

**GCSE Religious Studies**

**Christian Practices  
Revision Booklet**

**Paper 1: Religious Beliefs and Practices**

# Paper 1: Christian Practices - PLC

**This personalised learning checklist (PLC) is to help identify what and how to revise.** The middle column asks how confident you feel about each topic.

**Red** – Help!

**Amber** – Not 100% but nearly there.

**Green** - Bring it on! I know this!

What you need to know	Red Amber Green
I can explain the difference between liturgical and non-liturgical worship.	
I can explain what informal worship and charismatic worship are.	
I can explain different types of prayer and why Christians pray.	
I can explain why the Lord's Prayer is important to Christians.	
I can explain what a sacrament is and give examples of at least 2.	
I can compare the different types of baptism (infant and believers)	
I can identify and explain the different views on the Eucharist.	
I can give 2 examples of Christian pilgrimage & explain Christian views on going on pilgrimage.	
I can identify key Christian festivals and their traditions.	
I can give ways in which Christians help their local community	
I can identify at least 3 organisations that work in local communities to help others.	
I can explain who CAFOD are and the work they do in the wider world.	
I can explain how Christians respond to persecution.	
I can explain why Christians want to help others.	

# Types of Worship

**Liturgical worship**- this type of service is often found in the Roman Catholic, Orthodox and Church of England (**Anglican**) Churches. This will include routine and structured order to the service and the use of sets of prayers and readings. A Roman Catholic Mass requires a **liturgy** (a set order/pattern.)

## **Negatives of Liturgical worship**

- Old fashioned
- Too traditional
- Always the same
- Boring to some people
- Can be seen as less genuine or heartfelt



## **Positives of Liturgical worship**

- Familiarity is good for Christians
- Feel secure and can join in with ease
- Know what to expect
- Believe there is variety and structure in the set routine



**Non-Liturgical worship**- informal style of worship. Some Christians prefer it because they think that liturgical worship prevents genuine worship. Non-Liturgical worship is typical of some nonconformist churches and tends to be Bible-based.

## **Negatives of Non-Liturgical worship**

- Not as much structure
- Topics chosen by the service leader- could be anything and some people do not like the random part of this.



## **Positives of Non-Liturgical worship**

- Prayer can be more personal
- Allows people to consider areas they want to



## Informal worship

### Charismatic worship-

Charismatic worship is a form of informal worship. The service will still have prayers, hymns, readings etc. but it flows in the structure it wants to. In charismatic worship, (spirit inspired) the worshippers often speak in tongues (outbursts of words in different languages or words that often cannot be understood but are seen as showing a person's connection to God.) This is seen as a gift of the Holy Spirit. The singing is more lively and there is a more relaxed feel to it.

Quakers worship is very different, as there is no leader and no set structure at all. Those present usually sit in chairs forming a circle around a table in which there is a Bible and the book of Quaker writings. The worshippers sit in silence until someone feels called to share their thoughts with others. This can be on whatever they feel compelled to talk about.

### Private worship

Christians believe that **private worship** (worshipping alone) is just as important as public. Worshipping alone allows worship to be exactly how the person wants it and allows them to feel closer to God in their own way.

The Rosary- is a string of beads with a crucifix attached. Saying the Rosary involves running your hands through the set of beads and saying certain prayers (The Lord's Prayer, the Hail Mary and the Glory be to the Father...) when you touch different beads you recite the different prayers.

Meditation- meditation is thoughtfulness, focused on a religious truth. Some Christians might use a stimulus e.g. a candle or a picture to focus their prayers. Other Christians might read a passage from the Bible and think about its message whilst meditating.

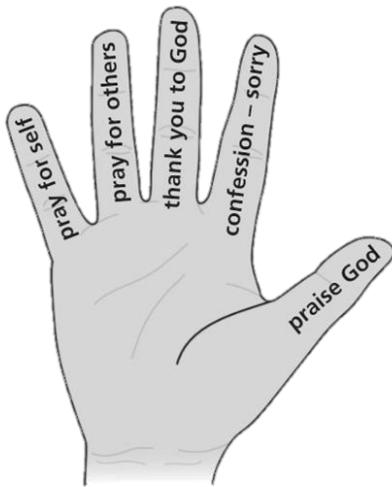
### Use of Bible in worship

- The Bible can be understood by all and is available for everyone in different versions.
- Portions of the Bible are read aloud during worship services.
- Sermons by the priest are often based on Bible passages.

