

CHRISTIAN JOURNEYS

AT1:

Pupils will:

- *Acquire knowledge and develop understanding of some of the influences of life experiences, beliefs, values and faith traditions upon individuals, communities, societies and cultures.*

AT2:

Pupils will:

- *Develop awareness of some of the fundamental questions of life raised by human experiences, and of how religious teachings can relate to them.*
- *Reflect on their own beliefs, values, perceptions and experiences in the light of their study of religion.*
- *Develop positive attitudes of respect towards other people who hold views and beliefs that are different from their own.*

Pupils will be enabled to:

- *Consider their own feelings about making journeys and understand the beliefs and values of others who have made journeys.*
- *Appreciate why many Christian missions take people away from their homes.*
- *Consider their own life as a journey and what skills and qualities are needed to take them on their journey in the future.*

SESSION 1: Introduction

1. Discuss what a 'journey' is.

- *What has been the best journey they have been on?*
- *Why do people make journeys?*
- *How do people feel before, during and after a journey?*
- *How have journeys changed over the years?*
- *What modes of transport have the children used to make different journeys?*
- *What essential things do you need for a long journey? (map, food, provision for shelter etc)*

2. Look at journeys made in the New Testament and compare with today's journeys.

- *Discuss Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem, before Jesus was born.*
- *Discuss Joseph's journey to the temple in Jerusalem, when he was a young boy. How do you think Mary felt when she realised Jesus wasn't in the crowd when they started to journey back home again?*
- *Discuss the journey Jesus made on Palm Sunday, when he returned to Jerusalem. How did he feel?*
- *Discuss the journey Jesus made when crucifixion was ordered and he had to pass through crowds of people carrying his cross.*

3. Use writing and images to compare and contrast one New Testament journey and one modern-day journey that they have made.

SESSION 2: Epiphany (The journey of the Wise Men – January 6th)

1. Discuss the events that happened when the wise men (Magi) heard about the birth of Jesus and travelled to Bethlehem, via King Herod.

- *Why did the wise men make the journey?*
- *How were they feeling? Why?*
- *What did they take? Why?*
- *How did they travel? Why?*
- *Why did King Herod say that he wanted to visit Jesus too? Was he lying? What did he really want to do and why?*
- *Why did the wise men not go back to King Herod?*
- *How do you think Mary and Joseph felt when the wise men visited them?*

2. Use writing and images to explain the journey that the wise men made. Try to include as much information from the discussion as possible.

SESSION 3: The legend of Saint Christopher

1. Discuss the legend of Saint Christopher – the patron saint of travellers.

- *Discuss grammatical and vocabulary anomalies in the text; eg; why a capital h for He and Him and the capital c for Child?*
- *Discuss the old vocabulary (hast, thou etc) and what it means.*
- *Discuss why Saint Christopher became the patron saint for travellers. Why do people wear necklaces with images of Saint Christopher on? Why would you need 'luck' or 'protection' on a journey?*

2. Write / illustrate the Legend of Saint Christopher. (Could be in cartoon strip form).

SESSION 4: The Journeys of Saint Paul

1. Discuss the journeys of Saint Paul.

- *Plot Paul's journeys on a map.*
- *Why did he travel so far to tell people about Jesus?*
- *Discuss how he wrote lots of letters during his journeys and how these have become part of the Bible. Look at some of the letters (from the Bible) and discuss why he might have written them.*
- *Why were Paul's letters so important to the people who received them?*

2. Write an explanation of why Paul made his journeys and what he wrote about in his letters. Explain how his letters tell Christians how they should behave towards others. Explain how this guidance can still be used today.

SESSION 5: The Journeys of prominent people

1. Discuss the Biography of Mother Teresa.

- *Discuss the meaning of the word 'missionary'.*
- *Discuss why Mother Teresa made the journey from her home in Yugoslavia to become a nun in Ireland and then why she travelled to teach in India and then travelled again to work with the poor in Calcutta.*
- *Do you think Mother Teresa felt her work was worth it? What inspired her? What rewards did she get or did she not look for rewards?*
- *Discuss other charity work – why do people make dangerous and long journeys to help others? (eg; Christian Aid's work to strengthen the poor that all may share in the feast of life, to tackle issues of poverty and inequality)*
- *Have you ever helped a charity? How? Why?*
- *What charities has the school helped in the past? How? Why?*

2. Discuss Christian pilgrimages

- *What is a pilgrimage?*
- *Why do Christians (and other religions) make them?*
- *Where would the destination of a Christian pilgrimage be and why?*
- *If you were to make a pilgrimage, where would it be to and why?*

3. Choose an appropriate way to present the information about Mother Teresa and her journeys – why she made them and what she did etc.

