

The higher we go, the better we shall hear the voice of Christ



ARCHBISHOP'S PENTECOST LETTER TO YOUTH 2015 CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF MELBOURNE

Classroom Resource

Every year, Archbishop Denis Hart writes a letter to young people which is released on Pentecost Sunday. The Pentecost letter is inspired by the Archbishop's annual conversation with student leaders, and reflects on the hopes, concerns and questions expressed by young people at this gathering.

This year's Pentecost Letter is an invitation for young people to 'go higher' in their lives by living the beatitude given as the 2015 World Youth Day theme: 'Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God' (Matthew 5:8). The invitation to 'go higher' is inspired by the life of Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati, a young man whose generosity and integrity was offered as a model for young people everywhere by Pope John Paul II who named him a 'man of the beatitudes'.

Schools are invited to share this year's letter with their students. It is accompanied by four short video reflections available at cam.org.au/YouthLetter and this resource which includes suggestions for using the letter as part of your classroom curriculum or faith program. A reflection resource is also available which you may consider adapting for classroom use.



Reflect

The following table provides some suggestions for reflecting on the Archbishop's Pentecost letter in the context of the Coming to Know, Worship and Love Curriculum Framework.

Year 7 Unit 5a: Christian Ideals - Moral Decisions	
CONTEXT FROM THE CURRICULUM DOCUMENTATION	SUGGESTIONS FOR REFLECTION
<p>The key principles which characterise the life of Jesus and underpin his actions and attitudes in the Gospel include love, compassion, forgiveness, the dignity of each individual, justice, truth and honesty, service to others, loyalty, sensitivity towards others, faith and hope. The Beatitudes offer guidelines for Christian living and direction to individuals who are faced with making moral decisions. In recognising these guidelines Christians can come to express them in a positive way in their lives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• After reading Archbishop Hart's 2015 Pentecost letter watch the video clip 'Who was Pier Giorgio Frassati?'• Why did Pope John Paul II describe Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati as a man of the beatitudes? What evidence is there that Pier Giorgio was living the beatitudes?• Divide the class into small groups and assign a beatitude to each group. Ask students to look at the life of Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati and choose one story which exemplifies that beatitude. Have the groups share the story, and the reasons they chose it, with the rest of the class.



Year 8 Unit 5a: Jesus, a model for living

CONTEXT FROM THE CURRICULUM DOCUMENTATION	SUGGESTIONS FOR REFLECTION
<p>The Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5-7) is a collection of many of Jesus' key teachings on Christian living. This discourse is an invitation to a new and different kind of living which challenges the priorities of people and demands a change of heart from those who accept the Christian way. The Sermon offers an insight into the high standards Jesus set for his followers. He challenges his audience towards inner conversion resulting in changed behaviour.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• After reading Archbishop Hart's 2015 Pentecost letter ask the students to brainstorm what they think 'Blessed are the pure of heart' means.• Watch the video clip 'What does purity of heart mean?'• Archbishop Hart describes purity as seeking and fulfilling God's will in all things, and seeking and defending the true purpose of every human life. Integrity is a good word to describe purity of heart; as one of the young people in the video explains, someone who is pure in heart doesn't just say things, they actually do them. People with integrity 'know who they are.'• What does purity of heart look like in real life? How can it lead to happiness for us and those around us?• Pope Francis has said that the Beatitudes are a blueprint for happiness and in his letter Archbishop Hart tells us that; 'Life is a gift from God, and God want us to enjoy it to the full'. How might trying to live the principles of the beatitudes lead us to experience joy and happiness?• Watch the video clip 'Who was Pier Giorgio Frassati?'• How did Blessed Pier Giorgio live his faith in his daily life? How was Pier Giorgio's life a model for daily living out your faith?• Do you think Pier Giorgio is an example of the joy and happiness that Pope Francis and Archbishop Hart are referring to?



Year 8 Unit 5b: Living the Christian Life

CONTEXT FROM THE CURRICULUM DOCUMENTATION	SUGGESTIONS FOR REFLECTION
<p>One of the main characteristics of Christian living is the demonstration of solidarity with and action for those who suffer. In the same way Jesus transformed the lives of many, through his compassionate presence. Christians are called to help alleviate the suffering of others. Christian living stands as a prophetic challenge to a society that tends to pursue individual success and material gain at any cost. Students, parents and teachers alike are highly influenced by these pursuits, which at times seem more attractive than the call to discipleship.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After watching the video clip 'What does purity of heart mean' read Archbishop Hart's 2015 Pentecost letter. • Pope Francis has said that the Beatitudes are a blueprint for happiness and in his letter Archbishop Hart tells us that; 'Life is a gift from God, and God want us to enjoy it to the full'. How might trying to live the principles of the beatitudes lead us to experience joy and happiness? • Watch the video clip 'Who was Pier Giorgio Frassati?' • In his letter Archbishop Hart says 'Pier Giorgio showed us how rising to the virtue of purity can lead to a life that full, joyful, wildly generous and strikingly unique.' Purity may seem a difficult goal when there are so many competing demands for our attention. How is the example of Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati relatable to us? • Watch the video clip 'Pure in heart; Hearing the voice of Christ'. • In his Pentecost Letter, Archbishop Hart writes 'Rising higher in integrity is, like mountain climbing, a difficult and often rocky journey which requires courage. You can stay below, among the crowds of the city or you can listen to the voice of Jesus and follow him up the mountain to a higher place.' • What voices do we listen to? How do they guide our life? • What challenges are present in the life of a young person towards living with purity of heart? What gets in the way of living higher in our lives? • What are the three ways Br Daniel offers to better hear the voice of God? How can we hear the voice of God? How can we respond to the obstacles which may distract us from living higher?



