Level: 3
Title: GOD’S HOLY WORD

SCRIPTURE:
Word of God, alive and active, Foundational story of Christianity.

Suggested Duration: 8 weeks

Unit Focus
In this unit students will be given the opportunity to become familiar with the structure, form and some content of Scripture. They will be provided with the opportunity to research and explore significant people and stories in Scripture and to acquire some reference skills.

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

Explore ways in which scriptural texts apply to their own experiences and are used in prayer and worship.

Unit Outcomes
By the end of the unit students should be able to:

1. Recognise that Scripture is an integral part of sacred celebrations.
2. Research and explore significant people and key events in Scripture.
3. Express an understanding of the Gospels as the community’s reflections on the life and love of Jesus on earth.
4. Identify that Scripture stories have a message which can relate to their own lives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRAND</th>
<th>DOCTRINAL CONCEPTS</th>
<th>CATECHISM REFERENCE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jesus Christ</td>
<td>4. Jesus teaches us about healing, forgiveness and reconciliation.</td>
<td>588, 1421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God</td>
<td>1. The Scriptures contain many stories and images which give us some insights about the mystery of God.</td>
<td>42, 214</td>
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<tr>
<td>Church</td>
<td>1. The Church is a community of believers called to celebrate and make present the ministry of Jesus.</td>
<td>783</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scripture</td>
<td>1. The Scriptures are intended to make us think about and reflect on our lives.</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. The Gospels teach us about the life and love of Jesus.</td>
<td>515, 125, 546</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. Jesus taught using parables and stories.</td>
<td>2653, 2654</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4. In our prayer and worship we listen to the Scriptures.</td>
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Key Understandings for Students
- The Bible contains many books divided into the Old Testament and New Testament.
- The Scriptures have messages which challenge us to live as Jesus lived.
- The Gospels teach us about the life of Jesus.
- Jesus taught using parables and stories.
- Scripture is an integral part of sacred celebrations.

Curriculum Links - VELS

Victorian Essential Learning Standards
The unit God’s Holy Word can be used to assess a range of VELS. The table below gives examples of how Level 3 standards could be assessed.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strand</th>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Key elements of Standards Students…</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical, Personal and Social Learning</td>
<td>Interpersonal Development</td>
<td>Building Social Relationships</td>
<td>・“demonstrate respect for others and exhibit appropriate behaviour for maintaining friendships with other people. They support each other by sharing ideas and materials, offering assistance, giving appropriate feedback and acknowledging individual differences. They work with others to reduce, avoid and resolve conflict.”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Working In Teams</td>
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<td>・“cooperate with others in teams for agreed purposes, taking roles and following guidelines established within the task. They describe and evaluate their own contribution and the team’s progress towards the achievement of agreed goals.”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Civics and Citizenship</td>
<td>Community Engagement</td>
<td>・“contribute to the development and support of class rules and participate in school celebrations and commemorations of important events. They describe some of the roles and purposes of groups in the community. They work with other students to identify a local issue and plan possible actions to achieve a desired outcome. They describe the benefits of action at the local level and the democratic aspects of the process. They participate in activities to protect and care for the natural and built environment.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interdisciplinary Learning</td>
<td>Information and Communications Technology</td>
<td>ICT for Visual Thinking</td>
<td>・“use ICT tools to list ideas, order them into logical sequences, and identify relationships between them. Students retrieve their saved visualising thinking strategies and edit them for use in new, but similar situations. They explain how these strategies can be used for different problems or situations.”</td>
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<td>ICT For Creating</td>
<td>・“create information products to assist in problem solving in all areas of the curriculum. With minimal assistance, students use ICT tools to capture and save images. They use simple editing functions to manipulate the images for use in their products.”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Thinking</td>
<td>Reasoning, processing and inquiry</td>
<td>・“collect information from a range of sources to answer their own and others’ questions. They question the validity of sources when appropriate. They apply thinking strategies to organise information and concepts in a variety of contexts, including problem solving activities. They provide reasons for their conclusions.”</td>
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<td>Creativity</td>
<td>・“apply creative ideas in practical ways and test the possibilities of ideas they generate. They use open-ended questioning and integrate available information to explore ideas.”</td>
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Reflection, evaluation and meta-cognition

-“identify strategies they use to organise their ideas, and use appropriate language to explain their thinking. They identify and provide reasons for their point of view, and justify changes in their thinking.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Curriculum Framework Context</th>
<th>Level 2</th>
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<td>Bible Stories About Jesus</td>
<td>God’s Holy Word</td>
<td>Sacred Stories</td>
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**Student Context**

Level Three students are becoming more systematic in their thinking. Whilst still being very literal they are developing their ability to understand different levels of meaning. They have a growing understanding of time and the sequence of events. The Scriptures take on a new significance for them.

Because of their growing awareness, Level Three students are able to research and explore significant people and key events in the Scriptures and discover that Scripture stories have a message that can relate to their own lives. Such development correlates with the unit outcomes as they are linked with the lived experience of the child.

**Theological Background for Teachers**

This unit provides a good opportunity for teachers to explore a variety of scripture passages from the Old and New Testaments with their students.

