

JUNIOR CERTIFICATE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION SUPPORT SERVICE
SAMPLE LESSON PLAN RESOURCE MATERIALS FOR ELEMENTS OF SYLLABUS

SECTION D: THE QUESTION OF FAITH PART 4: THE EXPRESSION OF FAITH

Syllabus Aim	To identify the characteristics of Religious Faith
Syllabus Objective	As a result of studying this section, the students should <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand that religious belief can find expression in prayer, worship, and ways of life
Key Concepts	Prayer, worship.
Description of Content	Prayer and worship as expressions of religious faith and search for God Way of Life as an expression of religious faith
Methodology	A variety of methodologies are used including presentation and interpretation of data, simulation games, pair/group work, discussion and self-assessment activities. These methodologies are used so as to give students an opportunity to identify, explore and clarify the concepts and to structure and elaborate on their existing knowledge and understanding of the content.

Procedure

Introduction

Read the following quote to the students by way of introduction to the communication game: “When we feel something deeply, we have to express that feeling. For instance, ... if we care a lot about some people, we may hug them, kiss them, or give them gifts. If we feel angry, we may scream and pound the wall. All these actions are natural attempts to express inward feelings in outward ways.”

(T. Zanzig-B. Allaire, *Understanding Catholic Christianity*)

Discuss: Do you agree/disagree with this statement?

Communication Game:

- Distribute word cards naming feelings such as happy, sad, tired, excited etc.
- Divide students into pairs
- Ask students to communicate the word on their card to their partner using only gestures or facial expressions.
- Ask each partner to say what these gestures or facial expressions communicate.

Take feedback from the students identifying the inward feelings that were expressed in outward ways.

Conclude that like feelings, religious faith or trust in God finds expression in outward ways.

Prayer worship and way of life as expressions of religious faith and search for God

Read the story on the *Student Work*: MICHAEL’S STORY

- Discuss:
1. Does Michael have faith in God? Give a reason for your answer.
 2. How does Michael’s trust/faith in God affect his behaviour?
 3. Give an example from Michael’s story of how his trust/faith in God takes expression in prayer, worship, and ways of life.

Take feedback and conclude that religious faith finds expression in prayer, worship, and ways of life.

OR Distribute a selection of pictures showing people shaking hands, kneeling in prayer, preaching, hands joined in prayer etc. give students time to complete the assignment.

- Discuss:
1. What the people are doing in each picture?
 2. In each picture what are people expressing?
 3. Do the pictures have anything in common?

Take feedback and conclude that religious faith influences how a person lives i.e. prayer, worship, and ways of life.

Or Read extracts from THE DIARY OF ADRIANNA SMOLE (i.e.15th & 21st February and 18th March 2001) Discuss: Do you think that Adrianna has religious faith? Give reasons for your answer. Note the students’ responses on the chalkboard. Then ask the students to categorise the signs of religious faith

under the headings: *Prayer, Worship and Way of Life*. Note feedback on chalkboard. Conclude by explaining that religious faith can find expression in prayer, worship and ways of life.

Or Personal Assignment: Interview someone you know who has faith in God. Ask them these questions:

1. Why do you believe in God?
2. How does your faith in God influence your life?

Take feedback and conclude that religious faith finds expression in prayer, worship, and ways of life.

Or Imagine that a person from a far-off country visited your locality. List the signs that he/she would find that show that people in your locality have religious faith. Categorise these signs under the three headings: *Prayer, Worship and Way of Life*.

Take feedback from the students, noting their responses on the chalkboard. Conclude by pointing out that religious faith can find expression in prayer, worship and ways of life.

Expressions of religious faith -Prayer

Read descriptions of prayer in *Religion for Living* 3 pages 23-29 or *Believe the Good News* Chapters 42-44 or explain that religious faith involves a person putting their trust in God. A person with religious faith says “yes” to a relationship with God. Their relationship with God is kept going through prayer. Through prayer, people spend time with God, talk with God and listen to God. Prayer is a sign of religious faith and an indication that a person wants to get to know God better.

- Discuss:
1. What is religious faith?
 2. What do people need to do in order to keep this relationship going with God?
 3. Why do people with religious faith pray?

