and celebrating achievement).

- Read and discuss Lk 4:16-21. What was Jesus’ mission?

Reflecting on who are the ‘poor’, the ‘captives’, and the ‘blind’ the Scripture is referring to.

Explore the social system in the time of Jesus, identifying the outcasts – poor, sinners, sick, non-Jews, uneducated.

What does this text mean for us today? Who are the blind, poor, oppressed, captives today?

Students create a scroll that articulates how they will continue Jesus’ mission in their context.

- Read and Interpret Matt 25:34-40.

Complete this matrix:

What did the righteous do?	Problem	Who in our World?	What does the Church do?
I was hungry and you gave me food.	Hunger for.	People who lack food. Hunger for knowledge (education).	Caritas funds: schools, Emergency food aid ...
	Thirst for.	Lack adequate water supply. Thirst for justice, fairness ...	ACSJC ... Catholic Missions ...

- Students reflect on Mt 25:34-40 and identify those within the community/world whom they feel are the thirsty, hungry, naked or imprisoned and suggest one way of responding to the need.

- Look at the Catholic Church's teaching on Justice. ( *Learning Links to Justice* P.12)
  - The Life and Dignity of the person.
  - The Rights and Responsibilities of the Person
  - The Call to Family, Community and to Participation.
  - The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers
  - The Option for the Poor and Vulnerable.
  - Solidarity
  - The Universal Destination of Created Goods

What is this teaching saying to us? What can I do?

- On a card, students write a Twitter Feed that sums up their mission as a Christian, using a maximum of 280 characters

e.g. (name) @Christian mission

need to follow Jesus' teaching: care for everyone, be kind. Do good things for others in need. Share generously

Display the students' tweets.

## Prayer and Ritual

Prepare a prayer place with a large candle as the central focus. Students place their mission scroll in front of them as they sit in a circle around the prayer focus. Place the Bible beside the candle open at Luke 4:16-21. Read the text and take time to reflect on the message. Have students place smaller candle on the focus as they read an

intercession such as “Lord Jesus may your Good News reach out to all. Thank you for ...” (here the students name the organisations they have learned about in the unit).