

Life beyond Boundaries

Summer 2007

Sunday 9th September is being marked in the Church of Ireland as Hard Gospel Sunday. Churches throughout the country will be reflecting on the message that we can live positively with difference.

Much of the work undertaken in RE and SPHE in school at this time of year fits in with the theme of this Sunday and schools are being encouraged in their RE lessons and School Assembly to share with what is being done in their local parish by focussing on this theme.

You will find some suggestions below as to where the class's RE lesson from the 'Follow Me' series may link in with Hard Gospel Sunday. You may also like to try out some of the suggestions from the Ideas List. Worksheets and an Assembly outline may also help to bring the theme to life and will encourage the parish school links.

Above all, at this point in the school year the theme of this material aims to encourage the pupils to stop and to take stock of their own uniqueness in God's eyes and to look at each other, both as fellow class members and as members of God's family.

Ideas list:

1. Use a class tree or a school tree (branches with each child's name hanging from the tree) to emphasise a sense of community.
2. Contact a new neighbour - create a link with a school in the area e.g. send a card from Junior Infants in one school to the other.
3. Create a school or class prayer. This could be written by a group of children. This prayer builds up a sense of community and a copy of it could be given to the parish or to a link school.
4. Create a montage using digital photographs of all the children in your school. This montage could be brought to church for Hard Gospel Sunday to emphasise the link between the church and the school. (Please make sure you adhere to your child protection policy on displaying children's photos with or without names.)
5. If geographically possible, hold Assembly in church this week and encourage the Rector to invite some church members to come too.
6. Find out the word welcome in all the different languages people speak in your school community. A web search under the heading 'welcome in different languages' will bring up a website which contains all this information. Younger children could make welcome signs for the school and also for the Church or Church Hall.



Using the Follow Me Religious Education Programme

Here We Go

In class you may have looked at names. Why not send a card and photograph to a neighbouring school from your class. You may also have looked at the school community. You could use photographs to make a display of the members of our school community.

On Our Way

In class you may have looked at how 'You and Me become Us'. This ties in well with the theme. The collage from Lesson 3 Day 5 would be very effective (see 6 in 'Ideas' page 1).

Stepping Out

The Class Tree could be extended to a school tree. The labels could include a fact about each child, eg. David likes soccer. This reinforces the fact that each child is different and yet are part of the school community. The story 'Ramesh's new School' is very appropriate for this theme.

Moving On

In class you may have looked at connections and how each person is connected to others. You could create a huge connection web by asking each child to make their own web of connections (home/family/community) and join them all together.

Log On

You may be working on a class history book. This builds up a sense of community and encourages respect for each person's history.

On Line

You may be looking at God's creation. As you marvel at the diversity and contrast to be seen in God's creation you could extend this to think about each unique human being. Caring for creation is a challenge for all people in all parts of the world.

Working Out

Even by looking at the cover of 'Working Out' there are opportunities to reflect on the topics of difference and community. The themes of belonging to a family, a class, a network of friends and the worldwide family of God are all appropriate for this theme. The Extension Story focuses on the arrival of Kris from Poland into an Irish classroom.



Assembly

Suggested Songs:

Church Hymnal 658 One more step along the world I go
499 When I needed a neighbour
518 Bind us Together
515 A new Commandment
517 Brother, sister let me serve you
521 I am the Church

Big Blue Planet
Sing and Pray

8 Caring, Sharing
48 It's a joy to get to know you

Suggested Bible Story: Luke 10:25-37 The Good Samaritan

Display

If you have made class trees / a montage or taken class photographs do display them for Assembly. Have the roll book on display as a symbol of the school community. You may also display a photograph of your local church if you are not able to be there.

Question: Who is my neighbour?

