**School/Classroom**

**A Teaching Approach to Religious Education**

**based on the Liturgical Year**

**& Grow in Love**

**January**

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**Liturgical Year: Ordinary Time January**

**Whole School:** January is a time of beginnings and an appropriate time to explore the sacrament of baptism across the whole school. The sacrament of Baptism is explored with the children from Level 1 -Level 4. While some of the lessons on Baptism in the Grow in Love programme may be scheduled to be taught later in the year there is nothing to prevent the teacher deciding to use them out of sequence. This time of year also offers an opportunity to revise children’s understanding of baptism.

The teaching about Baptism begins with the understanding that in Baptism we become members of God’s family through to the introduction of the baptismal promises made on their behalf at baptism. These promises represent the central beliefs of our faith. These central beliefs or core faith statements are also found in the Creeds that we pray at Mass. The Apostles’ Creed is taught at level 3 and the Nicene Creed at level 4 and this would be an appropriate time to begin helping the children to learn these prayers. January might also be a good time to consider scheduling a visit to the local church to see the Baptismal Font, bless themselves with Holy Water and perhaps take some Holy Water home with them. It might also be possible for the children to see and smell the oils associated with Baptism and examine the Paschal Candle that is lit during the celebration and from which their baptismal candle is kindled.

Don’t forget **Catholic Schools Week** is always celebrated during January and that the resources for use during this week can be downloaded from <https://catholiceducation.ie/>.

**Prayer Space/Display Boards**

The Christmas season continues until the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, celebrated on the Sunday after January 6. Prayer Spaces and Notice Boards can be used to remind children of the importance of baptism and make them familiar with the symbols and objects associated with the sacrament of baptism: Oil of Catechumens, Oil of Chrism, Paschal Candle, Baptismal Candles, White Shawl and Holy Water. Catholic Schools Week and its theme may also be highlighted.

**Feast Days to be Aware of:**

Feast of the Epiphany January 6

St Francis de Sales January 24

St Angela de Merici January 27

St Thomas Aquinas January 28

St John Bosco January 31

**Feast of the Epiphany in the Curriculum & Grow in Love**

**Level 1**

* **Grow in Love Junior Infants page 98**
* **Grow in Love Senior Infants page 109**

**Word of God Strand**

**•** Mt 2:1-3, 7-12. The three wise men.

**Level 2**

* **Grow in Love First Class page 106-107**
* **Grow in Love Second Class page 113-114**

**Word of God Strand**

• Mt 2:1-12. Wise men.

**Level 3**

* **Grow in Love Fourth Class page 148-154**

**Word of God Strand**

* The wise men recognised Jesus as God, and knelt and worshipped him, an event known as the Epiphany (Mt 2:1-12; CCC 422-24).

**Liturgy and Prayer Strand**

* The Feast of the Presentation, the Feast of Epiphany (Holy day of obligation: *Nollaig na mBan*), the Feast of St Joseph, the Feast of the Ascension, the Feast of Pentecost, the Feast of All Saints, the Feast of All Souls.

**Level 4**

* **Grow in Love Sixth Class page 190-192**

**Word of God Strand**

• Mt 2:1-11. Epiphany: Jesus’ identity revealed.

**Revise & Learn Prayers & Responses**

***Encourage children to bless themselves properly and intentionally at the beginning and end of prayer times. Lead by example***

* **Level 1:**

Sign of the Cross, Glory be to the Father

* **Level 2:**

Sign of the Cross, Glory be to the Father, Hail Mary, Our Father, The Confiteor

* **Level 3:**

Sign of the Cross, Glory be to the Father, The Apostle’s Creed

* Level 4:

Sign of the Cross, Glory be to the Father, The Apostle’s Creed, The Nicene Creed

**Confirmation Sponsor:** This is a very appropriate time for children preparing for Confirmation to consider who they might choose to be their sponsor. Encourage the children to discuss the kind of qualities that a sponsor might have, to think of a unique way to tell their sponsor of their decision and what they might say to them about the importance of their role on the day of Confirmation and in the future. Remind them that to be a sponsor the person must be at least 16 years of age and be confirmed in the Catholic church. Parents cannot be sponsors.

**Baptism in the Curriculum & Grow in Love**

**Level 1:**

* **Grow in love Junior Infants Theme 8 Water page 194-207**
* **Grow in love Senior Infants Theme 9 Baptism page 230-242**

**Christian Faith Strand**

**•** Objects in the church: altar, tabernacle, crucifix, holy water, holy water font, Paschal candle, baptismal font, pictures and statues, seats, kneelers.

• Christians are baptised in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (CCC 232).

**Liturgy & Prayer Strand**

• Baptism: When people are baptised they become members of the Church family. (CCC 1213, 1226, 1239-41, 1243, 1257, 1267, 1272, 1278-80, 1282).

