

LEVEL FIVE: THE SACRAMENTS

| MESSAGE (Knowledge of the Faith) | WORSHIP (Liturgy) | CHRISTIAN MORALITY | COMMUNITY (Service) |
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| <p>1. Grace.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is the free and unmerited favour of God, given to us so that we may respond to His call to live as His children. - It strengthens our relationship with God. <p>2. The sacraments are sources of grace.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The word "sacrament" means sacred pledge. A mutual pledge is exchanged between the person and God, and between the person and the Christian community. - As Catholics, we participate in the sacraments by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ritually celebrating them together, and • actively living their meaning daily. <p>3. The sacraments link us to Jesus through rituals, symbols, and meaning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rituals are combined repeated actions performed in a particular way. They express memories in living ways, and mark significant times in our lives. - Symbols point out and represent something else by association and remembrance. They make what they symbolize real and present. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a class, conduct a research of the symbols involved in each of the seven sacraments and their meaning. Create these symbols and display them in the classroom. • Ask a priest to come into the class and explain one of the sacramental rites • Participate in one of the sacramental celebrations of the parish (First Reconciliation, Confirmation, Baptism). • As a class, organise a Holy Hour of Adoration. • Renew baptismal promises by attending the Easter Vigil. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To highlight the importance of rituals in life, discuss non-sacramental rituals celebrated in the family. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer as an altar server for this catechetical year. |

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| <p>4. Jesus is the primary Sacrament.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Catholic understanding of sacrament is based on the essence of Jesus' person. - Sacraments are the continuation of Christ's saving action in the Church. - The Sacraments came from Jesus. <p>5. The Church is the Sacrament of Christ.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Church carries on the mission of Christ. - Christ teaches, heals, forgives, prays in and with the Church. - The Church receives its authority from Jesus. <p>6. The Sacraments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sacraments of Initiation for all Catholics are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baptism • Eucharist • Confirmation - Sacraments of Healing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconciliation • Sacrament of the Sick - Sacraments of Commitment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marriage • Holy Orders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locate Gospel passages that show Christ's sacramental actions. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We ourselves are a sign of Christ's continuing presence on earth by the way we live. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We welcome. - We encourage. - We support. - We forgive and reconcile. - We assist. • We live the sacraments daily. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write prayers for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the Level 2 classes who are preparing to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. - the level 3 classes who are preparing to receive the Sacrament of the Eucharist. - the Confirmation candidates preparing to receive the sacrament. - the adults in the RCIA programme preparing to receive the sacraments. |

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| <p>7. The Sacraments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jesus was baptised Himself, and began to call and welcome followers. In Baptism, we are given new life in the Holy Spirit. - The Holy Spirit came to the first apostles. Confirmation strengthens and completes Baptism. - Jesus gave Himself to us as spiritual nourishment to unite the community. The Eucharist nourishes and strengthens us to grow in Christian life. - Jesus showed us that God's forgiveness is limitless. Reconciliation repairs or restores our relationship with God, with those whom we have hurt, with the Christian community, and with all creation. To be truly reconciled, we must make up for the harm our sin has caused others. We do penance to help heal our own spiritual life. - Jesus touched and healed the sick in body and spirit. The Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is a source of hope and spiritual strength, and a prayer for physical healing. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn about the lives of famous converts to the faith: St. Francis, St. Augustine, Thomas Merton. • Prayer: to the Holy Spirit: <i>Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit, O Lord, and renew the face of the earth. O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit, we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations, Through Christ Our Lord, Amen.</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss ways that we show reverence when receiving Holy Communion. • Ask a panel of five youth who have received Confirmation to come and speak about how the gifts of the Holy Spirit are present in their lives. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask a priest's help to contact sick members of the parish. Write notes of hope and courage. • Organize a visit to parishioners who are sick or elderly and alone. • Find out the names of those preparing to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist for the first time, and organize way to pray for them throughout the year. |

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| <p>- Jesus supported and celebrated marriage. The Sacrament of Marriage is an unbreakable bond of unity between a man and a woman. It is considered a personal covenant. The bride and groom are ministers of the Sacrament of Marriage. (They bestow the sacrament on each other.) The priest or deacon blesses the union in the name of the Church. Divorce does not dissolve the Sacrament of Marriage. (In certain cases, the Church may grant an annulment.)</p> <p>- Jesus gave the example of how the life of a priest should be one of service. In the Sacrament of Holy Orders, a priest is ordained to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • preach God's message • lead the community in worship, especially by presiding at the sacraments, and • live a life of service. <p>Ordained priesthood is a permanent gift and lifetime commitment.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read together the Rite of the Sacrament of Marriage and Holy Orders, focusing on the them of "covenant love". • Learn a prayer to know one's vocation: <i>Lord, my God and my loving Father, you have made me to know you, to love you, to serve you, and thereby to find and to fulfill my deepest longings. I know that you are in all things, and that every path can lead me to you.</i> <i>But of them all, there is one especially by which you want me to come to you. Since I will do what you want of me, I pray you, send your Holy Spirit to me: into my mind, to show me what you want of me; into my heart, to give me the determination to do it, and to do it with all my love, with all my mind, and with all of my strength right to the end. Jesus, I trust in you. Amen</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite a married couple to explain the Church's teachings on the Sacrament of Marriage. • Invite a priest to come and speak about how he came to know of God's call. • Contact the diocesan seminary, and make cards encouraging them. • List the reasons why you think it takes so long to prepare for a marriage, and explain your choices. • Discussion: Statistics tell us that one out of every two marriages end in divorce. List 10 things that you think contribute to this. • Discussion: Why do you think there are fewer vocations to the priesthood today? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask a priest for a list of those who are preparing to be married. Pray for these couples, and make them a card assuring them of prayers. • Make a card for the parish priests, listing the many ways they serve God's people, thanking them and encouraging them in living their vocation. • |