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Free Resources For A Level RS

St Mary's Centre website hosts free AS/A Level RE Journals: Challenging Religious Issues which can be accessed via <http://www.st-marys-centre.org.uk/resources/Aleveljournal.html>

Challenging Religious Issues is an online journal supporting A-level Religious Studies for students and teachers. The journal was set up through Welsh Government sponsorship and is published by the St Mary's Centre in English and in Welsh.

- o Articles are written by leading scholars and practitioners
- o A wide range of popular AS and A2 options are covered
- o Activities and live links to recommended websites are included
- o The journal is published every term

Challenging Religious Issues can also be accessed FREE through Hwb Cymru (<https://hwb.wales.gov.uk>).

The Journals cover a range of topics such as Euthanasia, Evil and Suffering, Christian Sexual Ethics and Secular and Religious Meditation.

St Mary's Centre needs evidence to support the continued production of the journal. If you find the journals useful and would them to continue, please take a few minutes to give your feedback. Please reply to gill_press@hotmail.com and your response will be passed on accordingly.

Understanding Humanism Website for Schools



This new website provides a selection of resources offering students an introduction to humanist beliefs and values. These include presentations, videos, multiple-choice questions for assessment, and a 'How humanist are you?' quiz.

Resources are organised by theme. Under each theme, you will find...

- Lesson plans
- Classroom activities
- Humanist perspectives
- Presentations
- Films

A free book 'What is Humanism?' is also available to order via the website.

<http://understandinghumanism.org.uk>

Launch of new Bahá'í RE Resources for Schools Website

The new website is dedicated to supporting UK schools with materials on the Bahá'í Faith for use across all age ranges. <http://re.bahai.org.uk/>



Who are the Bahá'ís?

With tolerance and unity at its core, the Bahá'í Faith is one of the world's fastest growing new religions. Its emphasis on the divine origin of the major faiths makes it a valuable part of a religious education programme.

What do we offer to schools?

Bahá'ís believe passionately in the importance of good religious education in schools and colleges. The aim of this website is to provide good quality and engaging materials for teachers to use in schools in RE or related lessons, as well as in assemblies.

On this website you will find a wealth of materials to enhance your teaching. All materials may be downloaded and freely copied, with acknowledgements as appropriate. There are also links to inexpensive books and other printed materials, which may be purchased.

Members of local Bahá'í communities are often happy to be invited to come into a school to assist you in any way that you, as a teacher, consider beneficial, for example by talking to pupils, leading an assembly or taking a lesson. If you do not already know any local Bahá'ís, please use the contact form on the School Visitors page so that we can put you in touch.

We warmly invite you to make free use of the materials on this website, and to get in touch with us for any further support you need. We would very much appreciate your feedback on the materials available. We are always striving to improve and increase materials for teachers.

Please e-mail the Bahá'í RE team at opa-re@bahai.org.uk or use the contact page at <http://re.bahai.org.uk/>

First Accredited Resources for Understanding Christianity Project

The 'Puddles and Freddie' series of resources aimed at supporting Foundation Phase RE is the first to receive the Understanding Christianity Accreditation award.



Books at Press is delighted to be able to support schools as they adopt the Understanding Christianity project to raise standards in teaching and learning about Christianity.

The set of resources has been fully verified as effectively supporting the teaching and learning approach promoted by Understanding Christianity. Themes covered within the Puddles series of books also fully match the core theological concepts identified by the project and with which children will engage.

A guide on how each of the Books at Press resources support the specific concepts identified for exploration within the project is also available by request.

<http://www.booksatpress.co.uk/contact.html>

For further support and training on using the Books at Press resources with the project, Gill Vaisey, RE Consultant, is available to work with Early Years, Key Stage 1 and Foundation Phase practitioners. Simply contact Gill to discuss your training requirements.

We are also delighted to announce that a new title in the Puddles series *Puddles and the St. Francis Service* is due for publication in Summer 2017 and will be submitted for accreditation.

What Is The Understanding Christianity Project?

“The key purpose of this project is to help all teachers support pupils in developing their own thinking and their understanding of Christianity, as a contribution to their understanding of the world and their own experience within it.

We aim to see pupils leave school with a coherent understanding of Christian belief and practice. Pupils from 4-14 explore the significant theological concepts within Christianity as part of developing their wider religious, theological and cultural literacy.

We seek to support teachers in developing their own knowledge and understanding of Christianity theology to be able to teach with confidence.

Who is Understanding Christianity for?

For every teacher in Primary and Secondary classes, teaching RE from EYFS right through to KS3, laying down excellent foundations for further study at GCSE and beyond. It is relevant to RE in every classroom in every school, in Church of England and in Community, Academy and Free schools. These resources explore Christianity widely, including (but not limited to) Anglican Christianity.”

New Resources From St Mary's Centre

Two new series of resources for Foundation Phase: Exploring Why and Exploring Our World are available free of charge from the St Mary's Centre.

The link to the English resources are:

<http://www.st-marys-centre.org.uk/resources/Exploring%20Why.html>

(Exploring Why)

[http://www.st-marys-](http://www.st-marys-centre.org.uk/resources/Exploring%20Our%20World.html)

[centre.org.uk/resources/Exploring%20Our%20World.html](http://www.st-marys-centre.org.uk/resources/Exploring%20Our%20World.html) (Exploring Our World)

These storybooks and accompanying activities cover aspects of Christianity, Judaism, Islam and Hinduism.

