

These materials are designed to support the content of the GenR8 assembly “Amazing Love”, presented for Easter 2020, as well as giving useful background to some key dates in the Christian calendar in the lead up to Easter. They support the religious education enquiry process advocated in the local agreed syllabi in Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire. Some useful background to Christian beliefs and practices can also be found here: <http://www.reonline.org.uk/knowning/what-re/christianity/practices-and-ways-of-life>

Focus	Questions to challenge and inspire	Suggested activities to deepen understanding
Christian dates leading to Easter		
Lent	<p>What is Lent and when does it begin and end?</p> <p>What can I do if someone tries to persuade me to do something wrong?</p>	<p>Read together/act out the story of Jesus’ time in the wilderness in Matthew chapter 4 verses 1-11. Look at art work denoting Christ in the wilderness. There is an evocative painting by Kramskoy available on Google: https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/christ-in-the-wilderness/uwEOJTS-uQb5ww?hl=en-GB. Use the painting with thought bubbles or write prayers considering how Jesus may have been feeling.</p>
Palm Sunday	<p>Why do Christians celebrate Palm Sunday? Think about Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem on a donkey as a sign of humility.</p>	<p>Find out about Jesus entering Jerusalem on a donkey at the time of the Passover (celebrating the time when God had led the people to freedom, Mark chapter 11 verses 1-11, John chapter 12 verses 12-19). There is a useful video on Bible Quest -Holy Week and Easter: https://request.org.uk/restart/2017/06/05/bible-quest-holy-week/</p> <p>Look at a palm cross and reflect upon the reason they were made in this shape. Write thank you or sorry prayers onto outlines of hands. These can be mounted onto green paper and displayed assembled in groups on mock palm branches.</p>
Maundy Thursday and the “Last Supper”	<p>What does the Bible say that Jesus did to show that He is a servant king?</p> <p>How did Jesus teach His disciples to remember Him? (see also The Emmaus Road story below)</p>	<p>Find out about the events of Maundy Thursday (Matthew chapter 26 verses 17-30, Luke chapter 22 verses 7-38, Mark chapter 14 verses 12-26) http://request.org.uk/tag/maundy-thursday/.</p> <p>Think about Jesus’ action in washing the disciples’ feet as a deep expression of his humility and love alongside his command ‘love one another as I have loved you.’ Write poems thinking how you would feel if you were Peter in this story. Find out about what happens after a Maundy Thursday communion service (stripping of the altar, possibly a watchnight service).</p> <p>Christians remember what Jesus said and did at this “Last Supper” when they celebrate “Holy Communion”, sharing bread and wine. Create a simple chart linking Holy Communion with the Last Supper.</p>

Focus	Questions to challenge and inspire	Suggested activities to deepen understanding
Ideas supporting the assembly		
Puppet sketch – the champion	<p>What did Long Legs Lenny give up to help his friend?</p> <p>Why did the puppets think he was the real winner?</p> <p>How does Lenny’s unselfish action relate to what happened to Jesus in the Easter story?</p>	<p>Make a cartoon strip or zig-zag book of the story the puppets told. Suggested captions for each box / page are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. At the start of the cross-country race everyone lines up. 2. Turbo Tina was in the lead with Long Legs Lenny following. 3. Suddenly, Tina tripped over and Lenny tripped over her! 4. Lenny ran on, but looked back to see Tina still lying on her face. 5. Lenny went back to rescue his friend. 6. Lenny carried Tina home. Slowstart Simon won the race. 7. Who was the true champion? <p>With the children, discuss ways that they might be able to act unselfishly to help others in the school and elsewhere.</p>
Mime – Good Friday	<p>Why do Christians believe that Jesus died on Good Friday? What do they believe he achieved?</p> <p>Are there any bad things that you have done that would like to get rid of?</p>	<p>Watch a video and find out more about the events of Good Friday here: https://request.org.uk/restart/2017/06/05/bible-quest-holy-week/ and here: www.request.org.uk/festivals/Easter or you can read from the Bible: Mark chapter 15 verses 21-47.</p> <p>Christians believe that Jesus died on the cross on Good Friday to take the punishment for the wrong things we think, say and do - things that separate us from God. Christians say sorry for these things and promise to try not to do them again – this is called repentance – so that they can be part of God’s family.</p> <p>Give out pieces of scrap paper or newspaper and ask the children to think about something they might have done wrong – it could be one of the things from the mime (lying, stealing, bullying, selfishness) or something else. Ask them to screw the paper up and throw it into a bin as a symbol of saying that will try not to do that wrong thing again.</p>
A Song from the Bible	<p>For Christians, the greatest thing is to be part of God’s family and not separated from God’s love.</p>	<p>The song “How Broad, How Long”, by John Hardwick can be found here: https://genr8.org/useful-links/songs/</p> <p>Look up the Bible verses used in the song – Ephesians chapter 3 verse 18 and Romans chapter 8 verse 38-39.</p>

Focus	Questions to challenge and inspire	Suggested activities to deepen understanding
Easter Sunday – Jesus is alive again	Jesus' friends were sad after Good Friday. What made them happy on Easter Sunday?	<p>Watch a video and find out more about the events of Easter Sunday here: https://request.org.uk/restart/2017/06/05/bible-quest-holy-week/ and here: www.request.org.uk/festivals/Easter, or you can read from the Bible Matthew chapter 28 verses 1-10, John chapter 20 verses 1-9.</p> <p>Plant seeds and talk about the fact that they have to be buried before they can bring new life as they grow. Over the coming weeks, watch them grow, illustrating the miracle of new life.</p>
The Emmaus Road Story: Cleopas and his friend meet Jesus again	<p>Why were the friends sad when they started walking to Emmaus?</p> <p>When did they start to get excited?</p> <p>When did they recognise Jesus? Why?</p>	<p>Read the Emmaus Road story (see Luke chapter 24 verses 13-35) in a children's Bible, or use www.biblegateway.com and choose the 'easy to read option'.</p> <p>Display a painting on the theme of this event in Emmaus – e.g. Abraham Bloemaert's 'The Emmaus Disciples' - https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bloemaert_Emmaus.jpg on a whiteboard, or enlarge on paper. It illustrates the moment when one of the two friends recognises Jesus when he breaks bread, as retold in our story. Jesus had done this on the night before he died (see Luke chapter 22 verse 19, and Maundy Thursday, above) and the disciples recognised the action. Ask the children to add call-outs to show what was going on.</p>
Poem – He is the One	What do Christians believe was special about Jesus and his life?	<p>The Poem tells the story of Jesus' life, ending with the events of Easter. The first verse is below – ask the children to finish the poem themselves, writing other verses about Jesus and Easter using the same structure.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>He is the one who was born in a stable He is the one who walked on the earth He is the one who said "Love your neighbour" He is the one who healed the hurt.</i></p>
Comparing Easter around the world	How do Easter celebrations around the world link to the story in the Bible?	<p>How is Easter celebrated in different countries around the world and why?</p> <p>https://www.whyehaster.com/</p>