



Catholic Children's Society (Plymouth)

Putting All Children First

ADVENT APPEAL 2017 – Make Love Your Aim

Introduction

Thank you so much for participating in this year's Advent appeal for the **Catholic Children's Society Plymouth (CCSP)**. We are so grateful for your support!

The theme is '**Make Love Your Aim**'. We are asking schools to explore how CCSP helps local children and families in the diocese and how they can get involved while growing closer to Jesus ready for Christmas during Advent.

Easy to teach activities and a PowerPoint presentation are provided for each year group to introduce the CCSP to children at an age appropriate level. These lessons link directly with the differentiated learning outcomes and suggested activities from the **Advent teaching materials provided by the diocese and Unit 3 – Advent from 'God Matters'**. The planning is easy to follow, features engage, explore and express activities and also highlights AT1 and AT2 elements. All resources are free of charge and are available to download from our website: <http://ccsplymouth.org.uk/good-shepherd/> Please feel free to use or adapt the resources and activities as you see fit to support your teaching.

Fundraising

Our hope is that after learning about the CCSP, staff and children will feel inspired to help with our fundraising as part of their Advent preparation. Every child will get their own crib collection box to take home following their learning on the work of the Children's Society and how it links to Advent. Not only will it be a wonderful reminder of the true meaning of Christmas but it can be filled with current or previous currency, from this country or any other. Boxes will then be returned to school in time to celebrate at Epiphany. Any donations at all will be gratefully received by the CCSP. The charity has a crisis fund which provides emergency support for children, young people and their families who are having financial difficulties. It provides one-off grants to meet emergency needs such as essential white goods or clothing. Any head teacher in the diocese can access the fund for a family in need by completing a simple form stating the circumstances and needs of the family.

100% of the money you raise for the Catholic Children's Society Plymouth will go to supporting families living in Cornwall, Devon and Dorset.

Contact

If you have any questions please email Claire.Warren@prcdtr.org.uk or call Heather in our main office: **01364 645420**

Thank you so much for supporting CCSP this Advent!



Make Love Our Aim - Year 4

Learning Intentions	God Matters Learning Objective To understand that Advent is a significant liturgical celebration which helps us understand the life of Jesus. To understand the signs and symbols used in Advent. Working towards Age Related outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pupils will be able to retell some of the stories of some of Jesus' ancestors. (AT1)• Pupils will be able to describe ways in which an ancestor of Jesus lived out their faith. (AT1)• Pupils will be able to ask and respond to questions about why Jesus' ancestors believed and acted in the way they did. (AT2) Age related Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pupils will be able to explain the stories of some of Jesus' ancestors making links between the stories and beliefs. (AT1)• Pupils will be able to explain the purpose of the Jesse Tree in helping Christians prepare for Advent and be able to describe and explain some of the symbols on it. (AT1) Working at greater depth <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pupils will be able to show how the decisions made by several of the prophets were informed by their beliefs (AT2) Additional learning To know how CCSP helps local children through their services. To understand how we can help CCSP help local children
Resources	Which Season? sheet (below) Jesse Tree information sheet (below) What qualities does a prophet need? (below) Information/question sheets on Isaiah, Amos, Gideon and Esther (below) Nativity with figures
Key questions	Why is Advent an important time for Christians? What is a Jesse tree? What is a prophet? How does a Jesse Tree and its stories help with our preparation during Advent? What decisions did the prophets make based on their beliefs? What do Christians do during Advent as a result of their beliefs?
Engage Activities	What do we know?



