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The Teachings of Jesus

LEARNING STRAND: SCRIPTURE AND TRADITION



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**RELIGIOUS
EDUCATION
PROGRAMME**

**FOR CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN
AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND**

10G



THE LOGO

The logo is an attempt to express Faith as an inward and outward journey.

This faith journey takes us into our own hearts, into the heart of the world and into the heart of Christ who is God's love revealed.

In Christ, God transforms our lives. We can respond to his love for us by reaching out and loving one another.

The circle represents our world. White, the colour of light, represents God. Red is for the suffering of Christ. Red also represents the Holy Spirit. Yellow represents the risen Christ.

The direction of the lines is inwards except for the cross, which stretches outwards.

Our lives are embedded in and dependent upon our environment (green and blue) and our cultures (patterns and textures).

Mary, the Mother of Jesus Christ, is represented by the blue and white pattern.

The blue also represents the Pacific...

Annette Hanrahan RSCJ

The Teachings of Jesus

LEARNING STRAND: SCRIPTURE AND TRADITION



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CIRCA 2010: Unknown Venetian artist (17th century),
The Parable of the Good Samaritan, about 1650, oil on board.
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Māori terms are italicised in the text. The first time a Māori term appears in the text, its English meaning appears in brackets after it. A Māori glossary at the back of the book gives a more detailed explanation of these terms and provides a guide for their pronunciation.

CONTENTS

Part One:

Jesus the Teacher

2

Workbook Activity: Jesus of Nazareth page 2

Task One page 3

Task Two page 4

Part Two:

The Power of Stories

5

Task Three page 7

Workbook Activity: The Lost Son page 7

Part Three:

Parables and the Reign of God

9

Task Four page 11

Task Five page 12

Task Six page 12

Part Four:

Parables of the Return

13

Workbook Activity: Eight Parables page 13

Task Seven page 15

Task Eight page 17

Task Nine page 17

Part Five:

Parables – New and Old

19

Task Ten page 19

Task Eleven page 20

Task Twelve page 20

Workbook Activity: Parables Are... page 20

Part Six:

The Sayings and Sermons of Jesus

21

Workbook Activity: The Sayings of Jesus page 22

Task Thirteen page 23

Task Fourteen page 24

Task Fifteen page 24

Part Seven:

The Great Prayer and the Great Commandment

25

Task Sixteen page 25

Task Seventeen page 27

Part Eight:

Follow Me

29

Task Eighteen page 30

Task Nineteen page 30

Task Twenty page 31

Part Nine:

Summary

32

Glossary of Māori Terms page 33

Acknowledgements page 34

Part One:

Jesus the Teacher

Focus:

- By his life, death and Te Aranga (Resurrection), Jesus announced Te Rangatiratanga (the reign of God) to the world.
- Jesus was recognised as a rabbi who taught his followers with mana power and authority).
- The poor, the weak, the outcasts and the sinners found hope in what Hehu (Jesus) said.

Words to Understand

rabbi
synagogues

Jesus and the Reign of God

Jesus of Nazareth was a living sign of God's presence in the world. Through his words and actions, especially by his death and Resurrection, Jesus showed God's great aroha (love) for all creation.

Jesus announced the reign or kingdom of God by insisting that Te Atua was alive in people's hearts and in the world.

The kingdom of God is within you ... (Luke 17:21)

The right time has come, and the kingdom of God is near! Turn away from sin and believe the Good News.
(Mark 1:15)

By speaking of Te Rangatiratanga Jesus was asking people to recognise God's power and accept God's way of doing things. Jesus taught that the reign of God would come about by people choosing God's values and ways of acting, and by living in peace as sisters and brothers.

Jesus' message about God's reign stressed a number of points:

- People must change their lives
- God has begun to save his people
- God's love is the greatest sign of Te Rangatiratanga
- God's reign will come – everything will be all right in the end
- People should be happy because they have heard Te Rongopai (the Good News)

The first step was for people to recognise their need for Te Atua. Entering "the kingdom" began with trusting God.



Christ and the Samaritan Woman at Jacob's Well. Maratta, Carlo (1625-1713). Italy, School of Rome. Collection of the M. Kroshitsky Art Museum, Sevastopol.

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A Teacher Sent by God

Jesus was a teacher. He was called by the title “rabbi” more than by any other.

Early in his ministry Jesus gathered a group of disciples around him and acted as their rabbi or teacher. Sometimes he preached in the synagogues or the Temple in Jerusalem, but more often Jesus taught his followers in public places – in the streets and the markets, in the fields and on the hillsides, and by the shores of the Sea of Galilee.

The Gospels make it clear that Hehu taught with power and authority:

...the crowd were amazed at the way he taught. He wasn't like the teachers of the Law; instead, he taught with authority. (Matthew 7:28-29)

Jesus claimed that everything he taught came from Te Atua who sent him:

“...I do nothing on my own authority, but I say only what the Father has instructed me to say.”
(John 8:28)

Unlike other teachers, Jesus did not expect his followers to memorise information or accept what he was saying without thinking. Jesus challenged his followers to work out for themselves what God was saying.

Some people, such as Nicodemus, called Jesus teacher because they believed in him:

“Rabbi, we know you are a teacher sent by God. No one could perform the miracles you are doing unless God were with him.” (John 3:2)

But others gave Jesus this title because they wanted to trick him and get him into trouble with the authorities:

“Teacher, we know that what you say and teach is right. We know that you pay no attention to a person's status, but teach the truth about God's will for us. Tell us, is it against our Law for us to pay taxes to the Roman Emperor, or not?”
(Luke 20:21-22)

The poor, the weak, the outcasts and the sinners found hope in what Jesus said. The rich, the powerful and the respectable, including many religious people, often found Jesus' message too demanding to accept.

Task Two

Either:

List five key points that you would want people to know about Jesus the teacher.

Or:

Write five interview questions that you would like to ask Jesus about his ministry as a teacher. Ask another class member or your teacher to respond to your questions in a role play.



Christ and Nicodemus From The National Illustrated Family Bible published c1870

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Part Two:

The Power of Stories

Focus:

- Stories are a powerful way of communicating important messages.
- Hehu recognised the power of stories and used them to teach people about the way Te Atua relates to the world and to creation.

