

LESSON 15: Sign of the Cross



AIM

To help the children appreciate the meaning of the main symbols found in Christian worship (5.3.1)

OUTCOME

Learners understand the significance of the cross as a major Christian symbol.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- 1 Have a variety of objects or pictures that show **three in one**, for example a tricycle, a triangle, a clover leaf. Ask the children to compare them and see what they have in common.
- 2 Each time Christians make the **sign of the Cross**, they remember three persons in one God - God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Have three children light a match each and together light the one candle.
- 3 The **cross** is an important symbol for all Christians. It is a symbol used in worship, and it an unmistakable sign of a Christian place of worship. The cross reminds us that Jesus died, and how he died. It is also a sign of Jesus' love for the Father in that he stuck to the truth of his message even though it meant death. It also shows his love for us in dying so that we too could rise again to eternal life. It reminds us of Jesus' resurrection, and the power he has to help us overcome our own burdens and problems. The cross of Jesus gives us the inspiration and the power to face our own death. It is only through death that we gain life in its fullness.
- 4 **Paraliturgy:** Invite learners to participate. (Some who are not Christian may choose to observe. Allow this. They can be drawn into a discussion of the reading afterwards with the rest of the class.) Say or sing together

Alleluia, Alleluia!
 Glory be to the Father,
 And to the Son,
 And to the Holy Spirit. Amen.

READER 1: A reading from the Good News given to us by Matthew.

RESPONSE: Glory to you, Lord.

READER 2: It was after the resurrection. Jesus' friends made their way to the mountain where Jesus had arranged to meet them. Jesus came up and spoke to them. He said: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go then, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Teach them to do all things I have told you. Know that I am with you always, yes, even to the end of time." This is the Gospel of the Lord.

RESPONSE: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

WHAT YOU NEED

- * Objects and pictures: three-in-one (1)
- * Table with 3 matches, a candle and a cross (2)
- * Large cross or crucifix (3)
- * The alleluia and gospel reading [Mt 28:16-20] prepared by 3 children before the lesson (4)
- * Cut-out crosses (6)
- * Variety of crosses or illustrations (7)
- * Posters of the chi-rho and fish symbols (8)
- * Variety of religious symbols (9)
- * Worksheet (9) ⇨
- * *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross* (10)

- 5 Ask the children what things we do **in the name of** the Father, Son and Holy Spirit? To invoke the name of God means to ask God's power and blessing on the activity we are about to perform. All prayer in the Catholic tradition, therefore, starts with this formula.
- 6 Let the children write the words of the *Glory Be* - see ACTIVITY 4 - on a **cut out shape** of a cross.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- 7 Display different **types of Crosses** in a prayer corner. Point out the difference between a cross and a crucifix. The crucifix has the figure of Jesus on it, whereas the cross does not.
- 8 Explain **other Christian symbols**, such as the chi-rho and the fish. The chi-rho puts together the first two letters of the Greek word 'Christ'. The fish was a secret symbol used by early Christians in times of persecution. The Greek word for fish is 'ichthys'. The letters of the word formed a code which went like this: I-Jesus, CH-Christ, TH-God's, Y-Son, S-Saviour. Of course, it makes better sense to the person who speaks Greek and understands the Greek alphabet, as most Christians did at that time.



CHI RHO

ICHTHYS



- 9 Have a variety of **religious symbols** displayed with the names of the religions underneath them, and explain the meaning of each symbol. The worksheet asks learners to match symbols with the correct name and religion. 📖 ⇨
- 10 **Song:** *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*

Religious Symbols

There are TEN different religious symbols on this sheet. Can you identify them?

CHI-RHO

CRUCIFIX

FISH

MALTESE CROSS

OM (Hindu)

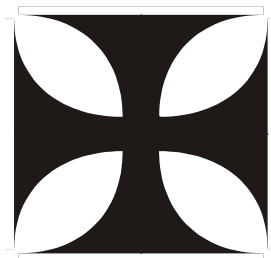
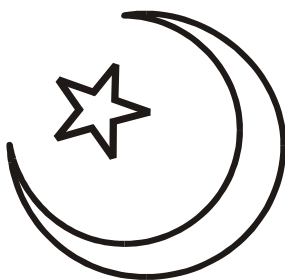
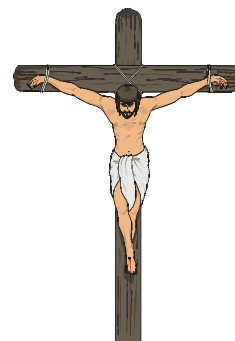
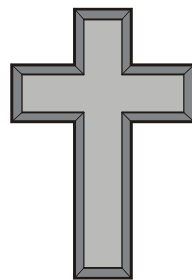
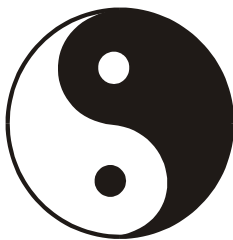
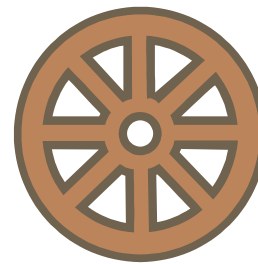
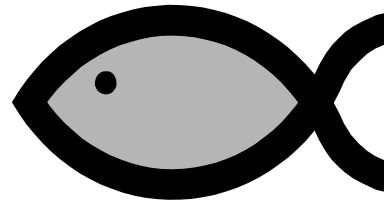
STAR OF DAVID (Jewish)

