

YEAR LEVEL	9 and 10
TITLE	Prophets and Saints
STRAND	CHRISTIAN MORALITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE
SUGGESTED DURATION	10 weeks (25 hours)
ENDURING QUESTIONS	How are we called to contribute to the common good? How can I use my gifts for the common good?



## Unit Focus

In this unit students investigate the life stories of people who strive to live out the message of Jesus. These people challenge, inspire and motivate us in our own time. The students will reflect on the lives of these prophets and saints as examples of Christian discipleship.

## Achievement Standards

By the end of Year 10:

***Students examine Christian life as being informed by Church teaching, human development and conscience, and inspired by people of faith.***

## Unit Outcomes

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

1. Articulate an understanding of the terms 'prophet', 'saint', 'disciple' and 'mission'.
2. Explore the life stories of people striving to follow Gospel values in their particular time and circumstances.
3. Articulate how Mary and the saints are models for Christian life.
4. Recognise some of the challenges and opportunities for living as prophets and saints in our world today.

## Key Understandings for Students

- Jesus faced many challenges in his ministry. These included rejection, loneliness, temptation, frustration and fear.
- Individuals face many challenges when trying to live as disciples of Jesus.
- A disciple of Jesus is one who looks to Jesus as a model and guide. They are trying to live the call of the Gospels.
- The word 'saint' originally meant 'believer'. It was then used to describe those individuals who lived their lives as followers of Christ or someone with heroic virtues.
- A prophet is someone who encourages us to live our lives as God wanted.
- Ministry is the work done on a daily basis in the service of God.

- Mission is a following of the call to live out the Good News of Jesus Christ.
- Each individual has a calling or challenge to act and serve as a Christian disciple.
- Throughout the history of the Church outstanding women and men, prophets and saints, have inspired many by the example of their lives.
- Mary is the model disciple, in the way she heard and lived out God's word.
- An individual can respond and live out their lives in a variety of ways as a disciple of Jesus. This can vary from a person living in an inconspicuous manner to the person with a prominent public profile.

## Student Context

Students in years 9 and 10 are often idealistic and wanting to solve the 'problems of the world'. It is important to capitalise on their experience, interest and motivation as a basis for further study.

Students' growing indecision and their search for authenticity is well suited to the study of lives which aim to work for justice, peace and harmony. Students can be expected to exhibit a deeper understanding of causes and consequences as they apply to social, political and scientific issues and movements.

## Theological Background for Teachers

- God: A message of respect, freedom and responsibility of the individual. Jesus' life was one in which he brought "the good news to the poor, proclaimed liberty to captives, new sight to the blind and set the downtrodden free." (Lk 4:18)
- We are called to live the values of the Kingdom in our world. The call to confront injustice and to be people of justice and peace is not an option for Christians, it is an essential characteristic of a life lived according to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. All are called: "This is what the Lord asks of you: only this, to act justly, to love tenderly and to walk humbly with your God." (Mic 6:8)
- By living justly and pursuing justice in all facets of our lives, we run the risk of challenging the world. This is part of our mission as it was for Jesus.
- The many ways in which we can live justly centre on our recognition of the dignity of every person. When a person suffers injustice of any kind we are called to share in their sufferings and help overcome them. It may be that good works, charity, prayer, fasting or a commitment to a cause are some of the ways of being a modern day prophet.
- Discipleship has its origin in the Latin *discipulus*, which means "follower" and "one who learns." Christian tradition claims there were at least seventy two special disciples of Jesus of Nazareth, along with the twelve apostles, who received special training, instruction, and other formation from Jesus to be sent out by him on a mission to call others to repentance, preach the coming of God's reign, and heal the sick (Luke 10:1-9). The original disciples can also be seen as the hopeful student-followers of their rabbi, Jesus.
- The equivalent of the term disciple appears only in the gospels and in the Acts of the Apostles. Acts 1:15 seems to speak of a group of one hundred and twenty special disciples of the now-risen Jesus. In the history of the church, the seventy two have been typically viewed as a body related faithfully (but not as intimately as the twelve apostles) to Jesus.
- Discipleship is a way of life that must involve significant risk, hope, and a willingness to speak out in urgent, self-sacrificing, and counter-cultural ways to lift up the message and values of Jesus' good news. While this mission of evangelisation was given to the original disciples, discipleship as a lifestyle and life-witness is the way that all baptised persons are called by the church to live in imitation of Jesus.
- Catholic tradition stresses that discipleship never has and never will involve status-seeking positions or the ranks of power and authority in the world. Discipleship is an everyday way of life, hope and ministry rooted in the gift of the Spirit instead. In baptism, one becomes a Christian disciple commissioned by the Spirit of Jesus to reach out to various persons, groups, and cultures, to share his gospel message regarding the reign of God, heal human hurts, and serve the poor. Disciples today, as in the past, are those who truly 1) accept Jesus' challenge to sacrifice themselves in any ways necessary to share faith with others and

