

WE ARE THE CHILDREN OF GOD



OTHER RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS

LEVEL 2: SKILLS

- ▶ identify his/her own religious identity and religious and/or cultural identity of others
- ▶ identify Christian and other faith communities in his/her locality
- ▶ listen to and discuss stories about children in a Christian or other faith community (Jewish/Muslim) in Ireland.
- ▶ Christians love everyone because we all have the same Father in heaven who loves us and wants us to love one another (CCC 1877-78).
- ▶ We are members of one human family and community on earth.
- ▶ Each person is unique and precious in God's sight.
- ▶ Catholics are called to respect other people's ways of praying, their holy objects, religious stories, sacred writings and beliefs.

KNOWLEDGE AND LANGUAGE INTRODUCED

JUDAISM: Kippah, Mezuzah, Shema, Aron Kodesh, Synagogue

ISLAM Bismillah, Hijab, Qur'an, Mosque

LEVEL 3: SKILLS

- ▶ discuss the importance of religious or philosophical beliefs in the lives of people in his/her community
- ▶ investigate the religious practice of children in other Christian, Jewish and Muslim communities in Ireland and relating it to his/her own religious practice.
- ▶ Judaism, Christianity and Islam are the three great monotheistic faiths.
- ▶ Judaism, Christianity and Islam are sometimes called Abrahamic religions because they all revere Abraham.

WHAT THEY BELIEVE

- ▶ **JUDAISM:** Jews believe in God. Jesus was a Jew. Friday sunset – Saturday sunset as God's special day; Sabbath, day of rest, worship and the family meal. Going to the synagogue to worship. Irish synagogues.

- ▶ **ISLAM:** Muslims believe in one God. Muslims pray five times a day; they call God Allah and respect his name. Friday, day of special prayer; the call to prayer; worship in the mosque, decorations with patterns and texts; men and women pray separately; the holy book is called the Qu'ran- how it is treated. Irish mosques.

LEVEL 4: SKILLS

- ▶ research one Christian and one other religious faith community (Jewish/Muslim)
- ▶ investigate ways of respecting and learning about and from people who adhere to other religions or stances for living in Ireland
- ▶ engage in ecumenical and interfaith activities.
- ▶ Respect and love ought to be extended to those who think or act differently than we do in religious matters (GS 28).
- ▶ Catholics work together with people of other faiths to promote human rights, social justice, good morals, peace and freedom (NA 3; DP 44).
- ▶ The Church reprovess discrimination against people on the basis of race, colour or religion (NA5).
- ▶ Dialogue is an honest witnessing to our belief and a sincere listening to the belief of the other person.

JUDAISM

- ▶ Jews believe in one God; God leading Abraham to start the nation: the Shema. Torah.
- ▶ Importance of Moses; Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Feasts of Passover, Tabernacles and Pentecost.
- ▶ The covenant with Abraham and Moses reveals Israel as God's chosen people (CCC 60, 201).
- ▶ Christians and Jews are kin in faith and worship (CCC 63, 839-40).
- ▶ The celebration of Pesach; kosher food; family gathering; welcoming the stranger; special food.
- ▶ Rosh Hashanah. Yom Kippur (forgiveness, atonement).
- ▶ Christianity as the fulfillment of Judaism.

ISLAM

- ▶ Meaning of Islam; Muslim prayer; ninety-nine beautiful names of God – qualities and attributes; The values important to Muslims (good manners, kindness, honesty and respect for others).
- ▶ The Prophet Muhammad; stories of Muhammad; what he taught about God; the Imam. Irish
- ▶ Muslim communities. Fasting and festivals: Ramadan and Eid-al-Fitr.
- ▶ Muslims worship the one God. They venerate Jesus as a prophet, even though they do not acknowledge him as God, and they honour his virgin mother Mary and even sometimes devoutly call upon her. They worship God especially in prayer, almsgiving and fasting (NA 3).
- ▶ Pilgrimage to Mecca. Zakah (caring for the community); faith-based activities of the Irish
- ▶ Muslim communities. Diet (Halal and Haram). The five pillars of Islam. Muslims await the day of judgement and so they have regard for the moral life (NA 3). Id-al-Adha. Ways in which care for others is important in the Muslim faith

A BRIEF NOTE ON JUDAISM

It is the oldest of the Monotheistic Religions dating to almost 4000 years ago. They believe in one God. They give many names to God, among them HaShem, El Shaddai, Adonai. They believe that the name of God should be treated with respect. It should not be written down so that it will not be discarded disrespectfully. Abraham and Moses are two of the most significant people in the Jewish tradition.

