

Part 2: THE EXPERIENCE OF WORSHIP

Syllabus Aim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To show how ritual and worship have always been part of the human response to life and to the mystery of God • To explore an experience of worship
Syllabus Objectives	As a result of studying this section the students should: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. be able to identify elements of worship
Key Concepts	worship, ritual, participation
Description of Content	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Examples of people at worship - identifying the elements of worship 2. Participating in/observing an experience of worship to experience or see the elements of worship in action
Methodology	A variety of methodologies are used including self-assessment activities interpretation of data, discussion, group work, research and activity based learning. These methodologies were 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 - ritual

Distribute *Student Work: BIRTHDAY RITUALS* Give students time to complete the assignment. Take feedback and discuss:

1. What activities are usually part of birthday celebrations?
2. Why do you think people who are celebrating a birthday usually do this?

Conclude by noting that whenever people celebrate a birthday, they tend to do similar things e.g. send cards or birthday wishes; have a party; blow out candles on a cake; give presents.

Using the board / overhead present students with a definition of ritual e.g.

Rituals are symbolic actions that help us concretely, or physically, express our beliefs, values and deepest concerns. Rituals involve movements and gestures that convey meaning. They often include words that underscore the significance of the action.
 (adapted from *Celebrating Sacraments* by Joseph Stoutzenberger)

Discuss: Which of the activities usually part of birthday celebrations are examples of rituals?

Look up dictionary definitions or read statements about the meaning of the word ritual for example:

At important times in their lives, people gather together and take part in rituals. Rituals can involve movements, gestures, words or dress that communicate meaning. They are bodily actions that help people express their beliefs, values, and deepest concerns. Rituals are done in a similar way every time they are performed. Shaking hands, standing to attention for the national anthem, singing the birthday song, wearing the colours of a favourite team, or the presentation of diplomas at a graduation ceremony, are all examples of ritual. They are bodily actions by which people communicate their values, beliefs and deepest concerns.

Rituals are closely connected to important events in people’s lives. Many rituals honour “firsts”. Turning the first spade of earth on a building site, cutting the ribbon during an opening ceremony are examples of “new beginning” rituals. Graduation ceremonies, weddings, and anniversaries are other important events that are characterised by ritual.

Since earliest times, rituals have been closely connected to religion and worship. Examples of religious rituals are the Sign of the Cross (Christianity), the lighting of the Sabbath candles at the beginning of the Sabbath (Judaism), wearing a garment made of seamless white cloth while on pilgrimage to Mecca ((Islam), and washing in the River Ganges (Hinduism). Religious rituals are actions that help people express something about their relationship with the divine. They are actions that help people communicate their religious beliefs and religious values. Religious rituals are done in a similar way every time they are performed. (Adapted from

Celebrating Sacraments, Community of Hope & The Encyclopedia of Religion Vol. 12 - M.Eliade. Macmillan)

Discuss: What is a ritual? Are there particular times when people engage in ritual?

Could religious rituals be associated with any of these times?

Written Assignment: 1. What meanings do the following rituals express?

ACTION:	MEANING:
Standing to attention for the national anthem	
Making the Sign of the Cross	
Lighting the Sabbath candles at the beginning of the Sabbath	
Singing "happy birthday to you...."	
Wearing a garment made of seamless white cloth while on pilgrimage to Mecca	
Receiving a diploma at a graduation ceremony	
Wearing the colours of a favourite team	

2. Which of these actions are religious rituals?

3. Explain the meaning of any one of these religious rituals.

Take feedback from students and discuss: What do religious rituals help people express?

Or Group work:

- Divide students into pairs or small groups.
- Assign one of the following events to each pair or small group (as appropriate): a birth; a graduation; a championship final; a wedding; St. Patrick's Day; Christmas Day / New Year's Day; anniversary; a death.

Task - For the event you have chosen to research prepare a presentation on the following:

- Rituals that are traditionally part of this event.
- The meaning of three of these rituals.

Give each group time to present their findings to the class.

When feedback has been taken from all the groups discuss: Which of these are religious rituals? Explain.

Examples of people at worship - identifying the elements of worship

Using Photospeak or a collection of photographs, present students with pictures of people at worship

- Discuss:
- Describe what is happening in each picture.
 - What religious rituals are seen in each picture?
 - What do these pictures have in common?

