



Nottingham Roman Catholic
Diocesan Education Service



Desert to
Garden

Branch 4

Y2 Teachers' Guide

Version 1: September 2026

This booklet is offered as a theological guide for teachers. Although the information provides some context for the whole branch, it will be most useful for teachers as they deliver the first few sessions and lessons within the branch.

Teachers' Guide: Branch Four: Galilee to Jerusalem – Y2

Notes for teachers

- In this branch, pupils in Year Two will revisit scripture from the previous year to consolidate learning about the events of Holy Week. They will make links between the forgiveness Jesus shows at his Crucifixion and the ministry of Jesus studied in the previous branch. They will also explore how Lent is a time of reconciliation and forgiveness for Christians because they want to restore their relationship with God to be ready to celebrate the Resurrection.
- They will develop an early understanding of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. In Year Two, this does not have to be a detailed understanding but rather a simple outline of why Catholics spend time thinking about how they have fallen away from God and how the sacrament helps them restore this relationship.
- The branch also focuses on the Easter Vigil Mass. Easter is the 'Feast of feasts' (CCC 1169), and the Easter Vigil is the high point of the Easter Triduum celebrating the passion and Resurrection of Jesus. The vigil opens with a service of light.
- Like the Jewish Passover, the Easter celebration coincides with the beginning of spring in the northern hemisphere when the sun offers new warmth, and the Earth is ready to flower again. The word 'lent' (from the Middle-English word for spring, 'lengthening days') and 'Easter' (Germanic or Anglo-Saxon in origin, signifying 'the east', 'the rising sun') point to the long tradition of seeing this holy mystery through signs of the natural world, a 'cosmic symbolism'.¹⁴⁹ The vigil begins with lighting a fire from which the priest lights the Easter candle. The candle is a sign of Christ, the light of the world, and celebrates the victory of light over darkness.
- After the liturgy of the Word, the priest blesses baptismal waters. Adults who want to join the Catholic Church receive baptism, and the congregation renew their baptismal promises at the Easter Vigil. Pupils should be able to make connections with the branches studied earlier in the year regarding the symbolism of light and water. They may be able to make very simple connections with images of light and darkness in Advent, such as the words of Isaiah and the Sacrament of Baptism.
- The importance of saying sorry, forgiveness, and reconciliation are not confined to the religious education curriculum. In this branch, pupils should make some simple connections between the life and mission of the school and the gospel message of forgiveness.

General guidance: Pupils of all ages should be aware of the Bible as the sacred text of the Christian faith, and teachers should reference a Catholic translation in religious education lessons. As teachers select age-appropriate texts to share with pupils, it is important to note that some children's texts still contain antisemitic tropes that portray the Jewish people as responsible for the death of Jesus. This is contrary to Church teaching (CCC 597). Teachers may need to consider this if using works of art to talk about the events of Holy Week. Wherever possible, resources for teaching should always look to diverse representations from the Universal Catholic Church. Teachers must teach the content through the lenses of Hear, Believe, Celebrate, and Live but do not have to follow the lenses in sequence.

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CCC Links	Knowledge lens content
Holy Week YCFK 31,35 YC 94-103 CCC 557-560, 569-570, 621-623 The Resurrection YCFK 37-39, YC 105-106, CCC 639-644, 647, 656-657 Sacrament of Reconciliation YCFK 85 YC 224, 227 CCC 1420-1421, 1439, 1485 Lent CCC 540 Easter YCFK 38(f) CCC 1168-1169 Elements of the Sacrament of Reconciliation YC 232 CCC 1450-1460, 1490-1492, 1494 YCFK 38(f) CCC 1217	Hear By the end of this unit of study, pupils will have revisited and encountered the following key texts: • Jesus enters Jerusalem (Lk 19:28-38*) • The last supper (Lk 22:7-23*, 28-34) • The Crucifixion and death of Jesus (Lk 23:33-46*) • The angel's message (Lk 24:1-8*) • Peter at the tomb (Lk 24:9-12) *Texts studied in Year One Believe By the end of this unit of study, pupils will know that the Church teaches: • That Jesus gave us the Sacrament of Reconciliation to heal and restore our friendship with God and through this ourselves. • That Lent is a time of preparing our hearts and minds for Easter through reconciliation and forgiveness. • The Easter Vigil Mass is the high point of the year and is rich in symbols of light and darkness. Celebrate By the end of this unit of study, pupils will know: • Some prayers and actions that are ways in which Catholics turn back to God, in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, for example, a simple Examen or an act of sorrow and in the Penitential rite, for example, the Kyrie Eleison (Lord have Mercy). • Some simple words, actions, and symbols of the Easter Vigil, focusing on light and water. Live By the end of this unit of study, pupils will know: • The importance of saying sorry to God and to others. • That prayer can help people say sorry for their sins. • That making bad choices damages relationships and damages them.
Key vocabulary	
Easter Vigil forgiveness Kyrie Eleison reconciliation sin	

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