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Engage Activities	<p>In pairs, identify the pictures and which liturgical season they are associated with using 'Which season?' sheet (below). Discuss.</p> <p>The Jesse Tree Introduce the children to the concept of a Jesse Tree. It is a bit like an Advent calendar, except that it emphasises the true meaning of Christmas through daily stories of people that came before Jesus was born – his ancestors. One ornament per day is added to the tree showing a picture or symbol that relates to an important story or person, for example, John the Baptist or Joseph. The relevant Bible reading is then read to discover the great and wonderful things that God orchestrated on our behalf. See below on Jesse Tree Information sheet for more details. Many prophets are included on a Jesse Tree. What is a prophet? What qualities do you think a prophet needs to have? (Sheet below) Ask pupils to work in pairs to sort the cards out into qualities a prophet must have and qualities they shouldn't have or those that are not necessary. They must then rank the necessary qualities in order of importance. Note You will need to cut out a set of cards for each pair. You may need to recap the story of Jonah (but briefly!). Why do think God chose Jonah to be a prophet? What does this tell us about ourselves? Prophets are not always brave and good, a lot of them had many faults, made mistakes and got things wrong but in the end they responded to God's call and tried to do something to bring people back to God.</p>
Explore and Express Activities	<p>Prophets Ask pupils to research in pairs the life of at least one prophet that might be featured on a Jesse tree. There are four examples below with questions to consider: Esther, Isaiah, Gideon and Amos. Pupils can share their learning in one of the following ways: Hot Seating (One plays the prophet and the others ask questions) If you plan to do this, it would be useful to let the children know when they start so they can think about how their prophet might answer the questions they are looking at. They can also highlight relevant words in the text to help. Symbols Pairs could display their symbol and explain why they have chosen this for their prophet. (AT1) Diary Entry Write a diary entry entitled 'A day in the life of</p> <p>.....' inserting the prophet's name detailing when and how they communicated God's message, what that message was and people's response to them.</p> <p>Create a Jesse Tree This can be done in various ways as suggested in the information section. Each child can complete an ornament to be placed on the tree to be placed on the tree day by day through Advent.</p> <p>Catholic Children's Society Appeal Share the PowerPoint with the children explaining the 'Make Love Your Aim' appeal and sharing the charity's work.</p>



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	<p>How would prophets such as Isaiah and Amos have felt about the appeal? What can you remember that tells you this? How can we help? Note - Ideally you need to start this with an empty stable in view as you will see in the PowerPoint. The children can then add the people who should be present as they suggest them.</p>
<p>Prayer</p>	<p>God our Father, you spoke to the prophets of old of a Saviour who would bring peace. You helped them to spread the joyful message of His coming kingdom. Help us, as we prepare to celebrate his birth, to share with those around us the Good News of Your power and love through our words and actions. We ask this through Jesus Christ, the Light of the world. Amen.</p>



Which season in the Church's year are these pictures linked to?





Jesse Tree Information

The idea for the Jesse tree stems from the words of the prophet Isaiah who said, **“a shoot will spring forth from the stump of Jesse and a branch out of his roots.”**

Jessie lived in Bethlehem, the son of Obed and the grandson of Boaz and Ruth. He had eight sons, of whom King David was the youngest, and two daughters. The tree is meant to tell the story of how God interacted with his people up to the point where Jesus was born. It is a symbol of hope.

The Israelites through Abraham were chosen by God to be a light to the nations. When they were imprisoned by the Egyptians, they cried out to God for help. And God responded: God promised to be with them and to be their God, and they would be His people. But they forgot God. God sent a series of leaders to raise their awareness, still they worshipped false gods. God sent prophets to warn them of the consequences of failing to be His people. Some people wanted to change but others refused. The Babylonian armies came and took the people into slavery. The prophets promised that once again God would offer the hope of salvation.

The idea behind the tree is to give the sense of history, of expectation and that you need to do something to bring about change. Typically one ornament is placed on the tree for each day of Advent, but Advent can range from twenty-one to twenty-eight days depending on the year, so adjustments must be made as to how many ornaments are placed on the branches each day. The ornaments are placed on the tree chronologically from creation through to the birth of Christ, and they are also usually placed from the bottom of the tree to the top, so Christ is alone at the top of the tree on Christmas day. It is usual to use a branch to represent a tree or make a paper tree and glue the ornaments on. The design of the ornaments reflects the person and their story.



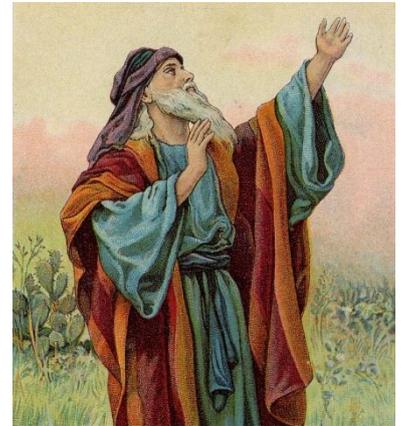
What Qualities Does A Prophet Need?