Words to Understand

prodigal

Good Stories

Everyone likes a good story – one that makes us laugh, or cry, or gets us thinking. Stories are powerful – they help us to connect with one another and can even change our lives. While some stories are simply entertaining, others carry much deeper messages. Many of us have favourite stories that we enjoy experiencing again and again. Each time we hear them we find new things in them.

Great spiritual leaders throughout the ages have often used stories to get their message across.

Chew This Over

A disciple once complained to his teacher: “You tell us stories, but you never explain their meaning to us.”

The teacher replied: “How would you like it if someone offered you a piece of fruit but chewed it in their mouth before giving it to you?”

Something to Think About

- **Do you have a favourite story that you can hear again and again without getting tired of it?**
- **Do you like stories being explained to you or would you rather work out their meaning for yourself? Why or why not?**

Something to Read

Read the two stories that follow – The Factory and The Stonecutter – either on your own or in a group. Otherwise listen to your teacher read them.

The Factory

There was once a factory that employed thousands of people. Its production line was a miracle of modern engineering, turning out thousands of machines every day. But the factory had a high accident rate. Its complicated machinery took little account of human error, forgetfulness, or ignorance. Day after day men and women came out of the factory with squashed fingers, cuts and bruises. Sometimes a worker would lose an arm or leg. Occasionally someone was electrocuted or crushed to death.

Enlightened people began to see that something needed to be done. First on the scene were the churches. An enterprising sister organised a small first-aid tent outside the factory gate. Soon, it grew into a properly built clinic, able to give first aid to quite serious cases, and to treat minor injuries. The city council became interested, together with community groups like Lions and Rotary. The clinic grew into a small hospital, with modern equipment, an operating theatre, and a full-time staff of doctors and nurses. Several lives were saved. Finally the factory management, seeing the good that was being done, and wishing to prove itself enlightened, gave the hospital its official backing, with unrestricted access to the factory, a small annual grant, and an ambulance to speed serious cases from workshop to hospital ward.

But year after year, as production increased, the accident rate continued to rise. More and more men and women were hurt or maimed. And in spite of everything the hospital could do, more and more people died from the injuries they received.

Only then did some people begin to ask some serious questions...



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The Stonecutter



There was once a stonecutter who was unhappy with himself and his position in life.

One day he passed a wealthy merchant's house. Through the open gateway, he saw many fine possessions and important visitors. "How powerful that merchant must be!" thought the stonecutter. He became very envious and wished that he could be like the merchant.

To the stonecutter's great surprise, he suddenly became the merchant, enjoying more luxuries and power than he had ever imagined – but envied and detested by those less wealthy than himself. Soon a high official passed by, accompanied by attendants and escorted by soldiers beating gongs. Everyone, no matter how wealthy, had to bow low before the procession. "How powerful that official is!" the merchant thought. "I wish that I could be a high official!"

Immediately, the merchant became the high official, accompanied everywhere by attendants and soldiers – but feared and hated by the people all around. It was a hot summer day, and the official felt very uncomfortable. He looked up at the sun. It shone proudly in the sky, unaffected by his presence. "How powerful the sun is!" he thought. "I wish that I could be the sun!"

Straight away, the official became the sun, shining fiercely down on everyone, scorching the fields, cursed by farmers and labourers. But a huge black cloud moved between the sun and the earth, so that the sun's light could no longer shine on everything below. "How powerful that storm cloud is!" the sun thought. "I wish that I could be a cloud!"

In an instant, the sun became a storm cloud, flooding the fields and villages with rain, shouted at by everyone. But after a while the cloud found itself being pushed away by some great force, and realised that it was the wind. "How powerful the wind is!" the cloud thought. "I wish that I could be the wind!"

In a flash, the cloud became the wind, blowing tiles off the roofs of houses, uprooting trees, feared and hated by all below him. But after a while, the wind ran up against something that would not move, no matter how forcefully he blew against it – a huge, towering rock. "How powerful that rock is!" the wind thought. "I wish that I could be a rock!"

In a moment, the wind became the rock, more powerful than anything else on earth. But as the rock stood there, it heard the sound of a hammer pounding a chisel into its hard surface, and felt itself being changed. "What could be more powerful than I, the rock?"

The rock looked down and, far below, saw the figure of a stonecutter.

Only then did the rock begin to ask itself some serious questions...

Something to Think About

- a) **What do you think "the serious questions" are that the people in The Factory and the rock in The Stonecutter begin to ask themselves?**
- b) **What message is each of these stories trying to get across?**



Jesus' Stories

Hehu himself chose to teach with stories because he knew that stories had the power to involve his listeners – not just their heads but also their hearts. Two thousand years after he first told them Jesus' stories still have important things to say to people about the way Te Atua relates to the world and creation. They are like windows that allow us to see something of what God is like.

Task Three

Jesus told many powerful stories. Here is one of the greatest of them – The Lost (or Prodigal) Son. But the events are in the wrong order. Read the different sections of the story and work out the order they should go in. Look up Luke 15:11-32 to check your answer.



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The Prodigal Son.
Illustration by Max Hirmer.

A. The servant answered, “Your brother has come home safe and sound, and your father ordered us to kill the best calf.” The older brother got so angry that he would not even go into the house.

B. But his father said to the servants, “Hurry and bring the best clothes and put them on him. Give him a ring for his finger and sandals for his feet. Get the best calf and prepare it, so we can eat and celebrate. This son of mine was dead, but has now come back to life. He was lost and has now been found.” And they began to celebrate. The older son had been out in the field. But when he came near the house, he heard the music and dancing. So he called one of the servants over and asked, “What’s going on here?”

C. The younger son got up and started back to his father. But when he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt sorry for him. He ran to his son and hugged and kissed him.

D. His father came out and begged him to go in. But he said to his father, “For years I have worked for you like a slave and have always obeyed you. But you have never even given me a little goat, so that I could give a dinner for my friends. This other son of yours wasted your money on prostitutes. And now that he has come home, you ordered the best calf to be killed for a feast.” His father replied, “My son, you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But we should be glad and celebrate! Your brother was dead, but he is now alive. He was lost and has now been found.”

E. Once a man had two sons. The younger son said to his father, “Give me my share of the property.” So the father divided his property between his two sons.

F. The son said, “Father, I have sinned against God in heaven and against you. I am no longer good enough to be called your son.”

