


YEAR LEVEL	7 and 8	
TITLE	How Do We Belong? Part I	
STRAND	CHURCH & TRADITION	
SUGGESTED DURATION	8-10 weeks (20-25 hours)	
ENDURING QUESTIONS	How does the Church make a difference? How can I connect with community and Church?	

Unit Focus

In this unit students will investigate the concept of belonging. Students are encouraged to develop an awareness of the charism of their school from studying the lives of their founder(s) and the persons their School Houses are named after as well as the history and values of their school. They will consider their school within the context of the local parish and Sandhurst Diocese.

Achievement Standards

By the end of **Year Eight**:

Students examine and describe the history and values of their school within the context of their local parish and the Sandhurst Diocese.

Unit Outcomes

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

1. Express an understanding and appreciation of the unique charism of their school community and how these are based on the teachings and example of Jesus Christ.
2. Have an appreciation of the rich history of their school community and an understanding of their place within the history of their community.
3. Have an understanding of the place of their school within the Parish and the Diocese.

Key Understandings for Students

- A Founder is a person who speaks for God. They are ordinary people who did extraordinary things.
- They had a vision of where God was calling them and they made that vision an enduring reality.
- All Christians strive to live life in a way that is true to the Gospels.
- Founders have given our school its distinctive flavour. We have built on the religious tradition(s) of our Founder(s) and have now, over time developed our own interpretation of the charism.
- The Catholic school is situated within the Parish and the Diocese.

Student Context

Students in Year 7 and 8 are new to their secondary schools and need to develop a sense of identity and belonging to a new school community with its charism and values. They are also growing in their ability to understand that the choices they make have consequences and require that they exercise responsibility. However, they can be overwhelmed by the many new feelings they are experiencing and this can give them a sense of powerlessness.

It is important to help students feel supported and to understand that joint action by people can achieve much. Year 7 and 8 students also need help to be realistic about the expectations they set for themselves, so they can continue to respond to their sense of belonging and to take up opportunities to put their Christian values into practice.

It is important to acknowledge the students' past experience, or lack thereof, of family, school and parish community, and to help them own their own experience and be able to build on it.

Theological Background for Teachers

- Determining what the gospel is asking of Christians remains a task for every generation. How we live a life that authentically responds to the invitation of Jesus is the question we need to answer. (*Inform* No. 15 - undated)
- Pondering that we ask the question: What can we do? What can one person, one family do to share more fairly the goods of this world God has provided? To respond to the call of the Church, in the light of the vision of our founders, a responsibility on all the followers of Jesus? (*Inform* No.38 - May 1994)

Scripture

As well as the following passages, find some examples of Scripture which had a special meaning for your local Founder or a passage related to your motto.

The concept of 'belonging' in scripture:

Ruth 1-4

No sooner had Boaz gone up to the gate and sat down there than the next-of-kin,^{*} of whom Boaz had spoken, came passing by. So Boaz said, 'Come over, friend; sit down here.' And he went over and sat down. ²Then Boaz took ten men of the elders of the city, and said, 'Sit down here'; so they sat down. ³He then said to the next-of-kin,^{*} 'Naomi, who has come back from the country of Moab, is selling the parcel of land that belonged to our kinsman Elimelech. ⁴So I thought I would tell you of it, and say: Buy it in the presence of those sitting here, and in the presence of the elders of my people. If you will redeem it, redeem it; but if you will not, tell me, so that I may know; for there is no one prior to you to redeem it, and I come after you.' So he said, 'I will redeem it.'

Isa. 43:1

But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine.

John 15:16-17

You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear much fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving these commands to you so that you may love one another.

Major Assessment Task

Major Assessment Task & Rubric

Your teacher will need to supply you with copies of the school identity statement, vision statements and graduate outcomes and the school motto, emblem or crest.

Imagine that the Yr 7 coordinator has asked you to make a presentation for people interested in attending your school in the future. Your presentation can be in the form of an oral presentation, a PowerPoint, a short movie or other medium. You will need to cover the following information:

- i) how your school got started,
- ii) some key historical figures at your school, including a quote from each of them where possible.
- iii) school traditions
- iv) what's considered important at your school (you will need to refer to the school identity statement, vision statements and graduate outcomes)
- v) the Parishes that are connected to your school and the Diocese to which it belongs
- vi) the significant (sacred) places in your school.
- vii) (in your own words) a brief explanation of the motto and crest
- viii) an explanation of five things individuals can do to animate the motto of the school community.