SESSION 6: The Journey of Life / What have we learnt?

1. Discuss how life is like a journey.

- *Look back on children's lives and their journey from birth to present day. If they were to plot this on paper, what would be the main points? What would be the things they valued the most? Why?*
- *Discuss the future 'life journeys' they will be making – where would they like to end up? What events might happen to them along the way? (eg; Secondary School, exams, university, jobs, marriage, children etc).*
- *Discuss what skills and qualities they will need to help them travel through adolescence to adulthood. Why?*
- *Discuss what guides us through life. What helps us? Why? What could be right turnings? Why? What could be a wrong turning? Why?*

2. Draw and write about your survival bag for your life journey.

- *If you were to pack a bag to help you on your journey through life, what would you put in it? (eg; what skills and qualities as well as material objects?)*
- *Discuss what can you learn from the Christian journeys we have studied?*

THE LEGEND OF SAINT CHRISTOPHER

Once upon a time there lived a great giant named Offerus, all alone by the banks of a mighty river. He was so strong that he was able to pull up the forest trees by the roots, and he was so tall that he could easily step from one hill to another. He could have crushed a man with his little finger, but he never hurt so much as a tiny sparrow, for he was a good giant.

It was wicked river which Offerus had built his hut. It was wide and deep, and it rushed and tumbled along, ready to break the boats and drown the poor travellers who wished to cross it. But Offerus was stronger than the river. He took a huge pine tree for a staff, and whenever it was a dark, stormy night, and he heard cries of distress from the river, he would plunge into the water and carry the travellers safely to the other side. He was always ready and never weary.

One night there was a more terrible storm than usual. The forest trees moaned and sighed, and the river roared as it beat against the shore. Offerus sat in his hut and he heard a tiny voice crying through the storm: "Offerus, come forth and carry me over!"

It did not seem as if anyone could be out in such a wild storm, but the giant heard the small voice again calling "Offerus, come forth and carry me across!"

So Offerus took his pine-tree staff and reached for his lantern which hung upon the wall and he opened the door to go out into the night. It was very dark and the rain beat into his face so that he could scarcely see, but he looked up and down, holding his lantern high above his head. He came to a little Child, all drenched with the rain, waiting for him on the bank of the river.

"Offerus, you must carry me over this night" he called. So Offerus lifted the little Child in his strong arms and took his staff, and waded into the stream thinking what a light burden he carried.

But the waves rose higher and higher, the waters came up to his shoulder and the wind blew fiercely. The strangest thing of all was this: at every step the little Child upon his shoulders grew heavier and heavier, until it seemed to Offerus that he would never be able to cross the river – he must turn and go back.

But he was brave, as all giants are, and he struggled on, tottering as he went and staying his steps with his stout staff; and at last he reached the other side. As he set down his burden – safely and gently – he said "Child, who art thou? The whole world upon my shoulders could not have been heavier than thou hast been!" The Child looked up and said softly, as He laid His little hand in Offerus' great one: "In helping every poor traveller, thou hast been helping me. Blessed shalt thou be, Saint. Christopher! This night thou hast carried over the Christ Child."

Then the Christ Child slipped away into the night and Saint Christopher stood and looked after Him, leaning upon his staff and thinking of the wonderful thing which had happened to him.

Suddenly the staff took root in the ground; although it was the bleak winter season; and it flourished and sent forth branches and leaves. It towered over the other trees in the forest to show every traveller who should pass that way, the place where Saint Christopher had carried over the little Christ Child.



Missionary Trips of St. Paul

Paul was born in Tarsus, southern part of Turkey in ancient Cilicia. His date of birth is placed by the scholars between 1 AD and 6th AD. He was named after Saul, the first king of Israel. He came from a rich and powerful Jewish family. His father or his relatives obtained the Roman citizenship and full civil rights of the city of Tarsus.



Educated by his mother and his father during his early years, Paul was sent to Jerusalem for further studies and studied at the academy of Gamaliel, one of the most respected Jewish teachers. During the early years, he took action against Christians and took part in their persecutions. His name spread all over the Roman world and created fear. His life totally changed after his vision when Christ appeared to him on the way to Damascus. Christ appeared to him and said: "Paul, why do you persecute me"

Paul who got blind after his vision, was healed with the help of one of the disciples. When he returned to Jerusalem great difficulties were waiting for him. Neither Christian nor Jewish believed or trusted him. He returned to his home town, Tarsus. His writings nowhere indicate that he knew Jesus or his disciples. He left Jerusalem and returned Tarsus during the Christ's ministry and he didn't return to Jerusalem till Jesus' death.