# Prayer

Prayer is not about just asking God for things and expecting to get them. It is about listening, being open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit and doing what God wants them to.

Jesus spoke about prayer on numerous occasions in the Bible. He said God would respond to the needs of those praying. Jesus also stated that prayer was an important way to show humility before God.



The types of prayer can be remembered as a hand of prayer. Praise is the basis of all prayer and life should be an act of thanksgiving.

- Pray for self
- Pray for others
- Thank you to God
- Confession- saying sorry
- Praise God

<u>The Lord's Prayer</u>	<u>What it means</u>
<b>Our Father who art in Heaven</b>	God is the Father, he lives in Heaven.
<b>Hallowed be your name</b>	May God be treated with honour and respect.
<b>Your Kingdom come</b>	Christians hope God's kingdom will be available for them.
<b>Your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven</b>	May God's will be followed on earth and in Heaven.
<b>Give us this day our daily bread</b>	Christians ask God to give them (and everyone) all they need physically and emotionally.
<b>Forgive us our sins</b>	Christians commit sins and constantly need God's forgiveness.
<b>As we forgive those who sin against us</b>	Christians also have to consider forgiving those who commit bad acts.
<b>And lead us not into temptation</b>	Christians understand that there is temptation and people do things wrong because humans are sinful.
<b>But deliver us from evil</b>	Through eternal life, Christians can be freed from evil.
<b>For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and forever</b>	God is almighty.
<b>Amen</b>	A Hebrew word meaning "So be it." 5

# The Sacraments

The term “**Sacrament**” means “**the external and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace.**”

**A physical action = spiritual effect**

The Protestant religion generally acknowledges 2 sacraments- Baptism and the Eucharist. These are known as the Gospel sacraments because they were authorised by Jesus and there are many references to their use in the books of the New Testament. Roman Catholics, Orthodox Christians and some Anglicans recognise 7 sacraments: **Baptism, Confirmation, the Eucharist, Confirmation, Reconciliation, Ordination, Marriage and Healing.**

<u>Sacrament</u>	<u>Outward and visible sign</u>	<u>Inward and spiritual grace</u>
<b>Baptism</b>	Water	Washing away of sins.
<b>Confirmation</b>	The laying of hands by the Bishop	Becoming an “adult” member of the Church. The Holy Spirit comes down.
<b>Eucharist</b>	Bread and wine	Fed Jesus’ body and blood.
<b>Reconciliation</b>	Words of absolution (forgiveness)	Making amends with God and being forgiven.
<b>Healing</b>	Anointing and laying of the hands	Spiritual and sometimes physical healing. Preparation for death.
<b>Marriage</b>	Ring (s)	The endless love between the couple in the circle of the rings.
<b>Ordination</b>	The laying of hands by the Bishop	The special gifts of the Holy Spirit needed by a deacon or priest

**Quakers** do not baptise, confirm, ordain or celebrate the Eucharist. They don't regard some activities as more sacred than others, nor do they believe that any particular ritual is needed to get in touch with God.

## Baptism in the Bible

John the Baptist baptised people as a symbol of forgiveness of sins. This was in preparation for the new way of life that would start the coming of the Messiah (Jesus.) Jesus was baptised by John, who was his cousin.

Jesus experienced the Holy Spirit entering his life and heard God's assurance that he was the Son of God. Before he died, Jesus told his disciples, "**Go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.**"

Baptism was the rite of initiation into the Christian community right from the start and there are many references in the Bible

### Baptism is important to Christians because:

- It is the rite of initiation and **welcomes them** into the Christian community.
- The person is **cleansed** from original sin (caused by Adam and Eve.)
- The person is **unified with Christ**.
- The person dies from their old way of life and is **reborn into eternal life**.
- The person receives the **gifts of the Holy Spirit**.

### The gifts of the Holy Spirit

- Reverence
- Wisdom
- Right judgement
- Understanding
- Courage
- Knowledge
- Awe and wonder in God's presence

## Infant Baptism

Most Christians practise baptism as a baby. This includes the use of blessed water. Roman Catholic and Anglicans use a font, pouring water three times over the baby's head.

