

Monday: I am the face of God's mercy when I am kind and compassionate

You are the people of God; he loved you and chose you for his own. So then, you must clothe yourself with compassion, kindness, humility gentleness and patience. (Col 3:12)

Let's Look

Discuss the children's experience of kindness. Encourage them to remember a time when someone was kind to them. Who was kind to them? What did they do to show kindness? How did they feel?

Ask the children if they remember being kind to somebody.

- What did they do/say?
- How did they feel?
- Can we think of different ways to be kind?
- Who are the people we share kindness with?
- How do we show kindness at home/in school/at play/to animals/to the environment?
- What do we say when we are being kind?

Prayer

Dear God, thank you for all the people who are so kind to me.

In my heart I whisper their names to you. (*Pause*)

Help me to be kind to those around me.

Help me to remember to be kind always.

Amen.

Let's Learn

Ask the children if they can recall any stories or books they have read about kindness.

For example:

- 'The Lion and the Mouse' (Aesop's Fable)
- *The Smartest Giant in Town* by Julia Donaldson
- *The Rainbow Fish* by Marcus Pfister

In the Bible we read many stories about God's kindness, which is present and evident from the very beginning. In the story of creation we read of all the wonderful gifts God created to share with us (*Grow in Love*, Junior Infants, Theme 2: Our World; *Grow in Love*, Senior Infants, Theme 1: Our World, Theme 5: St Brigid and the Spring). God's greatest gift to us is his son Jesus. In the New Testament we read about Jesus being kind to his family, to his friends and to those he meets for the first time. Jesus teaches us to be kind to everyone.

Share one of the following stories from the New Testament with the children.

- The Ten Lepers (Lk 17:11-19)
- Feeding the Five Thousand (Jn 6:1-13) *GiL*, SI, Theme 6: Jesus, Lesson 2
- Calming the Storm (Mk 4:35-41/Mt 8:23-27) *GiL*, SI, Theme 6: Jesus, Lesson 3
- Jesus Heals Blind Bartimaeus (Mk 10:46-52) *GiL*, SI, Theme 6: Jesus, Lesson 4

Consider










- How did Jesus share kindness?
- Who was he kind to?
- What did he do?
- How can I be kind like Jesus today?

Let's Live



A Cup of Kindness

Photocopy the following images so that there is at least one image per child in the class (and teacher too!). Fold each image in two and place in the 'cup of kindness'. (This may be a cup/bowl/jar.) Invite each child to take a piece of paper and to keep it until they have shared their kindness. The activity may be repeated several times during the week. The 'cup of kindness' could be kept in the Prayer Space during this week.

		
Offer to let your classmate go first	Say something nice to someone in your class	Share with a friend
		
Share a smile	Pick up litter	Invite someone new to play
		
Set the table for a meal	Turn off the water while brushing your teeth	Tidy up your toys without being asked

Recall the poem 'A Cupful of Kindness' from *GIL, JI*, Theme 1: My Family.



Tuesday: I am the face of God's mercy when I forgive and reconcile

Be kind and merciful and forgive others, just as God forgave you because of Christ. (Eph 4:32)

Do not judge and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. (Lk 6:37)

Let's Look

Remind the children of yesterday's activity of the 'cup of kindness'. We remember how Jesus asks us to be kind. We think of all the times when we share and help; are gentle and kind; the times when we invite others to play with us; and the kind words we share with each other.

Encourage the children to recall times when they were following Jesus by doing as he asks us to.

Remind the children that sometimes we forget or choose not to live as Jesus asked. Sometimes we don't want to share, help, say nice words, or look after someone else's things.

Ask the children if they ever did something that was wrong. What happened?

When we do something wrong we must try to make it right again. God is always with us, helping us to make things right. When we say we are sorry for the wrong thing we have done, God is so pleased with us. God is happy because we have done what Jesus asks us to do. We say sorry to show we love God and each other.

Prayer

Gentle God,
Help me to live as Jesus has shown me.
When I don't do the right thing, guide me back to your loving ways.
Help me to remember to always say sorry.
Amen.

