

RE - Holidays and Holy Days

• Session 1 - Holidays

Look at pictures of people on holiday. Talk about holiday experiences or show the BBC Barnaby Bear programme about how Barnaby goes on holiday. Sometimes holidays are taken at home, but we may do something different.

Key Questions:

- Q Why are holidays different from ordinary days?
- Q What do you like to do in the holidays?
- Q Do you stay at home, visit relations or go away?
- Q Who goes with you?
- Q What do you take?
- Q If you have to travel, what means of travel do you use?
- Q What do you like to do on holiday?
- Q What makes it a happy time?

Discuss the above questions with your child so that they have a good understanding of what a holiday is and how it makes people feel.

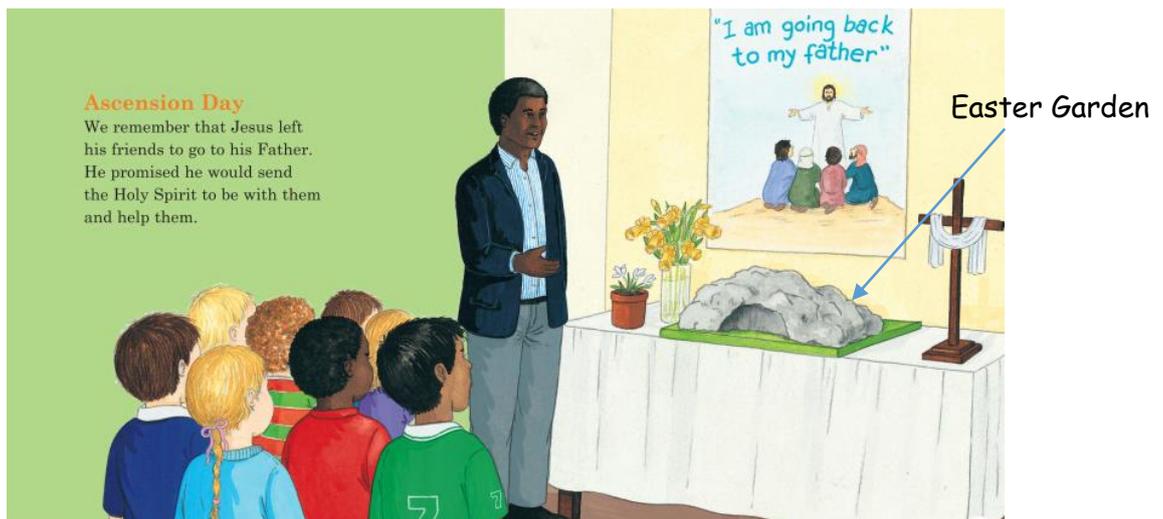
Activity:

- On a template of a suitcase (printout or drawing), draw things you would need to take with you for a holiday.
- Make a list of things you like to do in holiday time.

- **Session 2 - What is a Holy Day?**

The word holiday comes from holyday. In times past the only holiday anyone had was a saint's feast day or important feast days like Easter and Christmas. Some days of the year are 'holy days', when we celebrate these special times in the Church's year.

We have just celebrated the feast of Easter when we remember Jesus rising from the dead. Look at the Easter garden or Church's Story 2 pages 76-77. One special word we sing at Easter time to celebrate is 'Alleluia!'



Share with the children that the church celebrates some days as holy days e.g. the patron saint of the school, Christmas, Good Friday, Ash Wednesday and the Ascension etc.

Key Questions to discuss with your child to check understanding.

- Q What happens on those days?
- Q Which of them were also holidays?
- Q How are they celebrated?

Activity:

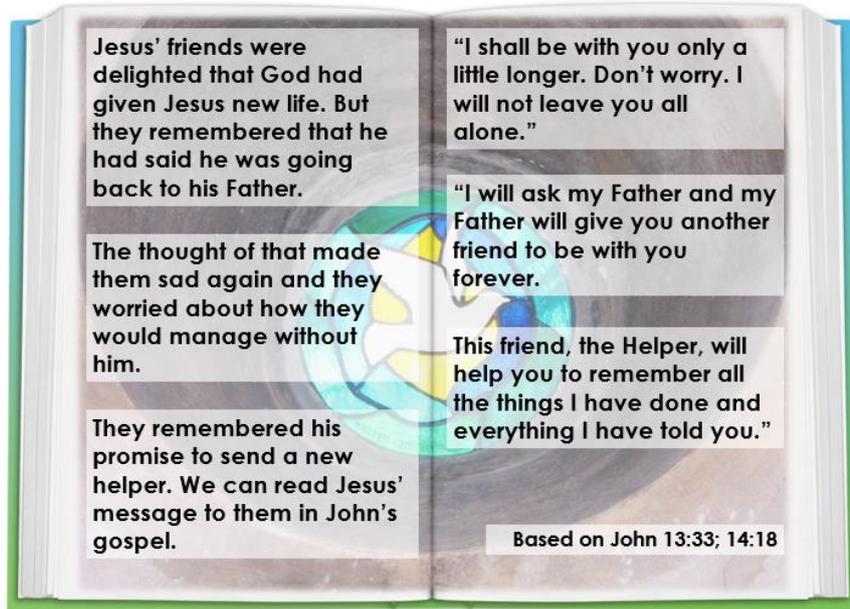
- Choose either Christmas, Easter or school's feast day for children to record what happens on that holy day.