A BRIEF NOTE ON ISLAM

The Arabic word 'Islam' means submission and obedience, and derives from a word meaning 'peace'. Followers of Islam are called Muslims. Muslims believe there is one true God, Allah (the Arabic word for God)

Muslims believe that Islam was revealed over 1400 years ago in Mecca, Saudi Arabia through a man called Muhammad. Each time they say the name of the prophet it is followed by the words; 'peace be upon him'

Muslims believe that Muhammad is the last prophet sent by God. They also believe that God sent prophets to teach us how to live according to God's law. Jesus (Isa), Moses (Musa) and Abraham (Ibrahim) are other respected prophets.

JUDAISM

SYMBOLS AND SACRED OBJECTS

STAR OF DAVID

The emblem of the Jewish people. It is said that it is shaped like David's shield



MEZUZAH

A mezuzah is found on doorposts in Jewish homes. It is a little case, containing a tiny scroll. The writing on the scroll is from the bible. It is in Hebrew and is called the Shema. It comes from the Book of Deuteronomy 6 and reads '*Hear, O, Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One. ... And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.*'



MENORAH

The Menorah is one of the oldest symbols of the Jewish faith. It is a candelabrum with seven candle holders and can be found in the synagogue. It symbolises the burning bush that Moses saw in the desert. The two most common menorahs have seven and nine candle-holders. The term *hanukiah* or *chanukiah*, refers to the nine-candled holder used during the Jewish festival of Hanukkah.



THE TORAH

The *Torah* (the first five books of the Hebrew Bible) is the most holy book of the Jewish religion. The Torah (or teachings) contains the five books revealed to Moses by God on Mount Sinai.

1. Genesis
2. Exodus



3. Leviticus
4. Numbers
5. Deuteronomy

The *Torah* is stored inside the Ark. (Aron Kodesh)

The Torah is so holy that no one is allowed to touch it. A special pointer called a *yad* is used when reading it. The collection of Jewish scripture is known as the **TaNACH** (TeNaK). This comes from the three parts of the Jewish scriptures the Torah, the Nevi'im and the Ketuvim.



ARON KODESH

The place (the Ark of the Covenant) where the holy books are kept in the Synagogue



PLACE OF WORSHIP

SYNAGOGUE

Jews worship in Synagogues. Men and women usually sit separately in the Synagogue. Men must cover their heads. In most cases worship takes place in Hebrew. The Jewish spiritual leaders are called Rabbis. A rabbi is not a priest and has no special religious status.



SABBATH (Shabbat) is the day when most Jews go to Synagogue to pray. It is the most important day of the week and is made holy by refraining from work, cooking or driving. Sabbath starts at sunset on Friday and continues until sunset on Saturday. At the beginning of Shabbat Jewish families share a meal. They eat special bread called hallah.

BAR MITZVAH AND BAT MITZVAH?

These are both special ceremonies where Jewish boys (aged 13) and girls (aged 12) become adults in the eyes of the Jewish religion.

Bar mitzvah is for boys and means Son of the Commandment.

Bat mitzvah is for girls and means Daughter of the Commandment



SPECIAL CLOTHES

KIPPAH

Male Jews wear the Kippah or skull cap as a reminder that he must always follow the laws of God. Boys start wearing the Kippah at three years of age.



TALLIT (Prayer Shawl)

Before beginning to worship or pray Jewish men and boys will often put on a tallit. This is a fringed shawl. The fringes are called tzitzit and are reminders of the many commandments of the Torah.



