

BACKGROUND NOTES

LOCAL CHURCH-COMMUNITY THEME

The Church themes which occur in each term gradually builds on the understanding of the previous theme. In the Autumn term the children explored '**My story ~ my family ~ Domestic Church**. The Church honours the family with the title Domestic Church because it is there that parents by their word and example are the first (teachers) heralds of faith with regard to their children. After Christmas the children explore the theme of 'Local Church' which **is our story**. The **parish** is where people gather together to celebrate and practice care and love for each other. The **diocese** is the community of the Christian faithful. In the summer the children will go on to explore – **The story of the worldwide community; the universal Church**.

Special People and Places

Year 1

Your child will explore the Church and the people who make the church e.g. Parish. The children will discuss all of the people who help in the church and the significance of the building and its contents.

BOOKS

Year 2

Your child will explore the importance of the Bible and how we the Parish can ensure that we live the Gospels.

A number of Christian beliefs are rooted in the story of the Baptism of Jesus. One belief which should be able to be understood by the children is the **belief in Jesus as the Son of God**.

While John baptizes Jesus the voice of the Father resounds over the waters: "*This is my beloved Son.....*" At that very moment, the Holy Spirit descends upon him in the form of a dove. Here, for a brief instant, we glimpse the mystery of One God in three persons, Father, Son, Holy Spirit. These words reveal Jesus as the Son of the Father, anointed with the Spirit. The Baptism is an Epiphany (which means 'showing', manifestation'). It is the manifestation ("*Epiphany*") of Jesus as Messiah of Israel and Son of God. In fact, in the Christian East, the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord and the Epiphany are one in the same.

The following questions will be useful (adapted from the general questions above)

- What might we learn from this passage?
- What does the story of Jesus' baptism help Catholics to believe/come to know?
- Catholics believe that Jesus is the Son of God.....How does this story help us come to believe this?

- Can you see connections between this story and something Catholics believe?

JOURNEYS Year 3

Two Christian beliefs can be explored with the children through the story of the Annunciation are belief in Mary as the Mother of God and Mary as a model for all Christians.

The reason why Catholics honour Mary is because God honoured her in a very unique way when he chose her to be the Mother of God Incarnate, Jesus Christ. In the story of the Annunciation Mary is chosen to be the Mother of Jesus 'You are going to have a baby. It will be a boy and his name will be Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of God.'

At the end of the Annunciation story, Mary uttered her *Fiat*, ('Yes') "Let it be done unto me according to your word" (Lk 1:38) or as it says in God's Story "I want to please God. I am happy to do whatever God wants." At that moment, she said 'yes' to being the Mother of the Messiah, the Incarnate Word of God.

The Church also presents Mary to us as *Model Disciple* because she was totally open and responsive to God's Word. She trusted God when it was not easy to do so. We are asked to follow her example and to try to say 'yes' to God and do what God would want us to do every day in our lives.

The following questions will be useful:

- What might we learn from this passage?
- What does the story of the Annunciation help Catholics to believe/come to know?
- Catholics believe that Mary is the Mother of God.....How does this story help us come to believe this?
- Catholics believe that Mary is a model disciple.....How does this story help us come to believe this?
- Can you see connections between this story and something Catholics believe?

COMMUNITY Year 4

Children need to be able make links between Mark 3:13-19 and Acts 6: 2-13 and the Christian belief that Christians are called to share in and continue the work of Jesus.

They will need to People who followed Jesus in the early Church began to be called Christians and 'followers of the Way'. They formed a Christian community called the Church. The Greek word "*ekklesia*," is used 115 times in the New Testament, and in

most bibles, it is always translated as "church"(except in Acts 19:32,39,41, where it is translated as "assembly").. It comes from two Greek words 'ek' meaning 'out' and 'kaleo' meaning 'to call'. So the Church is 'called out' and set apart to continue the mission of Jesus. God chooses people to serve him today and to share in his mission.

The children explore some of the different ministries the early Christians were called to preaching, teaching, praying and works of charity.

The following questions will be useful:

- What might we learn from these passages?
- What does the story of the call of the apostles and 'Sharing the Mission' help Catholics to believe/come to know?
- Catholics believe that we are called to share in the mission of Christ.....How does this story help us come to believe this?
- Can you see connections between these stories and something Catholics believe?
- In what other topic did we learn about being 'called'?

MISSION **Year 5**

The children will have explored a number of scripture passages about the mission of Jesus. Isaiah and Luke both focus on the mission of Jesus for the poor. He is anointed ('called', 'set apart') to bring the good news to the poor, heal the broken hearted, set prisoners free and usher in a time of blessing. Levi is called by Jesus to share in that mission even though he was a sinner – but he was willing to give up everything. Many women followed Jesus and were willing to share all they had with Jesus and his disciples to help them on their mission.

The root of the word "mission" means being "sent." The Church is "sent into the world to continue the works of Jesus Christ." These works include preaching, teaching, healing, and acts of charity and justice. Christians, empowered by the Holy Spirit, must "make the name of Jesus known and loved."

The children will need to link the scripture passages to other religious sources they have looked at in previous topics e.g. in 'Hope' children looked at how they can share in the mission of Jesus by 'bringing light' into the world, living in joyful hope and loving others to prepare for his Second Coming. Good links exist between these stories and the work done in 'Life Choices' where it was explained that everyone has a mission and special role to play. They looked at how married couples show their love and commitment and explored the marriage ceremony. They also understood how those who are unmarried are also called by God to love and service of others. This could lead to feelings of being special, unique, loved by God etc. Children may

express this feeling/idea through poetry, song or dance. How this 'calling' lead Christians to live does and what would their values be?

- I believe that I am called to (share in the mission of Jesus)....
- I believe this because....(scripture and tradition)
- I value....
- I have experience of sharing in the mission of Jesus already by...
- I feel..... (about this job) because....
- Ideas I have about continuing Jesus mission are.... and can be expressed by...

SOURCES

Year 6

Pupils are asked to describe and show an understanding of the Bible by showing what Christians believe about the Bible (making links with tradition); what they feel about the Bible; their experiences regarding the Bible and how they use it in their daily lives.

An apt title for the presentation may simply be:

'What Christians believe about the Bible'

- Catholics believe that....(the Bible is a library of different kinds of books, written by different authors over a long period of time, for different audiences....etc. Catholics believe that the Holy Spirit inspired the authors in their writing so the Church family believes that the Holy Spirit is the author of the Bible....When Christians read the Bible or listen to it read during the Liturgy of the Word at mass, Catholics believe God is truly present....
- They believe this because....(These beliefs are expressed in the Church's teaching documents on Revelation and expressed by the reverence shown during the Liturgy)
- I/they feel because....
- My/Catholics experience of the Bible is..
- I/Catholics use the Bible in their daily lives by...(Learning Focus 6)

Children need to focus more on beliefs, experiences, feelings, ideas and living rather than spend too much time simply describing the structure of the Bible.