

Teaching Focus areas of Religious Education

Prep

Teaching Focus 1:

What Makes our School Special?: Students observe what makes their school and class special. They identify features of the school that make it a Catholic School. They identify how our school differs from other Catholic Schools and other schools in Hervey Bay. They identify who Mary is and why she is important to Jesus, us as Catholics and to our school.

Teaching Focus 2:

I WONDER WHY WE PRAY?

They observe ways in which the school community gathers together for prayer and rituals for special celebrations, such as the Opening Liturgy. They learn about the church as a sacred place and the Bible as a sacred book for believers. They are introduced to the Bible, Jesus, classroom prayer and learn the Sign of the Cross.

The purpose of teaching the text:

Two different Gospel authors telling the story of Jesus teaching the 'Our Father' to his disciples. Stories of Jesus are presented in four different books called Gospels. Matthew shapes his version of Jesus' prayer for his Jewish community. Luke shapes his version of Jesus' prayer for his Gentile community.

Teaching Focus 3:

HOW DO WE REMEMBER THE EASTER STORY?

Students are introduced to the story of Easter and the liturgical season of Easter.

The purpose of teaching the text:

Matthew and Luke tell different stories of the death of Jesus, but similar stories of the resurrection of Jesus. Matthew, telling the story for a Jewish community, depicts the centurion reacting to the death of Jesus by proclaiming that Jesus is the son of God. Luke, telling the story for a Gentile community, depicts the centurion reacting to the death of Jesus by proclaiming that he must have been an innocent man. Trial by torture was common in the Roman world, and for someone to suffer this pain calmly was seen to be a sign of their innocence.

In the two resurrection stories similar themes are continued. The resurrection stories are stories of hope, that no matter how difficult life is, God's love can still break through. Sometimes in our lives, we will experience times of great sadness. The stories of the death and resurrection of Jesus help people remember that God is still with us even in our darkest moments. No matter how much we suffer, God's love can still break through.

Teaching Focus 4:

I WONDER WHO GOD IS AND WHY HE IS IMPORTANT TO US?

What are the stories that we share in our school community? We are a Catholic school so we share stories from the Bible. The stories in the Bible tell us what God is like.

Students explore the stories of Creation in Genesis and engage in literacy activities and drama activities.

The purpose of teaching the text:

The story of creation is actually multiple stories from different times and different authors highlight various elements of this overarching story. These stories are rich in meaning and provide religious truths rather than scientific or historical truths. Therefore, these stories are sacred myths (they tell truth about God rather than telling scientific truth). Genesis 1 highlights God as creator and human beings made in the image of God. In Matthew's Gospel Jesus teaches about creation (God's care for creation and the goodness of creation, which includes humans).

Teaching Focus 5:

I WONDER WHY ABRAHAM AND SARAH ARE IMPORTANT PEOPLE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

The story of Abraham and Sarah is foundational in the Old Testament, as Abraham is called by God to become the leader and ancestor of all Jewish people. Faith often comes from living in a family. For Jewish and Christian people (and Islamic people), Abraham and Sarah are seen as the parents of faith. Abraham is the first person to whom God spoke. Sarah is the woman mentioned most in the Bible.

Teaching Focus 6:

I WONDER WHY JOSEPH IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE STORY?

The story of Joseph shows us that families can experience breakdowns in relationships, but relationships can also be restored. For Jewish and Christian people Joseph's story serves to explain why the Israelites were in Egypt prior to the Exodus. Joseph's story demonstrates both strengths and challenges of family life.

Teaching Focus 7:

I WONDER WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM DAVID AND GOLIATH?

The story of David, the shepherd boy, defeating the Philistine's champion, Goliath, is a story of bravery and courage in the face of insurmountable odds. This is a story of Israel being a small nation surrounded by large powerful nations, yet Israel is favoured by God. This story fits in with the story of the Passover where Israel is favoured over Egypt and the story of David, the youngest member of his family being favoured over his older brothers. This is an ongoing theme through the Bible, where God favours the poor, marginalised and unimportant over the powerful, wealthy and influential. David grows up to become a King of Israel.

Teaching Focus 8:

I WONDER HOW JESUS HELPS US TODAY?

Students listen to, read and view stories of and about Jesus in the Gospels that tell of Jesus' life as a Jew and of his teachings about love, compassion and forgiveness that challenged people about the way they were living. They learn that Christians believe God created people with the freedom to choose between good and bad, right and wrong. They explore examples of times, from familiar texts and their personal experience, when people make these choices.

The purpose of teaching the text:

The story Jesus told of the Good Samaritan demonstrates Jesus' teachings about compassion, love and forgiveness. This is a story about stereotypes, demonstrated even by the title of the story (which has been added by an editor later). This is not a story about helping our friends and those we like and want to spend time with. This is a story that challenges people to respond to everyone in need, especially the people we would never choose to spend time with.

Both the stories of The Golden Rule and the Greatest Commandment provide examples of Jesus teaching about the importance of inclusion and looking out for the needs of the 'other' rather than only being mindful of my friends and my own needs. The Greatest Commandment links loving God with loving neighbour.

Teaching Focus 9:

I WONDER WHY WE CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS?

How is the birth of Jesus remembered in the Church? Students explore the infancy narratives through comparing and contrasting the accounts in Matthew and Luke. They continue to learn about the Liturgical year through an exploration of the colours and symbols of the season of Advent.

The purpose of teaching the text:

Two different Gospel authors tell very different stories about the birth of Jesus. Luke sets his story against the background of the Roman Empire and Matthew sets his story against the background of the Jewish expectation of a Messiah.