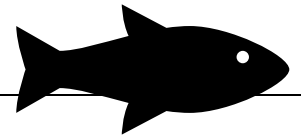




5. Good fish, bad fish



Age range: Primary

Theme: We gather together for collective worship that is **inspiring, invitational and inclusive**, reflecting the fact that we are a part of a diverse school family and the wider church community, serving the needs of our unique school contexts. As human beings, we have storytelling in our DNA, and so for this final term of the school year, we offer some stories from across the world that help us to think about **'ourselves, others, beauty and/or beyond'**, and wonder together at the power of a story to help connect us and change us. We intentionally use **language from our Diocesan spirituality offer** throughout these resources and hope that this will help to build schools' understanding of the role of collective worship as part of spiritual flourishing. This week, we are thinking about the choices we make – their impact on others, and on ourselves. **Whilst Jesus' parable focuses on the choice of being in God's kingdom or not, we suggest that this may be an unhelpful or inappropriate focus for school collective worship. So instead, we have chosen to use the idea of sorting to help children reflect on what helps them to make good choices in their own lives – and thinking about the wider themes of justice that Jesus spoke about in God's kingdom making everything right.**



How does this link to your school's Christian vision & values?

The class reflection materials for this term follow the same pattern as previous terms – think, talk and do – but also (where possible) relate to questions about **ourselves, others, beauty and beyond**. This week, the focus is on the importance of making **good choices** in many different walks of life – and **what helps us to make those good choices**. Your school's values will be a huge help here! There is also opportunity to think about things that Jesus said are important in God's Kingdom, which Christians believe has an impact on how they live in the world now, as well as what **God's Kingdom** might be like in the future. .

Resources:

- The PowerPoint slides are numbered with a point in the script so you can find your way, and the parts in **bold** show you where to click on to activate the next slide or animation.
- **There are two opportunities in this resource for pondering the ideas in the parable of the fishing net, so use either or both, whichever suits your context best. We use both in the script.**
- You will need some props for the 'Choices' reflective story (listed on p9) along with the script.
- You will also need to print the Good Fish, Bad Fish Game (p4-8) onto card, cut them out – and put them into a net or bag. Or you could go the whole hog and attach a paper clip to each fish's nose and go fishing with a magnetic rod! There is a selection of choices, good or bad: children choose whether it's a good choice (good fish) or bad (bad fish). It sounds easy, but doing it is harder!
- **Reflective areas:** Print cards on p4-8 to make a version of the Good Fish, Bad Fish game for your own classrooms. There are some blank fish for you to use to make your own cards. You will also need a magnetic fishing rod and paper clips.

Gathering:

Slide 1: Swimming fish stilling exercise

Use the stilling slide if desired: the suggested words should be spoken slowly, leaving pauses inbetween to create a sense of stillness.

As you sit quietly, look at the fish swimming [PAUSE]

Now practise slower breathing.....in.....and out.....in.....and out.....as you watch the movement of the fish....[PAUSE]

You maybe notice that you are feeling calmer and more relaxed....[PAUSE]

As you breathe, **think about yourself** and what you bring into this time today..... [PAUSE]

We come into this special / sacred space and **time to be still**....to **think deeply**.....to **be together** as a school community.....

In our time together today, we will **talk about a question together, share not one, but two stories (!), play a game, and then think together.**

But first, let's welcome one another as we begin....

- **Slide 2:** Use our new gathering words for this term, or your usual greeting if you prefer. These greetings may change slightly each week to reflect the **spiritual elements** that we will be exploring in each week's materials.

Leader: As we gather to share our story today....

All: **May we grow in our understanding of ourselves and our choices.**

Here are BSL actions for some of the words:

Leader's words:

Gather: <https://www.signbsl.com/sign/gather> (1st video); Story: <https://www.signbsl.com/sign/story> (1st video)



Response words:

Grow: <https://www.signbsl.com/sign/grow> (2nd video); Ourselves: <https://www.signbsl.com/sign/yourself> (2nd video); Choices: <https://www.signbsl.com/sign/choice> (3rd video)

Engaging:

