



# The Last Supper

## Lesson Preparation

### Learning Objectives

- To explore the Easter story through Jesus' final meal with his disciples
- To consider the significance of the 'last supper' to followers of the Christian faith

### Curriculum Links

- 1b) Describe the variety of practices and ways of life in religions and understand how these stem from, and are closely connected with, beliefs and teachings
- 1e) Consider the meaning of a range of forms of religious expressions
- 1h) Use and interpret information about religions from a range of sources
- 2a) Reflect on what it means to belong to a faith community

### Cross Curriculum Links

Speaking and Listening, Drama, Art, PSHE (drama tableau, hot-seating, thought-tracking, improvisation, circle time)

### Assessment Opportunities

- Retell religious stories and suggest meanings for religious actions and symbols (AT1)
- Identify how religion is expressed in different ways (AT1)
- Raise, and suggest answers to, questions of identity, belonging, meaning, purpose, truth, values and commitments (AT2)

## Stimulus Material (DVD): Episode 2 The Last Supper

### Further Lesson Resources:

- Approximately 25 objects (real or on powerpoint slides)
- Bibles
- A copy of *The Last Supper* by Leonardo Da Vinci
- A long blanket or sheet
- Name cards for the 12 disciples and Jesus
- Seder Meal items (optional)
- Bread and wine (blackcurrant juice)

### Bible References:

#### Matthew 26:17-30 *The Last Supper*

For further study see also: Mark 14:12-26 & Luke 22:7-30.



## Teachers Background Notes:

The six episodes in this series explore the Easter story from the perspective of different Bible based characters. In this second episode, the children meet Peter the disciple. Jesus and his followers are in Jerusalem celebrating the Passover Festival. During the special meal, Jesus foretells the betrayal of one of his disciples (Judas) and institutes the symbolic sharing of bread and wine. Throughout the lesson, the children will examine the events leading up to Jesus' death and will consider the importance of the Last Supper to Christians. They will also explore what it means to be thankful and to remember important occasions in their lives.

**Jesus** Like his early followers, Jesus would have grown up in the Jewish educational system and most likely attended the synagogue for religious teaching in the Torah Scrolls. His education would have involved memorisation of the Holy Scriptures and observance of important Jewish customs such as the Passover celebrations.

**Disciples** Jesus had 12 special followers known as disciples. Their names were Simon (Peter), Andrew, James, John, Philip, Nathaniel (Bartholomew), Matthew, Thomas, James (son of Alpheus), Simon the Zealot, Judas (son of James) and Judas (Iscariot).

**Passover Celebration** The Festival of unleavened bread was the high point of the Jewish calendar and is still an important observance of modern-day Judaism. It was a commemoration of the Israelites' deliverance from Egypt. In Jesus day, all males over the age of 12 travelled to Jerusalem filling the city with hundreds & thousands of pilgrims. In first Century AD the Passover meal would have consisted of unleavened bread, lamb and wine.

**Foot washing** Due to the dusty conditions and the wearing of sandals during Bible times, washing feet when entering a room was a necessity. In the society of the time, foot washing was a task reserved for the lowest class menial servants. Christians believe that Jesus' actions of washing the disciples feet serve as symbolic of spiritual cleaning and Jesus' humility.

## Lesson Plan

### Introduction

Ask the class the following question:

*What is your earliest memory?*

The children can write, draw or discuss their ideas in small groups or individually. Allow some time for feedback.

You may also want to share your own earliest memory or show some photographs of some significant events in your life that you like to remember (e.g. birthdays, graduation, holidays, marriage etc.)

### Game: The Memory Game

You will need:

- Approximately 25 objects (real or on powerpoint slides)
- Pencils and paper (1 per child)

In small groups or individually, give the children a blank piece of paper or whiteboard but do not allow them to have a pen. Show the children a set of approximately 25 objects (use real items or display rolling images on the computer). When the children have seen all the objects (now out of sight) hand out the pens. The children must write down as many of the items as they can remember in a set time (e.g. 1 min). At the end of the time, invite the children to swap papers/whiteboards and display the items as the children count up the number of objects remembered.

