

YEAR LEVEL	1 & 2
TITLE	Sacraments are Special Celebrations
STRAND	SACRAMENTS
SUGGESTED DURATION	6 weeks
ENDURING QUESTIONS	<p>Why do we have Sacraments?</p> <p>How can the Sacraments influence my life?</p>



## Unit Focus

In this unit students will develop a greater understanding of celebration. They will explore the different ways we celebrate God in our lives: through the world around us, through people and in a unique way through the Sacraments of the Church.

## Achievement Standards

By the end of Year Two, students should be able to:

Students identify that Sacraments are special celebrations in the Church. They describe various elements of sacramental celebrations in the Church.

## Unit Outcomes

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

1. Describe how their family and friends show God's love for them.
2. Recall and share some stories of celebrations in their lives.
3. Identify the importance of sacramental celebrations in the life of the Church.

## Key Understandings for Students

- God speaks to us through the people we love and through the beauty of creation.
- Each person is a unique and special sign of God's love.
- The Church community shows us God's love.
- The stories and actions of Jesus are remembered and lived out, in and through, liturgical celebrations.
- People celebrate at different times and in different ways.
- Sacraments are special celebrations of the Church.

## Student Context

Students at this level are naturally curious and uninhibited. Learning is 'hands on' and literal. Young children are kinaesthetic learners who are beginning to make links between personal experience and new knowledge. There is a need to provide opportunities for them to observe/participate in/ask questions about celebrations with their peer group.

Students in this years 1 and 2 make strong connections between school and home so activities to link school and home need to be included e.g. celebrations, bringing of photos and other memorabilia to show/share with peers. They have enthusiasm for fantasy and play and enjoy role-playing known situations e.g. celebrations they have been involved in, as well as invented and unfamiliar situations.

## Theological Background for Teachers

- The mystery of Christ can be seen in everything that is true and beautiful in creation and in people themselves.
- Sacraments are moments of celebration that provide new insights into our experiences.
- We are a sacramental people – all our daily life actions involve our own transformation by Jesus.
- We express meaning in our lives through the use of symbols. A hug, a bunch of flowers, a birthday cake symbolise meaning and milestones in our lives. Eg. Friendship, thanks, love, sympathy etc. Such expressions of love become signs of God's love and are thereby sacramental moments.
- Symbols are also part of our Church tradition and express religious meaning. Symbols used in the Church are water, oil, light, bread and wine. They are used in sacramental celebrations and have many layers of meaning according to the context in which they are used.
- The Christian life is lived fully through the healing power of the seven sacraments.
- The Church provides an important way of expressing our communal faith and relationship with God through celebration.
- Within the Church, a Sacrament is a community celebration by Christ's followers through which they recognise his presence in their midst, and receive, through signs, the power of Salvation he offers them. With this power, they can fulfil the mission they share, as well as their individual vocations in human society. As liturgical celebrations, the seven Sacraments are also signs through which members of his Church participate in Jesus' prayer to the Father on their behalf. By joining in his prayer, Christians celebrate their union with Jesus, as well as with each other. (6.8 GDC).
- The Christian sacramental system is rooted in human nature as well as faith. Together, the seven Sacraments express the scope of basic human yearnings, ones people need to present to God if they are to relate to God in their full humanity. (6.9 GDC)

## Scripture

### Matthew 26:26-29 The Last Supper

While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it,

all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will never again drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

Godly Play- Signs of Gods' Love ( Sydney )

Godly Play- Last Supper

## Major Assessment Task

### Celebration Collages

Children will make two collages.

The work will be scaffolded with key questions:

What colours might you see?	What words might be said?	What smells might be experienced?
What might the people be doing?	What sounds might be heard?	What feelings would be felt?

One collage entitled "I Celebrate with my family" will visually portray a special family celebration that they have been a part of.

The other entitled "The Church Celebrates" will show a sacramental celebration that they have experienced.

For each picture:

Step 1: Children paint the background and setting for the 'celebration'.

Step 2: Children identify and make significant people involved in the celebration

Step 3: Children write in speech/thought balloons to show the feelings/words of the people.

Step 4: Children may caption their pictures with explanations or reflections about their experiences.

The pictures can be displayed in prominent positions in the school/parish.