- **Slide 3:** A question to ponder as we begin: why is it sometimes hard to make good choices?
[Talk together for a while]
- **Slide 4:** So far this term, we have heard some parables told by Jesus to make his listeners think and explain to them how to live as part of God's kingdom. These ancient stories have helped us in turn to think about **ourselves**, **how we live**, and **how we behave towards others** – and to **explore some of Jesus' ideas for ourselves**.
- **Slide 5:** Today's parable is about fishing, which was something that many of his disciples knew a LOT about!! This is what Jesus said (and these are the words from an actual Bible today!): **'The kingdom of heaven is like a net that was put into the lake. The net caught many different kinds of fish. When it was full, the fishermen pulled the net to the shore. They sat down and put all the good fish in baskets. Then they threw away the bad fish....'** *[Matthew 13: 47&48]*
- **Slide 6:** ...I wonder what you think Jesus was meaning in this parable?.....I wonder how the fishermen might choose what's good and what's bad?.....I wonder what you think the fish might represent?...
[talk together again]
People often accused Jesus of teaching them hard things: the message in this parable for those who wanted to belong to God's Kingdom was a hard one, about making Kingdom choices – and about the consequences of making bad choices.
- **Slide 7:** To help **us** think some more about choices I have a fishing game for us to play – a game called **Good Fish, Bad Fish**. In my net / bag here I have some fish: help me decide whether they are a good fish with a good choice, or a bad fish, with a bad choice *[play the game together. You could make your own version using the blank fish on p.8. Also talk together about what to do when we make bad choices: the importance of saying sorry, being forgiven and accepting forgiveness.]*
Although it doesn't sound very hard, we all know that there are times when making good choices isn't easy. Jesus knew this too, which is why he told so many parables about people with choices!
- **Slide 8:** We're going to share our second story about choices now to help to unpack what Jesus might have been meaning in his parable of the fish and the net. Watch out for some reminders of other parables as well! *[use script on p9)*



Slide 9: Responding (and words for worship)

Let's be still and quiet together now....

....I wonder what choices we might face today?....

....I wonder what might help us to make **good choices** or how we might **put things right** if we make a bad choice?....

....I wonder what impact our choices might have on **other people**?...

....you might want to spend some time in quietness now, thinking or praying....

[leave a time of quiet]




Slide 10: Prayer

I'm going to pray now, using some words written by King David the Psalmist. We used some of these words in an earlier week, but I've added an extra line that fits with today's theme. There are some actions that you can join in with as well as the words if you would like to, *[teach them here]* but if you'd prefer not to pray, then just continue to be quiet with your own thoughts.

May the words of our mouths *[touch lips]* 

The thoughts of our hearts *[touch heart]* 

And the choices we make *[hands at shoulders, open palms – like the 'What?!' emoji]* 

Be pleasing *[thumbs up]* to you, O God.  

Slide 11: Amen



Sending: Slide 12

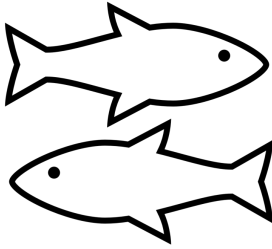
Leader: As we leave this place and time and go into the day ahead...

All: May we make good choices!



To sing / listen to:

[Let our love show](#) (NBD) or [The Sharing Song](#) (NBD)



Slide 13: Reflective areas

Print out a set of Good Fish, Bad Fish cards (or make your own) and make them into a fishing game with a magnetic fishing rod and paper clips.

Do: 'Catch' a fish using the magnetic rod. Read what the cards says.

Talk: **Is this a 'good' fish or a 'bad' fish?** Talk about the challenges that you might face making the right choice.

Think: Think about what might help you to make good choices going forwards.

Ideas to build spirituality:

- **Make your own sorting fishing game** based on the idea of choices. Write your own situations as a class / group / individual and have others play your game to see whether they can choose the 'good fish'.
- **Build a Jenga tower** then as you remove blocks, think about the things that sometimes get in the way of making good choices. As you re-build the tower, you might like to ask God to help you to make good choices, or think about the people or strategies that help you.
- **Goodies vs. Baddies:** Think about stories you know where good wins over evil/bad. Why is it so important that this happens? Does it matter in real life as well? Share some of these stories together during the week and talk about the challenges that characters face in making the right choices.
- **Watch this child-friendly reading** of some words of Paul in Romans 12: 9-21 [Love in Action | Bible Story | LifeKids - YouTube](#)