In the Orthodox Church the baby is full immersed in the font. **This use of water symbolises washing away original sin and spiritual rebirth.** Other things that happen are:

1. **Bible readings and prayers.**
2. **Anointing** with two different oils at different points in the service give people the strength.
3. **Making the sign of the cross** on the child's forehead to show that the child is called to fight against all that is wrong and remain faithful to Christ.
4. **Promises** by the parents and Godparents to reject evil and help the child to follow the Christian faith
5. Clothing the newly baptised child in a **white robes.**
6. The lighting of a **candle**, often from the Church's Paschal (Easter) candle, and given to the child as a sign that they have received the **light of the world** (Jesus.)
7. Reminder to parents/Godparents they have a duty to bring up the child in the Christian faith

### Why many Christians support infant baptism

- It is natural for Christian parents to want to bring up their child as a Christian from the start.
- The child receives the 7 gifts of the Holy Spirit to develop/grow.
- It enables the child to receive other sacraments (confirmation, Eucharist etc.)
- If a newborn baby is unlikely to survive, it comforts the parents knowing they are part of the Christian family before they die.

## Believers' Baptism

The Baptist and Pentecostal Churches practise only believer's baptism, which is for teenagers and adults.

Key elements in the service are:

1. **White clothes** worn as a sign of the new life that is about to begin.
2. The testimony, which is a **statement by the person** about to be baptised, explaining how he or she came to seeking Baptism.
3. **Declaration of penitence**, of being truly sorry and agreeing to dedicate their life to Christ
4. The candidate goes down the steps into the water symbolises the end of their old life of sin and separation from God. The person is fully immersed and the minister says "**I baptise you in the name of the Father, Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**" The person then comes out the water through different steps which symbolise a new life as a Christian
5. He or she may be given the "right-hand of fellowship," which is a **handshake welcoming them into the community** on behalf of the whole community

### Why many Christians support believer's baptism

- The candidate is **old enough** to make a decision.
  - **Jesus was baptised as an adult.**
- When they are older, **children might resent promises** made on their behalf as babies.
  - The idea of cleansing sins does not make sense for a baby.
  - Infant baptism can be seen as meaningless practise that just names a child.
- Many of those who have been baptised do not go to church again unless they decide to marry in a church.

## The Last Supper

Jesus' last meal was called the Last Supper and he shared this with his disciples. In this meal he broke the bread and wine with his disciples and blessed it.

St Paul wrote that Jesus said,

**“This is my body/blood, which is given for you in remembrance of me.”**

Jesus linked this to his upcoming death and it was a sign of the new covenant (agreement) established by his death between God and all believers.

## The Eucharist

The Eucharist is celebrated by almost all denominations apart from Quakers and the Salvation Army.

## Transubstantiation

Roman Catholics believe in **transubstantiation** and this means they believe the bread and wine becomes the **actual body and blood** of Christ.

Many Protestants see the ceremony as an **expression of faith** and obedience whereas, Catholic, Orthodox and Anglican traditions see it as a way to **receive God's grace**.

# Different names for the Eucharist

<b>The Eucharist</b>	The word means <b>to give thanks</b> and the Eucharist is thanksgiving for all God is believed to have done for the world and especially for Jesus' sacrificial death of Jesus.
<b>Holy Communion</b>	The word "holy" is a reminder that the service is special/sacred. The word "communion" means fellowship which reminds Christians they are <b>joined in fellowship</b> with one another and Christ.
<b>The Breaking of Bread</b>	This is a reminder that <b>Jesus' body was broken</b> on the cross when he died.
<b>The Lord's Supper</b>	A reminder of Jesus' <b>Last Supper</b> with his disciples.
<b>The Mass</b>	Latin word "ite, missa est" meaning "go you are sent out." It is reminder of <b>Christian mission</b> to the world
<b>The Divine Liturgy</b>	"Divine" reminds Christians of the <b>sacred</b> mystery of the service and the word "liturgy" means "work of the people" in their praising of God

## The significance of the Eucharist for Christians

- Memorial of Jesus' death.
- Grace received from God- Roman Catholics.
- Orthodox believe God is truly present.
- Spiritual presence of God.
- Gives them strength.
- Taste of Heaven.
- Food for the soul.