Reception Children: Draw a picture of the Holy Day and label what is happening.

Year 1 Children: Draw a picture of the Holy Day and write 3 sentences describing what is happening in the picture.

- **Session 3 - Ascension Day: Jesus goes back to his Father.**

Explain that after his Resurrection, Jesus appeared to the disciples and made a promise to send his Holy Spirit to them. Read the first two paragraphs from *God's Story 2* page 81 The promise of the Spirit based on John 13:33; 14:18.



Before Jesus left his friends, he promised to send them a helper, the Holy Spirit. The holy day, Ascension Thursday, celebrates Jesus' return to his Father.

Key Questions:

- Q What happened on Ascension Day?
- Q Why were Jesus' friends sad again?
- Q What was the promise Jesus gave to his friends?
- Q Who was the helper and guide?
- Q How did this make Jesus' friends feel?

Activity:

- Create a collage of Jesus talking to his friends; add speech bubbles and retell the words of Jesus' promise.

- **Session 4 – Pentecost: The Holy Day.**

Display Church's Story 2 pages 78 and 79. Talk about what is happening in the pictures and read the text together. Explain how the disciples were afraid when Jesus had left them and they had gathered together in one room. The coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost changed them. It is a holy day because this gift of the Holy Spirit is very special. The Holy Spirit helps and guides us in our lives just as happened to the disciples. The Holy Spirit appeared to Mary and the disciples like tongues of fire, giving them strength and courage to serve others.



Key Questions:

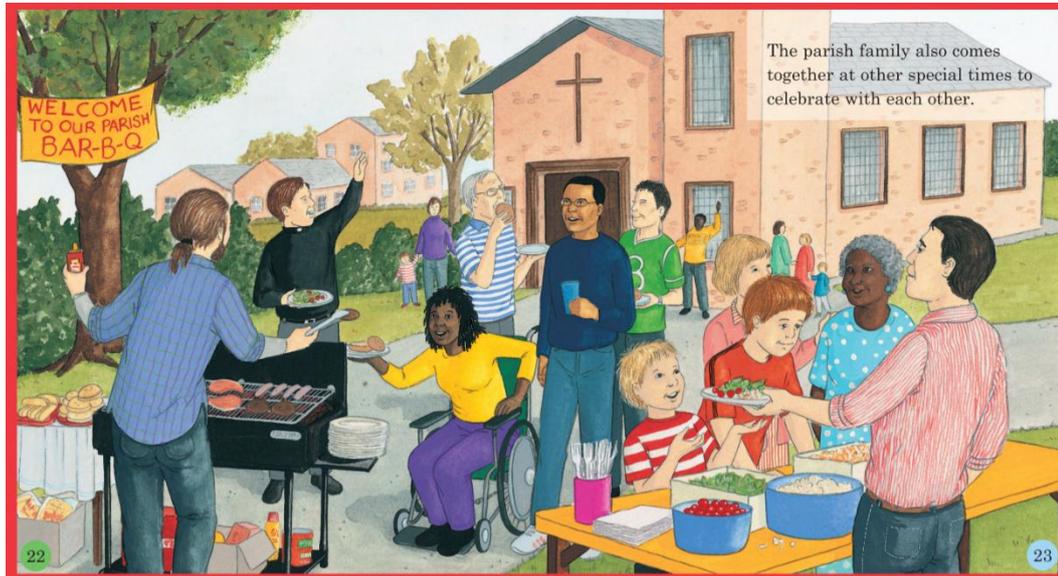
- Q Who was in the room when the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost?
- Q What were the signs of the Holy Spirit?
- Q How do you think Mary and the disciples felt?
- Q Why do you think they felt like that?

Activity:

- Using craft materials make a face on a paper plate or a round piece of card to show how the disciples felt. Discuss what captions would be appropriate and display the faces with some of the captions e.g. 'The Holy Spirit bring us happiness.' 'The disciples were astonished.' etc.

- **Session 5 – Pentecost: The birthday of the Church.**

Display the picture from *Church's Story 2* page 22-23. Jesus had returned to God, his Father, and the Holy Spirit was helping the friends of Jesus to pass the message on to others so that they might become his friends too. This marked the beginning of the Church, its birth. Pentecost is a holy day on which many parish families celebrate with a party. On the holy day of Pentecost, the priest wears red vestments at Mass like the colour of fire.



Key Questions:

- Q Who is in the picture?
- Q What do you think the people in the picture are celebrating?
- Q How do you celebrate a birthday?
- Q Why is Pentecost a holy day?

Activity:

- On a flame shape template write how the Holy Spirit guides you to help and serve others.