After Saint Barnabas found him in Tarsus and persuaded him to come to Antioch with him, Saint Paul made three great successive journeys which covered big part of Anatolia and Greece. Finally, after his third missionary trip, he was arrested in Jerusalem. Since he wanted to appeal to Caesar, he was taken to Rome. After two years imprisonment in Rome, he was found innocent and was freed.

Paul and Peter were arrested after the great fire of Rome and were blamed for. Peter was crucified upside down on the capitol hill where there is great church of Vatican now. As to Paul, since he was a Roman citizen he was beheaded near Ostia gate in Rome.

First Missionary Journey of Paul

Acts:13-14 -AD 46-48



Paul, Barnabas and John Mark started their missionary Journey from Syrian Antioch in the year of 47 AD. They went to harbor town of Seleucia and sailed first to Salamis in Cyprus from where Barnabas was originated. They arrived to Salamis (Acts 13:4-5), one of the great commercial harbors of Cyprus. They proclaimed the word of God the synagogues of Jews. They passed the island from the east to west and arrived the city of Paphos, the center of Roman rule and the cult of Aphrodite. The city of Paphos had an evil reputation for the laxity of moral of its inhabitants. Paul and companions met the Roman Proconsul, Sergius Paulos and the sorcerer called Elimas who was blinded by Paul. Proconsul became one of the believers and from this point on Saul started using this Roman name, Paul, Paul and friends then sailed for Pamphilia, south west Anatolia. They possibly arrived to Attalia, the main port of the region and moved to Perge, the most important city of Pamphilia region. Paul didn't stay long time in Perge. Young John Mark left the party. He was either scared of dangerous trip to north through the Taurus mountains or irritated by the leadership of Paul in the group or he was homesick. Paul and Barnabas journeyed towards Pisidian Antioch, located 100 miles in the north of Perge. In Pisidian Antioch Paul utters his historical words:

"Now, we turn to Gentiles"

After Pisidian Antioch, Paul and Barnabas moved to Lystra where people thought that Paul and Barnabas were Gods. When they learned about the truth, they tried to persecute Paul and Barnabas. Paul was stoned and beaten to such an extent that people thought he had died. Next city they would arrive was Derbe where the apostles made a lot of disciples and one of them was Gaius who accompanied Paul during his last missionary journey. Paul after staying for a while in Derbe. He starts his return journey by retracing their initial road. hey returned to Attalia from where they set sail to Antioch to report the results of his missionary journey. The first journey which lasted 18 months ended in the fall of 47 AD.

Second Missionary Journey

Acts: 15:36-4;16-18 AD 49-51



Second journey of Paul started from Syrian Antioch. This time, he was accompanied by Silas. Wishing to revisit some of the cities he visited during the first missionary journey, he went to Tarsus, Derbe, Lystra and some other cities of Galatia. Then Paul wanted to go to the Asian province of the Roman Empire but he was prevented by the Holy Spirit from going there. Then he wanted to go north to Bytina Region but this time, he was prevented by the spirit of Christ. Paul and companions were guided towards Troas, a city in the south of Dardanelles, a popular crossing point from Asia to Europe. When Paul arrived there, he had his famous vision. In his dream, he had a man from Macedonia beseeching to come over to Macedonia to help them. From the Acts of Apostles, we also understand that Luke, the author of the Fourth Gospel and the writer of the Acts of Apostles joined to Paul's Party. Paul and companions first went to island of Samothrace, then arrived to Neapolis and Philippi where Paul met Lydia, a rich women from the city of Thyatira. In Philippi, Paul was disturbed by a mentally irritated slave girl who had peculiar powers. She was healed by Paul and she and her family were baptized by Paul who was arrested and put into a prison upon complains of the owners of the girl. Paul's party continued their journey and they passed Amphipolis, Apollonia, Thessalonica and arrived Athens where he has bitter argument with the philosophers of the city. Going to further south Paul arrived the city of Corinth, one of the important cities of southern Greece. After staying nearly 1 year, he traveled to Ephesus, the capital city of Asia. He was accompanied by Aquila and Priscilla, close friends of Paul from Corinth. Paul first went to Synagogues of Ephesus and spoke with the elders of the synagogues and argued with them Christian doctrines. He didn't stay long time in Ephesus to keep the feast (passover) in Jerusalem. After promising he would return to Ephesus, he left for the Holy lands. After his journey from Ephesus, Paul landed in Caesarea on the coastline of Palestine. Then he went up before to Jerusalem and finally to Antioch.