Loyal	Trustworthy
A cheat	Rich
Brave	Cowardly
Angry	Peaceful
Kind	Forgiving
Prayerful	Deceitful
Poor	A Good Speaker
Intelligent	Have Authority
Married	Woman
Man	Old
Young	Single



The Story of Isaiah

Isaiah is probably one of the most important figures as we prepare to celebrate Christmas. Isaiah lived about 765 years before Jesus. He was a poet and much of his writing is poetry. At the time he lived he saw that the people around him only pretended to serve God. Isaiah told people that God didn't want them to come to the temple bringing sacrifices and praying if when they went home they treated others badly. He said their prayers were empty, just words because they didn't look after those who were weak or oppressed. He told the people they must change their ways. They must turn back to God and change. Isaiah also promised that a Messiah would come to save his people. He compared those who suffer now to being like a people who walked in darkness. He gave us these beautiful words about the promise of God. He said when the Messiah came it would be as though:



**The people walking in darkness
have seen a great light;
on those living in the land of deep darkness
a light has dawned.**

He went on to say:

**For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given,
and the government will be on his shoulders.
And he will be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
Of the greatness of his government and peace
there will be no end.
He will reign on David's throne
and over his kingdom,
establishing and upholding it
with justice and righteousness
from that time on and forever.
The zeal of the LORD Almighty
will accomplish this.**



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Because Isaiah constantly reminded people that if they wanted a better world they had to change to make it happen, he became very unpopular. People didn't want to change. They wanted all their luxuries. They were not keen on the idea that the Messiah, when he came, would take the side of the poor. Although it isn't absolutely certain it seems like the authorities tortured and killed him. Isaiah thought that might happen eventually but he said that being close to God and speaking God's word was the most important thing in his life.

- **Who was the Messiah that Isaiah talked about?**
- **What did Isaiah teach about God?**
- **What did he ask people to do? Why did this challenge the people?**
- **Why does he say the Messiah will reign on David's throne?**
- **Of all the titles he gives the Messiah, which do you like best? Explain why?**
- **What would be a good symbol of Isaiah's life and message? Design the symbol.**



The Story of Esther

Esther was an ordinary Jewish girl who had been taken captive by the Persians. After her parents died, she was adopted a family member, Mordecai, who raised her as his own daughter.



King Xerxes, the king of Persia was looking for a new queen. Now Mordecai had a dream. He dreamt that in the future the Jewish people would be in danger but Esther would be the one to save them. He asked Esther if she would be willing to try to be the queen. Esther was very frightened of the responsibility and she was very young but she knew she had to do the right thing and try to save her people. She was chosen to be the new queen but she didn't tell anyone that she was Jewish.

Mordecai found out about a plot to kill the king and even though the Persians were his enemies and the king was Persian he warned Esther who managed to warn the king. Now the king was grateful to Esther and Mordecai and rewarded them. Unfortunately, there was a politician called Haman, he was jealous that Mordecai and Esther were rewarded. Haman was an evil man who hated the Jewish people and plotted to have them killed. If he ever found out Esther was Jewish, she knew he would try to kill her too.

Mordecai asked Esther to go to the king and plead for the lives of the Jewish people. She was terrified. In those days you could be killed just for going to the king if he hadn't sent for you. And if she asked to save the Jewish people, she would have to tell him she was Jewish too! But despite her fear she went to see the king. Esther believed that no matter what happened she could always trust in God. She thought that even if she didn't know the words to say God would help her find the right words. She invited the king and the evil man, Haman, to a banquet. She asked all the Jewish people to fast and pray that the King would listen. During the meal, she revealed the plot against the Jews and accused Haman. The King realised that Esther was a good person and had saved his life before. He took Esther's side and ordered Haman killed. The Jewish People were saved.