**● leaving litter
on the ground**



**picking up a ●
piece of litter**



**● helping
someone who
needs it**





**not offering
when someone
needs help**



**playing with
someone who's
lonely**



**playing with friends
rather than someone
who's lonely**





● hanging your
coat up

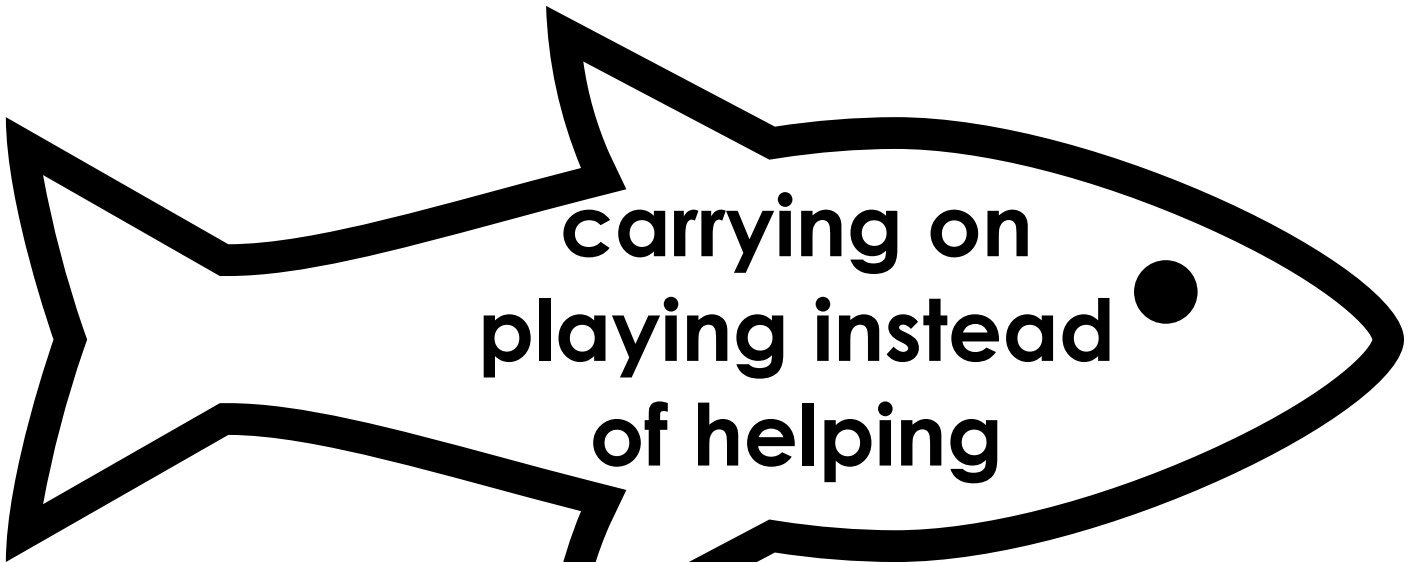


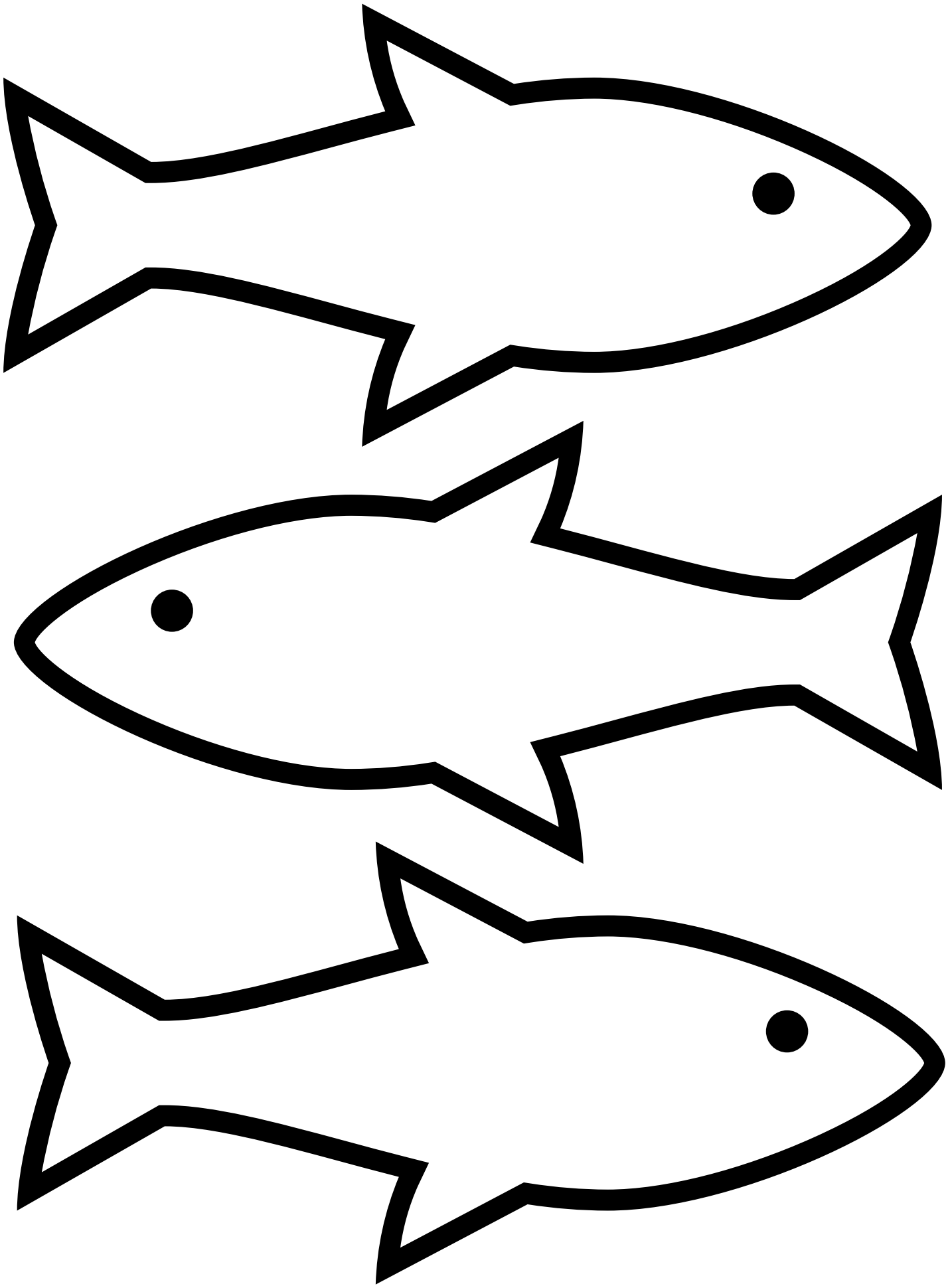
dropping your ●
coat on the floor



● doing what
mum or dad ask







Choices

For this story, you will need some props:

Batman figure (LEGO® or other)	a crown	LEGO® Darth Vader (or other villain figure)	a fish
some treasure (e.g. coins/gems, from wk 1)	a DUPLO® brick	Sunflower seeds (from week 2)	a large plaster
a mustard seed (from week 3)			

We all love a story where right and good win over evil and darkness....*[place Batman figure]*... where all is made right in the end....

Jesus said that this is true of God's kingdom too *[place crown]* ...that when God's kingdom comes, there will be consequences for those who have chosen an evil path, *[place Darth Vader]* no matter what they think they have got away with...and that all the wrong will be put right....