## Roman Catholic Mass

1. Introductory and rites- worshippers confess their sins to God, and forgiveness is given.
2. Bible readings, a sermon and prayers; the Nicene Creed is recited.
3. The bread and wine are brought to the altar, the Eucharistic prayer is said (whilst the bread and wine are consecrated) and bells rung to signify transubstantiation.
4. The Lord's Prayer and other prayers are said; the congregation stand before the priest to receive the consecrated bread which is placed on their tongue or in their hands.
5. There is a post-Eucharistic prayer, followed by a blessing.

## An Orthodox Divine Liturgy

In the Orthodox Liturgy the Eucharist is known as the Divine Liturgy. This services includes:

1. The wine and homemade bread are **prepared on the altar of preparation behind the iconostasis** (screen separating the holiest part of the Church from the rest.) The bread is divided into 4.
2. The Eucharistic prayer is said over **3 parts of the bread** consecrating them, through which it is believed that they come to "coexist" with the actual body and blood of Christ.
3. The service includes **Bible readings**, a **sermon** and **prayers** before a procession.
4. The cherubic **hymn is sung**, to bring everyone present into the presence of angels around the throne of God. Then the bread and wine are carried through the Royal Doors.
5. The priest invites all baptised members of the Orthodox Church to receive the consecrated bread and wine given out from a **silver chalice (cup) on a spoon**.
6. At the end of the service, all those present may take home the 4<sup>th</sup> part of bread to share with others.

## Church of England & Protestant Christianity

The rituals are very **much simpler**. Often the service in addition to a normal Sunday service. There are no special requirements to receive communion.

**It can also be a monthly service rather than a daily or weekly one.**

Those wishing to participate come to the front of the church.

- A minister will read the Gospel story of the Last Supper,.
- The bread and wine (often non-alcoholic) are shared with those who want to join in. Others are simply blessed. The "wine" is given in individual glasses, not a single chalice
- Depending on the church, hymns may be sung. A prayer will certainly be said in addition to the Lord's Prayer which is said by all..

## Pilgrimage

A pilgrimage is a **visit to a place of religious significance** and holy to a believer. Often the journey is also special. They are **not compulsory** in Christianity, places of pilgrimage are often linked to Jesus. Some are ancient e.g. Jerusalem, the place of Jesus' death and resurrection and some can be found in one country e.g. Lourdes in France or Iona in Scotland.

### **Lourdes, France**

There have been 69 healings that cannot be explained. These are considered **miracles** because they cannot be disproven by scientific or medical fact. Many people do not experience healing but say **they feel spiritually healed**. Those who have a terminal illness often feel they can now come to terms with their immanent death/illness.

Since then people **continue to visit** to sample and take the water home. There are shops there now to sell products and memorabilia. **Roman Catholics organise pilgrimages** to take the sick and dying to Lourdes to experience the healing powers.

### Iona, Scotland

Iona was the home of St. Columba, whose missionary work in the 6th century brought Christianity to Scotland. It is now home to the ecumenical (non-denominational) **Iona community** and **dedicated to the Virgin Mary**. The Irish missionary St. Columba established a small monastic (monk) community on Iona. This helped him to spread Christianity across Europe.

Although little of Columba's monastery remains the site of Columba's monastery is now occupied by the Benedictine abbey church, known as St. Mary's Cathedral and **many pilgrims come here to worship**. The place is considered ecumenical meaning **any denomination of Christianity can come here to worship**.

Many pilgrims visit the Community's two information centres as well as "Open Weeks" they have a range of activities and workshops. They hold discussions on issues relating to justice, peace, the environment etc.

**People go to Iona to reflect not to witness miracles** (like at Lourdes.)

## Views on pilgrimage



**For some Christians it is an important means of faith because:**

- It gives them time to be taken out of their daily lives and feel **refreshed** and pressure free.
- It gives them **spiritual growth**. They have time to pray and meditate.
- Visiting places **inspirational** Christians lives gives them inspiration.
- They may have a purpose for visiting e.g. they may be ill.
- They meet Christians from very different backgrounds and cultures. This depends their faith and helps them **gain new insight**.