G. He went to work for a man in that country, and the man sent him out to take care of his pigs. He would have been glad to eat what the pigs were eating, but no one gave him a thing. Finally, he came to his senses and said, “My father’s workers have plenty to eat, and here I am, starving to death! I will go to my father and say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against God in heaven and against you. I am no longer good enough to be called your son. Treat me like one of your workers.’”

H. Not long after that, the younger son packed up everything he owned and left for a foreign country, where he wasted all his money in wild living. He had spent everything, when a bad famine spread through that whole land. Soon he had nothing to eat.

Workbook Activity: The Lost Son

The Meaning of The Lost Son

Like other good stories The Lost Son can be understood in many ways. The Lost Son is about ...

- Someone rejecting and living apart from God
- A person waking up to their need for Te Atua
- A person turning back to God for forgiveness
- God's great generosity and aroha
- The resentment "good" people can show towards those who behave badly
- The resentment "good" people can show towards God's generosity

Something to Discuss

Which of the above understandings of the story do you think is the most important? Why?

Extension Activity

Choose some of the following questions and apply them to the story of The Lost Son.

- **How does this story make you feel?**
- **Which person in the story do you like the best? Why?**
- **Does this story present a person you would like to use as a role model?**
- **What picture or symbol would you draw to represent this story?**
- **Do any of the story's characters remind you of people you know?**
- **Does this story remind you of any situation you are experiencing now or have experienced in the past?**
- **Does this story help you to see something you have not seen before or remember something you have forgotten?**
- **Do you know a story that is similar to this one? If so, explain.**



The return of the Prodigal Son, 1773 (oil on canvas), by Pompeo Girolamo Batoni (1708 – 1787).

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Part Three:

Parables and the Reign of God

Focus:

- Jesus taught with parables – entertaining stories that challenged people to think about life and its possibilities.
- Jesus’ parables show us what Te Rangatiratanga is like.

Words to Understand

similes
metaphors

Teaching with Parables

Jesus’ favourite way of teaching people was with parables – entertaining stories that got people thinking about the meaning of life and its possibilities.

Jesus’ parables contain important truths about the reign of God. They have something important to say about the way God relates to the world and creation. Jesus’ parables are like windows that allow us to see something of what Te Atua is like.

In the Gospels there are almost forty different parables. While some are just a few words in length, others are extended stories. All of them make a link or comparison between some aspect of life in the world and the reign of God. They are built around similes and metaphors.

In the parables Hehu teaches the people by talking about things that they are familiar with:

- Planting and harvesting crops
- Making bread
- Catching fish
- Searching for treasure
- Buying and selling goods
- Working in a vineyard
- Celebrating a wedding

Jesus will often begin his parables with a statement that introduces the link between Te Rangatiratanga and the story he is telling before going on to develop the comparison further:



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The Sower, illustration for 'The Life of Christ', c.1886-94 (w/c & gouache on paperboard), by James Jacques Joseph Tissot (1836-1902)

“The kingdom of heaven is like this...”

Or:

“What shall we say the kingdom of God is like? What parable shall we use to explain it? It is like this...”



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Something to Find Out

Parables compare the kingdom of God with some aspect of life in the world. They are built around similes and metaphors.

- a) Use a dictionary to find out what similes and metaphors are. You may have already learned about them in English.
- b) Can you think of some examples of similes and metaphors?



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Task Four

Read Matthew 13:1-50 where Jesus tells seven parables, all about the reign or kingdom of God.

Study these seven What Am I? cards. What feature, that gives its name to a parable, is described on each card?



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What Am I?

(Card One)

1. I lie buried in a field.
2. A man finds me and covers me up.
3. The man sells all he owns in order to buy the field and possess me.
4. I am _____.

What Am I?

(Card Two)

1. I start off very small.
2. When I reach maturity I am a great size.
3. Birds come and nest in my branches.
4. I am _____.

What Am I?

(Card Three)

1. I scatter seed in a field.
2. My seed falls on all types of ground.
3. Where conditions are good it produces a great crop.
4. I am _____.

What Am I?

(Card Four)

1. I am used in baking.
2. A woman mixes me with flour.
3. I cause the whole batch of dough to rise.
4. I am _____.

What Am I?

(Card Five)

1. Fishermen throw me into the lake.
2. When I am full of fish I am pulled into shore.
3. The good fish go into buckets but the worthless are thrown away.
4. I am _____.

What Am I?

(Card Six)

1. A man is searching for something very fine.
2. When he finds me he recognises my great value.
3. He sells everything he owns and buys me.
4. I am _____.

What Am I?

(Card Seven)

1. An enemy sows me among the wheat a man has planted.
2. The servants want to pull me up.
3. I am allowed to grow up with the wheat until harvest time when I am bundled up and burnt.
4. I am _____.

Task Five

The seven parables in Matthew 13 tell us important things about Te Rangatiratanga.

Link up the statements in the left hand column with the parables they refer to in the right hand column. Write the correct letter of the alphabet next to the appropriate number.

Statements	Parables
1. Some people listen to God's word and accept God's ways but others do not.	A. The Parable of the Pearl (13:45-46)
2. The reign of God begins in a small way but gradually grows into something great and powerful.	B. The Parable of the Sower (13:1-9 and 13:18-23)
3. God's power is already at work changing our world.	C. The Parable of the Hidden Treasure (13:44)
4. Good and bad exist side by side in this world but in the end God will sort out the one from the other.	D. The Parable of the Yeast (13:33)
5. The reign of God is of great value and worth searching for.	E. The Parables of the Weeds (13:24-30) and the Net (13:13:47-50)
6. Some people give up everything when they experience the reign of God.	F. The Parable of the Mustard Seed (13:31-32)

Task Six

Choose one of the seven parables about the reign of God from Matthew 13 and present it as a cartoon or mobile.

Combine words from the parable with images to make your cartoon or mobile.



'The Pearl of Great Price', 1864 (1901).
A print from The Magazine of Art,
Cassell and Company, Limited, 1901.

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Part Four:

Parables of the Return

Focus:

- Some parables show us what Te Atua is like, others show us how we are to live until Jesus comes again.