Third Missionary Trip *Acts 18:23-28;19-21 - AD 53-57*



When Paul started his third missionary trip, the city in his mind was Ephesus and that was the main aim of his third trip. On the way to Ephesus, he revisited some of the cities of Galacia and traveled to Ephesus where he worked 2 and half years. His missionary work in Ephesus ended with the Silversmith Riot which forced Paul to leave. Planning to go to Macedonia, Paul stopped at Troas where he possibly spent few months of winter till he got the suitable weather for safe journey for northern Greece. Paul and his companions continued their journey to Macedonia where they spent nearly 18 then mouths in the Greece. Because of several attempts of murder, Paul didn't have a ship from Corint but returned to Troas where he had his miracle related to young boy who fell from the window of s Roman House. Instead of taking the boat with his friends, he preferred walking 20 miles over the mountains to Assos. After Assos, Paul's boat stops the some Aegean islands such as Mitytline, Chios and Samos. Paul's boat stopped in Miletos where he met the elders of the Ephesians Church. It was a touching ceremony in the Lion Harbor of Ephesus. Everyone cried. They all knew they wouldn't see each other after this meeting. Paul, after staying 3 days, he left for Holy Lands.

Paul's Last Journey and Martyrdom

In Jerusalem, Paul was accused by preaching against Mosaic Law and the temple. He was further condemned by bringing a Gentile into temple grounds and defiling the temple. Paul was finally arrested and appeared in the court. Willing to appeal to Roman Emperor, he was taken to Rome. On the way to Rome, his ship called at Lycian town of Myra and then shipwrecked in the south west of Crete and drawn towards island of Malta where Paul healed the father Malta's governor. When he was in Rome waiting for the trial, Paul was treated nicely and had even opportunity to preach in Rome. He stayed nearly two years as prisoner and continued the evangelistic work. After being freed, Paul continued his missionary journeys, he possibly returned to Ephesus, Miletus and Troas where he was possibly arrested. It is suggested that he even went to Spain which he had been dreaming about.

Paul and Peter were arrested once more after the great fire of Rome during the time of Nero. Paul was possibly in Troas during his arrest and sent to Rome for his second trial.

Martyrdom

The life of this great man ended in Rome after the great fire which ravaged the city. Paul was condemned and executed in 67 AD. just a year before the death of Emperor Nero. Since he was a Roman citizens, he was beheaded just outside of city wall, near to Ostian Gate at Salvian Springs.

Biography of Mother Teresa



Mother Teresa was born Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu in Skopje*, Macedonia, on August 26**, 1910. Her family was of Albanian descent. At the age of twelve, she felt strongly the call of God. She knew she had to be a missionary to spread the love of Christ. At the age of eighteen she left her parental home in Skopje and joined the Sisters of Loreto, an Irish community of nuns with missions in India. After a few months' training in Dublin she was sent to India, where on May 24, 1931, she took her initial vows as a nun. From 1931 to 1948 Mother Teresa taught at St. Mary's High School in Calcutta, but the suffering and poverty she glimpsed outside the convent walls made such a deep impression on her that in 1948 she received permission from her superiors to leave the convent school and devote herself to working among the poorest of the poor in the slums of Calcutta. Although she had no funds, she depended on Divine Providence, and started an open-air school for slum children. Soon she was joined by voluntary helpers, and financial support was also forthcoming. This made it possible for her to extend the scope of her work.

On October 7, 1950, Mother Teresa received permission from the Holy See to start her own order, "The Missionaries of Charity", whose primary task was to love and care for those persons nobody was prepared to look after. In 1965 the Society became an International Religious Family by a decree of Pope Paul VI.

Today the order comprises Active and Contemplative branches of Sisters and Brothers in many countries. In 1963 both the Contemplative branch of the Sisters and the Active branch of the Brothers was founded. In 1979 the Contemplative branch of the Brothers was added, and in 1984 the Priest branch was established.

The Society of Missionaries has spread all over the world, including the former Soviet Union and Eastern European countries. They provide effective help to the poorest of the poor in a number of countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, and they undertake relief work in the wake of natural catastrophes such as floods, epidemics, and famine, and for refugees. The order also has houses in North America, Europe and Australia, where they take care of the shut-ins, alcoholics, homeless, and AIDS sufferers.

The Missionaries of Charity throughout the world are aided and assisted by Co-Workers who became an official International Association on March 29, 1969. By the 1990s there were over one million Co-Workers in more than 40 countries. Along with the Co-Workers, the lay Missionaries of Charity try to follow Mother Teresa's spirit and charisma in their families.

Mother Teresa's work has been recognised and acclaimed throughout the world and she has received a number of awards and distinctions, including the Pope John XXIII Peace Prize (1971) and the Nehru Prize for her promotion of international peace and understanding (1972). She also received the Balzan Prize (1979) and the Templeton and Magsaysay awards.