The resources are available via the Hwb. Resources via the website are free and a hardcopy of the short story versions will be available for purchase @ £2.99 per book from the Welsh Books Council.

Sikh Community 2017

The Sikh community celebrated– 350th birth anniversary of Guru Gobind Singh tenth Master in January 2017.

He is described as: A warrior, poet and philosopher.

Aside from being a spiritual and a military leader Guru Gobind Singh was also a gifted writer who penned a large body of literary work.

In his lifetime, he stood against the Mughal Rulers of India and fought against injustice. In 1699, Guru Gobind Singh took five men from the lower caste of society and baptized them as His Five Beloveds, endowing them with great courage and a devotion to God. It was his dedication to God, his fearlessness and his desire to protect the people from being oppressed that led Guru Gobind Singh to establish the Khalsa, a military force of saint-soldiers.

Guru Gobind Singh was the last of the living Sikh Gurus. On his death bed; he passed the Guruship of the Sikhs to the Guru Granth Sahib, the sacred Book of the Sikhs. The Granth Sahib then became the Eleventh and Eternal Sikh Guru.

Guru Gobind Singh's principles of taking a stand on injustice and oppression against the weak and vulnerable, has had a big impact on me and my work. "Recognise the whole human race as one" this verse is my guidance, a reminder of home, social education and community responsibilities.



County hosts national religious education meeting



Monmouthshire County Council recently hosted a meeting of the Wales Association of SACREs (Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education) attended by 45 representatives from different faith groups as well as teachers and councillors. The meeting took place at the council's headquarters in County Hall, Usk.

The Wales Association of SACREs meets each term in different venues across the country and religious education consultant Gill Vaisey who coordinated the gathering said: "Monmouthshire was delighted and privileged to host the event and welcome SACRE colleagues from the other 21 Welsh local authorities".

The Chairman of Monmouthshire County Council, Councillor Jim Higginson welcomed delegates and opened proceedings before handing over to Councillor Liz Hacket Pain. Councillor Hacket Pain talked enthusiastically about her role as chair of Monmouthshire SACRE and the importance of its work in supporting schools to deliver effective religious education.

Three presentations were made on the development of the new curriculum, in line with the Welsh Government's report, *Successful Futures*: Sharon Perry-Phillips of Monmouth Comprehensive School on teaching religious education within a humanities curriculum, Manon Jones of Welsh Government on the work of the pioneer school network and the humanities and Owain ap Dafydd of Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni on enriching the modern curriculum from a pioneer school perspective. All were well-received.

As well as the formal meeting a number of colourful displays were provided by faith representatives, the council's Flying Start initiative and Goytre Fawr, Shirenewton and St Mary's RC Primary Schools.



In addition, delegates were greeted by singing on arrival from the Shirenewton and Cantref Primary School choirs while the Monmouth Comprehensive School musical ensemble provided a lunchtime performance.



Councillor Hacket Pain who is also Monmouthshire's cabinet member for schools and learning said: "This was a particularly stimulating and vibrant meeting and it was good to network with colleagues from across Wales".



Paula Webber, secretary to WASACRE added: "It's been a brilliant day; welcoming and very well-organised".

Faith Day at Llantilio Pertholey Church in Wales Primary School

In November 2016, the staff at Llantilio Pertholey held a Faith Day in which the children took part in workshops and lessons about different faiths throughout the day.

The purpose of the day was two-fold. Since adopting the Church in Wales Values Curriculum for RE, the staff had noticed limited opportunities for learning about other faiths and were keen to include teaching of other faiths in the curriculum. Secondly, the school holds an Open Day every November in order to promote itself and to appeal to new parents who are applying for school places for the following September. They always choose a theme for the day and children rotate around the school in mixed age groups.

On both counts the day was very successful. For the whole day, children were engaged in exciting, meaningful activities that gave them insights into new aspects of faith. They gained a huge amount of new knowledge and understanding, which they demonstrated so well in the 'sharing assembly' they held at the end of the day. The teaching staff embraced other faiths willingly and taught a variety of lessons.

We welcomed three visitors into school. Mr Big (Pete Cole) led a session about Hannukah. He was very popular as he brought in chocolate coins and doughnuts for all the children.



The Reverend Cath Lewis (our local Methodist Minister) led a workshop on Pentecost where all the children made head bands with bright flames on the front.

Diana Williams led a session based on the 'wondering' part of 'Godly Play'. We were grateful to all the visitors for their input and time, making this such a worthwhile day.



The Foundation Phase staff embraced other faiths with the Reception teacher telling the story of Diwali and the children make diva lamps.

In the Year 1, the children learnt about Guru Nanak and in the Year 2 class, they found out about Judaism and the Seder meal.



In Key Stage 2, the children learnt about Shabbat and the different Hebrew blessings in Year 4. In Year 5, they found out about Buddhism, the dharma wheel and the eightfold path, while in Year 6, they learnt about the Five Pillars of Islam and painted words in Arabic writing.

The children thoroughly enjoyed themselves and learnt so much. They were all excited to take home the things they had made, share with others in the assembly and tell their class teachers all about what they had learnt. Would we repeat it? Definitely!