Words to Understand
Second Coming

Windows

Jesus' parables are like windows that let us see what God is like and how God wants us to live. The different parables help us see God and ourselves from various angles. Some show us God's aroha, generosity and forgiveness; others remind us to have confidence in Te Atua and be humble in our attitude. Many parables give us an understanding into right and wrong ways of acting.



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Workbook Activity: Eight Parables



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Christ Preaching by Giuseppe Bartolomeo Chiari

Parables of the Return

Jesus told his closest disciples that one day he was going to leave them and return to be with Te Atua. But he also spoke about a future time when he would come back to complete the work he had begun and bring about the fullness of the reign of God. This event is often called the Second Coming. In a number of parables Hehu urges his followers to be alert and put their gifts to work so that they are ready for him when he returns.

Two parables that speak of Jesus' return are The Ten Girls and The Three Servants.

The Ten Girls (Matthew 25:1-13)

At weddings in Jesus' time, it was the custom for the groom to go to the home of the bride's parents to get his bride. Young girls, with oil lamps, and other guests would then go with them to the home of the groom's parents, where the wedding feast would take place.

The oil lamps the young women held were probably long sticks to which bowls filled with oil-soaked cloths were attached. These torches were used to light up the night during special celebrations. The extravagant use of olive oil was a sign that the event was an important one and the torches probably had some religious significance. It is not certain whether there was any dancing, but it is likely the greater the number of torches in the procession, the higher the status of the bride they were accompanying.

The kingdom of heaven is like what happened one night when ten girls took their oil lamps and went to a wedding to meet the groom. Five of the girls were foolish and five were wise. The foolish ones took their lamps, but no extra oil. The ones who were wise took along extra oil for their lamps. The groom was late arriving, and the girls became drowsy and fell asleep. Then in the middle of the night someone shouted, "Here's the groom! Come to meet him!"

When the girls got up and started getting their lamps ready, the foolish ones said to the others, "Let us have some of your oil! Our lamps are going out."

The girls who were wise answered, "There's not enough oil for all of us! Go and buy some for yourselves."

While the foolish girls were on their way to get some oil, the groom arrived. The girls who were ready went into the wedding, and the doors were closed. Later the other girls returned and shouted, "Sir, sir! Open the door for us!"

But the groom replied, "I don't even know you!"

So, my disciples, always be ready! You don't know the day or the time when all this will happen.



The Wise and Foolish Virgins (oil on canvas), by Peter von Cornelius, (1783-1867). Dusseldorf, Museum Kunst Palast

A Conversation at the Well

Rachel and Anna meet by chance at the village well. It is the middle of the day – a time most women avoid going out to fetch water because of the great heat.

Rachel: Anna, I'm so pleased to see you!

Anna: I'm happy to see you too, Rachel! I've felt so lonely!

Rachel: Yes. The middle of the day is not the favourite time for getting the water, but it's best for us just now!

Anna: Have you seen the other three mothers?

Rachel: Not yet - I suppose they are lying low for the moment, too!

Anna: It's all been so embarrassing...

Rachel: ... so shaming for us!

Anna: All because our daughters weren't quite ready on time!

Rachel: My daughter, Joanna, went off like a princess – the first time she's ever been a bridesmaid!

Anna: Rebecca, too! I helped her get her lamp ready – made sure she had enough oil!

Rachel: But the bridegroom was late. That wasn't their fault at all!

Anna: First I knew was my Rebecca arriving in a panic – she needed money for more oil!

Rachel: When Joanna came in, I was shocked. I thought the wedding feast was well under way by then!

Anna: Then Rebecca came back very upset. Not allowed in!

Rachel: Shut out!

Anna: It's not the first time it has happened.

Rachel: They can be so strict about bridesmaids being ready...

Anna: ... but not about bridegrooms being on time!

Rachel: Small consolation!

Anna: So now the local gossips take it out on us!

Rachel: Let's keep out of the way for a bit longer!

Anna: Hopefully it will blow over soon!

Task Seven

Either:

Present the story of The Ten Girls in a piece of drama – mimed or scripted.

Or:

Write and / or role play your own conversation based on the parable.

The Three Servants (Matthew 25:14-30)

In Jesus' time it was not considered honourable for rich men to make too much money. Any increase in their wealth was seen as depriving poor people of their fair share. Some clever noblemen avoided accusations of getting rich at the expense of others by getting slaves to manage their property for them. These rich men would set off on their travels, leaving their resources in the care of slaves who were expected to invest their masters' money and make a good profit on it.

The kingdom is also like what happened when a man went away and put his three servants in charge of all he owned. The man knew what each servant could do. So he handed five thousand coins to the first servant, two thousand to the second, and one thousand to the third. Then he left the country.

As soon as the man had gone, the servant with the five thousand coins used them to earn five thousand more. The servant who had two thousand coins did the same with his money and earned two thousand more. But the servant with one thousand coins dug a hole and hid his master's money in the ground.

Some time later the master of those servants returned. He called them in and asked what they had done with his money. The servant who had been given five thousand coins brought them in with the five thousand that he had earned. He said, "Sir, you gave me five thousand coins, and I have earned five thousand more."

"Wonderful!" his master replied. "You are a good and faithful servant. I left you in charge of only a little, but now I will put you in charge of much more. Come and share in my happiness!"

Next, the servant who had been given two thousand coins came in and said, "Sir, you gave me two thousand coins, and I have earned two thousand more."

"Wonderful!" his master replied. "You are a good and faithful servant. I left you in charge of only a little, but now I will put you in charge of much more. Come and share in my happiness!"

The servant who had been given one thousand coins then came in and said, "Sir, I know that you are hard to get along with. You harvest what you don't plant and gather crops where you haven't scattered seed. I was frightened and went out and hid your money in the ground. Here is every single coin!"

The master of the servant told him, "You are lazy and good-for-nothing! You know that I harvest what I don't plant and gather crops where I haven't scattered seed. You could have at least put my money in the bank, so that I could have earned interest on it."

Then the master said, "Now your money will be taken away and given to the servant with ten thousand coins! Everyone who has something will be given more, and they will have more than enough. But everything will be taken from those who don't have anything. You are a worthless servant, and you will be thrown out into the dark where people will cry and grit their teeth in pain."