Jesus also spoke about the choices of God's kingdom....

....like a fisherman sorting good fish from bad fish *[place fish]*, we can make bad choices....or good ones....

...to listen to wisdom, old and new, which is the treasure of God's kingdom...*[place treasure]* and *do* what it says....

...to build a good life *[place Duplo® brick]* on firm foundations....

...to grow good fruit in our lives...*[place sunflower seeds]*

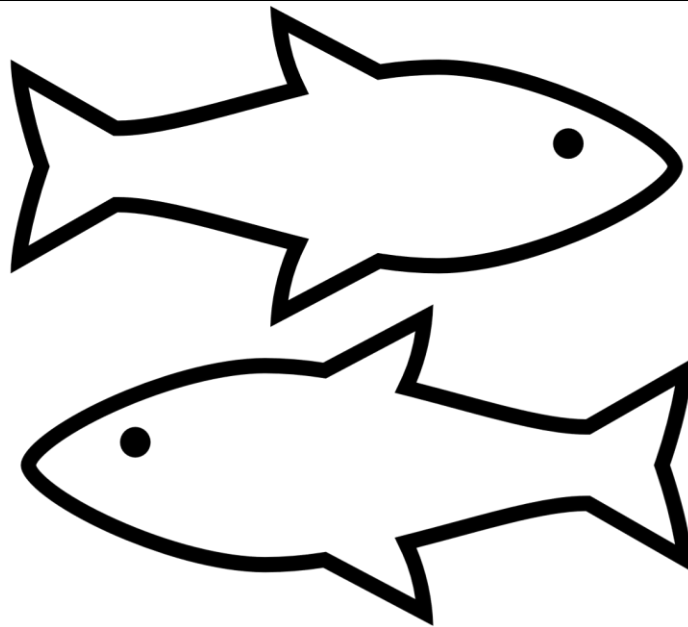
...to help those who are hurting... *[place plaster]*

...and to make a difference, no matter how small we feel....

[place mustard seed]

...but more than anything, to choose God...and good....and right....and put these things first, no matter how hard it is....

Jesus said that God's kingdom starts here – with the choices we make....



Jesus told a parable about fishermen sorting good fish from bad fish.



'Catch' a fish using the magnetic rod. Read what the cards says.



**Is this a 'good' fish or a 'bad' fish?
Talk about the challenges that you
might face making the right choice.**



**Think about what might help you to
make good choices going forwards.**

