

# BEFORE YOU BEGIN

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# INITIATION

## Belonging ↔ Baptism / Confirmation

Curriculum Directory : 'Celebration'

### Introduction

The understanding of God's love expressed through creation is further explored and deepened in the second theme this term Belonging ↔ Baptism through the topic 'Initiation'.

The children will explore the ways in which a family or group welcome new members. They will learn about the Baptismal rites and symbols and their significance. They will discover that Baptism is a welcome into the family of the Church. It is the beginning of initiation into the Christian life which we reflect on through the renewal of Baptismal promises. They will also discover that any experience of welcome is an experience of God. This has implications for how we welcome others.

### Search

Our lives are marked by many different experiences of being initiated into new situations and groups. We recognise the importance of welcome, of feeling comfortable with the new situation, and learning appropriate rules of behaviour. Such moments of initiation occur in the family, in our work and in leisure activities.

**What experiences of initiation can you recall, in the family, at work and in leisure?  
What was it that made them happy / difficult moments?**

*[Pause for reflection and sharing]*

### Revelation

We are all children of God, members of God's family, but for Christians the special moments of initiation into the family of the Church take place in the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation.

These Sacraments are a very real reminder to us that every experience of welcome is an experience of the welcome and love of God and that responding to any true call is a response to the God within.

In John's Gospel we hear how Jesus called his first disciples:

"The next day as John stood there again with two of his disciples, Jesus went past and John looked towards Him and said, 'Look, there is the lamb of God.' And the two disciples heard what he said and followed Jesus. Jesus turned round, saw them following and said, 'What do you want?' They answered, 'Rabbi' – which means Teacher – 'where do you live?' He replied, 'Come and see'; so they went and saw where He lived, and stayed with Him that day. It was about the tenth hour." (John 2: 35-39)

**All adults in the school community are called to be educators. How do you live up to your call?**

**What do you want from Jesus?**

*[Pause for reflection and sharing]*

## Response

### Into the Classroom

How can we ensure we do not exclude any child who has not been baptised when exploring this topic?

How does the school enable new children, new staff (teaching and ancillary) and parents to enter into the life of the school?

How may the children be helped to grow in awareness of their initiation into the Church?

What are your ideas for a central focal display for the whole school (hall, entrance area etc)?

*[A time to share ideas with one another]*

### For Prayer and Reflection

Let us reflect on the following from the Catechism of the Catholic Church:

‘From the time of the apostles, becoming a Christian has been accomplished by a journey and initiation in several stages. This journey can be covered rapidly or slowly, but certain essential elements will always have to be present: proclamation of the Word, acceptance of the Gospel entailing conversion, profession of faith, Baptism itself, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and admission to Eucharistic communion.’  
(1229)

### Let Us Pray Together

This we believe:

In God, Father of All, Creator of Heaven and earth.

This we believe:

In Jesus Christ, Son of God, born of the Virgin Mary,  
who was crucified, died and was buried  
rose from the dead and is now seated at the right hand of the Father.

This we believe:

In the Holy Spirit,  
The holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,  
The resurrection of the body and life everlasting. AMEN

**As a sign of renewal and belonging let us bless ourselves with water**