Level: 1
Title: OUR CHURCH

**CHURCH: Body of Christ, Community of Disciples, Witness to Unity and Justice.**

Suggested Duration: 4 weeks

**Unit Focus**
In this unit students will discover that people belong to the Church. They will begin to develop an understanding of Church as a welcoming and caring community that gathers together to celebrate.

**Level Outcome**
By the end of Level Two students should be able to:

Describe the Church as a believing, welcoming, serving, caring and celebrating community.

**Unit Outcomes**
By the end of this unit students will be able to:

1. Describe the concept of belonging as it relates to family, school, parish and community
2. Identify a variety of people who belong to the Church
3. Identify ways in which we celebrate as the Church.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRAND</th>
<th>DOCTRINAL CONCEPTS</th>
<th>CATECHISM REFERENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>God</strong></td>
<td>2. God loves each of us.</td>
<td>219, 733</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. God is experienced in other people’s love for us.</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Church</strong></td>
<td>1. Jesus invites people to be part of the Church</td>
<td>831</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. The Church is a believing, welcoming, serving, caring and celebrating community.</td>
<td>751</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. The Church is a community that celebrates and shares God’s love.</td>
<td>752</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key Understandings for Students**
- People can belong to the Church
- We can celebrate as Church in many places.
- We celebrate in our classroom, school and parish.
- We can feel special when we celebrate as a Church community

**Curriculum Links - VELS**

**Victorian Essential Learning Standards**
The unit Our Church can be used to assess aspects of VELS. The table below gives an example of how Level 1 standards could be assessed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strand</th>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Key elements of Standards Students……</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical, Personal and Social Learning</td>
<td>Interpersonal Development</td>
<td>Building Social Relationships</td>
<td>“They contribute to the development of positive social relationships in a range of contexts. Students describe basic skills required to work cooperatively in groups.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Curriculum Framework Context**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 1</th>
<th>Level 2</th>
<th>Level 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Our Church</td>
<td>What is Baptism?</td>
<td>Community of Believers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Student Context**

Students come to school knowing that they belong to a family and other communities. Their understanding of ‘family’ will have been shaped by their experience. To have an understanding of the Church the children need to understand that they can belong to more than one family or community e.g. the school/parish community and that such communities can be groups of people who work, play and/or celebrate together. This sense of belonging will be developed by their experience of their class as a welcoming, celebrating community. This understanding can then be extended to the school and parish.

At this stage children love stories and their daily life structured by routines and rituals. They are able to explore their experiences of belonging and of being welcomed. Their ability to use symbols, words and images in communication is rapidly developing. The concepts developed throughout this unit are of interest to them and are appropriate as they become involved in the school community.

**Theological Background for Teachers**

- Early followers of Jesus emphasized that families were the key building blocks of the spiritual family of God’s chosen ones. In a sense they saw the entire Christian community as the household of God’s family. Most primitive Christian gatherings for prayer and celebration of the Eucharist occurred in ‘house churches’, with ordinary Christian householders hosting and presiding over the sacred rituals.

- “In recent decades, Catholic congregations have been actively reclaiming and re-emphasizing the traditional notion of the family household as a ‘church of the home’ and a ‘church in miniature’. This is an appropriate point from which to develop a sense of the Church as community. The Church is often referred to as a true community of Christ’s followers, especially in the celebration of the sacraments and in other communal acts of worship and through the living witness to Christian values.”

**Scripture**

**Teacher Reference (NRSV)**

Col 3:12-16

As God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience. Bear with one another, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful.

Jn 13:34-35

I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

Acts 2:42

They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of the bread and the prayers.

**Student Reference CEV**

**Mk 10:13-16 Jesus Blesses the Little Children**

Some people brought their children to Jesus so that he could bless them by placing his hands on them. But his disciples told the people to stop bothering him. When Jesus saw this, he became angry and said, “Let the children come to me! Don’t try to stop them. People who are like these little children belong to the kingdom of God. I promise you that you cannot get into God’s kingdom, unless you accept it the way a child does.” Then Jesus took the children in his arms.

**Isa 49:15b-16a I will never forget you My people**

Even if a mother could forget, I will never forget you. A picture of your city is drawn on my hand. You are always in my thoughts!

