

**WE ARE ALL CHILDREN OF GOD**



# THE PRIMARY RE CURRICULUM & INTER-FAITH EDUCATION

## LEVEL 2

- 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

## LEVEL 3

### 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

- Respect and love ought to be extended to those who think or act differently than we do in religious matters
- Catholics work together with people of other faiths to promote human rights, social justice, good morals, peace and freedom
- The Church reproves discrimination against people on the basis of race, colour or religion
- 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
- Christians and Jews are kin in faith and worship.

- 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
- 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. Id-al-Adha. Ways in which care for others is important in the Muslim faith.

## **KEY TERMS**

- Ecumenism                      promoting and developing the relationship between the various Christian denominations or religions.
- Inter Faith                      promoting and developing the relationship between the different world religions.
- Monotheism                      belief in one God. Judaism, Christianity and Islam are monotheistic religions

## **USEFUL WEBSITES:**

<https://www.truetube.co.uk/>

<https://sites.google.com/site/worldreligionsforkids/>

[http://www.chabad.org/kids/article\\_cdo/aid/1347962/jewish/Why-I-Like-Being-Jewish.htm](http://www.chabad.org/kids/article_cdo/aid/1347962/jewish/Why-I-Like-Being-Jewish.htm)

<http://www.softschools.com/facts/religion/>

# JUDAISM

## A BRIEF HISTORY:

Judaism is the oldest of the world's religions and dates back almost 4000 years to the time of Abraham and Moses. Many of the world's religions are directly influenced by Judaism. There are more than 14 million Jewish people in the world. In the modern world three major branches or movements of Judaism, Orthodox, Reform and Conservative have developed.

## WHAT JEWISH PEOPLE BELIEVE:

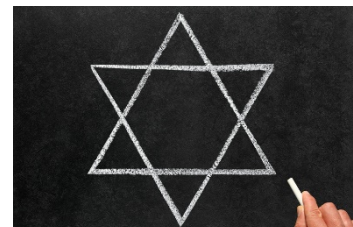
Jewish people believe that there is only one God. Monotheism, belief in one God, was not commonly held at the time that God revealed himself to Abraham as the one, true, God. Judaism tells us God took special care of the Hebrew people who later became known as the Jews. They were rescued from slavery in Egypt. Moses led them from Egypt to the Promised Land of Israel and it was during this journey that Moses received the Ten Commandments from God. God also revealed many more rules in the Torah or the Law as it came to be known. The main purpose of these rules were to encourage the Hebrews to believe in one God and not behave like their neighbours who worshipped many gods (*polytheism*).

## SYMBOLS AND SACRED OBJECTS

As with all religions Judaism has its symbols and sacred objects. Here are some of the most important ones.

### STAR OR *MAGEN* (*May-g-in*) OF DAVID

This is now the very recognisable emblem of the Jewish people. It is said that it is shaped like King David's shield, although Jewish scholars can find little or no evidence for this. The symbol of intertwined equilateral triangles is often found in the Middle East and in North Africa and it is said to bring good luck.



**MEZUZAH** (*may-zoo-za*) 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* (*shay – ma*). 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.*'



## **PLACE OF WORSHIP AND SACRED OBJECTS TO BE FOUND THERE**

**SYNAGOGUE** this word comes from the Greek and means '*the assembly.*' Conservative Jews use this word for their place of worship. Orthodox Jews also use the word '*Shul,*' which comes from the German word meaning school. This reflects the two activities that take place in the Synagogue. It



is a place of worship and a place of learning. Reform Jews speak about 'the Temple' because they believe that every building that they meet in for prayer is a replacement for the Temple in Jerusalem. The word Synagogue is most widely used and accepted.

Men and women usually sit separately in the Synagogue so as not to be distracted from their prayer. Men must cover their heads. In most cases worship takes place in Hebrew and people sit facing Jerusalem when they pray

**RABBI** is the Jewish spiritual leaders are called *rabbis*. A *rabbi* is not a priest and has no special religious status. The word '*Rabbi*' means teacher.

**CHAZZAN** or cantor leads the people in singing during prayer.

**MENORAH** (*men-or-ah*) is one of the oldest symbols of the Jewish faith. It is a candelabrum and can be found in the synagogue. It symbolises the burning bush that Moses saw in the desert. The menorah has seven candle-holders. The *chanukkiyah* (*yan-nok-a*) is a nine-candled holder used during the Jewish festival of Hanukkah.



**THE TORAH** (*toe-rah* the first five books of the Hebrew Bible. This 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 Scrolls* are stored inside the Ark (*Aron Kodesh: arun-ko-dish*) which is the most sacred place in the Synagogue.

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** (*Tanakh: tan-ach.*) This comes from the three parts of the Jewish scriptures the *Torah, the Nevi'im and the Ketuvim.*



**ARON KODESH** (*the Ark of the Covenant*) is where the holy books are kept in the Synagogue



**NER TAMID** is an eternal flame that burns in the Synagogue



**BIMAH** is the raised platform in the synagogue from which the Torah is read and from where services are led.

## **SACRED RITUALS & PRACTICES**

**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, carrying or driving. *Shabbath* 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 *challah*. (*cha-la*)

### **BIRTH**

When a Jewish baby is born the father stands up in the synagogue and asks for blessings on the mother and baby. Eight days after birth a male child is circumcised.

