

Themes:





-  *The Star of Bethlehem - COVID-19 - Aid to the Church in Need - Jesus the light being a light/star for others.*

Summary

Using the Star of Bethlehem as the foundation and focus, this resource is about recognising that although everyone has suffered this year, there is hope. This hope is because of God's love shown through Jesus' birth which redeems all things. The examples of human selflessness (being light or stars for others: ACN's COVID response and our everyday heroes here in the UK during the COVID-19 pandemic) is celebrated with pupils being invited to respond through prayer, reflection and support* of the work of ACN; symbolised by their making and offering a star to the crib, or as a Christmas tree decoration.

EVERYTHING YOU NEED FOR THIS RESOURCE IS ON THE PRESENTATION

This resource contains:

-  A very short Google presentation (comprises introductory slides, notes, prayers for each school day of Advent, instructions for the star-making activity and extra related ACN video material to show if required).
-  A star-making prayer/reflection activity
-  Prayers for each school day of Advent
-  Suggestions for offering of star at crib

Resource Aim:

1. To recognise that 2021 has been a difficult year and to give pupils time to bring their thoughts, fears and concerns to God in prayer.
2. To highlight some of the amazing ways individuals have responded to the crisis in order to help others.
3. To use the Star of Bethlehem as a prayer focus; to show that God is our hope and the light in the darkness and we too can be lights for others.
4. To explain how ACN has helped people across the world during the pandemic.
5. To give pupils the opportunity to respond in prayer and/or fundraising for ACN's COVID-relief efforts or for Christmas parcels.

Instructions

1. Play the presentation (either as an assembly or as part of a lesson).
2. Discuss the contents.
3. Give pupils the opportunity to share their experiences of lockdown and the pandemic.
4. Talk about Jesus being the light of the world and how even when things appear to be completely dark, God is working for our good. Explain that, we too can be/are stars for others – especially when we allow the Holy Spirit to work in us by developing our relationship with God through prayer and the sacraments. Unpack what this means (with reference to the Incarnation) and explain the activity.
5. Decide when you are going to do the star activity: you may want to do it in one lesson/form time or in slots over the weeks of Advent in an ongoing way.
6. If the class is fundraising for ACN (COVID relief or £25 Christmas parcel), give them time to plan their activities.
7. Pray the prayers each day.
8. Invite pupils to offer their prayers written on their stars to Jesus (in the crib) on Christmas Eve (or on their Christmas trees).
9. Collect donation for ACN.

**We have aimed to cover the COVID situation sensitively, recognising that pupils and their families may have suffered greatly. Consequently fundraising may not be appropriate for everyone this year.*