reform the world, 2) put hope in God and God's reign over material values, 3) trust fully God's promise of salvation (rather than cling to self-interest, family of origin, or human life itself), and 4) free themselves entirely of mere worldly concerns to spend themselves completely in pursuit of God's love on Earth.

- The Church honours Mary as Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God. Contemporary thinking about Mary focuses on her as a model disciple in the way she heard and carried out God's word. In the Gospel of Luke, Mary is a prophet who announces the coming reign of God. She is shown as the model follower of Jesus. In another sense, like Mary, the Church's mission is to bring Christ to birth in people's lives.

## Scripture

### Amos 7: 7-17

This is what he showed me: the Lord was standing beside a wall built with a plumb-line, with a plumb-line in his hand. And the Lord said to me, 'Amos, what do you see?' And I said, 'A plumb-line.' Then the Lord said,

'See, I am setting a plumb-line  
in the midst of my people Israel;  
I will never again pass them by;  
the high places of Isaac shall be made desolate,  
and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste,  
and I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword.'

Then Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, sent to King Jeroboam of Israel, saying, 'Amos has conspired against you in the very centre of the house of Israel; the land is not able to bear all his words. For thus Amos has said,

"Jeroboam shall die by the sword,  
and Israel must go into exile  
away from his land." '

And Amaziah said to Amos, 'O seer, go, flee away to the land of Judah, earn your bread there, and prophesy there; but never again prophesy at Bethel, for it is the king's sanctuary, and it is a temple of the kingdom.'

Then Amos answered Amaziah, "I am no prophet, nor a prophet's son; but I am a herdsman, and a dresser of sycamore trees, and the Lord took me from following the flock, and the Lord said to me, 'Go, prophesy to my people Israel.'

"Now therefore hear the word of the Lord.

You say, 'Do not prophesy against Israel,  
and do not preach against the house of Isaac.'

Therefore, thus says the Lord:

"Your wife shall become a prostitute in the city,  
and your sons and your daughters shall fall by the sword,  
and your land shall be parcelled out by line;  
you yourself shall die in an unclean land,  
and Israel shall surely go into exile away from its land." '

### Mic 6:8 *What God Requires*

He has told you, O mortal, what is good;  
And what does the Lord require of you  
But to do justice, and to love kindness,  
And to walk humbly with your God?

### Lk 1: 39 – 56 *The Magnificat*

39 In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, <sup>40</sup>where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. <sup>41</sup>When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit <sup>42</sup>and exclaimed with a loud cry, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. <sup>43</sup>And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? <sup>44</sup>For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. <sup>45</sup>And blessed is she who

believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.’<sup>46</sup> And Mary said, ‘My soul magnifies the Lord,<sup>47</sup> and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,<sup>48</sup> for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;<sup>49</sup> for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.<sup>50</sup> His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.<sup>51</sup> He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.<sup>52</sup> He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly;<sup>53</sup> he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty.<sup>54</sup> He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy,<sup>55</sup> according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever.’<sup>56</sup> And Mary remained with her about three months and then returned to her home.