**Mt 18: 20**

Whenever two or three of you come together in my name, I am there with you.
### Suggested Assessment Tasks

Assessment tasks for this unit may include:

**Outcome 1**  Describe the concept of belonging as it relates to family, school and parish.
- Draw a picture with the heading ‘I belong to…’. Children can include school and parish groups as well as family and sporting groups. They could label these groups or have an adult scribe for them.
- Give a ‘news’ talk describing a group they belong to.
- Complete a series of Y charts, ‘Belonging to a Family’, ‘Belonging to a Class/School community’, ‘Belonging to a Church/Parish community.’

**Outcome 2**  Identify a variety of people who belong to the Church
- Children create a patch to contribute to a class paper patchwork quilt that illustrates what it means to belong to their Church/Parish community.
- Make a mural of people who make up the school/parish community.

**Outcome 3**  Identify ways in which we celebrate as the Church.
- Plan a prayer celebration. Make invitations to their family members and members of the Church/Parish community.
- Children take an active part in a class celebration by singing, reading, praying. Children draw the different way they participated in the celebration.

N.B Outcomes 1 and 2 lend themselves to reporting in the dimension of Knowledge and Understanding.

### Suggested Teaching & Learning Experiences

#### Focusing Activity

Set up a photo display of families. Try to include a variety of families doing a variety of things e.g. picnics, birthday parties, a baptism etc. Children could add to this collage during the following weeks.

- **Mt 18:20 To PREPARE TO HEAR** the Word list the times that we ‘come together’ as family, as friends, as school community, as Church etc. Explain that Jesus is always with us when we gather to pray.
- **Mt 18:20 To ENCOUNTER the Word** after reading the text, students make (e.g. in collage) each of the words from the text, then arrange in correct order to form a banner
- **Mt 18:20 To RESPOND to the Word** students learn ‘together’ songs e.g. Together as One (Chinn, Andrew *This day.* [CD]), Gather together (Burland, John. *Let’s celebrate too!* [CD]) or Gathered as one (Burland, John. *Move! Pray! Celebrate!* [CD])
- Share a poem or story about belonging and families from the list of Literature Resources.
- Paint/draw family pictures. Discuss what families do together and create a word web or an acrostic poem about families.
- Make a plaque ‘I belong to the _________ family’.
- Display a whole school and a class photograph.
- Play some name games to encourage children to recognise and remember the names of all in the class. Match these with the photo.
- Role play some of the things different family members do.
- Read a book about celebrations such as “Seven more sleeps”. (Wild, Margaret).
- Brainstorm different ways we celebrate together.
- Draw a celebration they have experienced. Collage the drawings with the heading ‘We Celebrate in Many Ways’.
- Read one of the PSB’s and/or view one of the Videos from resource list and discuss the similarities/differences.
between what is illustrated and our local church.

- Read the first part of “A Peek into My Church” (Goody, Wendy)
- Visit the Church and make a chart to show what they saw/ observed/ learned.
- Find the foundation stone, when was the church was built, what other information is there?
- Who is our parish church named after eg St Mary or St Colman, who were these saints?
- Visit a variety of Christian churches and discover what is in some churches that are not in others, including symbols and signs outside. Then complete a Venn diagram to record what is the same/different in the churches visited.
- Think about the times we have gathered together in the Church and celebrated. What happened? What did we do in the Mass (e.g. listen, sing, shake hands, etc)? Who was there?
- List the various roles played by people within the church e.g. parishioners, parish leader, parish priest, bishop, pope and investigate their roles. Who is the Pope? Where does the Pope come from? What does he do?
- Invite the parish priest or member of the parish to talk about the parish community.
- Sing and learn songs about belonging. (see suggested resources below)
- Invite children to bring family photo albums to school.
- Read contemporary stories that reflect a theme of belonging.
- Read the story “Families are funny” (Hunt, Nan)

**Resources**

For resources to support this unit, refer to the online planning tool. For additional resources, refer to the Resource Centre Catalogue: [http://www.ceoballarat.catholic.edu.au](http://www.ceoballarat.catholic.edu.au) and follow links to Resource Centre.