2 – Jesus

Aim: to help YOUR CHILD discover the person of Jesus

|  |
| --- |
| Introduction & Opening Prayer [1 minute] 8.34 / 8.19 pm |
| * *Welcome the group with an affirming message.* * *Pray.* * *Give an outline of today’s session.* |
| SMALL GROUP – ICE-BREAKER [10 minutes] 8.35 / 8.20 pm |
| Q: What did you or your child enjoy most when exploring the Family Handout?  Supplementary question:  Q: Talk about what you were excited to share with your child and how they responded.  Q: What questions did your child have?  Q: Have you ever had an encounter with a celebrity? |
| Introduction – Why JESUS? [4 minutes] 8.45 / 8,30 pm |
| **Jesus is arguably the most famous person in history.** Over 2 billion people claim to follow him. That is one-third of the world’s population. He is represented in art and literature more than any other figure.  Page 13A  Time magazine called him the most influential person who has ever lived. But who is Jesus?  **We want to share an analogy you can share with your children. You can find this on page 7 of the parents’ booklet.** Imagine I had a cake here, which I had made and gave to a scientist. The scientist will be able to tell you how the cake was made and the ingredients of the cake. They may even be able to tell you when it was made. But only I can tell you who made it and why it was made. Only the cake creator can tell you, “I made that cake!” And only I can tell you why I made that cake.  It is the same with this universe. Only the creator can reveal who made this world and why he made it. And Christianity claims that he has done that. **God has revealed Himself in the person of Jesus.** And it is through Jesus that we can know who God is and why he made us.  You can’t get to know someone unless they reveal themselves. And if a God wanted to reveal himself to us, what would be the best way to do that? It seems logical that he would reveal himself in a way that we could understand in a human being like us.  **Christianity** is unique among world religions because it emphasises more than just moral teachings and a way of life. It **hinges on the identity of Jesus Christ**, who is both God and man.  **From scripture, we know that Jesus was fully human.** He had a human body; he ate and drank, sweated, got tired and suffered pain. We know he had human emotions: love, joy, sadness. He had human experiences: he grew up in a family, he had an education, he had a job, he was tempted, he experienced bereavement, torture and even death.  We’ve referenced page 41 in the YouCat 4 Kids, a “profile of Jesus”. Why not encourage your child to create their own profile?  Page 13b  Many people today would say, “OK, he was a human being, but just a human. Maybe he was a great religious teacher, but no more than that.” **Others would say, “he is much more than that.”**  Bono, the lead singer of U2, famously said, “I don’t think you’re let off easily by saying [Jesus] was a great thinker or philosopher because he went around saying he was the Messiah. That’s why he was crucified. He was crucified because he said he was the Son of God. So, in my view, he was the Son of God, or he was nuts. And I find it hard to accept that all the millions and millions of lives, half the earth, for nearly 2000 years, have felt their lives touched and inspired by some nutter. I don’t believe it.” He says, “I believe that Jesus was the Son of God.” |
| Video camera outline“Jesus compels a choice” [5 minutes] 8.49 / 8.34 pm  ([vimeo.com/catholicparishguildford/jesus-compels-choice](https://vimeo.com/catholicparishguildford/jesus-compels-choice?share=copy)) |
| Jesus did some amazing things [1 minute] 8.54 / 8.39 pm |
| So, how can we show our children that Jesus is more than just a man? **With your children, we will ask you to look at some of the amazing things Jesus did, some of the amazing things that Jesus said, some of the amazing things that Jesus taught and some of the amazing things Jesus said about himself.**  The Bible, specifically in the New Testament, provides the very best source of information about Jesus - the earliest letters of Paul and some of the Gospels written just 30 years after Jesus’ life.  Page 15A  One of the first things we learn from reading the Gospels is that **Jesus lived a miraculous life** – he multiplied food to feed thousands of people and healed the sick.  Another thing that marked Jesus’ life was **his love for those on the margins of society;** he showed this by feeding the hungry and healing the sick.  Page 15B  We ask you to reflect, with your child, on a passage from Matthew’s gospel, where Jesus healed a leper. We will spend a few minutes reflecting on this passage in our small groups now. |
| SMALL GROUPS – JESUS DID AMAZING THINGS [10 minutes] 8.55 / 8.40 pm |
| ask someone to Read Matthew 8:1-4 (Jesus HEALING THE LEPER)  Q: What does this passage show us about Jesus?   * Biblical leprosy was an assortment of serious skin conditions that isolated the leper from the rest of society. * The leper kneeling before Jesus and saying he had the choice to heal him shows great trust in Jesus’ compassion and power. * Jesus not only heals but touches the leper who is untouchable because of his condition. Jesus often spent time with people that no one else wanted to spend time with. * Jesus restores the man’s societal position by encouraging him to go to the temple. |