STAR AND CRESCENT (Islam)

TRADITIONAL CROSS

WHEEL OF THE LAW (Buddhist)

YIN-YANG (Chinese Taoist)



LESSON 16: Places of Worship



AIM

The children will better understand what actions are appropriate in places of worship. (5.2.1, 5.4.6)

OUTCOME

Learner have a sense of reverence and recollection before prayer and in places set aside for worship.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- 1 **Where Is God?** Ask the children where they think they would find God? Could they draw a map to where God is? Allow time for them to think. Note their responses, which may include the following: God is in heaven; God is everywhere; God is in each person. Do all these answers make sense together? We may say:
 - Heaven is where God is.
 - God is everywhere (just like the incense in the room, even though we may not be able to see it).
 - Therefore, heaven is everywhere.

Heaven is not a place in the sense South Africa, or London, or New York is. So we cannot draw a map to God. When we say that Jesus ascended into heaven, we mean that Jesus is with God, and therefore is everywhere. People used to picture heaven in the sky, a place above the earth. That is why a Russian astronaut, on returning to earth from a space trip, said, "There is no God. I have been to heaven, and I did not see Him."
- 2 Another name for heaven is the **Kingdom of God**. This is where God lives, God's home, so to speak. The place we call church or God's house, is where we celebrate God's Kingdom together.
- 3 Encourage the children to **talk about their homes** and their friends' homes. How do they behave when they visit a friend?
 - what type of house do you live in?
 - who have you visited?
 - who visits you at home?
 - when visitors come, how do you prepare for them?
 - why do people visit each other?
- 4 Apply the thoughts and ideas to **places of worship**. Consider what is appropriate by way of
 - dress (not over-casual, dirty or giving offense in any way)
 - punctuality (if you are going to a service)
 - respectful silence (so as not to disturb others)
 - recollection (being prepared to be with God)

WHAT YOU NEED

- * Paraliturgy preparation (5)
⇒
- * 🎵 *Building the Kingdom, Come, Lord Jesus, Come* (5)
- * Basket, gifts (5)
- * Magazines, newspapers, glue, scissors (6)
- * Photos (7)
- * Camera (9)

GRADE 3

- participation (joining in the prayers and hymns, contributing a gift when this is the custom)

In the paraliturgy which follows, the children will have an opportunity to put some of these considerations into practice, even if they choose not to participate.

5 Paraliturgy: Hold this simple service in a church or chapel if possible. To prepare the class for it, you will need to:

- teach the songs
- prepare the readers
- organise the pairs for the mimes
- decide with the class whom they would like to give a gift to (unless this activity marginalises some: if that is the case, leave it out)
- ask the children to bring a gift for the poor
- prepare a basket to hold the gifts

ALL: Sing *Building the Kingdom* (or some other suitable song)

READER 1: Alleluia, Alleluia

ALL: Lord, come and make your home with us.

Alleluia

READER 2: A reading from the Good News given to us by Matthew

ALL: Glory to you, Lord.

All are invited to make the sign of the cross on forehead, lips and heart.

READER 2: Jesus says: Who are the people that my Father will welcome into his kingdom?

The kingdom will be full of the people

- who gave me food when I was hungry;
- who gave me drink when I was thirsty;
- who made me welcome when I was a stranger;
- who clothed me when I was naked;
- who visited me when I was sick;
- who came to see me when I was in prison.

These are the people my Father will welcome into the kingdom.

Whatever you do to the least of these my friends, you do to me!

This is the Good News of the Lord

ALL: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

As the reader names each of the kingdom people in the reading, pairs of children mime or act the scene described.

ALL: Sing *Come, Lord Jesus, Come.*

During the singing, in an orderly way, children bring their gifts and place them in the basket.

6 Working in the groups of the previous lesson, the children cut out magazine or newspaper **pictures** to depict the different people who are mentioned in the Gospel reading. They stick these pictures around the label WHERE IS GOD? that they have already decorated.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- 7 Ask children to take **photographs** of their own church and congregation. Stick these up on the group collage.
- 8 Using the outline of a house, ask each child to draw a picture of all their **family members** at home. Add these pictures to the collages.
- 9 **Visit a church, a temple, a mosque, or a synagogue** of another faith community. Take photographs and add to the collages.