- The Bible is a collection of 73 books, written by numerous authors who were inspired by God.

- The first and longest part of the Bible is called the Old Testament. The Old Testament reveals how humanity came to know the one true God. It was composed over many hundreds of years while the Hebrews, the chosen people of Yahweh, awaited the coming of a messiah and saviour promised by God.

- There are 46 books in the Old Testament.

- The second major part of the Bible is called the New Testament. The books of the New Testament centre on the life, death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth and on the early community of his followers whose mission was to preach and spread Jesus’ good news of salvation to all humanity.

- The New Testament is composed of 27 books.

- Catholics believe the Bible is the word of God, inspired by the Holy Spirit. It is God who communicates in the Bible but always through the limitations of a culturally situated human being. The writers communicated the truth using their own powers and abilities, their cultural limitations and at times their narrow images of God. God entrusted the communication of truth to human beings who expressed that truth in their own way, using the tools and concepts available to them at the time.

- We cannot look to the Bible for scientific explanations or historical accounts that are accurate and factual in all respects, instead the Bible gives us religious truth, the inner truth of God.

- The Catholic insight into interpreting the Bible is that we can find religious truth by first of all understanding what the writer of any given passage intended to communicate. Who was the audience? What problems or concerns of the community influenced what was written or edited into the passage? What literary form was the passage written in? For a rich, full understanding of the Bible, guidance is necessary.

- Approaches such as Source Criticism, Historical Criticism, Form Criticism and Redaction Criticism are used as contemporary methods of biblical interpretation. A text can be analysed for any materials within it that are not original, but the author incorporated from other sources (source criticism). The literary forms employed in a text can be analysed (form criticism). The manner in which authors edit or ‘redact’ the materials at their disposal can be examined to indicate what their interests and convictions were (redaction criticism). A text can also be
viewed in the light of texts and other information available from the same time and place, in order to see it in its historical context (historical criticism).


**Scripture**

**Teacher References (NRSV)**

Isa 40:8
The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever.

Mt 4:4
But he answered, “It is written, 'One shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.' ”

1 Thess 2:13
We also constantly give thanks to God for this, that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human word but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers.

**Mt 13:10-17 - The Purpose of the Parables**

Then the disciples came and asked him, “Why do you speak to them in parables?” He answered, “To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. For to those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. The reason I speak to them in parables is that 'seeing they do not perceive, and hearing they do not listen, nor do they understand.' With them indeed is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah that says:

‘You will indeed listen, but never understand and you will indeed look, but never perceive. For this people's heart has grown dull, and their ears are hard of hearing, and they have shut their eyes; so that they might not look with their eyes, and listen with their ears, and understand with their heart and turn – and I would heal them.’

But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. Truly I tell you, may prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, but did not see it, and to hear what you hear, but did not hear it.

**Student References**

(This unit provides a good opportunity for teachers to explore a variety of scripture passages from the Old and New Testament with their students)

Lk 11:28
But he said, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it!"

**Mk 12:41-44 - The Widow’s Offering**

He sat down opposite the treasury, and watched the crowd putting money into the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums. A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which are worth a penny. Then he called his disciples and said to them, 'Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. For all of them have contributed out of their abundance; but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on.'

**Mt 13:1-9 Parable of the Sower**

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the lake. Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. And he told them many things in parables, saying: ‘Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Let anyone with ears listen!'
Suggested Assessment Tasks

Assessment tasks for this unit may include:

**Outcome 1 Recognise that Scripture is an integral part of sacred celebrations.**
- Sequence the elements of the Liturgy of the Word during the Mass. (From the First Reading to the Prayer of the Faithful).

**Outcome 2 Research and explore significant people and key events in Scripture.**
- Students research and ‘present’ a key person from the Bible, for example John the Baptist, Mary, Moses.
- Create a set of ‘Who Am I?’ question cards to identify characters from Scripture.

**Outcome 3 Express an understanding of the Gospels as the community’s reflections on the life and love of Jesus on earth.**
- Students design a billboard on one of the Gospel writers detailing some basic information about the author’s community.
- Create a Graffiti Wall that contains statements that reflect understandings of the gospels as a community reflection of the life and love of Jesus.

**Outcome 4 Identify that Scripture stories have a message which can relate to their own lives.**
- Students examine a Scripture story and identify how the story relates to their life.

N.B Outcome 1 lends itself to reporting in the dimension of Knowledge and Understanding.