### Activity

Remind the children that Jesus attracted a great crowd when he rode into Jerusalem on a donkey colt for the Passover celebrations. However, Jesus did not receive praise and acclamation from everyone he met. Some leaders within the Jewish authorities disapproved of Jesus and the attention he received. The Passover celebrations became a particularly dangerous time for Jesus to be in Jerusalem as his enemies looked for an opportunity to seize him.

*What are the Passover Celebrations and why do Jews celebrate this festival?  
What holy event in the Jewish scriptures do Jews remember during Passover?*

Briefly describe some of the elements of Passover (the story of Moses, Pharaoh and the deliverance of the Israelites from slavery found in the Old Testament book of Exodus, the Seder plate used in Passover celebrations and the traditions associated with the festival etc).

***\*The depth of information needed will depend on the children's previous knowledge. It is important that they understand the significance of the Passover meal to the Jewish faith before being introduced to the Last Supper. Further information can be obtained from Jewish information books and the Internet.***





## Bible Passage

Read the Bible story together using the reference provided or invite the children to read from individual Bibles. Spend a few minutes discussing the story, exploring any unfamiliar words and allowing the children time to ask questions. Jesus did something very significant the night he met with his disciples for their last meal. Some Christians remember this act of Jesus by sharing in Holy Communion (or *Mass Eucharist*) in churches or their homes.

## Show DVD Episode 2 The Last Supper

### Drama Tableau: (The Last Supper)

A tableau is a drama technique that enables children to replicate a dramatic scene using a still image. Tell the class that they are going to recreate the Last Supper scene.

Show the children a copy of the famous portrait *The Last Supper* by Leonardo Da Vinci. Discuss the depiction of the characters sat on chairs along the table, their facial expressions and stances etc. Remind the children that the Passover meal was typically a festive occasion in which the dinner guests reclined on the floor to eat in a relaxed environment.

Set up the scene using a large sheet on the floor with name cards representing the 12 apostles and Jesus. Select some children to sit around the blanket as the characters in the story. Invite the rest of the class to stand around the outside of the circle looking in on the action. Re-create a simple Passover meal in the Seder tradition inviting the actors to improvise a short scene. After a few minutes *freeze* the action and ask a few of the children to share their *in-the-moment* feelings through *thought-tracking*. Ask the *audience* to comment on the atmosphere of the scene.

Either swapping the children around or keeping the same actors, move the scene on to the point at which Jesus presents the bread and wine. Using the words from Matthew's gospel recreate the Last Supper then change the scene to re-enact the last supper using the words of Matthew's gospel. Provide the child portraying Jesus with lines from the Bible passage to read as they break bread and pour wine.

### Plenary/Conclusion:

Refer back to the Bible passage. Remind the children that this was to be Jesus' last meal with his disciples before his death.

How do you think Jesus felt during the meal?

Why do you think Jesus chose to use bread and wine to help his disciples remember him?

Why is communion still important to Christians today?



## Further Development/Classroom Activities:

**Senses Activity** – devise a worksheet or whiteboard display with 5 columns representing the human senses (sight, hearing, smell, touch, taste). Invite the children to look over the Bible passage and identify as many experiences that the disciples would have had with their senses (i.e. smelling the lamb cooking, feeling the bread in their fingers, tasting the wine, etc.)

**Thought Bubble/Diary Entry** – The children write a paragraph describing the events that took place during the last supper as if they were one of the disciples. (The senses activity can form the basis of their in-role writing)

**Drawing** – the children design their own artwork of the Last Supper based on the lesson activities.

**Make bread** – using pre-prepared dough, children make small loaves of bread that can be shaped accordingly. Bake the bread for the children to taste.

**Communion symbols** – make a wine goblet and small loaf of bread out of salt dough. These can be painted once the dough has set.

**Research** – Using the keywords *Holy Communion*, *Mass Eucharist*, *Sacrament of the table* and the *Lord's Supper* children research the ways in which different Christian denominations and churches remember and practice Jesus' Last Supper. Information can be obtained through the Internet or non-fiction religious books. The children's findings could form the basis of a class display or group presentation to the rest of the class.

**Guest Speaker/Church visit** - Invite a minister from a local church to visit the class (or organise a trip to the church) to demonstrate how they conduct a holy communion.



Notes:

2

RE Lesson

[www.relivresources.co.uk](http://www.relivresources.co.uk)

6