## Suggested Learning Experiences

### Focusing Activity:

Using a "Feely Bag", one by one, present children with a range of objects that can symbolise love eg. A ring, a teddy bear, a locket, a flower. Have the children explain what these objects remind them of, what they may be 'signs' of. Ask children what emotions these objects may make people feel.

- Ask the students to identify some signs of love. These may include a sunset, a hug from Mum, a beautiful feather. Write and pray a simple prayer of thanks for all that God has given us in Creation.

- Discuss signs of love, e.g., hugs, a loving home, food, actions, gifts, clothing, care, concern, demonstrating and teaching.
- Brainstorm how love is shown in the sharing times families and communities have with each other.
- Display different types of invitations to various celebrations. Invite students to look at invitations and identify similar elements in each.

*Purpose* - *what is the party/celebration for?*  
*Time* - *when is the celebration being held?*  
*Place* - *where is the celebration being held?*  
*Dress* - *what type of clothes are to be worn?*  
*Theme* - *is it a dress-up party?*  
*RSVP* - *the date to reply to the invitation?*

- Students will identify as many celebrations as they can both secular and religious using the Think-Pair-Share strategy.. Write each on a balloon or streamer for a class display called 'We Gather, We Celebrate'. Introduce the word 'sacrament' and discuss this word in the context of the special celebrations of our Catholic Church.
- Focus on the religious celebrations identified in class balloon display to develop a concept map. Head large sheets of paper with different Church celebrations e.g. baptisms, feast days, Confirmation, Easter, Christmas, funeral. Students add words, drawings, pictures to the charts in response to the following key questions:

1. What sounds might you hear?	3. What feelings might people have?	5. What smells might you experience?
2. What colours might you see?	4. What words might you say?	6. What things might you do?

- Students share the feelings experienced at various celebrations using the Value Lines strategy
- Photos of many different types of celebrations may be displayed and labelled.  
Use the photos to classify elements of a celebration:
  - *people gather and prepare*
  - *there is a time to listen to each other and respond*
  - *people share and give thanks*
  - *to conclude the celebration people go and tell others about the event.*
- Group role plays of various scenarios of celebrations – audience decides on whether it is gather and prepare, listen and respond, share and give thanks or go and tell.
- Using photos and recalling students' memories of celebrations, highlight the common features e.g., sharing of food and drinks, people gathered in a group, telling of stories, decorations, music, dance.
- Read Matthew 26:26-29. Ask the children to identify the above elements of a celebration within the Last Supper story. ( **Appendix 1** )

- Visit the local church if possible and show and discuss the Vessels, Vestments, Altar furnishings used in a Catholic Church for the Sacraments. If possible, invite the local priest to lead the tour. If this is not possible, invite the local priest to visit the class and show any of the above.
- Attend a parish Mass and ask the priest to either explain before, during or after the Mass which parts of the Mass relate to the elements of a celebration, ie. Gather and welcome, listen, share and give thanks etc. Remind the children that they will hear the words Jesus spoke at the Last Supper during the Mass to help them focus on that part of that celebration.
- Godly Play “Signs of God’s Love”. Allow time and resources for children to respond. ( **Appendix 2** )
- Invite students from higher grades to tell the class about their experience of celebrating sacraments.
- Prepare a Prayer Service for a special celebration using various religious symbols eg water, a candle, oil, bread, Such a Prayer Service could be used during preparation time for any of the Sacraments eg Baptism, Penance, Confirmation/First Eucharist.

## Prayer Ritual

Gather students around the prayer table with the various religious symbols collected and explained throughout the unit. Make the sign of the cross to begin the prayer ritual.

Ask students to share their prayers of thanks written earlier in the unit.

Listen to and sing ‘*Come Together*’ by Michael Mangan.

**Leader:** Loving God, you call us to love you. Help us to listen to your Word with open hearts and an open mind.

Read **Matthew 26:26-29** to the students and encourage them to reflect on the following:

Imagine you are with Jesus during this special time.

- How do you think the disciples are feeling?
- What things do you think Jesus and his disciples spoke about during this special meal?
- What can you give thanks to God for?

**Leader:** We ask you Jesus to fill our hearts with your love. Amen.

## Appendices

Appendix 1: Last Supper

Appendix 2: Signs of God’s Love - Godly Play ( Sydney)

