Teachers’ Guidance

Seeing Jesus

We are looking for evidence of pupils grappling with content such as this in response to the ways we can ‘see’ Jesus. Pupils will reflect on what it means that Jesus can be represented as a human, and all the ways this is done. Alternatively, they might reflect on what Jesus means to Christians, as a different way of ‘seeing’ him. The material below are examples only. We look forward to seeing art inspired by a wide variety of stimuli.

Jesus the man

For Christians, the truth at the heart of Christian belief is that God came to earth in the person of a man; Jesus of Nazareth. This event is called the Incarnation; God taking on a body. For Christians this means that Jesus can be shown as a human. Younger pupils might look at images of all the ways Jesus has been represented. They might think about what different the representations mean. Older pupils might reflect on why Christians all over the world and in different situations want to create a Jesus that looks like them. What does this tell us about people, as well as about Jesus himself?

Additionally, older pupils might read a text which affirms the Incarnation such as John 1:14. Who or what is the ‘Word’? What does it mean that the word was ‘made flesh’?

Jesus in the bible

We learn everything about Jesus from the bible. Read a bible story of Jesus and discuss what it tells Christians about him.

- In three Gospels Jesus heals a woman who has been ill for many years (Matt 9:18-26, Mark 5: 21-43, Luke 8: 40-56). Unknown to him, she touches his cloak. Jesus feels this, and turns around. He tells her she has been healed by her own faith in him. This is an incredible story; what does it tell Christians about Jesus’ power, and about the importance of faith for his followers?
- Jesus told many stories, called ‘parables’. They were often simple stories featuring things his audience would have understood. However, the meanings underneath the stories are far from ordinary. In the Story of the Lost Sheep (Luke 15: 3-7, Matt 18:12-14) Jesus paints a picture of a shepherd who has a hundred sheep and loses one. Even though he has many, the shepherd looks for the lost sheep and is happy when he finds it. This tells Jesus’ listeners that God cares for each and every one of them, like a shepherd. In John 10:11, Jesus also describes himself as a good shepherd, suggesting that a good shepherd will ‘lay down his life’ for his sheep, hinting at what would happen him eventually.
- Jesus told his followers what sort of world he wanted. Read extracts from the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5), such as ‘blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God’ (Matt 5:8) or ‘blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called the children of God’ (Matt 5:9). Think about what Jesus himself tells us about what is most important to him.

Beliefs about Jesus

Explore with pupils what Jesus means to Christians. He represents different things, such as,

- The messiah. This is a Hebrew word meaning ‘saviour’. What is a saviour? This is the basis of the Christian message but is quite hard to grasp, even for grown-ups! Younger pupils might think about how Jesus is a role model for humans. With older pupils, identify bits of the Christmas story which talk about Jesus as a saviour who has come to earth. You could do this through Christmas cards or Christmas carols. Reflect on what humans need to be saved from, and how Jesus can help.

- A rebel. Jesus taught a message of love but he didn’t always agree with those in authority. Find out about when Jesus argues with religious teachers, such as in Mark 2:15-17. The religious teachers think he is wrong for eating a meal with ‘sinners’, but Jesus answers that these are exactly the people he has come to help. In Matt 23:1-12 he actually argues with the religious teachers because they do not show love to those who most need it. Older pupils might be very interested to find out about this rebellious side of Jesus!
- God on earth: see Incarnation section above.