Task Eight

Imagine you are one of the servants in the parable. Write a brief note to the master explaining your actions and letting him know how you now feel. Here is an example:

Dear Master,

When you gave me five thousand coins to look after while you were away I realised that you trusted me a lot. I knew that the best way for me to show my loyalty to you was by investing your money wisely and making more.

I'm so happy that things worked out well and am enjoying my new responsibilities. Thanks again for rewarding me.

Your Ever-Faithful Servant

Task Nine

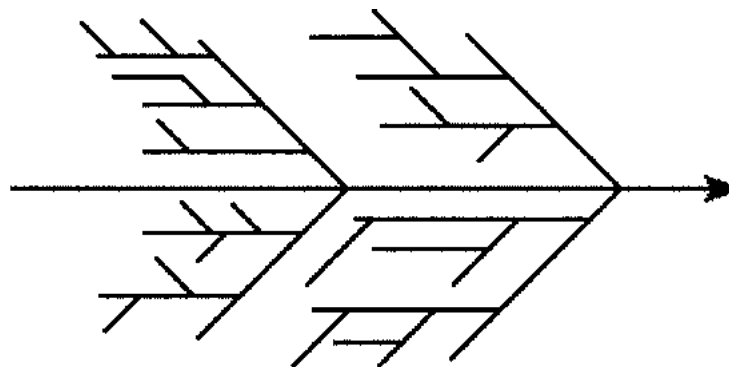
Choose one bumper sticker – from those below – that you think sums up well the message of either the parable of The Ten Girls or the parable of The Three Servants. Explain why it is a good bumper sticker for the parable.

Use Your Gifts Now	Be Alert and Ready
Take Jesus' Message Seriously	
Better In Than Out	Don't Be Lazy
We Will Be Judged According To Our Actions	

Something to Discuss

Discuss either the parable of The Ten Girls or the parable of The Three Servants with someone. Jot down what you learned from this conversation.

Use a character map or fishbone if you like.



Extension Activity

Write your own karakia (prayer) in response to either the parable of The Ten Girls or the parable of The Three Servants.

Dear God,

Help me to stay alert and ready.

May I always be focused on what I need to do!

Something to Think About

Read some other parables about the return of Hehu:

- **The Watchful Servants (Luke 12:35-38)**
- **No One Knows the Day or Hour (Mark 13:33-37)**
- **The Robber / Thief (Matthew 24:43-44)**
- **The Faithful or the Unfaithful Servant (Matthew 24:45-51 or Luke 12:41-48)**

How are these like the parables of The Ten Girls and of The Three Servants?



The Foolish Virgins, illustration for 'The Life of Christ', c.1886-94 (w/c & gouache on paperboard), by James Jacques Joseph Tissot (1836-1902)

Part Five:

Parables – New and Old

Focus:

- Parables apply to our lives today just as they did to the people of Jesus' time.

Words to Understand

kitchen hand

A Contemporary Parable – The Good Street Kids

Not so long ago, some students in the year twelve RE class thought they would have the teacher on a bit: "All this stuff about parables, what's it got to do with life in Aotearoa in the twenty-first century?"

The teacher told them this story:

Early one evening a young kitchen hand was walking to the fast food shop where he worked. As he cut through the car park of the local mall, three muggers knocked him to the ground and kicked him in the head before running off with his wallet and jacket.

As the kitchen hand lay motionless on the footpath the captain of the first fifteen drove past and saw him there. He thought about stopping, but as he was already late for rugby practice, he decided to keep going, telling himself that someone with more time would soon come along and help.

Next the head prefect and her friend from the liturgy committee biked past. They were on their way home from a meeting to plan the school feast day. When they saw the injured worker they felt sorry for him but decided it was too risky to stop. They pedalled on.

A little while later three street kids on their way to the park found the young man and immediately sprang into action. They moved him into the recovery position and checked his pulse. One kid ran to the nearest shop to ring emergency services while the other two held the worker's hand and kept him covered with their jackets as they waited for an ambulance.

The teacher said to the year twelve class: "Which of these people is a true neighbour to the man who was mugged?"

Task Ten

- a) The captain of the first fifteen and the head prefect and her friend have their own reasons for not stopping and helping the injured worker. What are they?**
- b) How do the street kids in the story show that they are good neighbours to the young man who was mugged?**

Something to Think About

- **Can you think of times in your own life when you have behaved like the captain of the first fifteen or the head prefect and her friend?**
- **Can you think of occasions when you have acted like the street kids?**

Something to Discuss

“Sometimes we need to sacrifice our own interests, time, money, and safety, family or friends if we are to do what Te Atua wants us to do and be good neighbours to those around us.”

“... and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?
(Micah 6:8)

Task Eleven

The Good Street Kids is a modern version of one of Jesus’ parables. Do you remember which one? Look up Luke 10:25-37 to find out.

- **How is The Good Street Kids like Luke’s parable?**
- **How is The Good Street Kids different from Luke’s parable?**

Task Twelve

If you were creating your own version of Luke 10:25-37 or of any of the other parables you have learned about in this topic:

- **Where would your story take place?**
- **Who would your characters be?**
- **What would happen in the story?**

Something to Do

Write or act out or design a poster for your own version of Luke 10:25-37 – or any other parable you choose.

Workbook Activity: Parables Are ...



The Good Samaritan, ca 1562-1563 by Jacopo Bassano / Collection of the National Gallery, London.

GETTY IMAGES

Part Six:

The Sayings and Sermons of Jesus

Focus:

- Various teachings of Hehu are in the form of sayings, many of which are collected together in sermons.
- Jesus explains the meaning of true happiness in the Beatitudes and gives us an insight into who he is in the “I am ...” sayings.

Words to Understand

Beatitudes
proverbs

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A Recipe for Happiness?



Be successful

Make money

Leave others behind

Be fun to be with

Be strong

Be beautiful

Be rich

Be secure

Be independent

Be in control

Do things on your own terms

Establish your rights

Make sure you get justice for yourself

Take revenge

Experience pleasure

Pick fights

Win arguments

Avoid all trouble and pain

Walk over others

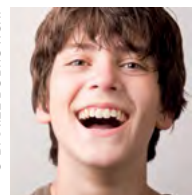
ISTOCKPHOTO.COM
© FOREST WOODWARD



Something to Discuss

Work with a partner. Discuss where on the continuum you would place each of the above pieces of advice about how to achieve happiness.