Ask for a volunteer. N.... is a member of a family. Are there any other members of N's family here? Stand beside N. N.... is also a member of ...class. Everyone from N's class stand up. N is also a member of our school. Let's all stand up - teachers and pupils. We could go on and find out the people who live near to N or the people who go to the same sports club or swimming pool or Cubs with N but let's all sit down and think about how we are all connected to N. When we meet together in Assembly we also think about how we are connected as a huge worldwide family of people who follow God. God's family meets in many different churches (give local examples). Jesus taught his followers to love God and to love their neighbour. By telling the story of the Good Samaritan Jesus taught the religious leaders and those who thought that God was just theirs that God loves everyone and that loving your neighbour means loving everyone.

On Sunday 9th September, churches throughout Ireland, people are going to be asking just the same questions that we are asking this morning. How can we love our neighbours and treat everyone as a member of God's family?

How can you love your neighbour? How can we make your class / this school / your family / your road / your town / this country... a place where everyone is cared for and loved? It starts small by caring for the people you meet each day.

Fictional Story

The following fictional stories printed in Follow Me may be useful.

Ramesh's New School - Stepping Out Lesson 2 or Kris's new School - Working Out Teacher's Book p. 3. Both these stories focus on new pupils from other countries (India and Poland) joining a primary school in Ireland. The story Good Friends - Stepping Out p. 149 is a retelling of the Good Samaritan where an unlikely friend helps out a boy in need. Moving On p. 15 is a story which tells how a school and a local community joined together to clean up a laneway and so celebrated a different type of harvest.

Prayers - You could choose from the following:

Here We Go p. 13
Stepping Out p. 11 **Neighbours**
Moving On p. 21 **Friendship prayer**
Moving On p. xix **School Prayer**
Log On p. 23 **Prayer Time**
Working Out p. 4 **Friendship Prayers**

In churches and schools throughout Ireland and the world people share a special prayer. It is sometimes called the Family Prayer.

Our Father...

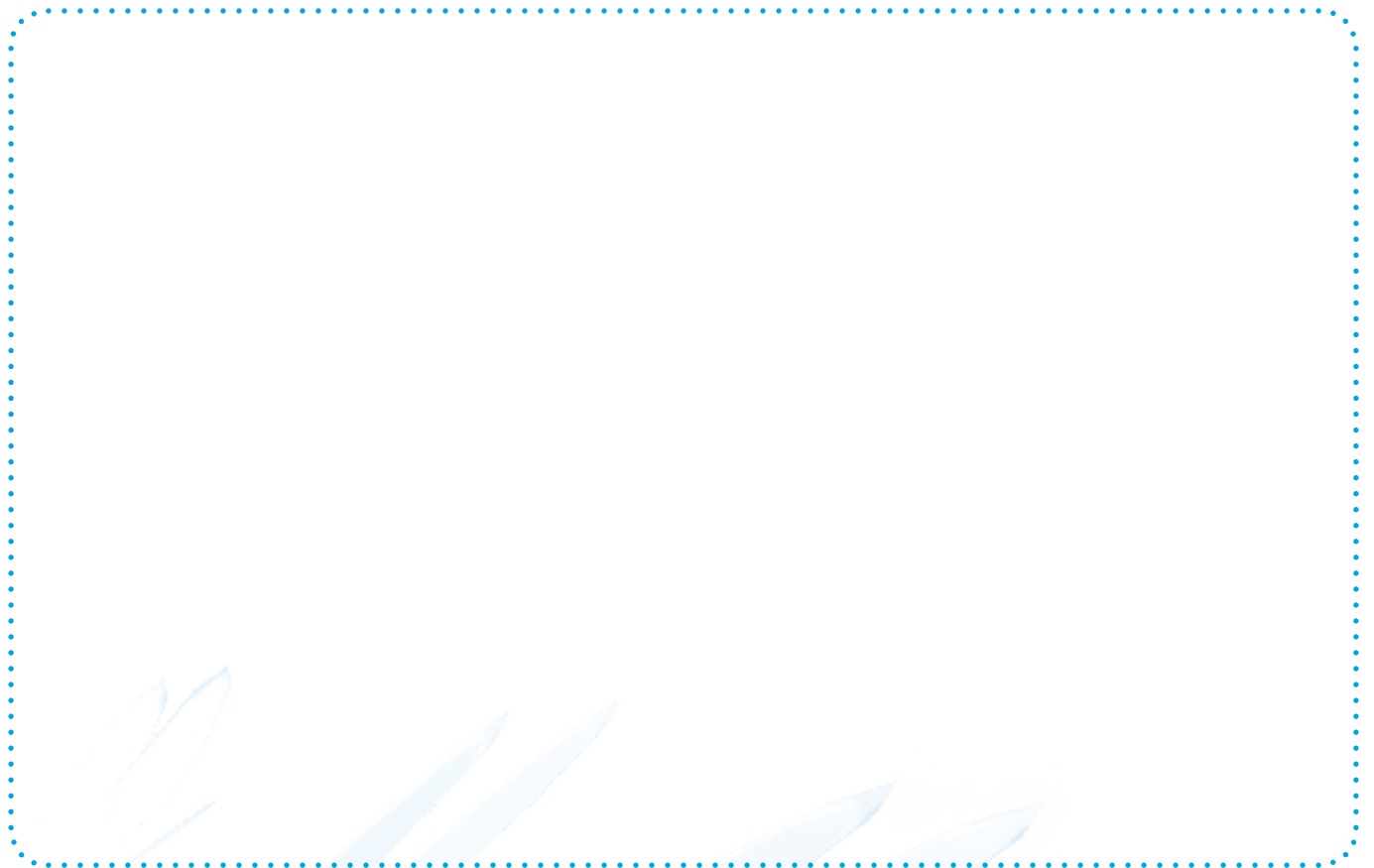
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Junior and Senior Infants