| Jesus Taught amazing things [1 minute] 9.05 / 8.50 pm |
| Another **way we can know that Jesus was more than just a good man was by his teachings.**  Page 16A  The Sermon on the Mount is one of the greatest teachings of all time, where five thousand people gathered to hear the teachings of Jesus.  Jesus’ teaching has been the foundation of our entire civilisation. Many of our laws are founded on Jesus’ teachings. He taught things like: “Love your neighbour as yourself”, “do to others as you would have them do to you”, and “love your enemies”. They are the greatest words ever spoken, the kind of words you would expect God to speak.  **On page 16 of the handout, there is an opportunity to reflect on a series of teachings by Jesus called the “Beatitudes”**. The word Beatitudes means supreme blessedness. The beatitudes that Jesus gives us are a list of blessings that we can have in our lives. There is an easy-to-fill-in, colour-coded chart where you match the action with the word.  Page 16B |
| Jesus SAID amazing things. |
| On this page, there is a lovely comic to read together. This comic comes from Luke 5: 17-26, where Jesus forgave the paralysed man's sins before healing him.  Page 17  Forgiveness is right at the heart of Christianity. **Jesus approached multiple people and said,** “Your sins are forgiven”**.** Now, if someone has sinned against you, you could forgive them. However, you can’t just walk up to anyone and say, “Your sins are forgiven”. The Pharisees at the time said, “Who can forgive sins but God alone?” But Jesus claimed to be able to do that. Jesus said that he came to give his life so that people who believe in him can have forgiveness.  Let’s look at this passage in our small groups and prepare to discuss it with our child. |
| SMALL GROUPS – JESUS SAID AMAZING THINGS [10 minutes] 9.06 / 8.51 pm |
| ask someone to Read Luke 5:17-26 (The paralysed man)  Q: How does Jesus claim to be God in this passage?   * Blasphemy means to disrespect God or sacred things. In this passage, the Pharisees accuse Jesus of blasphemy because he claims to forgive sins, which makes him equal to God. * It was scandalous to the Jews that Jesus claimed to have the authority to forgive sins – only God had that kind of authority! |
| Jesus amazing things about himself [1 minute] 9.16 / 9.01 pm |
| **Jesus caused controversy and curiosity wherever he went because of his powerful words and miracles.** He left everyone wondering, “Who is this man?” or even, “Who does this man think he is?”  **Jesus’ teaching centres on himself** - great religious teachers point away from themselves. They say, “Don’t look at me. Look at God.” Jesus, who personified humility in pointing people to God, said: “Look at me. Come to me.”  The Gospel writers give us an account of society’s attitudes and opinions about Jesus during his public ministry and passion – from the Pharisees to the crowds to his disciples and the Romans. Some saw Jesus as a great man, a miracle worker, a superb moral teacher, and perhaps Israel’s hope for freedom from Roman tyranny. More importantly, many understood that he claimed to be equal to God, and for this scandalous blasphemy, the Chief Priests sought to kill him.  **Scripture does not describe an occasion when Jesus explicitly said, “I am God.” However, a careful look at the Gospels shows that Jesus did claim equality with God**, especially by taking upon himself attributes only God could possess.  **On page 18** of the Family Handout, we ask you to look up “I AM” statements from the Gospel of John. On this page, we would like you to talk about the things Jesus said about himself that show us that he did say he was God.  Page 18A  So, in a moment in your small groups, you will be looking at these bible passages and a couple of others where Jesus takes upon himself attributes only God could possess. |
| SMALL GROUPS - WHO DID JESUS THINK HE WAS? [25 mins] 9.17 / 9.02 pm |
| Each group looks up the FOLLOWING bible passages. Ask them to explain in one very short sentence what Jesus claimed he was from the passage they read.  John 6:35  35 Jesus said to them, ‘I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.’  We all have a spiritual hunger that other things can’t satisfy, a sense that there must be more to life than this. Jesus said, “I am the bread of life”. He is saying, “I am the one who can satisfy that spiritual hunger”. Could link to the Eucharist here.  John 8:12  12 Again, Jesus spoke to them, saying, ‘I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.’   * Jesus’ being “the light of the world” means the world has no other light than him. * It means that all the world and everyone in it needs Jesus as their light. * The light of faith can also shine a light on sin and make everything look beautiful. * Finally, Jesus being “the light of the world” means that one day, this world will be filled with this light.   John 10:11, 27  11 ‘I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.  27 My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me.  23 You are my sheep, the sheep of my pasture, and I am your God, declares the Sovereign Lord, –Ezekiel 34:23-24, 31.   * Ezekiel prophesied that the coming Messiah would be God’s Shepherd of his flock. In verse 31, God declares that we are “his sheep”. * Jesus is claiming the role of Shepherd for himself, thus claiming to be the Messiah. But he takes it further, in verse 27, by claiming “the sheep” are his sheep. Jesus is claiming that he is God.   John 11:25  25 Jesus said to her, ‘I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live,’  Read verses 6-25 to set the context.  When Jesus said, “I am the resurrection and the life,” He claimed to be the source of both. There is no resurrection without him and no eternal life without him. Beyond that, Jesus was also making a statement concerning his divine nature. He does more than give life; He is life, and therefore, death has no ultimate power over Him. Jesus says those who believe in him will share in his triumph over death. Believers in Jesus will experience resurrection because, having the life Jesus gives, it is impossible for death to defeat them.  John 14:6  6 Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.’   * The: Jesus specifically uses the article “the”. He does not say, “I am a way, a truth, a life.” Nor does he say: “I am one way, one truth, one life.” He said I am THE way, THE truth, THE life. * Way: Jesus not only says he is THE way but also adds, “No one comes to the Father except through me”! It is a weighty and crucial proclamation. Jesus claims to be the only way to the Father. If we want to come to the Father, we must go through Jesus. * Truth: Jesus claims to be Truth itself, thus claiming for himself an attribute of the highest divinity. It would follow that we should take what Jesus says and does very seriously. * Life: If Jesus is the source of life, we need to turn to him to find our meaning and purpose. He is the source of our life now and after death.   Background on the term “I AM”:  “I AM”. God revealed his name to the Jewish people, the Israelites, as “I AM” when he appeared to Moses in the burning bush. Jesus used this name to signify that he is indeed God. Supplementary question Q: How do you think your children will respond to Jesus’ claim that he is God? |
| Jesus’ more direct claims [1 minute] 9.42 / 9.27 pm |
| **One of the most direct claims that Jesus made is in John’s gospel, chapter 10, verse 30**, where he said, “I and the Father are one”. The religious leaders saw this to be blasphemy. It is tantamount to a claim to be God, and it was punishable by death. People did pick up stones to stone him.  Page 18B  Then Jesus said to them, “I’ve shown you many great miracles from the Father, for which of these do you stone me?” “We’re not stoning you for any of these,” they replied. “But for blasphemy, because you, a mere human being, claim to be God.” |
| IS JESUS MORE THAN JUST A MAN? [1 minute] |
| The final way we know that Jesus is God is by his conquest of death – his resurrection. **YouCat 4 Kids Q.25 Is Jesus Christ really God?** It says: “Yes. Almost everybody thought that Jesus was a normal person. But when Jesus started to teach, when he healed the paralysed, blind and deaf, and even brought the dead back to life, they sensed that he was more than human. But it was only after the resurrection that even Jesus’ friends fully understood that he is the Son of God and truly God.”  Page 19a  Page 19b  **We ask you to meditate with your child, reflecting on the experience of Doubting Thomas.** Doubting Thomas was one of the twelve disciples who wasn’t there when Jesus appeared to the others.  So, like a lot of us probably would have done, he didn’t believe that Jesus rose from the dead because he didn’t witness it with his own eyes. Reading this meditation would be best done in a quiet setting, perhaps as part of your child's bedtime reading or prayer time.  Page 19b  Another thing you can do is to reflect on the painting by Caravaggio. |
| The Holy Spirit HELPS US TO BELIEVE [1 minute] |
| **On this page, we look briefly at the Holy Spirit.** Through the Holy Spirit, we can understand Jesus is God, just like the apostles.  Page 20a  In John 14:25-26, it says – “I have said these things to you while I am still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you.”  Only after the apostles received the Holy Spirit did they truly understand that Jesus was God, and they had the confidence to proclaim this to others. It is also through the Holy Spirit that we can pray to God.  **We ask you to pray to the Holy Spirit as part of the family prayer at the very end of the handout.**  Page 20B |
| CONCLUSION & FINAL PRAYER [1 Minute] 9.45 / 9.30 pm |
| Our children may already have learnt that Jesus is the Son of God. They accept this so easily and are happy to declare this belief. I wish we all had that beautiful child-like faith. When they reach a time of questioning in their life, coming soon, they will be able to go back to the conversations they have had with you about Jesus. They will remember how you showed them through opening the scriptures and showing them that Jesus did claim to be God. They can hold onto this truth for the rest of their lives.  Let’s end our evening by taking our children's place for a moment, and we will read the meditation on **page 19 of the Family Handout**. End with the **prayer to the Holy Spirit** at the end of the handout.  \* A wonderful way to bring faith into our home is to say “grace”, a prayer before meals. Look in the Parent Booklet for suggestions, including some you can sing!  Next session’s topic: THE CROSS |