Let's Learn

For many, many years God's people had tried to do as God had asked them to do. God's people tried to be loving and helpful, to be respectful and sharing. They tried to remember to say their prayers and to say nice words to each other.

God is always with us. (*Encourage the children to list all the different aspects of their lives [e.g. home, school, sports, dance, visiting, shopping, etc.] and remind them that God is there too.*) God's love for us goes on forever. God wants us to know just how much he loves us. When we remember God's wonderful love for us, we say thank you to God.

We share God's love when we say sorry for the mistakes we make. Jesus knows that it is not always easy to say sorry, especially if someone has hurt us. In Luke's Gospel, Jesus shares a very important message. He says: *Love your enemies and be good to those who hate you* (Lk 6:27).

Jesus reminds us that sometimes people are not kind to us. Because we feel hurt by the other person we might be mean or nasty to them. Jesus asks us not to be hurtful to those who hurt us. Jesus tells us to do something very important, something that can be really difficult – to forgive the person who has hurt us. We can say those words together now: **'I forgive you'**. When we say **'I forgive you'** we are doing what Jesus taught us to do. Jesus reminds us that God loves us all the time. To show God how we want to live like Jesus, we say **'I forgive you'** when someone hurts us. (Teacher Tip: Explain 'enemy' as being someone who chooses to be unkind or selfish to another person.)

Let's Live

We thank God for always loving us. We try to live as Jesus showed us. We want to be like Jesus. When we make mistakes we say sorry. We also want to live like Jesus. When people hurt us with their words or their actions, we do as Jesus showed us to: we forgive them. When we talk to God, we are praying.

Sometimes we pray out loud; sometimes we pray so quietly that only God can hear us; sometimes we pray together; and sometimes we pray by ourselves.

Jesus showed us how to pray. He taught us to pray to God. When we pray the Our Father we are saying the same words that Jesus said. In this prayer we pray that God will help us to forgive those who hurt us when we say: '... forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.'



Let's pray that special prayer together: **Our Father, who art in heaven ...**

Decorate the prayer card below, bring it home and put it in a special place where you can pray with your family.

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
Amen.**





Thursday: I am the face of God's mercy when I am fair and just

Happy are those who obey his commands, who always do what is right.
(Ps 106:3)

Let's Look

Consider with the children how we have been learning about Jesus teaching us to be kind and forgiving towards each other. Revisit the 'cup of kindness' today and invite everyone in the class to take a token from the cup in the Prayer Space. Remind the children to share their kindness at school and at home.

When we are kind and forgiving we are living the way Jesus asks us to. We also try to be fair. Ask the children about their experiences of fairness. Perhaps they will recall times when they felt circumstances were unfair. Being fair can sometimes be a challenge. Consider the following examples:

- I have a new set of colouring pencils and the child beside me has none. Teacher asks the class to colour a picture in our copies. What should I do?
- A child in my class asks me to play with them in the yard. I really want to play with someone else. What should I do?
- At home I am asked to tidy away my toys. I want to watch TV instead. What should I do?
- At home I am playing on my tablet. My sister/brother wants a go but I'm in the middle of my game. What should I do?

Prayer

Loving God, thank you for sending Jesus to teach us how to be kind and fair.
Thank you for making me so special.
Help me to be kind and fair to everyone.
Amen.

Let's Learn

Jesus didn't teach us to be kind and fair to **some** people; he taught us how to share God's love with **everyone**.

This is a story that Jesus listened to when he was a boy. Jesus and his family would go to the temple to pray to God. In the temple there were lots of prayers to say. The leader of the temple would read stories from a special book to help the people remember all the wonderful things that God has done for us because he loves us. This is one of those stories.



Joseph and his Brothers (adapted Gn 37–47)

Many, many years ago in a land called Canaan there lived a man called Jacob. Jacob was a farmer and he had twelve sons. Jacob loved all of his sons very much but his favourite son was the second-youngest boy called Joseph. One day Jacob came back from the market with a very special gift for Joseph. It was a magnificent coat – the nicest coat that anyone had ever seen. Joseph was delighted when his father gave him the special present and he thanked him very much.

