

Dear Parents,

RE: RELIGIOUS EDUCATION UNITSTO BE EXPLORED (Term One)

I Am Special: Introductory Unit

This Religious Education unit focuses upon the Sacrament of Baptism. It begins with discovering ways in which people are different and special, for example, hair colour, size of hands and feet, height, complexion, etc. As people discover the ways in which they are different from others, they may wonder at God who created each person different and special, and to celebrate what this reveals about God: that God loves each of us.

The unit also explores how Jesus showed that all people are special to God and wants them to use their 'specialness' in loving ways.

The children will be introduced to the understanding that, through Baptism, people become members of a special family: God's family.

Finally, the unit explores ways in which followers of Jesus can use their 'specialness' to show love for others.

You could help your child during this unit by, for example:

- sharing with them ways in which people are different and therefore special, for example, hair colour, size of hands, etc.
- wondering with them what God, who created each of us different and special, must be like
- sharing with them the stories and pictures of their own Baptism

We Belong (Baptism)

From the time they were born, the children have belonged to, and have had experiences within, families and groups.

This unit of work will begin with the exploration of people belonging to many different groups, for example, family, friends, school, sporting clubs, etc. This can lead people to wonder what God, who created people wanting to belong to families, make friends and belong to groups, is like.

Many people come to realise that among the different things we can discover about God, one is that God loves us.

When we look at how Jesus belonged to a family and groups, we realise that Jesus wants people to belong to their families and groups in loving ways.

The unit then explores how people can come to belong to God's family through the Sacrament of Baptism.

Finally, the unit concludes with the children exploring how people in God's family show they belong by a special action - the Sign of the Cross. Followers of Jesus show love and care for others as they belong to families and groups.

You can help your child explore these ideas at home by, for example:

- identifying family members in photographs
- discovering around your house, mementos, paintings, photographs, etc. that represent family members

- wondering with them about God who created the ability within people to belong to families and groups
- talking about things Jesus may have done with his family that you do now, for example, family meals, travelling, sharing stories, etc.
- sharing memories of your child's Baptism (or the Baptism of another relative or friend)
- practising making the Sign of the Cross (touching their foreheads, chest and shoulders with their right hand) while saying:
In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.
- role-playing ways your family members show love in the groups to which they belong

EASTER: A Special Holy Time

From their earliest interactions, children have experiences associated with new life: the birth of a baby, new growth at springtime, etc. Much of what the children learn about new life comes from, and will continue through their lives to come from, their families. This unit begins with wondering at the human experience of new life. As people celebrate, marvel and wonder at new life and think of all the wonder, excitement and joy they can experience because God has created the gift of new life, they may wonder at the God who created new life and to celebrate what has been revealed about God: that God loves us.

The unit then explores how Jesus' story teaches people about new life: how to live in new ways by loving, sharing and caring about others. Jesus' death and Resurrection teaches his followers about God's love, and that Jesus is alive today to help everyone to live the new life he taught. The second theme of the unit introduces to the children that at Easter, followers of Jesus *celebrate* that Jesus was raised to new life.

Finally, the unit explores ways in which followers of Jesus celebrate new life by showing love for others.

You could help your child during this unit by, for example:

- sharing stories and memories of new life experiences, for example, the birth of a baby, growth of plants from seeds, etc.
- showing and discussing Easter symbols with your child (e.g. Hot Cross Buns; signifying the dying (cross) and rising (yeast) of Jesus, Easter Eggs; signifying the empty tomb and Jesus being raised to new life)
- attending the parish Easter celebrations
- discussing with your child, ways people continue to celebrate Jesus' new life by showing love for others.

Yours sincerely,

Cathy and Bianca