Expressions of religious faith - Worship

Write “worship” on the chalkboard and brainstorm the students for answers to the question: What words or images come to mind when you hear/think of the word worship?

Take feedback from the students and note their understanding of worship on the chalkboard. Look up dictionary definitions of worship e.g.

- *Chambers Dictionary of Beliefs and Religions* - The acknowledgement, reverence and veneration of a God or gods. ... Worship involves a diversity of activities such as praise, adoration, confession, thanksgiving, intercession and petition.
- *Chambers Twenty-First Century Dictionary* verb: 1. to honour (God or a god) with praise, prayer, hymns, etc. noun: 1. the activity of worshipping; 2. a religious service in which God or a god is honoured.
- *The New Dictionary of Theology* - a response of adoration by one who has encountered the presence of God; the grateful rejoicing of people who have experienced God’s action in their lives

Student Assignments:

1. Write down the definition of worship that you find easiest to understand.
2. Pick any one of the words or images that came into your mind when you thought of the word “worship” and explain how it is true to your dictionary definition of “worship”.

Take feedback from the students and correct their responses as appropriate.

Expressions of religious faith – Way of Life

Read the story “Old Dag” in *Love One Another The New Christian Way* Series 1 page 10 and discuss:

1. Does Old Dag know the meaning of compassion?
2. Why did Kate think Old Dag did not know the meaning of compassion?
3. After the incident with the dog why might Kate change her opinion of Old Dag?
4. How did Old Dag put his religious faith into practice?

Stories of faithful people from two religious traditions – e.g. Hinduism

Read story of Gandhi in *So Everybody Fights?* Page 140 or *Champions of Change, Profiles of 20th Century Historical figures For Transition Years*. The Celtic Press. Dublin, 1997.

Discuss: 1. Where was Gandhi born?

2. What Religious Tradition was he born into?
3. What do you know about this Religious Tradition?
4. What did Gandhi protest against?
5. Do you think he was right to look for change? Why?

Or view video on Gandhi and discuss:

1. What religious tradition was Mahatma Gandhi born into?
2. What kind of work did he undertake during his years in South Africa?
3. When Gandhi returned to India, what did he set about doing?
4. How successful was the Independence movement in India?
5. Why was the Salt March organised?
6. What happened in 1947?

Or *group work*: Divide class into groups of 4/5 and allow time to research information on Gandhi as a faithful Hindu. When research has been completed assign each group one title to report on. Students can present this report in word, picture or drama. Using the following headings present *The Story of Gandhi* –

Introduction	Birth and upbringing
Youth and time in England	Gandhi and the masses
Leaving India	Freedom and martyrdom

Or *Role-play*: Divide class into pairs. Distribute one of each of the role cards to each pair. Allow time for completion of tasks.

<p><i>It is December 1947. You are the host of a popular radio show. This week's programme will include an interview with Mahatma Gandhi, a prominent member of the Hindu tradition. Through discussing his life story you hope to identify evidence of his religious belief, therefore you will ask him questions on his views on prayer, worship and his way of life.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Task:</p> <p>Prepare a brief introduction on Gandhi giving main points of his life to date. Prepare 5/6 questions about his expression of Hinduism in prayer, worship and his way to life.</p>	<p><i>You are Mahatma Gandhi. It is December 1947. You are to be interviewed for a radio programme in Ireland. The Irish people have heard about your life and work in South Africa and India. In the course of the interview you want to explain your views on prayer, worship and your way of life as a member of the Hindu tradition.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Task:</p> <p>Read the quotations that you have written at different times in your life and choose three (One each on prayer, worship, and your way of life), which you want to express on that programme.</p>
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Role-play the interviews.

Written Assignment: Complete *one* of the following -

1. Research (<http://www.mkgandhi.org/momgbook/chap16.htm>) or read *Student Work*: Gandhi Said and write a short paragraph on Gandhi as a faithful Hindu using two of these quotations.
2. Imagine you have interviewed Gandhi and have received these answers to your questions, using the information, write an article for your local newspaper; aim to inform your readers on the life and beliefs of this man, a follower of Hinduism.
3. Choose one quotation and design a poster to inform people about Gandhi.