Or Read: LOUGH DERG PILGRIMAGE - The Christian Way Book Two Teacher-guide & MY PILGRIMAGE TO MECCA by Abdul Khaliq -World Religions and Beliefs, E. Fleming & B.O'Hara

- Discuss:
- Why do people go on pilgrimage to Lough Derg and Mecca?
 - What religious rituals do people participate in during their pilgrimage?
 - What is the meaning of each of these religious rituals?

Using the board / overhead present students with a definition of worship e.g.

Worship involves a variety of activities in which God is honoured
e.g. praise, thanksgiving, petition etc.
(adapted from the Chambers Dictionary of Beliefs and Religions)

Discuss: How is God honoured in each of the rituals in Lough Derg and Mecca?

Written Assignment:

Write three sentences describing how a pilgrimage to Lough Derg or Mecca is an example of worship.

Or Choose an example of worship and

- Identify the religious rituals that people participate in during that experience of worship.
- Explain how God is honoured in each of those religious rituals.

Take feedback and conclude that worship involves participation in religious ritual.

Participating in/ observing an experience of worship to experience or see the elements of worship in action

Give students an opportunity to experience the elements of worship in action by having them participate in / observe (as appropriate) an act of worship e.g. Student Work: SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE (Christian Tradition)

As a follow up give students time to identify the elements of worship they participated in / observed by completing the following assignment:

Written Assignment:

One definition of worship is that it involves a variety of activities in which God is honoured e.g. praise, thanksgiving, petition.

- List examples of praise, thanksgiving and petition in the experience of worship you have participated in or observed

PRAISE	THANKSGIVING	PETITION

- In worship people participate in rituals.
 - Explain the term ritual by finishing the sentence: A ritual is
 - In the experience of worship you observed / took part in, what rituals did people participate in?
 - In each case, explain the meaning that is being expressed by the ritual?

RITUALS	MEANING

- Write a paragraph about an experience of worship you participated in / observed, using five of the following words:

Worship	Petition	Thanksgiving	Words	Dress
Honoured	Praise	Rituals	Gestures	Movements

Take feedback from the students and conclude by highlighting the ways in which this act of worship involved a variety of activities in which God is honoured.

Resources which teachers have suggested include:

- All About Faith 2 Gill & Macmillan, pages 111– 115; 121.
- Community of Faith Veritas, pages 18-19, 56-57, 84, 105, 149, 152-153, 156.
- Community of Hope Veritas, pages 116 – 120.
- Cyberclass Manual Scholastech Disk 2
- Logos
- Show Us The Way New Christian Way Series 2 Veritas page 129

Student Work: BIRTHDAY RITUALS

Think of a birthday you celebrated (your own or a friend’s or a member of your family). Read the following list and in the second column put a tick beside those actions you took to celebrate that birthday:

<i>Actions</i>	<i>Tick</i>	<i>Mark X</i>
Sent a birthday card		
Sent or received birthday wishes (“Happy Birthday”!)		
Gave or received presents		
Went fishing		
Got a birthday cake		
Had or went to a birthday party		
Blew out candles on a birthday cake		
Went to the cinema by myself		
Wore a party hat		
Sang the Birthday Song (“Happy Birthday”)		
Other (Please state)		

- In the third column put an X beside those activities that are usually part of birthday celebrations?
- Choose one of the activities you have marked with an X. Explain why people who are celebrating a birthday usually do this.

Student Work: SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE (Christian Tradition)

GATHERING HYMN: *Stay here and keep watch with me...* (Taizé)

INTRODUCTION: For each of us life is a journey. Birth is the beginning of this journey, and death is not the end but the destination. It is a journey that takes us
from youth to age, from innocence to awareness, from ignorance to knowledge,
from foolishness to wisdom, from weakness to strength and often back again,
from offence to forgiveness, from loneliness to friendship,
from pain to compassion, from fear to faith,
from defeat to victory and from victory to defeat, until, looking backward or ahead, we see that victory
does not lie at some high point along the way, but in having made the journey, stage by stage.
(From an old Hebrew prayer)

HYMN: *Jesus remember me when you come into your Kingdom...* (Taize)

PERSONAL REFLECTION: Reflective music is played as cards are distributed on which participants are invited to name the loved one who has died.