Year 9 Unit 5a: The Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes

CONTEXT FROM THE CURRICULUM DOCUMENTATION	SUGGESTIONS FOR REFLECTION
<p>Christian morality is given its fullest expression in the Beatitudes. They go beyond a set of guidelines and positively advocate attitudes and actions which are to be embraced. They offer inspiration and encouragement to those who follow the example of Jesus' lifestyle. Jesus reassured his followers that in living out the underlying principles of the Beatitudes, they would experience the joy and happiness that comes from an attitude of trust in God, and from acting on that trust. However, the challenge for society today is that many of the values in contemporary culture do not reflect the spirit of the Beatitudes. On the contrary, true happiness and joy will be the reward of those who endure experiences of sorrow, injustice and persecution on God's behalf, and who exemplify the qualities of gentleness, compassion, mercy, honesty and peace in their lives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After reading Archbishop Hart's 2015 Pentecost letter ask the students to brainstorm what they think 'Blessed are the pure of heart' means • Watch the video clip 'What does purity of heart mean'. • Pope Francis selected Matthew 5:8 as the theme of World Youth Day 2015, telling young people that this beatitude speaks directly to their lives and is a guarantee of their happiness. • How do we think that purity of heart leads to happiness? • In the 2015 Pentecost Letter, Archbishop Hart describes purity as seeking and fulfilling God's will in all things, and seeking and defending the true purpose of every human life. Purity is loving one another 'with an upright and undivided heart' (CCC 2520); it 'enables us even now to see things according to God' (CCC 2531). Integrity is a good word to describe purity of heart; as one of the young people in the video explains, someone who is pure in heart doesn't just say things, they actually do them. People with integrity 'know who they are.' • What does purity of heart look like in real life? How can it lead to happiness for us and those around us? • Watch the video clip 'Who was Pier Giorgio Frassati?'. • In his letter Archbishop Hart says 'Pier Giorgio showed us how rising to the virtue of purity can lead to a life that full, joyful, wildly generous and strikingly unique.' Purity may seem a difficult goal when there are so many competing demands for our attention. How is the example of Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati relatable to us? • When mountain climbing with his friends, Blessed Pier Giorgio would frequently shout out 'Verso L'alto' 'To the heights!'. Once when climbing with his friends, he encouraged them by saying 'The higher we go, the better we shall hear the voice of Christ.' • What does it mean to live higher and how can we hear the voice of Christ? • In his Pentecost Letter, Archbishop Hart writes 'Rising higher in integrity is, like mountain climbing, a difficult and often rocky journey which requires courage. You can stay below, among the crowds of the city or you can listen to the voice of Jesus and follow him up the mountain to a higher place'. • Watch the video clip 'Pure in heart; Hearing the voice of Christ'.



Year 9 Unit 5a: The Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes

CONTEXT FROM THE CURRICULUM DOCUMENTATION	SUGGESTIONS FOR REFLECTION
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What voices do we listen to? How do they guide our life?• What challenges are present in the life of a young person towards living with purity of heart? What gets in the way of living higher in our lives?• What are the three ways Br Daniel offers to better hear the voice of God? How can we hear the voice of God? How can we respond to the obstacles which may distract us from living higher?