Suggested Teaching & Learning Experiences

**Focusing Activity**

Read the letter, Appendix No 1, or a letter from a PSB eg Penny Pollard’s Letters, and extract as much information as you can from the text. *(This activity highlights the fact that we can look further into a text to gain information as we do in Scripture.)*

- Students write their own letter to someone about aspects of their own lives.
- Create a class wall chart or gathering grid of all the students understandings of the Bible
- Investigate the elements of the Liturgy of the Word during the Mass. (From the First Reading to the Prayers of Intercession).
- After reading the story of the Parable of the Sower students complete the Scripture Thinkpad Activity - White, D. O’Brien, D. & Todd, S. Into The Deep, Rich Teaching Strategies for the Religious Education Classroom (p.82)
- After reading the story of the Parable of the Sower students participate in a Liquid Picture activity found in Just Imagine 1 Sowing Seeds, p.48
- After reading the story of the Parable of the Sower students participate in an Echo Mimes activity found in Just Imagine 1 The Parable of The Sower, p.62&63.
- Students engage in a discussion about what a parable is and why Jesus might have told stories in parable form. Explore other parables and interpret what their real meanings might be and why they may have been written as they have been.
- Students invited to complete the following sentence *° The Parable of the Sower tells us a story about…………………………………..° The Parable of the Sower is also a story with a message that tells us to………………………………………………
- Refer to Ryan, M. Expressions, Book 4 (2003) p 64 and Teaching The Bible (2001) and work through some of the suggested teaching and Learning activities e.g. make a Bible library.
- Compile a class/individual book containing facts and understandings about the bible.
- As a class decide to make scripture a particular emphasis in class prayer celebrations.
• Read the story of Abraham to the students, locate the stories of his life in the bible and complete a character map demonstrating an understanding of some of the key moments in his life.

• Read the story of Joseph from the Hebrew Scriptures to the students, locate the stories of his life in the bible and complete a character map demonstrating an understanding of some of the key moments in his life.

• Read the story of Moses to the students, locate the stories of his life in the bible and complete a character map demonstrating an understanding of some of the key moments in his life.

• Students learn the names of the four gospel writers, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John and complete a fact sheet detailing some key understandings of the authorship of their particular gospel.

• Students examine one particular Gospel and investigate how it begins and ends. Compare with someone else who chose a different Gospel. What was similar and what was different?

• Sequencing: Groups of children are given an envelope with scrambled scriptural story. Children work together to sequence the events. (refer to icon in Planning Tool)

• Find your other half: Children are provided with cards containing questions and answers relating to scriptural persons and/or events. Cards are jumbled, and children are asked to find matching pairs. (refer to icon in Planning Tool)

• Role playing: Children role play events from Scripture

• In small groups students complete a jigsaw activity on three key characters, places or events using information provided by teacher. Each group present a report on their particular area of study.

• Mk 12:41-44 To PREPARE TO HEAR the Word - define unknown words e.g. widow, treasury, abundance (ref. Carswell, M. Teaching Scripture The Gospel of Mark p94). In Jesus time widows lived without support and without access to basic necessities.

• Mk 12:41-44 To ENCOUNTER the Word after reading the text from the Bible - The widow in the story models true discipleship because she gives selflessly. From this understanding students create a word web/mind map to visually represent the text.

• Mk 12:41-44 To RESPOND to the Word – Make a class list of the ways we can give generously and selflessly, what wealths are we prepared to give e.g. time, energy, talent, compassion, forgiveness?

• Mk 12:41-44 To RESPOND to the Word – Jesus was disappointed in the treatment of the poor widow in the story and how she was expected to give all that she had. How are the poor treated in contemporary society, list some of the ways that the poor people are supported today?

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 and follow links to Resource Centre.
Dear Aunty Cathy

Annie and I are really excited about coming down on the bus for the school holidays, we are especially looking forward to visiting Sovereign Hill. Annie’s grade is still too little but all the senior kids at school have been learning about Life on the Goldfields this year. Tom finished school two weeks ago, I think that he would like to come with us but dad says he is a great help on the farm now that he can drive the tractor, and mum and dad would be very lonely with no one at home.

It is lucky that you are on holidays as well, sometimes the secondary school here has different holidays to us. Mum always says that the holidays would be the only thing that she would like about being a teacher. She is very tired at the moment because she has been on night shift. Two nurses left last week because their families could not stay on their farms any longer, so the hospital is very short of staff and mum had to do extra shifts.

I hope that we can go and see Gran while we are down, she always looks so happy when we walk in the door, even if she does not remember who we are. Mum says that we don’t know how much she understands on the inside. Some of the other elderly people like to talk to us anyway.

Dad says “hi sis” and that he will be down to pick us up when the harvesting is finished, which should be before Christmas, depending on the weather.

We have a new principal at school, from South Australia, and this year we had a concert, it was great, some kids from our cluster came to see it because it only took them an hour to get here on the bus. I won the Principal’s Award last week for organising the Mission Day fund raiser. It was great fun and our little school raised $450 for the Children’s Mission.

I will tell you the rest of the news when we see you on Friday.

Love from
Grace
What can we learn from this letter that is not written down?

Eg. Who is the author of this text?
Who is the intended audience?
What genre is this text?
What is the purpose of the text?
How many children in Grace’s family?
Where are they going for their holiday?
Who is the eldest in the family?
What does Aunty Cathy probably do?
Where does mum work?
Where is Gran, and what do we know about her?
How is Aunty Cathy related?
What does dad do for a living?
Is Grace’s school a Catholic school?
   Why do you think so?
   Do you know for certain?
Is there any evidence that Aunty Cathy is married?
Is Grace from a large school?
Do you think that Grace likes school?
   What makes you think this?

How much more information can you find out from this letter?