• Water is poured on the person’s head while the priest says: ‘Name … I baptise you in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit’ (CCC 1278).

• Jesus told us to use this sign (Mt 28:19; CCC 1131).

• The baptismal font and the Paschal candle remind us of Baptism.

• Blessing ourselves with holy water can remind us of Baptism.

• Symbols of Baptism: Anointing with Chrism, water, light, white garment (CCC 1238, 1241,1243).

**Level 2**

* **Grow in Love First Class Theme 1 Belonging**
* **Grow in Love Second Class Theme 1: Lesson 3**

**Liturgy & Prayer Strand**

• Baptism is the sacrament through which people become children of God and members of the family of the Church (CCC 1213, 1226, 1239-41, 1243, 1257, 1267, 1272, 1278-80, 1282).

• In baptism, as in all of the sacraments, we receive God’s grace.

• Grace is a gift from God that helps us to be holy (CCC 1999, 2021-24).

• Baptism uses symbols of water, sign of the cross and anointing with Chrism, white garment, light (CCC 1234).

• The baptismal candle is lit from the ‘Paschal/Easter’ candle: the light of Christ for everyone.

**Level 3**

* **Grow in Love Third Class Theme 8: Lesson 3**

**Christian Faith Strand**

* Christ gives the Holy Spirit through the sacraments, especially in Baptism and Confirmation (CCC 1116).
* The Holy Spirit gives grace to all God’s people.
* Grace is the presence and work of the Holy Spirit in us. We need the gift of grace which we receive in a special way through the sacraments and prayer.
* All those who are baptised, who identify Jesus as God’s son and who believe in his

Resurrection are called Christians.

**Liturgy and Prayer Strand**

* In the sacrament of Baptism Christians become children of God and brothers and sisters of every other member of the Christian community (CCC 1265).
* In baptism, God gives the Christian God’s own life. This is called grace. (CCC 460, 1266, 1999: sanctifying grace).
* In the sacrament of Baptism God gives Christians the gift of the Holy Spirit to help them to follow Jesus (CCC 1266, 1996).
* When children are baptised as babies; the parents and godparents make the baptismal promises on the baby’s behalf, to believe in God and to reject Satan and sin. These promises are renewed at Confirmation.
* Godparents promise to help parents bring up their children as members of the Church.
* Importance of the Christian name given in Baptism (CCC 2156, 2158).
* The grace of Baptism comes from the redemptive death and Resurrection of Jesus.
* Baptism lasts forever and can only be received once.

**Level 4**

* **Grow in Love Fifth Class Themes 3 & 8**
* **Grow in Love Sixth Class Theme 10**

**Christian Faith Strand**

* Baptism is the common bond that unites all Christians (UR 22).
* The descent of the Holy Spirit on Jesus at his Baptism by John was the sign that he was the Messiah, the Son of God (Mk 1:9-11; DV 2; CCC 528, 535, 711ff, 1286)
* The risen Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to us when we were baptised.

**Word of God Strand**

* Jn 1:29-34; Mt 3: 1-17. Baptism of Jesus

**Liturgy and Prayer Strand**

* The sacraments of initiation are Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist (CCC 1212)
* Through the sacraments of initiation Christians are received into full membership of the Church and lay the foundations for their Christian life (LG 7; CCC 1121-22).
* Baptism and Confirmation confer a sacramental ‘seal’ or spiritual mark and so can never be repeated (CCC 1121, 1280, 1317).
* When the person is anointed with Chrism s/he becomes a Christian.
* Baptism frees people from original sin and all personal sin, makes them children of God and members of the Church and gives them a share in the Church’s mission. It is necessary for salvation. (CCC 1213, 1262, 1279).
* Baptism calls us to participate in establishing God’s Kingdom (GS 38).
* The rite of Baptism consists in immersing the candidate in water or pouring water on his/her head, while saying ‘I baptise you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit’ (CCC1278).
* The promises of Baptism and how they are to be lived and renewed.
* The symbols of Baptism: water as life-giving and cleansing, oil as strengthening and healing, light as driving out darkness, the white garment as ‘putting on Christ’, the community as the setting in which Christ is present

Teacher: ­­­­­­­­\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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| **Month** | **January** | **Other Suggestions** |
| **Liturgical Season**  **Colour** | Christmas season/Ordinary Time  *The Christmas season continues until the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord which falls on the Sunday after January 6, the Feast of the Epiphany*  White/Green |  |
| **Liturgical Feast/s other themes** | Feast of the Baptism of the Lord  Sunday after January 6  Baptism  Catholic Schools Week |
| **Prayer Space Elements** | Baptismal Candle  Holy Water  White Shawl |
| **Prayer/s** | Sign of the Cross  Glory Be to the Father Baptismal Promises  Apostles’ Creed  Nicene Creed |