ISTOCKPHOTO.COM
© DANIEL BOBROWSKY



strongly disagree

strongly agree



Happiness is good health
and a bad memory!

Ingrid Bergman
1917 - 1982

Something to Think About

What is your own personal recipe for happiness?

Begin: Happiness is ...

Jesus' Sermons

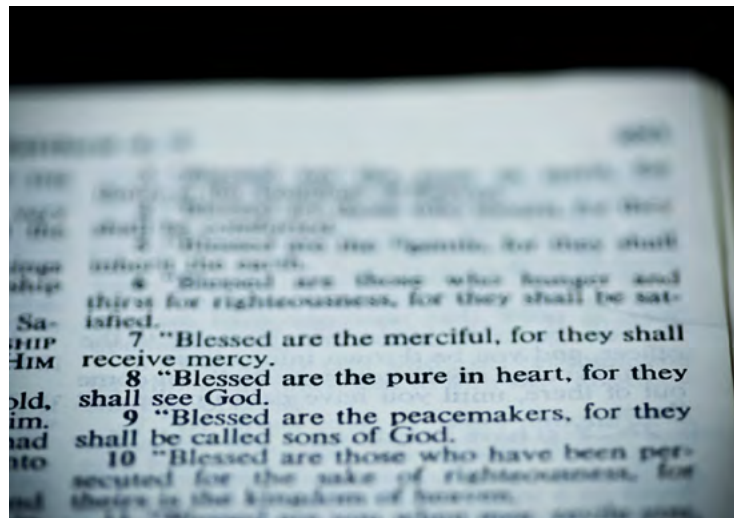
As well as reporting Jesus' many parables, the Gospels also gather together other teachings of Jesus in the form of wise sayings. Matthew presents many of these teachings in the Sermon on the Mount (chapters 5-7). In Luke's Gospel they appear in the Sermon on the Plain (chapter 6:17-49).

These sermons contain the most famous of Jesus' sayings, the Beatitudes or blessings. In them Hehu explains the meaning of true happiness.

The Beatitudes

In Luke's Beatitudes (6:20-23) Jesus praises people for living in unjust conditions where they have to put up with real poverty, hunger and misery. In Matthew (5:3-10) Jesus congratulates those who live in a spirit of poverty and gentleness, and who do what is right. He also praises those who suffer persecution.

In the Beatitudes, Jesus makes clear what attitudes and behaviour he expects of his followers. Because the Beatitudes tell us who belongs to God's reign, they apply not only to the people of Jesus' time, but to ours as well.



GETTY IMAGES

Something to Discuss

Read the Beatitudes in Luke (6:20-23) and Matthew (5:3-12):

- **What is the difference between being poor and being poor in spirit?**

Workbook Activity: The Sayings of Jesus

Other Sayings of Jesus

Scattered throughout Nga- Rongopai are other sayings of Jesus. Some are proverbs, some are instructions and others are warnings. At times Jesus deliberately said things to shock people so that they would see aspects of life in a new way.

Task Thirteen

Look up each of the following Scripture references. Match the beginning of each of Jesus' sayings with its ending. Write down the numbers 1 to 10 and next to each the appropriate letter of the alphabet.

Scripture	Beginning of Saying	End of Saying
Mark 3:24	1. If a country divides itself into groups which fight each other,	A. is of no use for the kingdom of God.
Mark 6:4	2. A prophet is respected everywhere except	B. let him slap your left cheek too.
Mark 10:25	3. It is much harder for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God	C. they will only trample them underfoot.
Matthew 5:39	4. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek,	D. that country will fall apart.
Matthew 5:44	5. Love your enemies	E. than for a camel to go through the eye of a needle.
Matthew 7:6	6. Do not give what is holy to dogs –	F. and those who humble themselves will be made great.
Matthew 7:6	7. Do not throw your pearls in front of pigs –	G. and pray for those who persecute you.
Luke 9:60	8. Let the dead	H. in his own home town and by his relatives and his family.
Luke 9:62	9. Anyone who starts to plow and then keeps looking back	I. bury their own dead.
Luke	10. All who make themselves great will be humbled	J. they will only turn and attack you.

Something to Discuss

Discuss the above statements in a pair or group and try to work out what they mean.

Then try to decide:

- **Which of Jesus' statements is the easiest to understand?**
- **Which is the hardest to understand?**
- **Which is the strangest?**
- **Which is the most challenging?**
- **Which is the most comforting?**
- **Which can you most easily apply to a situation in your own life?**

The I Am Sayings

Jesus was a creative teacher. He sometimes used images or pictures to give people an understanding that he really was the Son of God. In John's Gospel Jesus makes seven different statements about himself which all begin with, "I am..."

I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry (John 6:35).

I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness (John 8:12).

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep (John 10:11).

I am the gate for the sheep (John 10:7, 9).

I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live (John 11:25).

I am the way and the truth and the life. No-one comes to the Father except through me (John 14:6).

I am the true vine (John 15:1).



Task Fourteen

You have read what Jesus says about himself. How would you describe him? Write your own statement about Jesus. Begin:

Jesus is ...

Task Fifteen

Design a poster that presents any one of Jesus' sayings. Choose from:

- **The Beatitudes – either from Matthew's or Luke's versions**
- **The I am statements**
- **Any other of Jesus' sayings**

Part Seven:

The Great Prayer and the Great Commandment

Focus:

- Hehu taught his followers how to pray and gave them the Lord's Prayer as a model.
- At the heart of Jesus' teaching is love – of God, neighbour and self.

Words to Understand

Aramaic
The Law

Jesus' Teaching On Prayer

Jesus prayed often and central to his teaching is his advice about how to pray:

When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites! They love to stand up and pray in the houses of worship and on the street corners, so that everyone will see them. I assure you, they have already been paid in full. But when you pray, go to your room, close the door, and pray to your Father, who is unseen. And your Father who sees what you do in private, will reward you.



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When you pray do not use a lot of meaningless words, as the pagans do, who think that God will hear them because their prayers are long. Do not be like them. Your Father already knows what you need before you ask him. (Matthew 6:5-8)

Task Sixteen

In Matthew 6:5-8 Jesus gives his disciples guidelines about how to pray. Make a list of dos and don'ts of prayer based on Jesus' advice.