Resources which teachers have suggested include:

All About Faith 2 Gill and Macmillan Series, pages 4-5.

Believe the Good News, The Light of the World Series 2 – Gill and Macmillan, 13.

Champions of Change, Profiles of 20th Century Historical figures For Transition Years. The Celtic Press. Dublin, 1997.

Community of Faith Veritas, pages 12-13, 101-103, and 142-143.

Community of Hope Veritas, pages 94-101.

Great Religions of the World –Sr. Loretta Pastva page 81

Logos

Love One Another New Christian Way Series 1, Veritas, pages 86-91, and 128-130.

Religion For Living Workbook 2 Hawthorn Publishing Ltd., pages 22-25.

Religion For Living Workbook 3 Hawthorn Publishing Ltd., pages 23-29, and 34-49.

Show Us The Way New Christian Way Series 2 Veritas, pages 62-66, and 157-169.

So Everybody Fights? Irish Commission for Justice and Peace page 140.

The Experience of God: An Invitation to Do Theology. D.A. Lane, Dublin: Veritas Publications, 1985

Understanding Catholic Christianity– St. Mary’s Press, Chapter 2

Student Work: MICHAEL’S STORY

“My name is Michael and I am 14 years old. My parents are very religious and brought me up to believe in God. They taught me how to pray and brought me to Church each Sunday with my brothers and sisters. Right now I have a lot of questions about God. But, God is still very important to me. I try to pray to God everyday, even if it is just before I go to bed. I also try to help other people in whatever way I can. I believe that God loves me and is always there for me. Whenever things are going badly I talk to God about it. I believe that God will help me to sort things out and to make good decisions. Even though I don’t fully understand God, I think of God as a very good friend.”

Student Work: Gandhi Said.....

- *For me Hinduism is all sufficing. Every variety of belief finds protection under its ample folk.*
- *Hinduism tells everyone to worship God according to his own faith or Dharma and so it lives at peace with all the religions.*
- *There is much ignorance and superstition in India. But deep down in us is that faith in God—the instinct for religion.*
- *I have never believed anyone to be my enemy. My faith demands that I should consider no one as such.*
- *But in all my trials –of a spiritual nature, as a lawyer, in conducting institutions, and in politics—I can say that God saved me. When every hope is gone, when helpers fail and comforts flee, I experience that help arrives somehow, from I know not where.*
- *Prayer has been the saving of my life. Without it I would have been a lunatic long ago. My autobiography will tell you that I have had my fair share of the bitterest public and private experiences. They threw me into temporary despair, but I was able to get rid of it, it was because of prayer.*
- *I hate privilege and monopoly. Whatever cannot be shared with the masses is taboo to me.*
- *Work without faith is an attempt to reach the bottom of a bottomless pit.*
- *In spite of despair staring me in the face on the political horizon, I have never lost my peace. In fact, I have found people who envy my peace. That I tell you, comes from prayer: I am not a man of learning, but I humbly claim to be a man of prayer. ...Let everyone try and find that, as a result of daily prayer, he adds something new to his life, something with which nothing can be compared.*
- *For me the road to salvation lies through incessant toil in the service of my country and there through of humanity. I want to identify myself with everything that lives.*
- *We go to the temple to worship not the stone or the metal image, but God who resides in it. The image becomes what man makes of it. ...Therefore everyone, including children should observe perfect silence at the time of prayer.*
- *Silence has now become both a physical and spiritual necessity for me.*
- *Prayer is not an old woman’s idle amusement. Properly understood and applied, it is the most potent instrument of action.*
- *Service of the poor has been my heart’s desire and it has always thrown me amongst the poor and enabled me to identify myself with them.*
- *I claim to be a simple individual liable to err like any other fellow-mortal. I own, however, that I have humility enough in me to confess my errors and to retrace my steps. I own that I have an immovable faith in God and in His goodness, and an inconsumable passion for truth and love. But, is that not what every person has latent in him?*
- *I cannot intentionally hurt anything that lives, much less fellow-human beings, even though they may do the greatest wrong to me and mine.*

(<http://www.mkgandhi.org/momgbook/chap16.htm>)