**Other Christians and non-Christians do not think pilgrimage has any value. Here are some of their reasons for their view:**



- It is often **costly** and shows poor stewardship
- It is **not necessary** for spiritual development it can be gained in other ways such as prayer.
- Reading about Jesus and great Christians is the same as going on a pilgrimage.
- Any spiritual “**high**” is **temporary** and the effects will soon wear off.
- **Money can be used for other things** such as giving to charity.



## FESTIVALS

### Easter celebrations

Easter Day comes after the end of Lent and Holy Week. Many Christians will have fasted during this time, **remembering the time Jesus spent in the wilderness being tempted by the devil.** It is important to different Christian traditions because:

- His resurrection from the dead proved Jesus to be the Son of God.
- Jesus' predictions of his death and resurrection came true, so it means the rest of His teachings can be trusted.
- There is no need to fear death as Jesus' victory over death allows mankind to achieve eternal life.
- **The message of Easter is one of the victory of light over darkness, good over evil, hope over despair and life over death. It assures them that God's love will triumph.**

### The Easter Vigil- the start of the celebrations

In Roman Catholic and many Anglican churches, the Easter Vigil is held on Easter Eve (the evening of the night before Easter Day or in the early hours of Easter Day.) This ceremony goes back to the very early days of the Church, when converts were baptised and admitted to the Eucharist. There are 4 key parts of the service:

<b><u>Service of Light</u></b>	The church itself is dark and this first ceremony takes place outside. A new fire is lit and blessed. The Paschal candle is prepared by the priest and is then lit from the fire. It is then carried in a procession through the church, with the deacon or priest saying 3 times "The Light of the World" and the congregation replying "Thanks be to God." Everyone has a candle lit from the Paschal candle and they sing an Easter hymn. It recalls and celebrates the history of salvation, linking the story of Exodus from Egypt to the sacrificial death of Christ and his victory over death.
<b><u>Liturgy of the Word</u></b>	This is the part where scripture is read. It follows the same pattern that would be seen in a usual Sunday Eucharist but with extra Old Testament readings. One of them is the account of the Exodus from Egypt (Exodus 14.)
<b><u>Liturgy of Initiation</u></b>	This is a time when some people will be baptised. Sometimes confirmation may occur. All those present renew their baptismal promises.
<b><u>Liturgy of the Eucharist</u></b>	The Eucharist then continues, ending with many repetitions of "alleluia."

<b><u>HOLY WEEK</u></b>	<b>What happened?</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
<b>Palm Sunday</b>	<b>Jesus rides into Jerusalem on a donkey</b>	<b>Jewish people went to Jerusalem during the Passover period and many had heard about Jesus and wanted to see who he was. People threw palms as his feet when he rode in on a donkey.</b>
<b>Monday</b>	<b>Jesus turns the trader's table over in the Temple.</b>	<b>Trading in the Temple was normal but it made Jesus angry to see and he flipped over the tables saying that they had turned his Father's house into a place to gamble and steal from people.</b>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Jesus taught in the temple.</b>	<b>Jesus was challenged by priests about his authority and where it came from. Jesus taught them the parable of the wedding banquet.</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Jesus spent time with Martha and Mary. Judas prepares to betray Jesus.</b>	<b>Jesus spent time with his friends whilst Judas traded Jesus' life for money.</b>
<b>Maundy Thursday</b>	<b>Last Supper of Jesus. Jesus is arrested and put on trial.</b>	<b>Jesus shares the meal with his disciples which included bread and wine. Jesus is then arrested and betrayed by Judas. He is put through trials by the Sanhedrin (the ruling council of Jews)</b>
<b>Good Friday</b>	<b>Jesus is sentenced to death, whipped and nailed to the cross.</b>	<b>Jesus had to die to atone for the sins of human beings. At his death he said that the criminal who repented would be with Him in paradise. The Temple shroud was ripped apart when He died. The Sabbath was about to start so no work could be done. Jesus' body could only be laid in the tomb.</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Jesus body is laid in the tomb.</b>	<b>The disciples hid fearing they would be arrested. Losing Jesus had tested their faith.</b>
<b>Easter Sunday</b>	<b>In the morning, the women went to the tomb to anoint the body- it was gone. A young man told them Christ was risen.</b>	<b>The tomb was empty because Jesus had resurrected from the dead. Christians see this as a victory over death .</b>

## **Palm Sunday**

This is the first Sunday of Holy Week. Christians are given a palm crosses at church to keep until the start of Lent the following year. Palms are used to represent the palms the Jews laid on the ground to welcome Jesus. On Ash Wednesday (first day of Lent) the palm crosses are symbolically burned and then replaced on the next Palm Sunday.