My name is

This is a picture of me with my friend.



God made me. I am special. My friend is special too.

Dear God, help me to be a good friend. Amen

Transforming Communities through loving God and loving your neighbour

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1st and 2nd Class

My name is

This is a picture of my family.



Here are the names of the people who sit near me in school.

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.....
.....
.....
.....

Jesus told people to help each other. He said we should be kind to everybody.

Draw a picture on the back of this sheet that shows you helping someone.

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3rd and 4th Class

What would you do? Fill in what you would do in each of these situations.

1. Your friend has left his pencil case at home?

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2. You forgot your lunch and your parents are out at work.

.....

3. Your teacher dropped a pile of copies.

.....

4. One of the boys in your class never has anyone to play with at break time.

.....

5. There is a new girl in your class and she doesn't speak English.

.....

Being a good neighbour is sometimes hard work. Crack the code to find out what Jesus said about being a good neighbour. (a=1, b=2, c=3, d=4 etc.)

12.15.22.5 25.15.21.18 14.5.9.7.8.2.15.21.18 1.19. 25.15.21 12.15.22.5
25.15.21.18.19.5.12.6.

.....

What could you do to help make your class a happy place for each person?

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5th and 6th Class

Fill in some information about yourself in the left column and collect a signature from someone who is different from you in the right column, e.g. someone who was born in a different city, someone who supports a different team. Do not ask the same person to sign twice.

ME

I was born in
I am years old
I have brothers
I have pet(s)
I support (soccer team)
My favourite TV show is

MY FRIEND

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Although we are all different in many ways we have things in common too.
What things do you have in common with the person you are sitting next to?

.....

.....
What do you think Jesus meant when he said 'Love your Neighbour?'
Who do you think Jesus meant you were to be loving to?
Is this always easy to do? When might this be difficult to do?
Is everyone a good neighbour in this classroom/school? Is everyone a good neighbour in this town/city? Are people good neighbours in the world?
.....

Think of a situation when you were a good neighbour.
Write about it on the back of this sheet.



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Love God • Love your neighbour