

About the theme – Local Church

EARLY YEARS - LOCAL CHURCH THEME	
Celebrating	
Key Vocabulary	Church Priest celebrate Parish family family community party Celebration celebrating memory Father altar Temple parish
<p>The local church gives thanks for God’s blessings in its liturgical celebrations and in the way, it lives its parish life. Christians belong to the local church community – the parish, which celebrates in a variety of ways. They celebrate tradition and story and find their meaning in Jesus.</p> <p>Children will know and understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what a celebration is • how the parish family celebrate <p>See Background Notes for Parents</p>	
<p>Week 3 - Activity 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Presentation Story: Read the story of ‘Mary and Joseph at the Temple in Jerusalem’ • Use the candle template to share some ideas of how you can be like Jesus, ‘the light of the world’. 	

Background Notes for Parents/Carers

After Christmas children will explore the theme of Local Church, which is our story. The **parish** is where people gather together to celebrate and practise care and love for each other. The **diocese** is the community of the Christian faithful. The Local Church theme focuses on the people of God, gathered in Christ, united in the journey of faith, in care for one another, in sharing their story and in celebration.

The experience of community is an essential and enjoyable part of life for people of every age and faith. The cycle of a year and the span of a lifetime contain occasions for regular celebrations as well as unexpected surprises, when people want to celebrate with family, friends and communities.

The Church’s celebrations are also community occasions. On Sundays, the parish family gathers together. It is a time to remember how much there is to celebrate; a time to say thank you; a time to know that God’s love is offered and made visible here and now in Jesus and in people. Sacraments are more formal special moments: signs of ‘God-with-us’, who journeys with his people; signs of strength and blessing for life.

The Presentation Story

- Look at the image of 'Mary and Joseph at the Temple in Jerusalem' below and read the story :

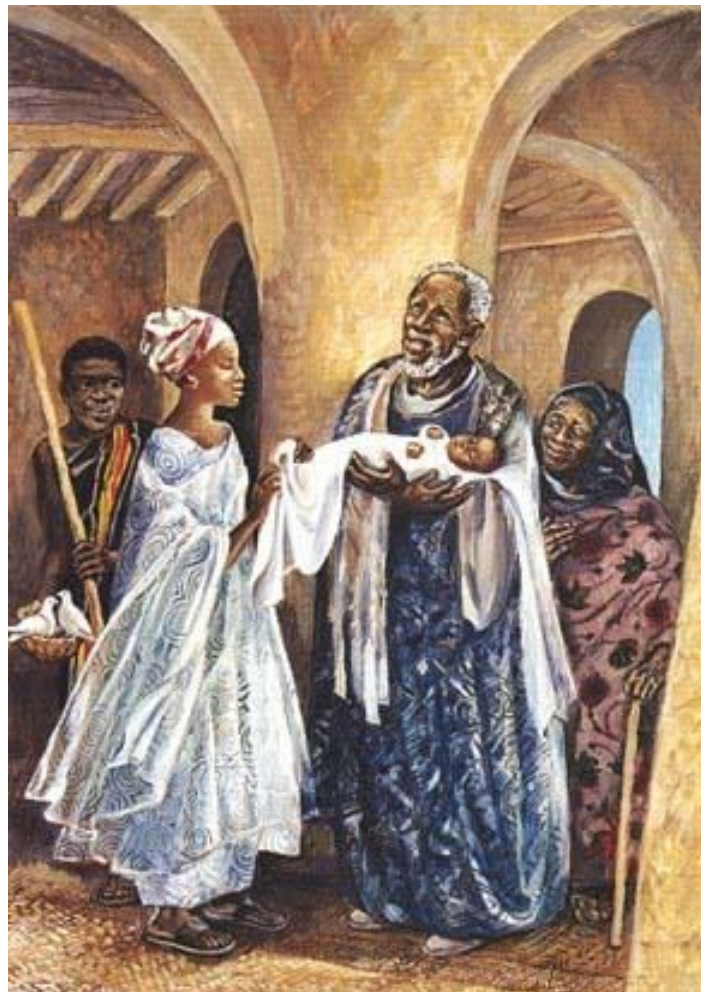
Mary and Joseph took baby Jesus to the Temple in Jerusalem. They wanted to present him to God and thank God for giving them their lovely boy.

Whilst they were there they met two people, Simeon and Anna. They went to the Temple every day to pray. Simeon took Jesus in his arms and gave thanks to God. He said a prayer over Jesus and blessed Mary and Joseph. He said Jesus was like a light to help people. Anna was delighted to see Jesus and gave thanks to God for him.

Afterwards Mary and Joseph took Jesus home to Nazareth.

Ask your child the following questions:

- Q Who do you see in the picture?
- Q Why did Mary and Joseph take Jesus to the Temple?
- Q Who were the people that they met?
- Q Why did Simeon and Anna go to the Temple?
- Q What did Simeon do?
- Q Why do you think Simeon and Anna were so pleased to meet Jesus?
- Q What did Mary and Joseph do after they left the Temple?



Mary and Joseph took Jesus to the Temple to present him to God and met Simeon and Anna there.

Simeon said Jesus is the light of the world. How can we be like Jesus? Write some ideas in the boxes.