KOSHER FOOD

Many Jewish people eat only Kosher food. This means no mixing of dairy and meat, no pork or pork products and no shell fish. Meat must come from an animal that has been slaughtered according to Jewish ritual. Jews cannot eat meat from any animal which does not both chew the cud and have a split hoof.

JEWISH FESTIVALS

PASSOVER

Passover (*Pesach in Hebrew*) celebrates the setting free of the Jewish people from slavery in Egypt. It lasts for eight days and is a major festival in the Jewish calendar. At the beginning of Passover Jewish families gather to eat the Seder Meal when the story of their deliverance is told. Matzah (*unleavened bread*) is eaten.



ROSH HASHANAH - JEWISH NEW YEAR

The Jewish New Year is called Rosh Hashanah. It usually takes place in September/October and is a time for thinking about the past and repentance. It commemorates the creation of the world. The festival is also known as the Day of Judgement, the Day of the Sounding of the Shofar, and the Day of Remembrance. Over the two days of Rosh Hashanah, there are special services at the synagogue. A musical instrument, called a shofar, is blown. It makes a loud piercing sound like a trumpet and reminds the Jewish people of God's great power.

People eat slices of apple dipped in honey. This is a way of wishing each other a sweet and happy New Year.

YOM KIPPUR - THE DAY OF ATONEMENT

Yom Kippur, the most sacred and solemn day of the Jewish year. As well as fasting for 25 hours, Jews spend the day in prayer, asking for forgiveness and resolving to behave better in the future.

HANUKKAH

Hanukkah or Chanukah is the Jewish Festival of Lights. It dates back to two centuries before the beginning of Christianity. It is an eight-day holiday. Hanukkah commemorates the re-dedication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem and the miracle of the burning oil. This is where the oil of the menorah (the

candelabrum in the temple) miraculously burned for eight days, even though there was only enough oil for one day.

SHAVUOT

This is a Jewish festival of thanksgiving celebrated fifty days after Passover. It also commemorates the giving of the Torah to Moses. In the Christian calendar we celebrate Pentecost fifty days after Easter, the day when the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples.

SUKKOT (TABERNACLES)

The Festival of Sukkot lasts for 8/9 days and commemorates the years that the Jews spent in the desert on their way to the Promised Land. Some lived in tents whilst others built huts out of leaves and branches. These huts were called sukkot. During the festival, some Jews build their own sukkah in the garden or at the synagogue. Jews eat their meals in the sukkah for the eight or nine days of the festival.

There is a special Sukkot service in the synagogue. Everyone holds branches from three trees in their hands and a citron fruit in their right. They walk around the synagogue seven times, waving the branches.

ISLAM

SYMBOLS AND SACRED OBJECTS



THE STAR AND CRESCENT MOON

This is a very recent symbol adopted by some Muslims. It is suggested that the crescent moon represents the lunar calendar that governs the Islamic year and that the five pointed star may represent the five pillars of Islam.

THE QUR'AN

The Qur'an is Islam's Holy Book. Muslims believe it is *'the word of God'*. Their beliefs and practices are rooted in the Qur'an.



Muslims treat the Qur'an with great respect because they believe that the Qur'an is from Allah, and every word and every letter is sacred. It is usually placed on a special wooden stand to be read. Muslims regard the Qur'an as the unaltered word of God.

FIVE PILLARS OF ISLAM

- ▶ **SHAHADAH:** declaration of faith
"I bear witness that there is no god, but God; I bear witness that Muhammad is the prophet of God."
- ▶ **SALAH:** prayer
Muslims are required to pray five times a day, washing themselves before prayer and facing in the direction of Mecca while praying.
- ▶ **ZAKAT:** charity
Muslims are required to give away a percentage of their earnings to those less fortunate, regardless of their religion.
- ▶ **SAUM:** fasting during the month of Ramadan
Muslims fast for one lunar month each year, a period called Ramadan.

During this time, Muslims reflect on their behaviour and strive to purify their thoughts.