## **Maundy Thursday**

Christians go to church on this evening to celebrate the Last Supper. They remember with sadness the predictions Jesus made about his death. This included his two closest friends letting him down; Judas by betraying him and Peter denying him 3 times. Jesus prayed the same night too, for God his Father to take away the suffering that was to come. Nevertheless, he does what God asks him to do.

## **Good Friday**

The most solemn day of the year for Christians. Many churches are emptied of their colourful and celebratory items. The altar and lectern are covered in cloth. Candles remain unlit and often the vicar will wear black garments. Everything is plain and simple. In some towns/cities many Christians will work through an area behind someone carrying a heavy cross. Christians often eat fish on this day rather than red meat (which would reflect the blood Jesus shed.) It is called "Good" Friday because Jesus died for the good of all mankind.

## **How do Christians in Britain remember and celebrate the key events of Holy Week?**

# Christmas

**Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus at Christmas. This date is the 25th December but for the Orthodox Christians it is the 6th January.** There are two accounts of Jesus' birth in the Gospels. Luke's Gospel states that Mary and Joseph had to travel to Jerusalem to register for a census. On arrival, they found there was no space for them at the inns so they had to sleep in a stable amongst the animals. Therefore, Jesus was humble enough to be born in poor conditions. Jesus was visited by the Shepherds. Matthew's account mentions the visiting of the 3 wise men who brought gifts to Jesus.

## Christmas celebrations in Britain today

Church on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day.

At Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve the Church is lit only by candles. When the Gospel reading takes place the lights come on, symbolic of the birth of Christ the light of the world. Special hymns known as carols are sung, churches are beautifully decorated with flowers and Christmas trees.

Often there is a Christmas crib showing the birth of Jesus. This is blessed at the start of the service. The 3 wise men are not added until the Epiphany, which is the 6th January.

Some Churches have a Christingle service, which came originally from Eastern Europe. Children are given Christingles. The service consists of Christmas carols, readings and a collection is often taken.

Many Christians send Christmas cards, often with religious themes. Christians may have their own nativity scene

Exchanging of presents on Christmas Day like the gifts Jesus received from the 3 wise men.

# The Role of the Church

The different Christian churches in the UK work both individually and together to try and make their local communities better. The church has also cared for others since the Middle Ages. Some things they do are:

- Street missions- speaking to people out and out.
- Feed the homeless e.g. soup kitchens.
- Markets.
- Provide food e.g. food banks.
- Teach young people.
- Welcome refugees.
- Send presents/shoe boxes to poorer children in other countries.
- Centres for the old, disabled and sick.

## Reasons why Christians are involved

- **Parable of the Sheep and Goats-** Jesus said those who do not help others (goats) will not achieve eternal life but those that do (sheep) will
- **Jesus helped and mixed with everyone** even the people considered undesirable e.g. lepers, tax collectors, prostitutes etc.
- Jesus said to **“Love your neighbour”** this means everyone.

## Church growth

Mission means “a sending” and it goes with evangelism. Some Christians believe they have been sent by God to preach the Gospel.

## The Church Army

The Church Army is a lay (not ordained) group who are committed to spreading the word of God. The group is involved in:

- Acting as chaplains, for example, in hospitals or prisons
- Visiting the elderly and providing luncheon clubs for them
- Providing alternative forms of Church
- Projects for young people for example, the Church Army bus that is available for teenagers to chat and be offered support
- Working with drug addicts
- Running clubs for children, and working with families

## Open Doors

This organisation supports persecuted Christians. This support is given in many ways:

- Different training given to members to deal with trauma and persecution. It gives them confidence.
- Delivering Bibles to Christians who have to practise their faith and meet in secret.
- Awareness raised in churches in the UK through prayer, fundraising and volunteering support.
- Running special campaigns for persecuted Christians.
- Fight for justice and religious freedom in the UK through meeting with politicians and public campaigning
- Practical support to those fleeing from violence e.g. medical supplies, literacy classes, food, training etc.