FIRST READING: There is a season for everything, a time for every occupation under heaven:
A time for giving birth, A time for dying; A time for embracing,
A time for planting A time to refrain from embracing.
A time for up rooting what has been planted. A time for searching, A time for losing;
A time for killing, A time for healing; A time for keeping, A time for throwing away.
A time for knocking down, A time for building. A time for tearing, A time for sewing;
A time for tears, a time for laughter; A time for keeping silent, A time for speaking.
A time for mourning, A time for dancing. A time for loving, A time for hating;
A time for throwing stones away, A time for war, A time for peace.
A time for gathering them up. (ECCLESIASTES 3: 1-8)

PSALM 121 (alternate groups read/chant each verse)

1. From whence does my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth. Response - All: <i>The Lord is my Keeper.</i>	3. The Lord is your keeper; The Lord is your shade on your right hand. The sun shall not smite you by day, nor the moon by night. Response- All: <i>The Lord is my Keeper.</i>
2. He will not let your foot be moved, he who keeps you will not slumber. Behold, he who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. Response- All: <i>The Lord is my Keeper.</i>	4. The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life. The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and for ever more. Response- All: <i>The Lord is my Keeper.</i>

SECOND READING: The Christian belief is that while death does bring physical life to an end, it is also the beginning of a completely new life. This is expressed in the pray which states: "Lord for your faithful people life is changed, not ended." The Christian belief that we will rise to a new life is based on Christ's Resurrection. In the Gospel of John we hear Jesus promise: "I am the Resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me will live even though he dies and whoever lives and believes in me will never die."

All: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

SERVICE OF LIGHT: A large candle is lit on a stand in the centre of the gathering.

Commentary: We light this candle as a reminder that Christ is risen, and that the light of our life can never be quenched. What was said of Christ will eventually come true for us: "Death has no longer any power over him."

Participants are invited to - light a candle from the large candle in memory of a loved one who has died
or
Place the cards with the name of their loved ones around the large candle

(Reflective music is played as participants come forward)

THIRD READING: *What is Dying ?*

A ship sails and I stand watching till she fades on the horizon, and someone at my side says, "She is gone", Gone where? Gone from my sight, that is all; she is just as large as when I saw her the diminished size and total loss of sight is in me, not in her. And just at the moment when someone at my side says "She is gone" there are others who are watching her coming, and other voices take up a glad shout "There she comes" ... And that is dying. (Bishop Brent)

LET US PRAY:

For those who have died, and are on their way to you, Lord. Give them the fullness of life and happiness.
In your mercy Lord..... (All) *Hear our prayer.*

For those who are dying, and who are afraid. Give them strength to go on their last journey in peace.
In your mercy Lord..... (All) *Hear our prayer.*

For those who have been wounded by the death of one they love. Help them find the new life that comes through death.
In your mercy Lord..... (All) *Hear our prayer*

For those who are worried and anxious about many things. Help them find peace in themselves.
In your mercy Lord..... (All) *Hear our prayer*

For those who are depressed and in despair. Help them to find hope in the love and care of others.
In your mercy Lord(All) *Hear our prayer*

FOURTH READING: *Death is only a horizon*

We give them back to you, O Lord, who first gave them to us;
and as you did not lose them in the giving, so me do not lose them in return.
Not as the world gives do you give, O Lover of souls.
For what is yours is ours also,if we belong to you.
Life is unending because love is undying,and the boundaries of this life are but an horizon,
and an horizon is but the limit of our vision.
Lift us up, strong Son of God, that we may see further.
Strengthen our faith that we may see beyond the horizon.
And while you prepare a place for us, as you have promised, prepare us also for that happy place;
that where you are we may be also, with those we have loved, forever.

(Bede Jarrett, O.P.)

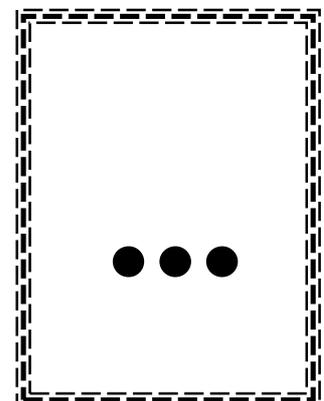
CONCLUDING PRAYER:

O Lord, Support us all the day long,
until the shadows lengthen, and the evening comes,
and the busy world is hushed,
and the fever of life is over,
and our work is done.

Then, Lord, in your mercy, grant us safe lodging,
a holy rest, and peace at the last;
Through Jesus Christ Our Lord.

(John Henry Newman)

All: Amen



CONCLUDING HYMN: *Be Still My Soul*