► HAJJ: pilgrimage to Mecca

If it is financially possible, Muslims are required to travel to Mecca once in their lifetime.

PRAYER

Muslims face Mecca or Makkah when they pray because it is the birthplace of prophet Muhammad. There is a huge mosque in Mecca and in its centre is a cube-shaped building called a **Kaaba** (Ka'bah). All Muslims face the direction of the Kaaba during ritual prayer.



Muslims believe that the Kaaba is the holiest place on earth. It is generally thought to have been built by Prophet Abraham. It is used only as a focal point for prayer and simply signifies a direction, imposed by God to maintain unity and uniformity among worshipers.

The Kaaba is draped with a black cloth, which is covered with Koranic verses that are embroidered in gold and silver thread. During the Hajj ceremony, a Muslim walks seven times around the Kaaba and then he or she kisses and touches the Black Stone.

Every Muslim family, no matter where they live, knows what direction the Kaaba is from their house.

Muslims pray five times a day. Each period for prayer has a special name and each time is separated by two hours.

These essential times are:

1. After first light and before sunrise (Fajr)
2. Between the sun reaching its height and mid-afternoon (Dhuhr)
3. Between mid-afternoon and sunset (Asr)
4. After the sun has finished setting (Maghrib)
5. In the dark of the night (Isha)

THE MOSQUE

Muslims go to a building called a mosque to pray. Many Mosques have a domed roof and a tall tower called a minaret. Muslims are called to prayer from the minaret. The man who calls them to prayer is called a muezzin.



There are no pictures or statues in a mosque. They are decorated with patterns and words from the Qur'an. There is also very little furniture because Muslims use prayer mats for prayer.

When people go into the mosque they take off their shoes. This is to keep it clean for prayer.

There is always a qibla wall in a Mosque which is the one facing Makkah (Mecca). Women do not usually pray in the same place as men, there is usually a screened off area for them. There are prayer services every day at the Mosque but the most important service is held on Friday at noon. Friday is their special day for prayer. Prayer and services are led by an Imam who is usually chosen from among the community.

MUSLIM FESTIVALS

RAMADAN (RAMADHAN)

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar and at this time Muslims fast during the hours of daylight.

The Muslim year is a lunar (moon) year, so Ramadan moves forward by ten or eleven days each year. The day Ramadan begins is decided by the sighting of the new moon.

Muslims believe that the gates of Heaven (Jannah) are open and the gates of Hell (Jahanam) are locked for the duration of Ramadan.

During Ramadan, Muslims celebrate the time when the verses of the Qur'an were revealed to the Prophet Muhammad. Ramadan is a time of worship and contemplation. A time to strengthen family and community ties.

Muslims are expected to fast from sunrise to sunset. During Ramadan Muslims get up early before dawn (Fajr) and have a light meal. This time is known as Suhoor.

At the end of each day Muslims traditionally break their fast with a meal called the iftar. Ramadan concludes with the celebration of Eid al-Fitr.

EID-UL-FITR (ID-UL-FITR)

The festival for the first day after Ramadan.

Eid-ul-Fitr marks the breaking of the fast for Muslims at the end of Ramadan. It lasts for three days and is a time for family and friends to get together, for celebrating with good food and presents for children, and giving to charity.

EID-UL-ADHA

The Festival of Sacrifice which occurs 70 days after Eid-al-Fitr.

Eid ul-Adha is the second most important festival in the Muslim calendar. It is to remember the time when Abraham was going to sacrifice his own son to prove obedience to God and marks the end of the Hajj, the annual pilgrimage to Makkah (Mecca). It takes place on the 10th day of Dhul-Hijjah, the last month of the Islamic calendar.

DHU AL-HIJJA:

The month of pilgrimage during which all Muslims, at least once in their life, should try to make the pilgrimage to Mecca.

AL HIJRA:

The Islamic New Year begins on the day Muhammad left Mecca to travel to Medina.

HIJAB

The hijab is a scar traditionally worn in public by women from the age of puberty