DOS & DON'TS



The Lord's Prayer

In both Matthew's and Luke's Gospels, Jesus teaches his disciples a prayer. It is known as the Lord's Prayer or Our Father and is used constantly by Christians throughout the world.

The Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13)

So you should pray like this:

Our Father in heaven,
may your name be held holy,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread,
and forgive us our debts,
as we have forgiven those who are in debt to us.
And do not put us to the test,
but save us from the Evil One.

The Lord's Prayer (Luke 11:2-4)

When you pray, this is what to say:

Father,
may your name be held holy,
your kingdom come;

give us each day our daily bread,
and forgive us our sins,
for we ourselves forgive each one who
is in debt to us.
And do not put us to the test.

When Jesus taught his followers to pray "Our Father..." the actual word he used was Abba, which is Aramaic for "father". By referring to God in this way Jesus was inviting his followers to see God as a close and loving parent – someone they could trust.



Something to Discuss

- Find as many differences as you can between the Matthew version of the Lord's Prayer and the Luke version.**
- Which of the versions is closest to the one that the Church uses today?**
- Why do you think the Church chose this version?**

The Agony in the Garden 1527-1530, oil on panel, by Peter Coeck van Aelst (1502 – 1550).

Task Seventeen

When we pray the Lord's Prayer we make seven different requests or petitions to Te Atua. Write out these seven requests in the order that they follow in the Lord's Prayer:

We ask:

- **That, as Hehu did, we do the will of God**
- **That we trust God to provide for all our needs**
- **That God protect us from the forces of evil**
- **That the name of Te Atua be respected and held Tapu (holy) by all people**
- **That God forgive us for our offences just as we forgive those who do us wrong**
- **That the reign of God continue to grow in our lives and become established in our world**
- **That God keep us away from the path that leads to hē (sin)**

Something to Do

Choose any of the requests or petitions made in the Lord's Prayer:

- a) **Write your own prayer based on the request or petition**
- b) **Illustrate your prayer if you wish**

Ko Te Inoi A Te Ariki

E to mātou Matua i te rangi,
kia whakatapua tōu ingoa,
kia tae mai tōu rangatiratanga,
kia whakaritea tōu hiahia i te whenua
kia pērā ano i tō te rangi.

Homai ki a mātou aianei he taro mā mātou
mō tēnai rā

Whakakāhoretia ō mātou hara, me mātou
e whakakore nei i ngā hara o te hunga
e hara ana ki a mātou.

Kaua mātou e tukua kia whakawaia,
Engari whakaorangia mātou i te kino.



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The Great Commandment

By Jesus' time, the Jewish Law had become very elaborate. In addition to the Ten Commandments there were 613 lesser laws that interpreted them. Jewish teachers frequently argued over these regulations. Sometimes they would ask difficult questions about these rules in an attempt to trick people into giving wrong answers.

On one occasion the experts challenged Jesus to say which of all these laws were the most important. Jesus answered by stating that there were two commandments which were the basis of all the others:

- "Love the Lord your God" (Deuteronomy 6:5)
- "Love your neighbour as yourself" (Leviticus 19:18)

By stressing these two commandments, Jesus was saying that aroha was greater than any other value – more important than any burnt offering or sacrifice.

The love Jesus spoke of is to be expressed in action. We show our aroha for Te Atua by doing God's will. We show our love for our neighbours by treating them as we would like to be treated ourselves.

Jesus lived his life in total accord with the values and standards that he taught. He always showed great love of God and other people, especially the poor, the sick, the outcasts and the sinners. Jesus once told his disciples that a person shows the greatest possible love by laying down their life for their friends (John 15:13). Jesus showed the depth of his own love through his suffering and death on the cross.

Something to Discuss

Jesus' teaching about the two most important commandments is described in three of the Gospels.

Matthew 22:34-40

Mark 12:28-34

Luke 10:25-28

Read the different versions of this incident:

- How are they similar?**
- How are they different?**
- Which version do you like best? Why?**



Jesus speaking to a crowd

© KELLY REDINGER/DESIGN PICS/CORBIS

Part Eight: Follow Me

Focus:

- Jesus invites us to follow him by living lives of love and keeping his commandments.

Keep My Commandments

During his three years of public ministry Jesus' most frequent invitation to those he met was, "Follow me!"

This command, stated fifteen times in the Gospels, challenges people to make a decision either to accept Hehu and his teachings or to reject him.

The most certain way that we follow Jesus is by showing our love for Te Atua and each other. We show the strength of our love by living according to the teachings of Jesus:

"If you love me you will keep my commandments" (John 14:15).

Building the Kingdom

C.Landry - © Oregon Catholic Press

Refrain:

True friends of Jesus, building the kingdom,
Building the kingdom of God on earth.
True friends of Jesus, building the kingdom,
Building the kingdom of God on earth.

Verse One:

Small acts of kindness, sharing and caring:
Seeds of the kingdom of God on earth.
Showing respect and trusting each other:
Seeds of the kingdom of God on earth.

Verse Two:

Helping a friend who's hurt and rejected:
Granting forgiveness as makers of peace;
Growing in friendship, bringing compassion:
Signs of the kingdom of God on earth.

Verse Three:

Led by the Spirit, praying together;
Loving each other as Jesus loves us;
Speaking the truth and giving in service:
These are some signs of God's kingdom on earth.

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The Calling of St. Matthew,
c.1598–1601 (oil on panel)
Michelangelo Merisi da
Caravaggio (1571–1610)

PUBLIC DOMAIN

Task Eighteen

- **List all the different ways that people show love of Te Atua**
- **List all the different ways that people show love of neighbour**
- **List all the different ways that people show love of self**

Something to Do

Either present in a poster, or in a piece of drama (mimed or scripted), or in a song, or in a poem ways of showing love of God, neighbour or self.

Those who say, "I love God," and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they haven't seen. The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also. (1 John 4:20-21)

Task Nineteen

Read these comments by people who are trying to follow Jesus' teachings in their lives.

