

## The priest

A priest is an ordained member of the Anglican or Roman Catholic clergy, who can administer Holy Communion; a vicar or rector is a priest who is in charge of a parish, whereas a minister or pastor refers to the leader of a specific congregation, often of a non-conformist protestant church. Priests are trained and sent out to serve God as leaders of teams that serve the whole community, through services, festivals, visits and sacraments. Their most visible role for many people is at key moments in the lives of parishioners ~ birth, marriage and death. Church schools have their parish priest as an ex officio governor.

## Joining the church

This unit focuses on baptism. This is the way in which people (often young children) are formally welcomed into the Christian church family, although the Church of England does have a service called 'Thanksgiving for the Gift of a Child' giving an alternative for those who want to give thanks without having their child baptised.

The baptism ceremony reflects the baptism of Jesus by his cousin, John, recorded in all four gospels. The unit explores what may be said and done in baptismal services, and provides opportunity for the children to consider blessings.

KS1

## WHO?

*Who are the church? What are the special roles of clergy and laity in the church? Is the church a child friendly community? How do you become a member of the church?*

## The church as a centre of its local community

The Church of England is the national established church. It is divided into parishes, and all those who live within the geographical area of the parish are seen as members of the parish community, whether or not they are committed members of the Christian faith. With this understanding, the local church is open to all for the rites of passage of marriage and funerals, and should be a centre of outreach to the whole community.

What happens in your local parish? Pupils should be given an opportunity to interrogate the evidence of how the church fulfils its role, including the relationship between school and church, because the school is itself an important part of the parish.

KS2

## The priesthood of all believers - the gathered community

Church members use their different talents to the good of the church family, and you should find a wide number of tasks being undertaken by local Christians both to support worship and the day to day life of the community.

Whilst some churches work hard to make their worship and Christian life inclusive, others struggle to really be child friendly. Why not use this opportunity to try to get children talking to the church about their needs and expectations?

