

Foreword by the Bishop of London

“The London Diocese is committed 'to telling the story of Jesus Christ afresh for this generation and especially for the young' and I am glad to commend these resources to you for use in schools and parishes. The good news of Easter is at the heart of our Christian Faith and I am grateful to those who have produced these materials for telling the Easter story afresh in London. New life constantly flows from the empty tomb. I hope this pack will prove to be an effective channel”.

With all good wishes.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Richard Chartres". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

The Rt Revd & Rt Hon Richard Chartres DD FSA

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EASTER – CELEBRATING THE NEW LIFE OF JESUS

Introduction

In this pack you will find assembly outlines, instructions for how to run a half-day of workshops in your church and artefacts to use to bring the Easter story alive.

These resources will equip you to:

- lead an assembly in your local primary school in the fortnight before Easter
- welcome classes of pupils into your church for a half-day of workshops on the Easter story during Holy Week
- return to the school for an assembly on the resurrection after Easter.

There are of course lots of ways to use these resources. You don't have to do all three of these suggestions. Some churches might just do one assembly as the first contact with a local school. Some who have regular input into a school might choose to use the workshop ideas over the course of the spring term. You may want to run half the workshops on one day in the church, and half on another day in the school.

But we hope that hundreds of churches in the London Diocese will capitalise on this fantastic opportunity and communicate the real story of Easter to the children in their parish. Read on to find out how to use these resources, and then decide what's most appropriate for your church.

What's in your box?

- A manual that includes:
 - four outlines for an assembly to deliver before Easter
 - instructions for a half-day of workshops to tell the Easter story in the church during Holy Week
 - six outlines for an assembly to deliver after Easter.
- Six posters to use during the workshops, to create continuity and provoke thought
- A set of the poster images, size A4
- Artefacts to use during the retelling of the story
 - A purple pashmina for Jesus' robe
 - A 'crown of thorns'
 - Two dice, used to cast lots for Jesus' clothing
 - Nails
 - Sponge

You can add other appropriate resources to this box. It can be kept for years to come, to use again each Easter.

Making contact

Some churches have good links with their local primary school. You may already do assemblies on a regular basis and invite pupils to visit your church. If so, we hope that these Easter materials will enhance your relationship with the school and help you to provide a valuable learning experience for pupils.

If on the other hand, you don't currently have links with your local school, then Easter 2008 is a fantastic opportunity to make contact and hopefully build relationships that last.

If you have teachers from the school in your congregation, ask them to introduce you to the Headteacher. Or write a letter to the Head, and follow it up a week or so later with a phone call. Ask if there are any ways that your church could contribute to the spiritual and educational life of the school. Talk about the Easter 2008 resources and suggest ways in which you might use them in the school.

Talking about the Christian faith to school pupils

Community schools are required by law to have an act of Collective Worship every day that is broadly or mainly of a Christian character. In Church of England schools there is an expectation that all worship is Christian. All schools have to teach Religious Education that enables children to learn about the Christian faith and to learn from it. So using these Easter materials can enable you to make a significant contribution to pupils' educational and spiritual development.

Talking about the Christian faith in schools and in churches are two very different things. In church you are on home territory. You can assume that most people have some form of Christian belief, and those that don't are there because they want to be, and are interested to find out more. In school, however, you will meet pupils of all faiths and none. You can't assume that pupils share your Christian beliefs or have any knowledge of the Christian faith. You need to invite pupils to participate in worship, not assume that they will want to pray when you do. You need to own your personal beliefs and the tenets of the Christian faith.

In the assemblies/Collective Worship outlines, you will find sections that begin 'Christians believe/the Bible teaches/I believe'. These sections highlight the areas where you need to be most explicit about the Christian application of biblical stories. Use whichever term comes most naturally to you to make your faith personal and real without making statements to your audience that are not authentic. Make sure your team do the same in the workshops.

Any questions?

If you have any questions about the content or delivery of the material in this pack, please contact Sam Donoghue, the Children's Ministry Adviser for the Diocese of London (020 7932 1255 or samuel.donoghue@london.anglican.org).