I show my aroha for Jesus every time I forgive people who hurt me. Tui

I follow Jesus by trying to be more at peace. Michael

When I pray the Lord's Prayer I imagine God is very close. Sharon

The Beatitudes challenge me to be happy even when I'm miserable. Rick

When us kids are getting too much for Mum she says: "Do not put me to the test." It's her special prayer. Paul

The Two Sons is my favourite parable. It reminds me that God always welcomes me. Tara

I'm much more interested in working out the meaning of Jesus' parables now that I know they are full of important messages. Anthony

It's easy to see Jesus in the people who treat me well. It's hard to see him in those I don't like or don't know. Lorna

If I'm going to follow Jesus seriously I need to learn more about him. That's why I'm reading the Bible. Ben

It's not a good idea to sleep walk through life. It pays to be alert. Eva

Hehu expects me to see everyone as my neighbour. That's a hard teaching to follow. Chris

It's up to me to look for God's kingdom in the world around me. David

Jesus tells us that those who are poor are close to his heart. I try to remember this. Liz

I now realise that I can't really love God if I don't care for the people I'm with. Thomas

How do you try to follow Jesus and his teachings?

Write a comment of your own.

Thinking About the Reign of God Today

The challenge for Christians is how to follow Jesus and to put his teachings into action in our world. From time to time the Catholic Bishops of New Zealand write letters to their fellow Catholics to provide guidance on important contemporary social issues. You can find these on the website, www.catholic.org.nz, under the heading Bishops' Statements.

Task Twenty

1. **Your teacher will give you a copy of The Final Judgment (Matthew 25: 31-46) to read.**
2. **Highlight or underline things that you find interesting and things you have questions about.**
3. **Choose one of the groups referred to in the text, 'prisoner', 'hungry', 'stranger', 'sick', 'naked', 'thirsty'. Who might this refer to today in New Zealand?**

Activity

- **The image on this page is a fresco in the Sistine Chapel called The Last Judgment painted by Michelangelo Buonarroti (1475-1564) between 1538 and 1541.**
- **To view the image in more detail visit, <http://www.christusrex.org/www1/sistine/40-Judge.html>.**
- **A worksheet to accompany this activity is available on the FaithCentral website, www.faithcentral.net.nz.**
- **How would an artist illustrate The Last Judgment today?**



Last Judgement, from the Sistine Chapel, 1538-41 (fresco)

Michelangelo Buonarroti (1475-1564) / Vatican Museums and Galleries, Vatican City

Part Nine: Summary



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- **By his life, death and Te Aranga, Jesus announced the reign of God to the world.**
- **Jesus was recognised as a rabbi who taught his followers with power and authority.**
- **The poor, the weak, the outcasts and the sinners found hope in what Hehu said.**
- **Stories are a powerful way of communicating important messages.**
- **Jesus recognised the power of stories and used them to teach people about the way Te Atua relates to the world and to creation.**
- **Jesus taught with parables – entertaining stories that challenged people to think about life and its possibilities.**
- **Jesus’ parables show us what Te Rangatiratanga is like.**
- **Some parables show us what God is like, others show us how we are to live until Jesus comes again.**
- **Parables apply to our lives today just as they did to the people of Jesus’ time.**
- **Various teachings of Jesus are in the form of sayings, many of which are collected together in sermons.**
- **Jesus explains the meaning of true happiness in the Beatitudes and gives us an insight into who he is in the “I am ...” sayings.**
- **Jesus taught his followers how to pray and gave them the Lord’s Prayer as a model.**
- **At the heart of Jesus’ teaching is aroha – of God, neighbour and self.**
- **Hehu invites us to follow him by living lives of love and keeping his commandments.**

GLOSSARY OF MĀORI TERMS

This glossary gives explanation of Māori terms which are italicised in the text. The first time a Māori term appears in the text, its English meaning appears in brackets after it.

Pronunciation - correct pronunciation of Māori comes only with practice in listening to and speaking the language. The English phonetic equivalents provided under each Māori word are intended to provide a reasonably accurate guide for students. If in doubt please seek assistance from someone practised in correct pronunciation of Te Reo Māori.

´ indicates stressed syllable

Aroha -
ú h-raw-huh
In general, means love and/or compassion. Note that the word is used in two senses:
1. a joyful relationship involving the expression of goodwill and the doing of good, empathy.
2. sympathy, compassion towards those who are unhappy or suffering.

Atua -
ú h-too-uh
The Māori word Atua has been used to describe God in the Christian sense since missionary times. Before the coming of Christianity, Māori used the word atua to describe many kinds of spiritual beings (in the way we now use the word "spirit") and also unusual events. Io was the name given to the Supreme Being before missionary times. Many, but not all, tribes had this belief in Io.

Hē -
heh
Wrong.

Hehu -
héh-hoo
Jesus.

Karakia -
kú h- r uh-kee-uh
Prayer, ritual.

Mana -
múh-nuh
Spiritual power and authority. Its sources are both divine and human, namely, God, one's ancestors and one's achievements in life. Mana comes to people in three ways: mana tangata from people, mana whenua, from the land, and mana atua, from the spiritual powers. Please note: when mana refers to Mana of God it is written as Mana.

Rongopai -
ráw-ngaw-puh-ee
Gospel or Good News. Nga Rongopai (plural). Te Rongopai (singular).

Tapu -
túh-poo
This word is used in three senses:
1) restrictions or prohibitions which safeguard the dignity and survival of people and things
2) the value, dignity, or worth of someone or something, eg the holiness of God, human dignity, the value of the environment
3) the intrinsic being or essence of someone or something, eg Tapu i Te Atua is the intrinsic being of God, the divine nature.
Please note: when tapu refers to the Tapu of God it is written as Tapu.

Te Aranga -
teh úh-ruh-nguh
The Resurrection.

Te Rangatiranga -
teh rung-uh-tée-ruh-tung-uh
The Kingdom or Reign of God.

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Titles of the Topics in Year 10

10A

Discovering Our Identity

10B

Journey Stories

10C

The Meaning and
Significance of Eucharist

10D

The Church's Story
- The Middle Ages

10E

Inspiring Men and
Women

10F

Sinfulness and
Reconciliation

10G

The Teachings of Jesus

10H

Expressions of
Catholic Life

STRANDS

Human Experience 10A

Scripture and Tradition 10B, 10G

Church History 10D

Theology 10E

Sacrament and Worship 10C, 10F

Social Justice 10H

**RELIGIOUS
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NEW ZEALAND**



Glendalough, Ireland

The Teachings of Jesus

10G