## Major Assessment Task

Task: **Individual comparative investigation**

Negotiate the form of presentation with your teacher e.g. PowerPoint, written piece.

Students are to investigate the facets of the life and legacy of a traditional Christian Saint in comparison with a modern-day contemporary figure who embodies Gospel values.

Things to look at:

- Identify the significant events in the life of the two chosen figures.
- Analyse the impact or legacy of your chosen subjects.
- Recognise challenges faced by the two figures.
- Explore links to gospel values (specify which values) and discipleship in the lives of the two chosen subjects.
- Compare the legacies of the subjects on society, identifying similarities and differences.

*It is expected that students and teachers will co-construct an assessment rubric for this task beginning with the below. Teachers are encouraged to assess skills and knowledge from other learning areas that may be included in this task.*

	WELL ABOVE EXPECTED LEVEL	ABOVE EXPECTED LEVEL	AT EXPECTED LEVEL	BELOW EXPECTED LEVEL
<b>KNOWLEDGE and UNDERSTANDING</b>	Has identified various significant events in the lives of the two chosen figures in detail.	Has identified numerous significant events in the lives of the two chosen figures.	Has identified various significant events in the lives of the two chosen figures.	Has identified few significant events in the lives of the two chosen figures.
	Has outlined various challenges faced by both subjects in detail.	Has outlined numerous challenges faced by both subjects.	Has outlined various challenges faced by both subjects.	Has outlined few challenges faced by one or both subjects.
	Demonstrates a high level of understanding of the presence of gospel values and discipleship in the	Demonstrates a sound understanding of the presence of gospel values and discipleship in the	Demonstrates understanding of the presence of gospel values and discipleship in the	Demonstrates limited understanding of the presence of gospel values and discipleship in the

	lives of both subjects.	lives of both subjects.	lives of both subjects.	lives of one or both subjects.
<b>REASONING</b>	Has analysed the impact or legacy of both subjects on society in great detail.	Has analysed the impact or legacy of both subjects on society in detail.	Has analysed the impact or legacy of both subjects on society.	Limited analysis of the impact or legacy of one or both subjects on society.
	Has compared the legacies of the two subjects in great detail.	Has compared the legacies of the two subjects in detail.	Has compared the legacies of the two subjects.	Limited comparison of the legacies of the two subjects.

## Suggested Teaching & Learning Experiences

### Focusing activity:

Students identify someone who is your hero. Tell me more. Students respond to the following questions; What do they do or have they done that you admire? What have they said that inspires you? What message do they promote? (Is it a worthwhile message?) In what ways do you aspire to be like your hero?

Ask the class what is a prophet? Which of your heroes could be considered prophets? And which are not?

### Outcome 1 Articulate an understanding of the terms ‘prophet’, ‘saint’, ‘disciple’ and ‘mission’

- Complete a KWL Chart on the terms, ‘prophet, saint and disciple.’ Do a Google search on the terms, to help complete the chart. What understandings emerge?
- Go to the website “ReSource” <https://resource-macs.com/2018/09/27/the-book-of-amos/>  
This will allow interactive engagement with material on the book of Amos.

The book of Amos provides an excellent introduction to the world of the prophets. The book is brief enough to read, the writing style is strong and the themes very relevant for today’s world.

- Chapter 4, *To Know, Worship and Love year 9* has an excellent collection of text, diagrams, photographs, illustrations from scripture and activities which could be used to develop an understanding of key terms for this outcome. “Fat and Skinny” questions could be used before students were introduced to the text to generate a series of questions for investigation.
- Chapter 4, *To Know, Worship and Love year 9* (pp76-80) tells the story of King David and the key role of the prophet Nathan in bringing David to a realisation of the injustice of his actions. After working through this story, the “Hot Seat” activity could then be used to explore the motivations of key characters.
- Students use their understanding of the key terms to create definitions to use in a ‘find your other half’ activity.
- Brainstorm the qualities of a modern day prophet, saint or disciple. (To Know, Worship and Love, year 9, p74)

### Outcome 2 Explore the life stories of people striving to follow Gospel values in their particular time and circumstances.

