

YEAR

CHRISTMAS

5

UNIT D

ABOUT THE UNIT

In this unit the children will hear about the story of Christmas from St. Matthew's Gospel. They will explore the difficulties faced by Mary and Joseph and the tensions that arose in King Herod.

WHERE THE UNIT FITS IN

This unit builds on previous work on the characters in the Christmas story.

PRIOR LEARNING

It would be helpful if the children could:

- sequence some of the events and name characters in the Christmas Story.

SKILLS

Research skills, speaking and listening, thinking skills, writing skills, map work, prayer writing.

VOCABULARY

Matthew, Wise Men Herod, Bethlehem, Egypt, refugee.

ASSESSMENT

At the end of this unit:

Most children will know the main features of the Christmas Story and understand some of the difficulties faced by the different characters in the story.

Less able children will know the main features of the Christmas Story.

More able children will ask deeper questions about the actions of Herod and why he was so opposed to the birth of this special child.

A.T.1

A.T.2

3a

3c

4a

2a

2b

3a

3c

4a

4a

PROGRAMME OF STUDY

TEACHING STRATEGIES

R3 Hear about and explore the Bible.

R4 Hear, read and explore the Gospel accounts of key events in the life of Jesus: The Nativity.

L6 Ways love of neighbour can be shown at home, at church, locally and globally.

C3 A variety of prayers and prayer forms.

C7 Community prayer through taking part in and leading simple celebrations.

- Children to find references to the birth of Jesus in Matthew's and Luke's Gospels.
- Read the story of the birth of Jesus in Matthew's Gospel and record the main features in note form.
- Invite the pupils to "hot seat" King Herod. Ask the children to compose questions that would reveal his thoughts and feelings.
- Children to "hot seat" Mary and Joseph in the same way.
- Compare the answers given by Mary and Joseph with those of King Herod. Did they think about the birth of this baby in different ways? Highlight the major differences.
- Create "for and against" lists for the baby Jesus from the answers of Mary, Joseph and King Herod.
- Follow this up by producing a news report for the Six O'Clock News. Include an interview with King Herod, maps which highlight Nazareth, Bethlehem and Jerusalem.
- Children to write play scripts based on the Christmas story from different perspectives (e.g. the perspective of the Wise Men)
- Alternatively, create some writing frames called "through the window". Children to imagine King Herod looking out of his palace window. What are his fears and anxieties at the birth of this child?
- Imagine the Wise Men looking in through the stable window at the manger scene. What are their thoughts and reactions at being there?
- Explore with the children some of the journeys associated with Matthew's account of the birth of Jesus.
- Make a table to record the different journeys, the dilemmas faced and how they were resolved.
- On the map of the Holy Land, trace the journey of the Holy Family from Nazareth – Bethlehem-Egypt-Nazareth. How far is it? How difficult a journey do you think it was? How long might it have taken them to get from Egypt back to Nazareth?
- Explore newspaper and television reports which address problems of the homeless. Who are the homeless? Why are they homeless? How might the life and teaching of Jesus inspire people to help those who are homeless?
- Look with the children at Estate Agent information. What do we find in an ideal house?
- In groups, children to produce a recipe for an ideal house.
- Reflect with the children about refugees and homeless people not having opportunities to create such an ideal living place.
- Write a bullet point list imagining what the accommodation was like for Mary and Joseph in the stable.
- Create a "For Sale" advertisement for the stable advertising its limited features.
- Incorporate prayers for the homeless, refugees and asylum seekers in collective worship and class liturgies which focus on the Nativity of Jesus.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

R3 Of how to find their way around the Bible.

R4 That the Gospels proclaim that Jesus is the fulfilment of God's promises; that Jesus' death on the cross expressed his love for his Father and for all people, and changed the world.

- Know the main features of the Christmas story from Matthew's Gospel.
- Understand some reasons for King Herod's anxiety over the birth of Jesus.
- Discuss and write about the thoughts and feelings of Herod, Joseph, Mary and the Wise Men at the birth of Jesus.

- Know some of the journeys in the Christmas story.
- Understand some difficulties these imposed on the Holy Family.
- Be able to trace the journeys on the map.

L6 That the commandment are guides to true love of oneself and others.

- Know that Jesus was born in poverty.
- Understand some of the difficulties faced by homeless people and refugees today.

C3 Increased variety of forms of prayer.

C7 That the Church celebrates the life and love of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

Think of lots of different aspects that could be put into a news broadcast of the Christmas story. Include weather and travel news, etc.

This could be an opportunity for ICT.

Find out about the work of Catholic charities supporting the homeless.

Research some information about refugees and asylum seekers.

RELATED SCRIPTURE

Mt. 1: 18-2: 23 – The Birth of Jesus

OTHER LINKS

Map work links are essential to this unit of work.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

- Sing the 'Coventry Carol' as part of collective worship.
- How does this retell Matthew's account of the birth of Jesus?
- Prayers for refugees and those in grave need.

EVALUATION

What went well?

Which areas of planning need to be developed/adapted next time?

What needs to be revisited/developed in a later unit?