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	Expected level	Below expected level
Knowledge and Understanding	Shows an insightful understanding of the school's history, traditions and significant places.	Shows a high level of understanding of the school's history, traditions and significant places.	Shows evidence of a good level of understanding of the school's history, traditions and significant places.	Has a limited treatment of the school's history, traditions and significant places.
REASONING	Animates the school motto in at least five ways with detailed explanations.	Animates the school motto in at least five ways.	Animates the school motto in five ways with explanations.	Animates the school motto in less than five ways.

Suggested Teaching & Learning Experiences

Focusing Activity: Students watch the school promotional video and recall experiences of open days or school tours they have participated in in past years. Students recall what their first impressions of the school were, why they chose to come to this school and what they thought it would be like.

Outcome 1 Express an understanding and appreciation of the unique charisms of their school community and how these are based on the teachings and example of Jesus Christ.

- Think Pair Share what students know about the history and charism/s of their new school.
- Examine the name of the school, the house names and the school crest.
 - What is their meaning or origin?
 - What do they say about the school?
- Study the school Vision statement. What hopes or aspirations does it suggest for the school community? Where is the evidence of these hopes being present in the school?
- Pretend that the founder has returned today to visit the College, prepare a guided tour where you describe to the founder what is happening and why and what value it is.

Outcome 2 Have an appreciation of the rich history of their school community and an understanding of their place within the history of their community.

- Research the history of the school in pairs, present findings in an appropriate manner.
- Students explore alumni reflections if they are available.
 - Why did they choose the school?
 - What did they like best about the school?
 - What was their greatest achievement?

Teacher information: Ruth is a beautiful story of love and loyalty about one of Israel's ancestors. It is a story about belonging that students coming from different faith positions and making a new start at Secondary school can identify with and make ready connections. Ruth, a foreigner among the ancient Israelites, is faithful to her mother-in-law and makes a choice for the God of Israel. She marries Boaz and becomes the great-grandmother of King David. Just as God worked through Ruth, a foreigner, to advance the divine plan, so too, those new to a school community can also choose to belong, to be loyal and make a contribution to their secondary school.

Students complete a "Scriptural Think Pad" to process the story of Ruth, express understandings and make connections to their lives.

Students then make a list of various ways that the school encourages students to strengthen their sense of belonging and make a contribution to the school community.

- In pairs, students prepare a poster, tour guide or powerpoint for prospective families to their college which explains the history, significance of the College and what it has to offer.
- OR in pairs, prepare a powerpoint or a newspaper article for Catholic Education Week on the history of the College, including the founders, and describe what the College has contributed to the local community during its history and today.

Outcome 3: Develop an understanding of the place of their school within the Parish and the diocese.

- Read a story about identity and belonging, e.g. "A River Dreaming" by Elizabeth Pike. Students research the Aboriginal history of their area, e.g. whose country are they on? What indigenous place names can be found in their area? What totem is significant to the indigenous peoples of this area? what significant cultural places are in the area.

- If possible visit the Parish Church and meet the Parish Priest. Find the plaque commemorating the official opening and blessing of the Church. Who was there?
- Research some of the history of the parish, e.g. significant dates, significant people.
- As the Commencement Mass and Ash Wednesday will usually occur during this unit it will be important to prepare students for these significant occasions. Afterwards ask the students what did they 'see', what did they 'think' and what do they 'wonder'. Record responses on individual post-it notes under appropriate headings (See, Think, Wonder). Stick the post-its at the front of the room. Share responses.
- Watch the video "A history of Sandhurst Catholic schools 2021". The video is available on the Catholic Education Sandhurst Ltd website (go to About Us - History) or by following this [link](#). What information is included about your school and town? What other questions arise?
- View a map of the diocese identifying the location of the Cathedral, churches, primary and secondary schools. What diocesan activities are available to or inclusive of students e.g. Youth Ministry, Social Justice? Create a timeline of the Bishops of Sandhurst.
- Students write a letter or a tweet (280 characters) to a distant friend or relative detailing their understanding of the relationship between the school, the parish and the diocese.

Resources

To Know, Worship and Love - Book 7

Elisabeth Pike - River Dreaming

A History of Sandhurst Catholic Education - 200 years - [video](#)

Appendices