Year 10 Unit 5a: Personal Moral Responsibility

CONTEXT FROM THE CURRICULUM DOCUMENTATION	SUGGESTIONS FOR REFLECTION
<p>As individuals grow in moral maturity they begin to develop and live by their own values and make responsible moral decisions. They act less and less out of fear of punishment and of the desire for others' approval. People sometimes face difficult moral decisions. However, more often than not, the difficulty lies in having the courage to do what one knows is right. Growing in moral responsibility is about growing in moral character, strength of will and judgment to become a person who wants and is able to do what is right.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After reading Archbishop Hart's 2015 Pentecost letter ask the students to brainstorm what they think 'Blessed are the pure of heart' means • Watch the video clip 'What does purity of heart mean'. • Pope Francis selected Matthew 5:8 as the theme of World Youth Day 2015, telling young people that this beatitude speaks directly to their lives and is a guarantee of their happiness. • How do we think that purity of heart leads to happiness? • In the 2015 Pentecost Letter, Archbishop Hart describes purity as seeking and fulfilling God's will in all things, and seeking and defending the true purpose of every human life. Purity is loving one another 'with an upright and undivided heart' (CCC 2520); it 'enables us even now to see things according to God' (CCC 2531). Integrity is a good word to describe purity of heart; as one of the young people in the video explains, someone who is pure in heart doesn't just say things, they actually do them. People with integrity 'know who they are.' • What does purity of heart look like in real life? How can it lead to happiness for us and those around us? • Watch the video clip 'Who was Pier Giorgio Frassati?' • In his letter Archbishop Hart says 'Pier Giorgio showed us how rising to the virtue of purity can lead to a life that full, joyful, wildly generous and strikingly unique.' Purity may seem a difficult goal when there are so many competing demands for our attention. How is the example of Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati relatable to us? • When mountain climbing with his friends, Blessed Pier Giorgio would frequently shout out 'Verso L'alto' 'To the heights!'. Once when climbing with his friends, he encouraged them by saying 'The higher we go, the better we shall hear the voice of Christ.' • What does it mean to live higher and how can we hear the voice of Christ? • In his Pentecost Letter, Archbishop Hart writes 'Rising higher in integrity is, like mountain climbing, a difficult and often rocky journey which requires courage. You can stay below, among the crowds of the city or you can listen to the voice of Jesus and follow him up the mountain to a higher place'. • Watch the video clip 'Pure in heart; Hearing the voice of Christ'



Year 10 Unit 5a: Personal Moral Responsibility

CONTEXT FROM THE CURRICULUM DOCUMENTATION	SUGGESTIONS FOR REFLECTION
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What voices do we listen to? How do they guide our life?• What challenges are present in the life of a young person towards living with purity of heart? What gets in the way of living higher in our lives?• What are the three ways Br Daniel offers to better hear the voice of God? How can we hear the voice of God? How can we respond to the obstacles which may distract me from living higher?



EXPLORE

A few ideas to further explore the themes of the Archbishop's 2015 Pentecost letter include:

- Have students to create a video reflection using the Beatitudes.
- Ask students to create a 'Facebook profile' poster for Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati which demonstrates why he is considered a man of the beatitudes.
- Have students source current real life photos that capture the spirit of 'Verso l'alto' to make a collage.
- Just within the past few years 'Frassati Societies' (groups/clubs) have begun to pop up across the world. Ask students to conduct a 'Frassati Society' Google search and find a home page for one of these groups. Ask students to design a promotional brochure that explains what the group is, why the group formed and what they typically do.
- Watch Fr. Robert Barron discussing Pier Giorgio Frassati (<https://youtu.be/ceOn2UZI3wQ>) and ask students to discuss the similarities between Frassati's 'to the heights' and St Pope John Paul II's 'put out into the deep'. What might this mean in our own lives?
- Ask students to design a stain glass window that includes symbols depicting Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati as a man of the beatitudes.

PRAY

Conclude with a time of reflection and prayer.

Prayer of Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati

Let us pray together;

Pier Giorgio, help us to strive for simple hearts, attentive to the needs of others, and friendships based on that pact which knows no earthly boundaries or limits of time: union in prayer.

If we do not know the road, and if we often abandon the path, show us the way 'verso l'alto' upward to heaven!

If by being superficial we have not put in our knapsack all that we need for the climb, and if we never lift up our gaze because we do not want to take the first demanding steps to set ourselves on the way, show us the way "verso l'alto" upward to heaven!

If we lack the strength to overcome the most difficult passes, and if we have the strength, but prefer to use it to turn back, show us the way 'verso l'alto' upward to heaven!

If we never pause to be nourished by the bread of eternal life, and if we do not quench our thirst from the fountain of prayer, show us the way 'verso l'alto' upward to heaven!

When we do not know how to contemplate the beauty of the gifts we have received, and when we do not know how to offer ourselves for others, show us the way 'verso l'alto' upward to heaven!

If we have committed many sins, show us the way 'verso l'alto' upward to heaven!

If we lost hope, show us the way 'verso l'alto' upward to heaven!

Pray for us, Pier Giorgio Frassati. Teach us how to hear the voice of Christ calling us towards purity of heart.

Pray for us, Pier Giorgio Frassati. Show us the way 'verso l'alto', upward to heaven and deep in to the heart of God.

Amen.¹

Invite students to take a minute in silence to think of one action they may commit to in order to better hear the voice of Christ in their lives.

