



YEAR LEVEL	Foundation
TITLE	God Knows us and Loves us.
STRAND	TRINITY
SUGGESTED DURATION	3 - 5 weeks
ENDURING QUESTIONS	Who is God? Is God alive in me?

## Unit Focus

In this unit students will explore a range of understandings about God. They will be given opportunities to explore images of God. They will come to understand that God's love for them is revealed through their families, friends and creation and they will be given opportunities to give thanks for all these.

## Achievement Standards

By the end of **Foundation**:

**Students recognise God as loving, experienced in people and the world around us.  
They identify and describe how they experience God's love through other people's words and actions and the world around them.**

## Unit Outcomes

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

1. Understand that God knows them and always loves them.
2. Identify ways in which they see God's love for them through other people and creation.

## Key Understandings for Students

- We are made in God's image.
- God knows us and loves us for who we are.
- God is present in people and the world around us.
- We see and feel God's love for us through the actions of other people and in creation.
- There are different names for and images of God.

## Student Context

Foundation students come to school their knowledge of God and of creation will vary from student to student, but their natural curiosity will make them willing to explore new concepts and environments.

At this level they become more able to understand concepts such as cause and effect and symbolism, therefore there is a window of opportunity to develop in all students a heightened awareness of their world and of God who created it.

## Theological Background for Teachers

- Who is God? Theological giants caution us not to rely on strict definitions about the nature of God. “If we have understood, then what we have understood is not God,” wrote Augustine in the fifth century. “We can know *that* God is, but not *what* God is,” Thomas Aquinas said some eight centuries later. They are saying that God who is mystery cannot be imprisoned by limited human vocabulary. We cannot say what God is, said Aquinas, but we can say what God is *like*. We can talk about God by way of analogy and image. (Inform No. 63, March, 1999)
- Each of us is unique and has received the Spirit of God. This gift of the Spirit calls each one of us to become authentically human and to live in relationship with God and with others.
- As people created in the image and likeness of God, we are creative, gifted and talented. We have been endowed with intellect and with the freedom to use and express these gifts and talents. We are called in different ways to contribute to the life and mission of the Church and the common good of society by using our gifts and talents in the service of others. In service to others our gifts are developed as we grow as persons.
- Everything in our world is an example of God’s creative love. All things created by God are good because they come from the creative hand of God.
- God loves each individual in a unique and personal way. God loves us as a mother and father would. God’s love is constant. We are created to know and love God. God has given us the freedom to accept or reject this love. (Education Committee of Australian Bishops’ Conference, 1990, # 2.60).
- Young children form their concept of God from the people and world around them. Even though they may not be able to articulate their understanding of God, the experiences that each child has had provide the foundation for their concept of God.
- Teachers need to be aware that the student’s acceptance of teachings about God will be influenced heavily by his or her ‘self-image.’ If a student feels unloved or worthless, he or she will not easily believe in the unconditional love of God, nor in any of God’s other attributes. (Education Committee of Australian Bishops’ Conference, 1990, # 2.85 and Catholic Education Office, Parramatta, 1999, p.60)

## Suggested Teaching & Learning Experiences

### Focusing Activity:

Read a Picture story book about a family or Watch this Peppa Pig Clip about her family.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zKcHRjix0YI> Students may need to watch the clip several times.

Partner talk: In groups of 2 or 3 students talk about each character in the family and what they do in the short clip. Students share reflections with the teacher who records main ideas and any questions.

- Picture Talk: Show images of families doing things to help others in the family. Students draw a picture of their family doing something together and share it with the rest of their class.

- Make a class Y Chart. What does 'love' look, sound, feel like?
- Brainstorm. List the people who love me, the different ways to show love.
- Students demonstrate ways that they can show love to other people in a freeze frame format. Teacher or other students capture this in a photograph to create a collage titled, '**We Show Love to Others**'.
- Draw a circle on the board and ask children what they notice about it. Explain that it is the same all the way around; it has no beginning or ending and it keeps going round and round. Suggest to the children that God's love is like this circle. Students are given their own circle shape and draw an example of God's love for them. (**Appendix 1** Teacher information circle example and movable rope to change from circle to heart).
- Read the picture story book '*Shh God is in the Silence*' ( Fiona Basile).  
What did you enjoy about the story? What/Who can we hear when we are quiet and listening? What did you see in the pictures that showed God's love? What are you wondering about?
- Students listen to the song God loves me. As a class, create actions for the song.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vALAbbKlikY>
- Class conversation: Our parents and family know us, they have known us since we were babies. They know what we like and what we don't like eg: football or soccer, vegemite or honey sandwiches. They know how we feel- when we are happy or sad, when we are frightened, when we are unsure of something. God knows who we are. As we get older and learn more about ourselves, we also learn more about God and know God better and God knows us better. Students introduce themselves to God in a postcard. Eg: Hi God my name is... I am getting to know you better.
- Class conversation: We go to our parents or people we love when we need to talk about things for example when we are lonely or sad, or when we need to ask a question, when we are happy and want to share our good feelings, when we want to say thank you. God is always there for us to talk to just like our parents and friends who love and care for us.  
How do we talk to God? What might we call God when we talk to God. (eg. God my friend, God who loves us.)
- In an outline of a Photo frame, students draw themselves and at the top with the title, 'God Knows and Loves Everyone.' (**Appendix 2**)

## Prayer Ritual

Students sit around the prayer space.

Teacher uses these images students have drawn of themselves to pray a litany with the class. The teacher says God Knows and Loves... and each student holds their picture up and says their name.

Play the song God Loves me from the unit outline.

## Appendices

Appendix 1: Teacher information Circle example

Appendix 2: Photo frame template