**BAR MITZVAH AND BAT MITZVAH** 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



**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.

## SPECIAL CLOTHES

**KIPPAH** is the skull cap worn as a reminder that the laws of God must always be followed. Boys start wearing the Kippah at three years of age.



## TALLIT (Prayer Shawl)

Before beginning to worship or pray Jewish men, boys and some women will often put on a *tallit*. This is a fringed prayer shawl. The knotted fringes are called *tzitzit* (*seat-seat*) and are reminders of the many commandments, more than 600, of the Torah.



## HOLY DAYS AND FESTIVALS

**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** is the Jewish New Year. 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** is 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** 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** 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)** 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

## A BRIEF HISTORY:

Islam is a monotheistic faith founded almost 1300 years ago. Muslims believe that God revealed the faith to the Prophet Muhammad in Saudi Arabia in the 7<sup>th</sup> century. God did this by sending his messenger the angel Gabriel to Muhammad for more than twenty years. These messages eventually were written down in the Qu'ran, the Holy Book of Islam. The name Muhammad means 'highly praised.' The word 'Islam' means submission and followers of Islam believe that they are called to submit to God's will in all things.

## WHAT MUSLIMS BELIEVE

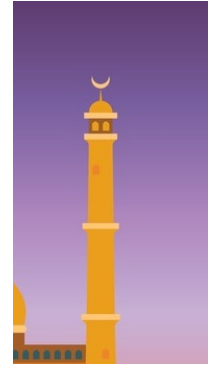
Muslims believe in one God who is unseen and whom they call 'Allah.' Their God is the same God of the Jewish and Christian religions but, they believe that this God was imperfectly revealed in the Jewish and Christian biblical texts. Muslims believe in five prophets, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad. There are two main branches of Islam, Sunni and Shi'a. The largest of the two is the Sunni and they are rooted in those who followed Abu Bakr after the death of the Prophet Muhammad. Abu Bakr was the father of Muhammad's favourite wife. The Shi'a Muslims are descended from those who followed Ali who was a cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet and chosen by Muhammad to be his successor. There are almost a billion Sunnis and 120 million Shi'as in the world today.

## SYMBOLS AND SACRED OBJECTS

**THE STAR AND CRESCENT MOON** is a very recent symbol adopted by some Muslims. It is suggested that the moon represents the lunar calendar that governs the Islamic year and that the five-pointed star may represent the five pillars of Islam.



**MINARET** is a tower connected to a Mosque from where Muslims are called to prayer five times daily. Traditionally this call was done by the muezzin or crier. Nowadays most mosques have loudspeakers.



**THE QUR'AN** is Islam's Holy Book. Muslims believe it is '*the word of God*'. Their beliefs, practices and laws 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.

**HIJAB** is a scarf traditionally worn in public by women from the age of puberty. It covers the head and neck. A Niqab covers the head and face except the eyes. The burka covers the head, face and body and may have a mesh covering for the eyes. A chador is a long black cloak worn by some Muslim women outside the home.



## SACRED RITUALS & PRACTICES

### 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. They must wash their face, hands and feet (*wudu*) before they begin their prayer. If there is no water sand can be used for this ablution. When praying Muslims face in the direction of Mecca.

Each period for prayer has a special name and each time is separated by two hours.

These essential times are:

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

► **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

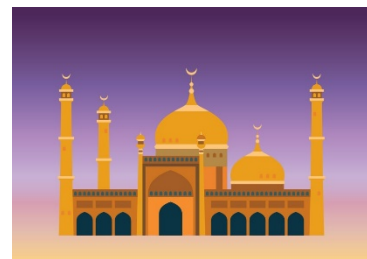
Muslims fast for one lunar month each year, a period called Ramadan. During this time, Muslims reflect on their behaviour and strive to purify their thoughts.

► **HAJJ:** pilgrimage to Mecca

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

## HOLY PLACES

**THE MOSQUE:** Muslims go to a building called a mosque to pray. 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 and to show that it is a holy place. Mosques also have places for the ritual washing that takes place before each prayer time. This ritual washing is called **WUDU**.



There is always a qibla wall in a Mosque which is the one facing Makkah (Mecca). **MIHRAB** is a semi-circular niche in the wall of a mosque that indicates the direction of 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. There are actions and words used while praying to Allah. These actions and the words used are called **RAK'AH**. Prayer and services are led by an **IMAM** who is usually chosen from among the community.

**MINBAR** is the pulpit from which the Imam gives a sermon during Friday prayer.

**MECCA:** 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 **Ka'ba** (Ka'bah). All Muslims face the direction of the Ka'ba during ritual prayer.

Muslims believe that the Ka'ba is the holiest place on earth. It is generally thought to have been built by Prophet Abraham and is a shrine around a black stone. 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.

## **MUSLIM FESTIVALS**

**RAMADAN (RAMADHAN)** 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 (Jahannam) 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: *fa-jeer*) 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; *eed-oll-fit-r*) is the festival that celebrates 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** is 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 twelfth and last month of the Islamic calendar.

**DHUL AL-HIJJAH** is the month of pilgrimage during which all Muslims, at least once in their life, should try to make the pilgrimage to Mecca.

**AL HIJRA** is the Islamic New Year and begins on the day Muhammad left Mecca to travel to Medina.