.....
1 Prayer adapted from Homily of Fr. Thomas Rosica, CSB preached on 14 July, 2008 during World Youth Day Sydney at the Prayer Vigil and Eucharistic Adoration with the body of Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati in St. Mary's Cathedral, Sydney, Australia



Watch > Prayer of Blessed Pier Giorgio

- Leader:** Jesus said; Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Remember those who know their poverty, those for whom the kingdom of heaven often seems distant and unattainable.
- All:** We pray for refreshment and sustenance.
- Leader:** Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.
Remember those who grieve, those who have lost someone or something dear to them.
- All:** We pray for comfort.
- Leader:** Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.
Remember those who suffer oppression and violence in their homes, in their communities, and in their nations.
- All:** We pray for salvation.
- Leader:** Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.
Remember those who struggle to make meaning in their lives. Remember those who seek communion with God but have not found the living water and the body of Christ.
- All:** We pray for the advent of loving community.
- Leader:** Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.
Remember those who are in power over others. Remember government leaders, law enforcement officers, judges, school administrators, and parents.
- All:** We pray for compassion and justice.
- Leader:** Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.
Remember those who struggle to forgive. Remember those who carry shame, and who struggle to receive forgiveness.
- All:** Pray for freedom and shamelessness before God, who sees all and forgives all.
- Leader:** Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.
Remember those who work for peace in dangerous place. Remember those who walk with Jesus on the way to the cross.
- All:** Pray for courage and endurance.
- Leader:** Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Remember our brothers and sisters around the world who suffer for their faith. Remember those in prison for Christ's sake.
- All:** Pray for awareness God's incarnate presence.
- Leader:** All of these prayers we offer to you, God our Father, Christ our Brother, Holy Spirit the power within us.
As we have been blessed, may we be a blessing to the world around us.
Amen²

.....
2 Prayer adapted from Guided Prayer Meditation: The Beatitudes; College Community Church Mennonite Brethren, sourced at <http://www.clovismb.org/guided-prayer-meditation-the-beatitudes>



OTHER HELPFUL RESOURCES

The Beatitudes

- *The Religion Teacher* website has some very useful suggested activities for exploring The Beatitudes with students including worksheets to download. For more information and to download the worksheets go to: Beatitudes Activities: 11 Teaching Ideas for Religious Educators at: <http://www.thereligionteacher.com/beatitudes-activities/#sthash.pKwm6L96.dpuf>
- *Word on Fire* has a MP3 download of Fr Robert Barron reflecting on the Sermon on the Mount entitled "The Beatitudes: A Spiritual Program" <http://www.wordonfire.org/resources/homily/the-beatitudes-a-spiritual-program/658>
- Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati
- *The Catholic Religion Teacher* website has a section exploring the lives of saints, including Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati, with suggested classroom activities which can be adapted for your context. Go to: <http://catholicreligionteacher.com/the-saints>
- Pope John Paul II's homily at the Beatification of Pier Giorgio Frassati can be found at: <http://www.ewtn.com/library/MARY/PIERGIOR.HTM>
- Archbishop Anthony Fisher reflected on the life of Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati during a homily when Frassati's relics were in Sydney for World Youth Day 2008: <http://www.ewtn.com/library/BISHOPS/zbpfisherfrass.HTM>
- Fr. Robert Barron explains the meaning behind the stained glass window dedicated to a Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati in the Mundelein Seminary's Blessed John Paul II Chapel <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zqFXT8wuCwU&feature=youtu.be>
- There are many great books on the life of Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati including '*Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati - An Ordinary Christian*' by Maria Di Lorenzo. A student assessment task based on this book, which could be adapted for your context, can be found at: https://www.bmchs.org/uploaded/Forms/Theology_Pier_Giorgio_Assessment.pdf

Prayer

- Prayer to walk the path of the Beatitudes: <http://frassatiusa.org/prayer-to-follow-pier-giorgio>
- Prayer for the courage to be great: <http://frassatiusa.org/prayer-for-courage>
- The way of light with Blessed Pier Giorgio: <http://frassatiusa.org/the-way-of-light-with-pgf>
- Way of the cross with Blessed Frassati: <http://frassatiusa.org/way-of-the-cross-with-pgf>
- Litany of Blessed Pier Giorgio: <http://frassatiusa.org/litany-of-pier-giorgio>
- Dialogued Prayer on the Beatitudes: <http://www.catholic.org/prayers/prayer.php?p=454>
- A Prayer Based on the Beatitudes: <http://johnvest.com/2013/10/07/a-prayer-based-on-the-beatitudes/>
- The Beatitudes - Living in True Joy and Peace prayer service: <http://cwl.on.ca/sites/default/files/prayer/632.doc>
- Beatitudes Prayer Service: <https://www.avemariapress.com/dynamicmedia/files/b3cca3a4aaba4499029acf7f84e1c738/OurCatholicFaith-Handouts-Ch9.pdf>