However, the other brothers were not pleased that Joseph had received a beautiful present. They all wanted a coat as amazing as Joseph's. The brothers were jealous of Joseph. They were so jealous that they decided to do something terrible. One day when Jacob was away and the brothers were working on the farm, a group of people came by who were looking to buy slaves. The brothers sold Joseph to them and he was taken away to a faraway land called Egypt.

Joseph was a slave for a long time in Egypt. All the time he was a slave, he remembered that God was with him. Joseph prayed to God and he always asked God to bless his father and his brothers. Joseph was kind and helpful to everyone, and after a while he was freed from being a slave. The King of Egypt heard about this wise and helpful man. He called Joseph to his palace and gave him a very important job. Joseph was put in charge of all the food in the land of Egypt.

Far, far away in the land of Canaan, things were not going very well for Jacob and his sons. The seeds that they had sown on their farm did not grow. The animals had no food to eat and very soon the people in Canaan had no food to eat. They became very, very hungry. One of Jacob's sons heard that there was plenty of food in the land of Egypt. The family decided that they would travel all the way to Egypt to ask the king for some food.

When Jacob and his eleven sons arrived in Egypt they were sent to see the man in charge of all the food. The man in charge of the food asked them many questions about themselves. He asked them if they had any other brothers. The brothers told the story of what they had done to their younger brother Joseph. They told the man in charge of the food how sorry they were. Suddenly the man who was in charge of the food jumped up from his chair and smiled the widest smile Jacob's family had ever seen. He called for the palace guards to bring in and share out as much food as this family needed. Jacob looked and stared and looked again. There was something familiar about this man. Suddenly Jacob cried out a name that he hadn't said out loud in a very long time!

Consider

- What name do you think Jacob shouted out loud?
- How did Jacob know who he was? (*encourage the children to use adjectives, for example: kind/friendly/sharing/helpful/forgiving*)
- Why did Jacob's family go to Egypt?
- What did the brothers say sorry for?
- How did Joseph show that he forgave his brothers?

Let's Live

Joseph was kind to his brothers. He forgave them for what they did to him. Joseph was fair and generous to his brothers. He treated them the way God asks us to treat each other. We ask God to help us to be fair when we play our games and when we are sharing at home, at school and everywhere.

Joseph and His Brothers

Colour in the picture below.





Friday: I am the face of God's mercy when I live like Jesus

Jesus answered, 'Love the Lord your God with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and most important commandment. The second most important commandment is like it: 'Love your neighbour as you love yourself.' (Mt 22:37-39)

Let's Look

Begin by describing to the children a very special person who teaches us how to love God and each other. Revise what the children have already come to know about Jesus:

This person ...

- was born a long time ago
- was always kind to everyone they met
- listened to people
- was a great teacher
- helped people to say sorry
- showed us how to be honest, truthful, kind and fair
- loved and cared for the all people (Jn 6:1-13)
- helped the sick (Lk 17:11-19)
- taught us to pray to God our Father (Mt 6:9-13)

Let's Learn

(This theme is developed in *GiL*, J1, Theme 5: Lesson 3, Jesus Teaches Us)

Jesus loves every one of us. He is our special friend. Our family helps us to become friends of Jesus. Many other people help us to become friends of Jesus too. Brainstorm with the children to list others who help us to follow Jesus' example. This week, we have considered how we become closer to God by living like Jesus asks us to. Encourage the children to recall a time when they were kind/fair/forgiving/generous/helpful this week.

The Greatest Commandment (adapted Mt 22:34-40)

Lots of people wanted to follow Jesus; they wanted to learn how to show their love for God. One day, when Jesus was in the temple, a man asked him a very important question. The man wanted to know how to show that he really loved God. Jesus gave the man a very simple answer. He told the man that the most important thing that he could do was to love God with all his heart, and to love everyone else the way he loved himself.

Consider all the ways we show that we love God and each other.

Let's Live

This has been a special week in our school. We have celebrated all the different ways we love God. Let us praise God for sending his son Jesus to be our friend. We can pray a special prayer to God:

I love you God with all my heart;
I love others too
Thank you God for loving me
In everything I do.
Amen.





Activity Worksheet

Whom do we love? Draw pictures of those we love in each of the four hearts. These are all linked to God's love in the centre.