## **The importance of reconciliation**

### **Working for reconciliation**

**Christians aim for reconciliation not revenge. This prevents conflict and follows Jesus' teachings**

### **Corrymeela**

This is both a centre and a movement. The movement began in Belfast in the 1960s with the concerns of the Dean at Queen's University. They were concerned about religious tensions in Ireland and aimed to work through this by:

- Working with families needing help to work through difficult times or needing respite support
- Helping those ages 18-25 to deal with issues of concern to young adults
- Working with schools to help children to encourage positive and active citizenship

## **Why do Christians help others?**

Here are some reasons:

- **Treat others as we want to be treated**
- **“Clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness...” Colossians 3:12**
- **We are all God's children with responsibility to help one another.**
- **Christians should see helping others as helping Jesus. In the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats he said “Whatever you did for them you did for me”**
- **Developed countries are responsible for much of the poverty in LEDCs, so they have a duty to put things right.**
- **Moral duty/responsibility to help others**
- **Agape- Christian selfless love Jesus taught**

# How the Church supports those in need.

## **Street Pastors**

These people go out from local churches and speak about their faith to others. Some go out at night to help those who might have had too much to drink. **They are there to help, listen and care for those who need it.** They undergo months of training to do this role and are then commissioned (given a job to do). They have a special service to seek God's blessing on this particular and very challenging kind of ministry. **Before going out they will gather for prayer.** It began in 2003 in London with 18 people going across the streets of Britain. It has now spread to 270 towns and cities and there are also international groups. Each project is set up by a governing body and is **carried out in partnership with the local police**, local council and other bodies. **In the UK there are 20,000 street pastors.**

## **Food banks**

These are very common in Britain. They provide food for the needy. The **Trussell Trust** was set up by Paddy Henderson and his wife, Carol (in 1997) to help disadvantaged people in Bulgaria.

Once they realised there was need for them in the UK, they set up food banks in the UK. Professionals such as the police, doctors and social service workers identify those most in need and give them food vouchers for these food banks. These food banks also ask for donations from shoppers and volunteers to help distribute the food.

## **The Salvation Army**

This is a **Christian denomination** founded in the 19th century by William and Catherine Booth. They were shocked by the deprivation that they saw around them. They work with the poor in the following ways:

- Setting up soup kitchens and hostels for the homeless
- Toy distribution at Christmas
- Advice for people who are in debt on how to get out
- Giving employment guidance and information
- Giving emergency assistance for example, meals, clothes, baby supplies etc.
- Providing community vegetable gardens so people can grow their own food
- Collecting and redistributing unwanted furniture
- Raising awareness of the issue of human trafficking

## Why do Christians help the poor?

### Poverty in less economically developed countries

Helping those in need is something Jesus encouraged Christians to do. They choose to help poorer countries because they might suffer conflict, poverty, persecution, injustice etc. They help LEDCs by:

- Emergency aid- immediate response such as to a disaster. Food and bottled water are essential to prevent hunger and water-borne disease. Medical kits are often required, tents and blankets and teams of specialists like doctors and engineers.
- Short term aid- such as reuniting families or setting up temporary support e.g. schools
- Long term aid (development)- e.g. rebuilding areas, planning for emergencies and training.

### Christian responses to poverty in the UK

- Fairtrade support- encourage fairness in LEDCs so that they farmers can make a profit and earn a decent wage. Encouraging people to buy Fairtrade products.
- Campaigning- putting pressure on those in power to make changes for example, lobbying, petitions or peaceful protest.
- Increasing public awareness- e.g. encouraging celebrities to try and help causes and speak out in the media. Use of educational resources for young people.
- Fundraising- raising money in different ways

### Catholic Agency for Overseas Development

The official aid agency for the Catholic Church in England and Wales. Love, solidarity and hope, they are **rooted in the Catholic community**.

Together, with the help of volunteers, they put their faith into action to help people to achieve their full potential **regardless of religion or culture**. It was set up in 1960 by the Catholic Women's League in the UK.

Cafod not only sends emergency aid and assistance but helps put in place risk reduction strategies. They focus **on long term and short term** aid and improving communities. The money comes from fundraising and collections. Above all, it is important to remember that Cafod's help is given to the **poorest of the poor**.