- Research the names of people who have been made saints by Pope Francis (i.e. since 2013). Present their stories as part of a class display. Explain what example they continue to set for people today.

- Prepare a 'This is your Life' presentation based on the life of a modern day prophet, for example, someone within your own family or local community.
- Prepare and participate in a liturgy that celebrates the lives of living prophets and saints (consider people in the news at the time for doing great things that support others in society).
- Create a Wordle of the human qualities evident in the lives of modern day prophets across a wide range of endeavours. Compare these with the qualities of Christian disciples outlined in selected Scripture texts.
- Research the life of William Cooper. What were his main achievements? Why is he still remembered to this day in Israel?
- Write a personal reflection after viewing the movie *Romero*.

Guiding questions:

*What makes the story of Romero remarkable? (Show some understanding of the socio-political background of El Salvador)*

*How was Romero a prophet, a saint and a disciple? Support with examples and evidence.*

*What qualities do you admire in Oscar Romero?*

*What can our society learn from Romero's life?*

- Class debate on the topic: 'Saints are a thing of the past'.

### **Outcome 3     Articulate how Mary, and the saints are models for Christian life.**

- Chapter 11, *To Know, Worship and Love year 9* describes how Mary is first disciple and so the model for all Christian disciples. An eight point checklist (pp217-222) is drawn from Mary's life and describes the path for Christian disciples based on Scripture. Apply the eight point checklist to tell the story of a range of well known Christian disciples using powerpoint slides.
- Locate various images of Mary. Choose a number of them and discern what characteristics these images are portraying.
- Find all the Gospel references to Mary and compile a character portrait of her based on the qualities of Mary evident in these texts. Explain why Mary is considered the model disciple. Provide arguments and evidence to support your decision.
- Research Church teaching in relation to Mary (e.g. the Immaculate Conception, The Assumption) - see *To Know, Worship and Love year 9 pp223-225*. What does the Church teach about Mary? Why?
- There have been many claims for various apparitions of Mary over time and considerable coverage in the media. This could be used as an entry point for consideration of how Mary is a model disciple. The "1:2:4 Group Process" could be used to engage students in a discussion on the meaning and authenticity of apparitions of Mary. Material on "Apparitions of Mary" (*To Know, Worship and Love year 9, pp229-237*) could then be studied to give the Church's position on apparitions and their meaning for today's world.
- Create a powerpoint reflection on Mary's discipleship. Try to incorporate music or some traditional Marian prayers (see *To Know, Worship and Love, year 9, pp225-228*)
- Complete either of the tasks in *To Know, Worship and Love, year 9, p237 - Mary's Role in the World Today*
- Research some of the saints of the Catholic Church, for example patron saints, Confirmation saints. What are the patron saints remembered for? What examples do the Confirmation saints set for us?

### **Outcome 4     Recognise some of the challenges and opportunities for living as prophets and saints in our world today.**

- Create a presentation that details the challenges individuals face in trying to live as prophets and saints in our world (use examples from popular media). Include suggestions on possible ways to overcome these challenges.

- Identify members of the local community who fit the description of a 'modern day prophet'. Reflect on the relevance of their message for your own life. Perhaps invite one of them into the class as a guest speaker.
- Students present a song/artwork/cartoon with a prophetic message, including an analysis of the background of the song and artist and why it is considered prophetic.

***Liturgical celebrations/sacramental celebrations – provide opportunities for connection with the prayer life of the Church for reflection and resonance.***

Such celebrations should be an integral part of every unit, and should be linked to the liturgical year wherever possible.

## Resources

Archdiocese of Melbourne (2003) *To Know, Worship and Love Year 9 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition* James Goold House

Chapter 4 *People Who Cared; The Prophets And Social Justice*

Chapter 11 *Mary, Mother of God and the Church*

## Appendices