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- **What problems did Esther have to face in her life?**
- **What qualities did she show?**
- **Why do you think her faith was important to her?**
- **Was she a prophet?**
- **What would be a good symbol of her life? Why?**
- **Design and create the symbol.**



The Story of Amos

Amos was an ordinary person who lived in Judea and became a shepherd. However, when he looked at the world around him he decided that the politicians and the religious leaders were not behaving in the right way. The more he thought about it, the more convinced he became that someone had to do something. He felt God was asking him to try to change people. He said "I was no prophet, I was a shepherd. The LORD took me from following the flock, and said to me, Go, prophesy to my people Israel. Now hear the word of the LORD!" (7:14-16)



The people however didn't want to hear what Amos had to say. They thought it didn't matter how they behaved. They ignored Jewish law and the commandments. Amos told them that God cared about the weak and poor, whatever country they came from or religion they were. He said that God would be angry with those who hurt others or had too much money while others hadn't enough to buy food. He even told them it was no good just saying prayers if you let others starve. He told the people "Seek good, not evil, that you may live. Then the LORD God Almighty will be with you, just as you say he is."

No one would listen to him. He had to stand on a street corner and shout his message. They laughed at him, insulted him. They even attacked him. People didn't want to be seen with him but still he told people what they should do. The rulers tried to force him to leave the country. Amos spent his whole life trying to persuade people to do the right thing. He was never rewarded or praised except by the poor.



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Highlight important things that Amos said or did.

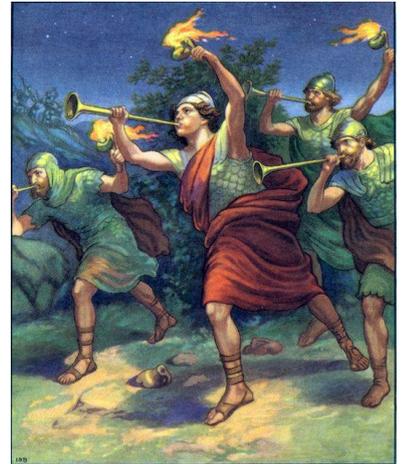
- **What problems did Amos see around him? How is that similar to our day?**
- **How did he ask people to behave?**
- **What did he teach about God?**
- **What problems did he face?**
- **Do you think he was happy? Why?**
- **What qualities did he show?**
- **What symbol best describes his life? Why?**
- **Design the symbol.**



The story of Gideon

When the story began, the Israelites are constantly being attacked by other groups especially the Midianites. These attackers would destroy crops meaning it was difficult to find food. Gideon was threshing grain to make bread but he was afraid of being attacked so he had dug a pit to hide himself and the grain. A messenger from God came and told Gideon that God was with him and he was going to save his people.

At first Gideon didn't believe it. He said God wasn't with him because if he was they wouldn't be being attacked and in any case he was not a hero and much too young to get involved. When the messenger said again that Gideon must help so Gideon asked for a sign. Eventually Gideon was convinced. He came to believe that God will always help but maybe not in the way you expect. He realised that you have to trust in God and try to live in the way God wants.



The first thing he did was tear down altars put up to false gods. That nearly got him killed but he carried on. He realised he had to defeat their enemies – the Midianites. He asked for help from his people. Eventually he gathered three hundred men. They planned to attack the enemy camp which had thousands of men in. That night, Gideon gave each man a trumpet, a torch and a clay jar. They surrounded the enemy camp, with each torch hidden inside the jar. At Gideon's signal, every man blew his trumpet and broke his jar. The confused Midianites turned on one another, with the survivors fleeing the camp. Gideon and his courageous men chased the escapees and cut off their retreat. The victory was the Lord's.

Israel then had quietness for 40 years for the remainder of Gideon's life. Once the Israelites were delivered from the oppression of the Midianites, they begged Gideon to be their king, but he refused. *"I will not rule over you, nor shall my son rule over you; the Lord shall rule over you."* (8:23). He turned down power and wealth because he knew that wasn't the way to live. His desire was for the Israelites to turn to God, their true King and live in the way God wanted. He knew that if they didn't, if they were greedy or selfish, they would make more enemies so he didn't just want them to be glad the Midianites were gone he wanted people to truly love God.



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- **What problems did Gideon see around him?**
- **How did he first react? How did he change?**
- **What problems did he face? Do you think he was happy?**
- **What qualities did he show?**
- **What did he teach about God?**
- **What symbol best describes his life? Why?**
- **Design the symbol.**